

TRANSPORT

Cabinet gives motorway project larger land budget

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Yesterday the cabinet approved a higher land expropriation budget for the Bang Yai-Kanchanaburi motorway project, an increase of 12 billion baht from 5.22 billion.

Traisulee Traisoranakul, a deputy government spokeswoman, said a larger budget is needed as land prices along the motorway increased, particularly because of the construction of the MRT Purple Line and Central Plaza WestGate.

Ms Traisulee said the previous budget of 5.22 billion baht was an estimate from 2008-12.

Under the new estimate, the total land expropriation cost is 17.45 billion baht, she said.

The Transport Ministry aims to complete the land expropriation by

March 2020 and complete construction by 2021.

"The project plays a significant part in linking the western region to central areas as well as to the Eastern Economic Corridor project," said Ms Traisulee.

The cabinet also approved accelerating construction of the 3-billion-baht four-lane highway from Wang Manao, Ratchaburi to Highway 3510 (on the Myanmar border) as proposed by the private sector.

The project should reduce congestion on Phetkasem Road and a reserved road to the southern provinces.

The project is estimated to be completed by 2025.

The cabinet also approved in principle nine infrastructure projects worth 3.2 billion baht in lower central provinces including Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi and Suphan Buri.

Rachada Dhnadirek, a government spokeswoman, said the cabinet also approved 9.6 billion baht for the tapioca price guarantee scheme for the 2019/2020 harvest season.

The price guarantee is set at 2.50 baht per kilogramme, limited to 100 tonnes per family.

The programme is to run from Oct 1, 2019, to Dec 31, 2020, and is expected to cover 540,000 farmers.