



## New dual track train line to slash travel time between Bangkok, Hua Hin and southern Thailand

Thailand's new dual track train line is set to transform travel between Bangkok, Hua Hin, Chumphon and the deep south.

The new line, which is currently under construction and will replace the existing single-track line, will be a boom for business, tourism and will help to reduce travel time for passengers, SRT acting governor Worawut Mala told the media this weekend.



Once all phases are completed, the new dual track will enable passengers to travel from the new Bang Sue station in Bangkok to destinations such as Nakhon Pathom, Ratchaburi, Phetchaburi, Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Bang Saphan Noi, Chumphon, Surat Thani, Songkhla and then onto Padang Besar on the Malaysian border.

Trains will travel at 160 km/hour, meaning passengers leaving Bangkok can be in Hua Hin in just two or three hours, Mr Worawut said, adding that it can often take the best part of four to five hours to complete the same journey by car.



Dual track train line under construction at Soi 94 in Hua Hin.

Mr. Worawut also said that tourists will be among the biggest beneficiaries of the new train line. He said that foreign tourists account for a whopping 90 percent of passengers travelling by train between Bangkok and Chumphon. It currently takes around nine hours to travel by train between Bangkok and Chumphon, but once the upgrade is completed journey time will be just five hours.

The Nakhon Pathom-Hua Hin and Hua Hin-Prachuap Khiri Khan sections of the upgrade are around 30 percent complete, while the southern phase from Prachuap Khiri Khan-Chumphon is 19 percent complete.

The new dual track between Bangkok and Padang Besar will cost 90 billion baht will be fully operational by 2022.

By 2051, 2.85 million people will be using the new dual track train line, the Nation TV reported.

A new dual track line is also being constructed Nakhon Ratchasima and Khon Kaen. It will be 187 kilometers long and is set to be finished by the end of next year.

The line will run into Khon Kaen - the last 5 kilometers will be elevated (10 meters up) leading to a two-story station that will be the biggest and first of its kind in Khon Kaen. Ticket hall will be downstairs with shops and upstairs will be the trains.

Thailand's new dual track lines will operate from the new Bang Sue Central Station, which is set to open in 2020. The station, which is located near Bang Sue intersection on Thoet Damri road, will become the hub for Thailand's new rail infrastructure, including the proposed high-speed trains from Bangkok to Nong Khai and Bangkok to Chiang Mai.

The high-speed trains are a separate project to the new dual track upgrade.

The station will also be used for the proposed Eastern Economic Corridor high-speed rail line which will link three airports - Don Mueang, Suvarnabhumi and U-Tapao in Rayong, and which promises travel from Pattaya to Bangkok in less than one hour.

The new station will eventually replace the Hua Lamphong station, which has been Bangkok's primary train station since it opened in 1916.

The Bang Sue Central Station will be the largest in Southeast Asia when it opens.