

**DEVELOPMENT**

# Central Village to open amid gate dispute

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Central Pattana Plc (CPN), developer of the Central Village, has pledged to put all efforts into opening its luxury outlet near Suvarnabhumi International Airport as planned.

The 5-billion-baht luxury outlet is scheduled to open this Saturday, but Airports of Thailand (AoT) has blocked the entrance to the premises since last Thursday.

In response, CPN yesterday petitioned the Administrative Court for an injunction against AoT blocking the outlet's entrance. The court was expected to give a ruling yesterday, but no ruling had been delivered as of press time yesterday.

"If the court can't protect us, we would ask the police to solve the problem [of the outlet's entrance]. We also have a back-up plan to resolve the issue," Preecha Ekkunagul, the company's president and CEO said yesterday.

AoT blocked the entrance to the outlet after it alleged that CPN unlawfully built the entrance on AoT-claimed land on Highway No.370 — the road that connects Bang Na-Trat Road to Suvarnabhumi airport.

CPN is insisting it has permission from the Department of Highways (DoH) to use the land, which separates Central Village and the highway. According to the company, Central Village is located on the land adjacent to Highway No.370, which AoT has no rights to.

"Highway No.370 is a plot of land assigned by the government to the





An AoT sign erected by a road side area near the entrance to Central Village reads: 'This area is under AoT ownership. No entry or else legal action may be taken.'



A sign put up by Central Village reads: 'This project is located right next to a highway. It doesn't intrude on any land owned by anyone.'

DoH to build on. It is different to the land plot expropriated to make way for Suvarnabhumi airport, which is under the care of the AoT," according to a press kit released by CPN yesterday. The company went on to say that CPN has already asked the DoH for permission, as it holds sole authority to approve CPN's plan to connect the outlet's entrance to the highway.

On aviation safety, CPN said it has obtained permits to build within the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand's (CAAT) Air Navigation Safety Zone and its buildings do not violate any rules and/or height requirements. CPN also said activities at the outlet will not affect airport operations or disturb flights in any way, as its design complies with International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) standards. On Tuesday, CAAT chief Chula Sukmanop is reported to have said the outlet did not violate ICAO regulations.

Nitinai Sirismatthakarn, president of the AoT, yesterday was adamant that the disputed area is under the AoT's jurisdiction and the CPN failed to ask for its permission.

"AoT will ask the Department of

**Traffic on Highway No 370 is heavily congested as people who have to get into Central Village to get their jobs done before the planned opening of the new luxury outlet near Suvarnabhumi airport on Saturday are forced to leave their cars by the road side after Airports of Thailand began blocking the entrance to the project's location last week.** PHOTOS BY PATIPAT JANTHONG

Public Works and Town & Country Planning to probe whether the project violates town plan codes, and ask CAAT to recheck whether the project may interfere with aviation safety, Mr Nitinai said. "Since the project is a large-scale one, its lighting system may affect flight operations," he said. He cited an incident in which he said a golf course located about 4 kilometres away from the airport was found to have confused some pilots when it used laser beams at an event.