

Airport to lift capacity by 15m people

Suvarnabhumi's east expansion gets boost

POST REPORTERS

The blueprint of the East Expansion project to enlarge the eastern section of Suvarnabhumi airport's main terminal will be adjusted to increase the handling capacity of the country's main gateway by 15 million passengers a year in three years, says the Transport Ministry.

The blueprint dominated the meeting agenda held by the committee on Suvarnabhumi airport's capacity increase on Wednesday.

The meeting, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, was attended by Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob and various agencies including the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning.

Later, Mr Saksayam said the meeting was briefed on the plan to commission the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to study the expansion of Suvarnabhumi airport's terminal.

The Airports of Thailand (AoT) had been in talks with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) before drafting an agreement to hire the ICAO to conduct the study.

The OAG is vetting the legality

surrounding the proposed agreement which is expected to be wrapped up next month, the minister said.

The agreement is pressing ahead as the East Expansion project, which has been approved by the cabinet, was being revised.

The project involves expanding the eastern part of the Suvarnabhumi airport terminal.

The expansion of this particular section alone is expected to lift the airport's overall handling capacity to 65 million passengers per year when it is completed in 2025. The 65 million passenger mark is the level the airport handled before Covid-19 struck two years ago. The revision, which is taking about seven months to finish, is intended to make the eastern section of the terminal able to accommodate up to 15 million passengers a year.

A completed revision will be forwarded to the AoT board before being submitted to the cabinet for approval early next year, according to Mr Saksayam. The next step is to find builders for the project, a process which could get underway from April to July next year. The actual construction is likely to begin in August next year and carry on until the end of 2025.

The Eastern Expansion project, costing 7.8 billion baht, will occupy 66,000 square metres of space and forms a vital part of the main terminal.

The AoT is clearing adjacent areas and moving away the City Garden and a shrine to make way for the project.