

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

# Centre orders agencies to hasten projects

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The Center for Economic Situation Administration has ordered responsible agencies to rev up infrastructure projects worth a total 1.22 trillion baht as planned, in part to boost the economy in the medium and long terms.

According to government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri, the centre met on Sept 16 and agreed to speed up state and state enterprise infrastructure projects in fiscal 2020 worth 935 billion baht and 287 billion baht, respectively.

The proposal was made by a sub-committee handling measures to stimulate the economy in the medium and long terms chaired by Pailin Chuchotthaworn, an adviser to the prime minister and a former deputy transport minister.

The proposed infrastructure projects include the Red Line (Bang Sue-Rangsit; Bang Sue-Taling Chan section); the extension of the Brown Line (from Khae Rai to Yaek Lam Sali); the Purple Line (from Tao Poon to Rat Burana); the second phase of double-track rail; the Sino-Thai high-speed railway (Bangkok-Nakhon Ratchasima section); provincial mass transit projects, including those in Phuket, Chiang Mai and Nakhon Ratchasima; and Hat Yai's monorail.

The other projects are a special expressway and motorways, including

the north route of the third-phase expressway, the Kathu-Patong Expressway; Bangkok Port and Bang Na-At Narong Expressway; Chalong Rat-Nakhon Nayok-Saraburi Expressway; the Utraphimuk Motorway (Rangsit-Bang Pa-in); and the third phase of Map Ta Phut port.

The government was also advised to speed up studying measures to promote the rail industry, including tax perks for investors and requirements for local content. The government plans to allocate 30 million baht in fiscal 2021 to conduct a feasibility study to establish a high-speed rail company.

Mr Anucha said the development of infrastructure for the planned Southern Economic Corridor, which covers double-track rail, land bridges, oil pipelines and commercial ports in Chumphon and Ranong, also needs getting done.

The cabinet in January last year approved the development of the Southern Economic Corridor, covering 116 projects worth 107 billion baht.

The 116 projects will be developed on a combined 300,000 square metres in Chumphon, Ranong, Surat Thani and Nakhon Si Thammarat during 2019-22.

The four-year development will cover four key strategic plans, with the first aiming to develop the SEC as the gateway to South Asia and a link to the Eastern Economic Corridor.