

**DEVELOPMENT**

Open outlet at own risk: Wissanu

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Central Pattana Plc (CPN) can proceed with the planned opening of its new luxury outlet near Suvarnabhumi International Airport at its own risk, Deputy Prime Minister Wissanu Krea-ngam said yesterday.

Mr Wissanu said the developer of the 5-billion-baht Central Village can go ahead without having to wait for an injunction from the Administrative Court, but added CPN will have to take responsibility if it is later found to have flouted the law.

CPN is locking horns with Airports of Thailand (AoT) over the new outlet's entrance, which has resulted in AoT blocking entry to the premises since Thursday last week.

AoT claims CPN unlawfully built the entrance on AoT-claimed land on Highway No.370, which connects Bang Na-Trat Road to Suvarnabhumi airport.

Meanwhile, CPN insisted 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.

On Wednesday, CPN petitioned the Administrative Court for an injunc-

tion to stop AoT from blocking the outlet's entrance. After no ruling was made, the company said it will put all efforts into opening the outlet as planned tomorrow.

Mr Wissanu said the government has instructed authorities to look into the matter. "What needs to be established is who has the right or authority over the disputed area," he said, adding that various agencies had been invited to discuss the issue, including the Department of Highways.

Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob said yesterday he will join urgent talks on ways to settle the dispute between CPN and AoT, today at the ministry.

Mr Saksayam said he has asked the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) to coordinate talks between legal experts from various transport agencies and the ICAO, Treasury Department and CPN.

Natthawut Ta-inta, president of the AoT labour union, had said the outlet's entrance lies on land to which AoT holds the rights — a position backed by the Treasury Department and Land Department.

He insisted the AoT is not protecting the interest of any business, but the national interest. That said, Mr Natthawut said that the AoT is ready to comply with a court order.

He said a letter will be sent to the Thai and international pilots associations to ask if they have encountered any aviation safety risk posed by the luxury outlet's location.

Meanwhile, Bang Kaew police yesterday put up "No Parking" barriers along Highway No.370, after complaints about traffic jams caused by staff leaving their vehicles by the roadside and walking to the outlet because of AoT's blockade.