

## Taipei fed up with pun, chooses new name for Neihu line

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The Taipei City Government will spend about NT\$1 million (US\$30,000) to change the name of the MRT Muzha-Neihu Line after an insulting twist on its name became popular.

The problem-ridden MRT line is jokingly called by the last two syllables in “Muzha” and “Neihu” because when put together, they sound like zhahu (ㄓㄠˊ), a term in the game of mahjong that describes an act of cheating.

In hopes of improving the line’s fortunes, the name will be changed to the “Wenshan-Neihu Line.”

Several Taipei City councilors in Neihu (內湖) and Nangang (南港) districts have blamed the line’s repeated malfunctions and breakdowns on its “unlucky nickname.”

They suggested the name be changed to the Wenshan-Neihu Line, or Wen-Hu Line (文湖), as it connects Wenshan (文山) and Neihu districts.

Taipei Mayor Hau Lung-bin (郝龍斌) yesterday said the change would soon be formalized, but rebutted reports that it would cost more than NT\$100 million for new signs, maps and other changes.

“The Muzha-Neihu Line will become the Wenshan-Neihu Line, but it is a groundless rumor that this project will cost that much money,” Hau said.

Chao Hsiung-fei (趙雄飛), a spokesman for the Taipei Rapid Transit Corp, said the project would cost about NT\$1 million, including the cost of changing signs, maps and recorded MRT announcements.

Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Taipei City Councilor Huang Shan-shan (黃珊珊) said the line’s name should have been changed sooner.

“How can it run smoothly when everyone keeps calling it the ‘zhahu’ line?” she said, adding that Wenshan-Neihu Line was also a better name because Muzha is not an official city district.

The Muzha area is part of Wenshan district.

Some residents criticized the change, saying the city should spend the money on improving the system instead.

“Will changing the name improve the line’s luck? I think the city government shouldn’t waste money,” said Lin Hsiang-mei (林香梅), a frequent MRT passenger.

Taipei resident Claire Chiu also dismissed the idea.

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“Maybe Hau Lung-bin should change his own name if he wants better luck,” she said.

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