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BAD FARANG



Police investigate a vandalism attack by foreigners in Cherg Talay last Sunday (Sept 29). Photo: Cherg Talay Police

VISA-FREE POLICY HARMING PHUKET'S PUSH FOR 'QUALITY TOURISM'

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun
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Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat and Phuket Tourist Association President Thaneth Tantipiriyakij have both voiced concerns about the growing issue of 'overtourism' in Phuket, and the effect of appealing to 'cheaper' tourists visiting is having on the island.

Both are focused on striking a balance between tourism growth and preserving Phuket's status as a quality destination.

"The problem I see now is the continued implementation of the visa-free policy, with the government hoping to attract more tourists and boost [overall] spending," Governor Sophon told *The Phuket News*.

"This approach appears to priori-

tise quantity over quality, potentially leading to negative long-term impacts," Mr Sophon added.

"The influx of international tourists has brought a rise in lower-quality visitors at destinations, causing disruptions for local residents and diminishing the experience for higher-quality tourists," Governor Sophon admitted.

Mr Thaneth shared recent statistics showing that Phuket has welcomed between 200,000 to 400,000 international tourists over the past six months. "This number could surge dramatically, reaching 600,000 to 800,000 tourists, similar to the levels we saw in 2019," he said.

The current visa-free policy is countering Phuket tourism industry's efforts to improve revenue per tourist, Mr Thaneth noted.

"We aim to prioritise quality over

quantity. We are moving beyond simply increasing numbers and are now focusing on enhancing the quality of tourism," he said.

"While the government may focus on encouraging tourists to stay longer and spend more, I believe that before addressing these aspects, we should first ensure that tourists respect the law and local traditions," he added.

"Even if tourists stay longer and spend more, it's important that they respect our laws and traditions. To feel truly welcomed, visitors should embrace local customs and follow the rules," Mr Thaneth said.

However, Mr Sophon argued, "We can't control the influx of tourists due to the ongoing visa-free policy.

"So far, my solution is to distribute tourists to different provinces. For example, if they're interested in

hot springs, we can direct them to Ranong, and for island alternatives, we can recommend Phang Nga or Krabi," Mr Sophon explained.

"This approach aims to prevent tourists from travelling to just a single province, easing the strain on Phuket while also promoting other beautiful destinations," he said.

"I have gathered representatives from five Andaman destinations – Phang Nga, Ranong, Surat Thani, Krabi and Phuket – for a meeting to discuss strategies for diverting tourists from Phuket to these other provinces," he noted.

The concerns about overtourism appear valid, as the increasing number of tourists has led to more incidents of disruptive behaviour, Governor Sophon admitted.

"This year alone, I have revoked

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Sea gypsies line up for B10,000 cash handout



LIFE PAGE 8

Carbon neutral drive starts to gains weight



SPORT PAGE 16

Aussie Rules action returns to the ACG



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49/35 BOAT AVENUE, LAGUNA, CHERGTALAY AMPHOE THALANG, PHUKET, THAILAND 83110





Cement truck overturns at building site > p4

Sea gypsies queue up for B10k

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Sea gypsies at Laem Tukkae on Koh Siray turned out last week to withdraw their B10,000 welfare handout as among the first group of “vulnerable citizens”, to receive the handout for state welfare cardholders and disabled individuals as part of the current government’s economic stimulus program.

A national government report, still referring to the sea gypsies as ‘Thai Mai’ (‘New Thais’), marked that residents from the poor community “eagerly withdrew the funds from ATMs early in the morning to cover essential expenses” on Sept 25.

“Sea gypsies were seen in various areas of Phuket Town, where ATM usage spiked as people rushed to access the funds,” said the report.

“Many explained that the money would be used to pur-



Photo: NBT

chase necessities such as rice, oil, sugar and fish sauce, while some planned to save a portion for future needs.”

In Laem Tukkae, where most residents work as fishermen or labourers, around 500 individuals out of over 2,000 villagers received the financial

aid, the report explained.

One of the sea gypsies, Tangja Pramongkit*, expressed his “relief and happiness” after finding out he had received the money, the report added.

Mr Tangja shared that he planned to use it for household

expenses, including electricity and water bills and to support his grandchildren’s education.

Another beneficiary, Wichai Pramongkit*, described how he had eagerly awaited this financial support to help sustain his daily life as a fisherman,

the report continued.

After confirming the deposit early in the morning, he quickly withdrew the funds, intending to purchase household supplies and treat his grandchildren later in the day.

The B10,000 payment is part of the government effort to support vulnerable groups during challenging economic times, and the lively scenes at ATMs in Phuket reflect the significant impact this assistance is having on local communities.

Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra officially kicked off the B10,000 cash handout scheme during a launch ceremony on Sept 25.

“The payment system for the second and third phases is being developed. The Finance Ministry will provide details later,” she said.

“Today, cash will be in the hands of Thais. A cash injection of more than B145 billion will create a major economic

whirlwind,” she added.

The B10,000 handout to vulnerable groups project is the remains of a core policy promise by the Pheu Thai Party last year to hand out B10,000 to all Thai citizens.

The payouts, initially touted to be distributed by ‘digital wallets’, was to cost B560 billion (B560,000,000,000) and promoted as able to give the Thai economy a B2 trillion boost.

That pre-election promise remains unfulfilled as the project came under fire from anti-corruption bodies, economists and social welfare groups.

* ‘Pramongkit’, literally meaning ‘fisherman’, is the family name bestowed to all sea gypsies by Queen Sirikit (HM The King’s mother) more than 20 years ago so they could be issued Thai government ID cards, so they could be recognised as citizens.

Governor revokes visas of more than 200 foreigners for bad behaviour

Continued from page 1

...the visas of around 200 foreign visitors for causing trouble in Phuket,” he confirmed.

TROUBLEMAKERS

Governor Sophon’s confirmation of revoking tourists’ visa came just days before two foreign men vandalised a local restaurant in Cherng Talay, shattering its glass windows and causing panic among staff and nearby residents.

The first incident, at the Birds Café Restaurant in Soi OrBorTor, Cherng Talay, occurred at about 2:18am last Sunday (Sept 29).

According to Kochem Nukun, a 68-year-old security guard at the restaurant, a foreign man arrived on a motorbike, parked in front of the establishment and proceeded to break the glass windows.

The sound was loud enough to resemble a gunshot, prompting fears that a firearm had been used. The perpetrator quickly fled the scene on his motorcycle.

Less than an hour later, at around 2:58am, a second foreign man arrived and smashed more glass at the restaurant before fleeing in a similar manner.

In that case, police reported they were working to identify and apprehend the suspects, and confirm the motives behind the attacks.

Just two days earlier, last Friday morning (Sept 27), a German man

went on a destructive rampage at an Italian restaurant near Phuket International Airport, assaulting the shop owner and damaging property.

The event, which occurred shortly after 2am, was captured on CCTV footage, which has since gone viral on social media with hashtags like #FreeVisaEntryAgain and #Crazy-Foreigner.

The German man had arrived at Da Luka Pizza & Pasta, and after a period of talking with the owner’s husband, also a foreigner, suddenly began throwing objects around the shop before physically attacking the owner.

The owner’s foreign husband explained that before the German man’s violent behaviour, he talked incessantly and appeared agitated. The situation escalated when the German man smashed a car parked outside the shop and then crossed the street to a nearby convenience store, where he continued to cause chaos, prompting employees to flee.

The owner of the pizza shop, ‘Ms Nga’, explained that the man had come in earlier, ordered a pizza, beer and a shot of liquor, and then returned hours later in a visibly agitated state.

At one point, he began removing his clothes and behaving erratically. When Ms Nga’s husband attempted to intervene, the German man attacked him, locking his neck and pushing him to the ground.



Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat. Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

Attempts to call the police were initially unsuccessful apparently due to “connection issues”, but eventually, help was sought from a relative.

Meanwhile, the German man damaged the shop’s car, throwing glass and bending the vehicle’s side mirrors before he was confronted. After attacking the owner again, the man continued to the 7-Eleven store across the road, where he continued to cause disruption.

According to reports, this was not the first time the German man had been involved in such incidents, as reports indicated he had caused similar disturbances at other local businesses.

Social media users were quick to express outrage, with many criticising the handling of foreign tourists and calling for stricter law enforcement. Comments included, “Phuket is becoming worse than Pattaya,”

and “This is not beyond the Thai police – lock him up and teach him a lesson.”

Officers from Sakhu Police Station arrived at the scene some three hours later. The German presented his passport and confirmed he was a German national, apparently ex-military.

At last report, police had yet to confirm what charges the German man faced, if any.

SOLUTIONS

“I have submitted a request to the central government to elevate the standards for international visitors, particularly those under the visa-free policy.

“We propose requiring a minimum balance of B300,000 in their accounts to help ensure that these tourists are more likely to stay longer and spend more in our destinations,” Governor Sophon said.

“If we continue to welcome an increasing number of tourists without careful consideration, Phuket may encounter more challenges, with the potential for some visitors to impact the community’s peace and safety,” he said plainly.

“I desire higher-quality tourists, but I cannot change the existing [visa-free] policy myself. It’s challenging to determine when and how Phuket can transition toward becoming a destination that attracts more quality visitors,” he added.

Mr Thaneth urged investment into improving Phuket’s infrastructure in order to improve the ‘quality’ of tourists wanting to come to Phuket.

“If we want to have quality over quantity, the government should make the necessary preparations. Creating quality destinations comes from investing in their development.

“By developing infrastructure, providing diverse facilities and ensuring safety for both residents and tourists are essential,” Mr Thaneth said.

“From the supply side, I can confidently say that Phuket’s hotels, restaurants and tour services have been continuously improving since the COVID-19 pandemic to enhance the destination’s appeal,” he added.

“However, infrastructure projects are struggling due to lack of funding. Sometimes, Phuket residents have to use their own resources because government support is lacking,” Mr Thaneth explained.

“Phuket’s over-tourism issue, as highlighted by the Phuket Governor, is driven largely by the visa-free policy, resulting in an overwhelming and uncontrollable influx of visitors,” Mr Thaneth concurred.

“To resolve the issues, the Phuket Governor proposes raising the standards for tourists, allowing only quality visitors to enter, while simultaneously working to establish Phuket as a premier destination for high-quality tourism,” he concluded.

Waste problem 'alarming'

The Phuket News
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A new initiative to improve solid waste management in Phuket was launched last week, with Phuket Vice Governor Norasak Suksomboon, presiding over the opening ceremony of the training program, which aims to enhance waste management efforts across the province.

Organised by the Office of Local Administration Promotion, the event, held last Friday (Sept 27), brought together 73 participants, including public health and environment officers from all 19 local administrative organisations on the island.

The training, led by Sudarat Wongthepwanich, Director of the Local Promotion and Development Group, aims to empower the community leaders with the skills and knowledge to tackle the province's growing waste problem.

Ms Sudarat emphasised that the program seeks to raise awareness about the importance of addressing solid waste issues and encourage collaboration among communities.



Firefighters douse a worrying blaze at the landfill in Saphan Hin in February this year.
Photo: Phuket City Municipality

"We want to promote sustainable solutions that are cost-effective and environmentally friendly. Our goal is to create innovative technologies to manage waste efficiently and reduce its impact on Phuket," she said.

The initiative is part of Phuket's broader 'Clean Province' community waste management plan for 2024, which focuses on creating long-term solutions to the

increasing waste burden, she explained.

Currently, Phuket generates approximately 1,100 tons of waste per day, a figure that Mr Norasak described as "alarming".

Vice Governor Norasak stressed the importance of reducing organic waste, which makes up 60% of the total waste sent to the disposal centre.

He called on participants

to focus on sorting waste at the source and finding ways to repurpose organic material, such as turning it into compost or using it as animal feed.

"By addressing organic waste alone, we could cut the amount of waste sent to incinerators and landfills by more than half," Mr Norasak said. "The participants in this programme are the key force that will lead our province toward a cleaner future."



Photo: PR Phuket

Phuket hosts International Island Tourism Forum

THE 25TH INTERNATIONAL Island Tourism Policy Forum (ITOP) was held at the Pullman Karon Beach Phuket Resort last week, marking a significant milestone for the event as it celebrated its 25th anniversary.

The forum attracted over 150 leaders and policymakers from island destinations worldwide, including Hainan Province in China, Jeju Island in Korea, Okinawa in Japan and Bali in Indonesia.

The opening ceremony on Sept 25, presided over by Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat, set the tone for discussions centred on sustainable tourism and community development.

Delegates shared visions for the future of island tourism, with a particular focus on

challenges posed by climate change, green finance, and biodiversity conservation. Topics such as the impacts of climate change on tourism and strategies for building resilience were key areas of discussion.

Later in the day, a co-operation agreement was signed, and Bali, Indonesia, will receive the host flag for the next forum.

The next day (Sept 26), participants embarked on a study tour of Phuket's sustainable tourism practices, including efforts to transform the city into a carbon-neutral tourism hub by 2030.

A visit to Phuket Town was also to provide delegates with an immersive experience of Thai hospitality and culture.

The Phuket News

Boy, 6, stripped, beaten at school

CHALONG POLICE HAVE held a press conference to clarify what action has been taken over a 6-year-old boy being physically assaulted by other students at a school in Rawai.

The father of the 6-year-old boy arrived at Chalong Police Station about 11:12pm on Aug 18 to report the incident, Chalong Police confirmed through a statement.

The man's son, a Grade 1 student at Wat Sawang Arom School in Rawai had been physically assaulted by older students at the same school.

According to the complaint filed with police, two to three girls tied the boy's hands, removed his shirt and pulled his pants down to his ankles, and proceeded to strike him with rubber sandals on his back, body and head, causing injuries.

A video of the attack, shared widely on local social media channels and seemingly recorded by a member of his assailants, showed one girl repeatedly hitting the boy on the head, back and stomach with her rubber sandal.



Photo: PR Phuket

The girl started her assault by raising her foot to the boy's face and shoving him over, and continued by striking the boy with her sandal by raising her arm high and bringing it down as hard as she could.

At the end of the video, a different girl starts hitting the boy with her rubber sandal, repeatedly forcefully hitting the boy in the face.

The assault showed plain signs of malice, despite the girls' young age.

As the case involves a child under 12 years old, which falls under the Child Protection Act of 2003 and Section 73 of the Criminal Code, Chalong Police said.

"According to these laws, children under 12 who commit acts that would otherwise be considered crimes are not subject to punishment," the statement continued.

"Instead, the investigation officer must forward the case to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS). Chalong Police Station followed this procedure, sending the child responsible for the assault, along with their parents, to a children's shelter to ensure safety and investigate the incident."

On Aug 23, investigators arranged a meeting with both sets of parents, the school director, volunteer lawyers, and the deputy director of investigations from Chalong Police Station.

"The goal was to resolve the issue, negotiate compensation and explain the legal process. Both sides agreed on a compensation settlement. However, when the payment was due, the parents of the child responsible for the assault could not make the payment as agreed," the statement said.

"Regarding the incident that occurred, Chalong Police Station was aware of and did not ignore the incident," Chalong Police assured.

Additional reporting
by Eakkapop Thongtub



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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

FRI OCTOBER 4

High: +36°
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Wind 11 m/s

SAT OCTOBER 5

High: +36°
Low: +28°
Wind 11 m/s

SUN OCTOBER 6

High: +35°
Low: +28°
Wind 11 m/s

MON OCTOBER 7

High: +35°
Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

TUE OCTOBER 8

High: +35°
Low: +28°
Wind 4 m/s

WED OCTOBER 9

High: +37°
Low: +28°
Wind 4 m/s

THU OCTOBER 10

High: +36°
Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

Photo: Cherng Talay Police

Driver killed as cement truck overturns at construction site

THE DRIVER OF A concrete mixer truck was killed when the truck he was driving overturned at a construction site in Cherng Talay last Sunday morning (Sept 29).

Cherng Talay Police were called to the scene, in Soi Khok Tonode 1, at about 11:10am.

Officers soon arrived, along with three teams of rescue workers: one from the Phuket Kusoldharm Foundation, one from Cherng Talay Municipality and another from Cherng Talay Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor).

At the site, officers found a white-and-blue concrete mixer truck, registered in Phuket, overturned in a four-metre-deep construction pit.

The truck, owned by PCL Transport Co Ltd, had fallen after the ground at the edge of the pit gave way.

The driver, identified as King Khannuch, 56, from Phetchabun Province, was trapped beneath the vehicle.

Despite efforts by the rescue teams, the driver was unresponsive and believed to have died at the scene.

Rescue workers used hydraulic equipment to free his body, which was finally recovered at around 1:15pm.

According to the driver's wife, Mr Khanuch had arrived at the construction site at about 11am to deliver five cubic metres of cement.

As he drove out of the pit, the ground beside the pit collapsed, causing the truck to overturn and trapping him underneath.

Mr Khanuch's body was transported to Thalang Hospital, where an examination will be conducted to determine the exact cause of death.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Modified motorbikes targeted by police

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket Provincial Police have launched a new campaign targeting youths and illegally modified motorbikes with loud exhaust pipes that disturb the public.

Region 8 Police Commander Pol Lt Gen Surapong Thanomchit told a press conference at Phuket City Police Station on Sept 26 that the operation, led by Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum, was initially launched on Aug 1.

The campaign is aimed at maintaining public order ahead of major events like the upcoming Vegetarian Festival and the high tourist season, Pol Lt Gen Surapong said.

"Phuket is a popular tourist destination with a diverse community. As the Vegetarian Festival and the busy tourist season approach, both Thai and international visitors will be travelling to Phuket for festivals and other attractions," he added.

In response, police had been ordered to take necessary actions in addressing social issues in the province, particularly those related to noisy motorcycles and unlaw-



Photo: PR Phuket

ful gatherings of teenagers, Pol Lt Gen Surapong continued.

"And [police] will continue to target illegal vehicle modifications, especially loud exhaust pipes, which have been a frequent source of public complaints," he said.

Pol Lt Gen Surapong explained that so far during the campaign police had taken the following action:

One person was arrested for using a fake licence plate.

- 50 people were apprehended for modifying their vehicles' exhaust systems.

- 58 individuals were caught for other illegal vehicle modifications.

- 98 people were charged for driving without licence plates.

- Legal action was taken against 41 parents for neglecting or encouraging their chil-

dren's inappropriate behaviour.

- 36 parents were warned and penalised for neglecting their children.

- 96 vehicles suspected of being involved in illegal activities were confiscated.

The operation aims to create a safer environment by preventing crime before it occurs, taking legal action against offenders, and holding parents accountable for their children's actions, Pol Lt Gen Surapong said.

"Region 8 Police and the Phuket Provincial Police are also calling on the public to support these efforts by discouraging teenagers from engaging in activities that disturb the peace. Parents are urged to be more vigilant, and the police are offering support to families seeking advice or assistance," he added.

Drug tests return to Bangla

PATONG POLICE JOINED BY Kathu District Officials and public health officials have relaunched their campaign to combat crime and ensure public safety by conducting drug tests of staff at entertainment venues along Bangla Rd.

Drug tests have been carried out at several venues, Patong Police reported on Sept 24.

The spate of "random" drug tests involved several venues along the popular nightlife street.

The operation was coordinated by Patong Police Chief Pol Col Chalermchai Hirasawat, and carried out through his deputies, Pol Lt Col Narubadin Panglisen Pol Lt Col Somporn Surin and Pol Lt Col Suchart Chumphusang.

Police were joined by Jiravat Namart and Sikarin Aninbon from the Kathu District Office, along with volunteers from the Kathu District branch of Volunteer



Photo: Patong Police

Defense Corps (OrSor).

Public health officials, led by Namchai Prateep from the Kathu District Public Health Office, also joined the operation.

The drug tests are part of the third phase of the campaign under the crime prevention and suppression plan by the Region 8 Police, under the theme "Protect the people, suppress dangers, be modern, and care for the people, Patong Police said.

A total of 141 employees were tested (73 males, 68 females). It was not reported if any of the tests were positive. *The Phuket News*

Syrians caught with fake passports

IMMIGRATION OFFICERS AT Phuket International Airport have arrested two Syrian men for using forged United Arab Emirates (UAE) passports.

The men, both aged 23, were arrested in the international arrivals hall of the airport at about 1:30pm last Sunday (Sept 29), reported the branch of Phuket Immigration stationed at the airport.

The arrests of the Syrian men followed the arrest of a 38-year-old Chinese woman on arriving in Phuket on Sept 22. The woman was arrested in the international arrivals hall at about 1:30am.

The woman was charged under Section 137 of the Thai legal code for providing false information to officials, as well as Section 269/11 for improperly using another person's passport, which could result in harm to others or the public.

The Chinese woman was taken to Sakhu Police Station for further legal proceedings.



Photo: Phuket Airport Immigration Checkpoint

Immigration officers at the airport also arrested a 25-year-old Thai man at about 1pm last Thursday (Sept 26) for attempting to leave the country while a warrant for his arrest had been issued by the Thung Song Provincial Court in Nakhon Sri Thammarat for him failing to appear in court on drug charges.

Following the arrest, the man was transferred to Thung Song Provincial Court, immigration officers reported.

At about 9:40pm last Friday (Sept 27), airport immigration officers arrested a 30-year-old Thai woman wanted on arrest warrant for a defamation charge, described as "joint defamation by advertising". She was handed over to Phuket Provincial Court.

The Phuket News

Former Mayor of Kathu faces corruption charge

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The former Mayor of Kathu has been indicted on an anti-corruption charge for making payments to a road construction contractor even though the work was not yet complete.

Suchart Kruaykittanon, Assistant Secretary-General of the NACC Region 8 office, confirmed the charge at a press conference held at the Krabi Provincial Administrative Organisation offices on Sept 25.

"The NACC in Phuket Province has indicted the former mayor of Kathu Sub-district Municipality and his associates for corruption by disbursing money to a road construction contractor even though the work was not yet complete," said an official report of the press conference.

NACC Region 8 identified seven corruption cases across seven provinces in southern Thailand, with total damages exceeding B7 million. Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province recorded the highest number of complaints, the report noted.



Suchart Kruaykittanon, Assistant Secretary-General of the NACC Region 8 office. Photo: NBT

Mr Suchart and directors from the seven southern provinces of NACC Region 8 – Surat Thani, Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Phuket, Krabi, Phang Nga, Chumphon and Ranong – presented the findings.

The cases included:

- The mayor of Tambon Krungyan in Nakhon Sri Thammarat and five others were charged with embezzling 39 checks, totaling more than B3.4 million.

- In Chumphon, 10 executives from Chumphon Vocational College were indicted for improper disbursement of funds, causing a loss of over B3.3 million.

- In Krabi, officers at Krabi Hospital were accused of misusing over B1.2 million in overtime payments.

- In Nakhon Sri Thammarat, the former mayor of Tambon Tai Sampao was indicted for awarding a construction contract to a close associate. Another former mayor in the province was charged with withholding housing rental fees for eligible officials.

- In Phang Nga, the former chief of a mangrove forest station was indicted for using government vehicles for personal use and claiming fuel expenses.

As of Sept 19, NACC

Region 8 was handling 734 cases, including 376 preliminary investigations and 308 fact-finding cases, noted Mr Suchart.

Most complaints related to justice and security, followed by issues involving public utilities, construction, natural resources and procurement.

The provinces with the most complaints were Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Surat Thani, Chumphon, Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Ranong, respectively.

Current Kathu Mayor Wanayut 'Beng' Suthikul took office after winning a Kathu mayoral election in January this year.

The position of Kathu Mayor "became vacant" after years-long incumbent Chai-anan Suthikul was summarily dismissed from office by previous Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew in late January last year.

Mr Chai-anan's dismissal from office followed an investigation into allowing a private operator to pump water from a lagoon at the Tin Mine Museum in Kathu.



Photo: PR Phuket

Phuket awarded as 'World Festival City'

PHUKET HAS BEEN recognised as a 'World Festival and Event City' for 2024 by the International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA).

The award was presented during the IFEA Annual Convention & Expo, held last Sunday (Sept 29) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in the US.

Phuket earned top honours, receiving the 'Gold Pinnacle Award' for Best Parade as part of its Phuket Peranakan Festival 2024.

In addition to Phuket, other cities honoured with the "World Festival and Event City" award include Gwangju, South Korea; McAllen, Texas; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Pattanachai Singhawara, Director of the Southern Regional Office of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), accepted the award on behalf of Phuket.

Winning the 'World Festival City' title is expected to elevate the standards of event organisation in Phuket and attract more global visitors, solidifying the island's position as a cultural and tourism hub, said an official report of Phuket winning the accolade.

The award comes as the Phuket Vegetarian Festival for this year began on Thursday (Oct 3).

The Phuket News

Aftermath of Kata landslide still haunts local residents

MORE THAN A MONTH AFTER A devastating landslide in Kata buried homes and claimed 13 lives, residents and the affected area continue to bear the scars of this tragedy, reports state news agency TNA, which operates under MCOT.

Despite a month having passed, the trauma remains a haunting reality for residents, especially during heavy rainfall. Reddish-brown water and mud continue to gush down from the landslide site, causing distress and fear among locals. The threat of another massive landslide looms large.

Suthep Rodklaew, one of the victims whose home was destroyed, lost two family members in the disaster. Pointing at the remains of his home, he expressed uncertainty about how he would rebuild, as the government's compensation of B20,000-30,000 is far from sufficient to cover the millions of baht needed for repairs.

Many other homes in the affected area, including rental houses and luxury villas, remain abandoned and damaged. This is partly due to the frequent rainfall and the perception of the area as unsafe.

Karon Mayor Jadet Wicharasorn acknowledged that Phuket lacks an automated warning system for the Karon area. The local government can only rely on manual patrols, especially during heavy rain. If the water turns red and rainfall exceeds 100 millimetres, residents will be evacuated to the Wat Kata. Over the past month, dozens



Photo: TNA

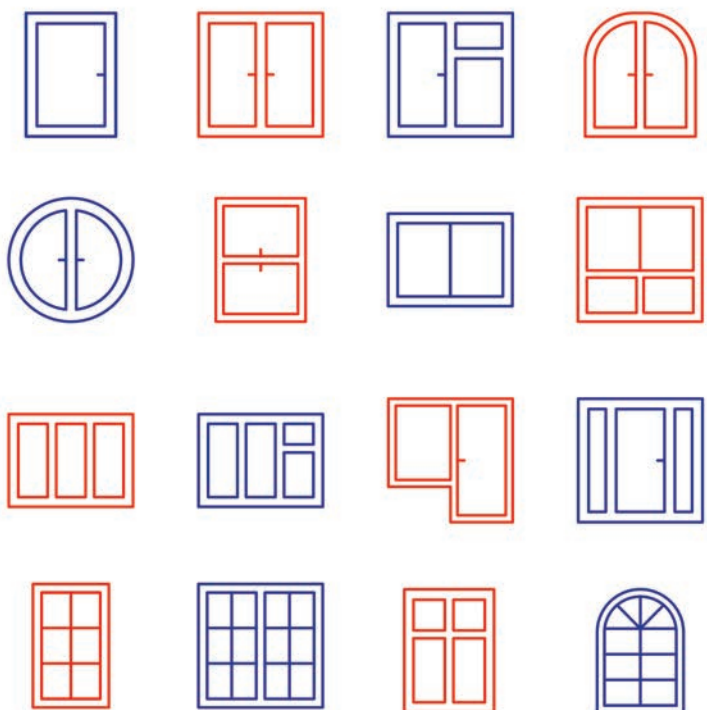
of people have sought refuge at the temple.

The landslide issue in Phuket is an urgent matter that requires immediate attention to prevent further loss of life and property. Although a committee has been formed to address the problem, concrete solutions, such as installing rain gauges, effective warning systems, and long-term prevention plans, have yet to materialise.

Additionally, questions remain about the role of the Phra Phuttha Ming Mongkhon Foundation, which operates the Big Buddha Viewpoint, that allegedly encroached on the protected forest area and constructed buildings at the top of the hill where the landslide began, potentially contributing to the disaster. TNA



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PTA sets out tourism strategy

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Rangsiman Kingkaew, Vice President of Strategy and Planning at the Phuket Tourist Association, has set out the tourism strategy to be pursued as Phuket's tourism industry recovers to nearly pre-COVID levels.

Mr Rangsiman set out the strategy at a press conference led by Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat on Sept 23 to discuss key developments and initiatives for Phuket.

While the event focused on several major topics, including the 10 main 'pillars' for Phuket's development (GEMMSSTTF), the key focus was on tourism.

Mr Rangsiman discussed the private sector's role in driving tourism in Phuket. He reflected on the exponential growth of tourism since the Tom Yum Kung crisis over 20 years ago, noting that tourism has become a crucial driver of Thailand's economy.

In 2019, Thailand ranked 8th globally in terms of foreign tourist arrivals and 4th in tourism revenue. However, the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the country.



Rangsiman Kingkaew (right), Vice President of Strategy and Planning at the Phuket Tourist Association, at the event on Sept 23. Photo: PR Phuket

After the pandemic, Thailand's tourism sector experienced one of the fastest recoveries in the world, with Phuket leading the way due to the Phuket Tourism Sandbox initiative.

Although tourism in Thailand has nearly returned to pre-COVID levels, the profile of tourists has changed. Business tourism, particularly through the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) industry and international investment, has become more prominent.

Phuket's tourism has al-

most returned to normal levels, with 11.3 million tourists in 2023. Tourism revenue in Phuket reached B388.017 billion in 2023, accounting for 17.85% of the country's tourism revenue. Phuket also had the highest income per tourist in Thailand, at B34,337 per person.

However, while the revenue has returned, the type of tourists has changed, Mr Rangsiman said.

"In 2024, Phuket is expected to achieve its highest tourism revenue ever, even if the number of tourists doesn't

match 2019 levels. Tourists are now spending more due to longer stays and higher daily expenses, indicating a shift in the types of visitors, especially those working remotely," he said.

The growth in tourism and changing tourist behaviour have also driven growth in the real estate, education and retail sectors in Phuket. However, this growth comes with challenges, Mr Rangsiman noted.

He explained that the private sector has outlined the following strategies for tourism development in Phuket:

Retention Strategy: Focus on maintaining tourist groups from China, Russia, Australia, the UK, Germany, and other European countries through activities like:

- Trade shows: ITB Asia 2025, ITB Berlin 2025, CITM 2024

- Roadshows: Pre-ITB (UK), China, Australia, UK, Russia

New Market Strategy: Target new markets including India, Middle Eastern countries, nearby countries and markets with specific needs through:

- Trade shows: SATTE, ATM, IMEX, KITF

- Roadshows: Post-SATTE, Jordan, Korea, Vietnam, South Africa

Thai Market Strategy: Focus on domestic tourism to further support the industry.

These strategies aim to adapt to the evolving tourism landscape and ensure sustainable growth for Phuket's tourism sector, Mr Rangsiman explained.

TOURISM CALENDAR

Phakawadi Muangmoon, a Policy and Planning Analyst at the Phuket Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, announced the release of the

first edition of the '2025 tourism calendar'. The calendar features 33 diverse events, including those focused on local culture, sports and nature tourism, catering to both Thai and international visitors.

From 2025 onwards, residents, tourism operators, and tourists can access the calendar and event details in real-time via Google Calendar at <https://shorturl.at/hrrqF>.

"This tool will help tourists plan their visits more easily, allow operators to prepare better, and effectively promote local events throughout the year," she said.

Government and private organisations are invited to support this initiative by submitting their event information through the form at <https://forms.gle/y844zcqyfpCP-2kUH6>.

Ms Phakawadi emphasised the importance of collaboration in creating a sustainable and enriching tourism experience that connects people with places through activities, traditions, festivals and cultures.

"This will help disseminate information about various activities and contribute to boosting Phuket's economy and tourism," she said.

Carbon tax enforcement in the offing

THE GOVERNMENT is to introduce a carbon tax, with enforcement slated for this year, says Deputy Finance Minister Paopoom Rojanasakul.

In his speech at the 'Road to Net Zero 2024: The Extraordinary Green' event, Mr Paopoom said the Finance Ministry will soon propose the carbon tax measure to the Cabinet for approval, aiming for implementation within months, reports the Bangkok Post.

He said the measure would incentivise businesses to reduce carbon emissions and would not burden the public.

As an example, the combustion of all types of fuel oil contributes to carbon emissions in the atmosphere. Mr Paopoom said that if the carbon tax is implemented, the current excise tax rate will remain at B6 per litre, but the Excise Department will split the tax burden into two parts: B5 as the excise tax and B1 as the carbon tax.

Under this tax structure, fuel users will not face an additional tax burden, while the tax burden for oil compa-



Mr Paopoom suggested the carbon tax measure would incentivise businesses to reduce carbon emissions and would not burden the public. Photo: Bangkok Post

nies may increase, decrease or be maintained, depending on how well they manage their carbon emissions. The greater the reduction, the lower the tax burden, he said.

Thus, every tonne of carbon emissions from businesses will carry a cost, as each unit of carbon released will be multiplied by the carbon tax rate, which will be borne by the businesses. He emphasised that the carbon tax will persuade businesses to reduce carbon emissions.

In addition, he said that in the future the Excise Department will change the excise tax structure for batteries to a tiered system, moving away from the current flat rate of 8%. The new tax structure for batteries

will have a higher tax rate for batteries with higher carbon emissions and a lower tax rate for batteries with lower carbon emissions.

Moreover, businesses that significantly reduce their carbon emissions could potentially receive a tax refund through a reverse tax system.

According to Mr Paopoom, Thailand has international commitments to meet so that by 2030 the country must have reduced carbon emissions by 30-40% from current levels. By 2050, Thailand should achieve carbon neutrality, and by 2065 the country should reach net zero emissions.

"If we continue as we are, we will not meet the 2030 goal," he said, adding that the world is increasingly moving towards 'green' standards, where products must be certified as environmentally friendly.

Only 7% of Thailand's exports are environmentally friendly, while the country's use of clean energy accounts for just 13-14% of total energy consumption.

Bangkok Post

Legal rejig needed for foreign land leases

THE IDEA OF ALLOWING foreigners to lease land in Thailand for up to 99 years, with the land transferred from private ownership to state property, may require amendments to the state property law, says finance permanent secretary Lavaron Sangsnit.

Mr Lavaron said to implement such a scheme, a detailed study is needed, possibly requiring amendments to related laws. Public input would also be required, in accordance with the constitution, for new legislation.

Former premier Thaksin Shinawatra recently proposed allowing foreigners to hold long-term land leases for a period of up to 99 years.

Thai landowners wishing to lease their land to foreigners would first need to transfer the title deed to the Treasury Department for supervision.

Over the course of the lease, the Thai landowner would receive full payment from the foreign party, but would relinquish ownership, converting it to state property under the department.

Foreign lessees would have the right to own a lease for up to 99 years, after which the land would revert to state property under the Treasury



Photo: Bangkok Post

Department.

Conditions would prohibit foreigners from purchasing land for agricultural purposes in competition with Thais, or developing affordable housing projects for low-income individuals without requiring a down payment, said Mr Lavaron.

No progress has been made on this concept at the policy level, he said.

For this plan to move forward, several laws would need to be revised, including Treasury Department regulations that limit leases to a maximum of 30 years, said Mr Lavaron.

"Extending the lease to 99 years would require legal amendments," he said. "There are also laws concerning the transfer of state property that must be reviewed to determine whether land can be transferred from private ownership, setting specific conditions for foreign leasing. Amendments to the Civil and Commercial

Code would also be necessary, along with defining the types of land use restrictions that may apply."

The ministerial regulation on the utilisation of state property, issued in 2021 under the authority of the State Property Act of 2019, stipulates that "[a] leasing contract for state property shall not exceed 30 years, except for leases of state property for commercial or industrial purposes under the real estate leasing laws for commercial or industrial purposes, where leases exceeding 30 years must first be approved by the finance minister."

The determination of rental rates or other compensation must be less than the rates approved by the director-general, according to the regulation.

However, in cases where the utilisation of state property involves a value exceeding B500 million from private entities, the rental rates or other compensation must not be less than the rates approved by the State Property Committee.

A source from the Finance Ministry argued that long-term leases maintain Thai ownership, addressing previous concerns. Bangkok Post

Google to invest US\$1bn in digital infrastructure

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Google plans to invest US\$1 billion (B32.4bn) to build digital infrastructure in Thailand, including a new data centre, the US tech giant has announced, saying the move would support 14,000 jobs in the country.

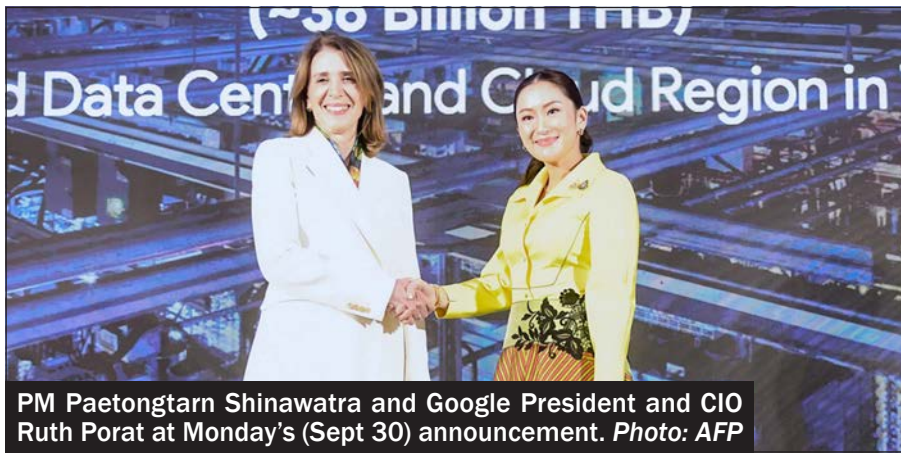
The new hubs in Bangkok and the industrial area of Chonburi are intended to help meet growing demand for cloud computing in Southeast Asia, the company said in a statement on Monday (Sept 30).

Google's investment comes after Microsoft announced in May that it would create Thailand's first data centre region to boost cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure.

"These investments will empower Thai businesses, innovators, and communities to harness the power of cloud and AI technology," Ruth Porat, president and chief investment officer of Google and its parent company Alphabet, said.

The investment's details were unveiled after a Bangkok meeting between Porat and Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who hailed the move as proof Thailand was becoming a major digital hub in Southeast Asia.

The data centre will be located in Chonburi, a major industrial area south-east of Bangkok, while the cloud facilities will be in the capital itself.



PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra and Google President and CIO Ruth Porat at Monday's (Sept 30) announcement. Photo: AFP

Google's expansion in Thailand will add \$4bn to Thailand's GDP by 2029 and support 14,000 jobs between 2025 and 2029, the company said, citing a report from consultancy Deloitte.

LAGGED

The announcement comes a year after Shinawatra's predecessor Srettha Thavisin made a major push for investment from US tech giants during a trip to New York, seeking finance from Google, Microsoft and Elon Musk's Tesla.

Thailand is Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, but its tech sector has lagged behind the likes of Singapore and Indonesia.

The Thai economy, long focused on traditional manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, has struggled to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government hopes investment from Google, Microsoft and their ilk will diversify and modernise the kingdom's economy.

Thailand's Office of the National Digital Economy and Society Commission has said the digital economy could contribute as much as 30% of GDP by 2027.

Across the region, governments are vying for US tech dollars, with Vietnam making a drive to move up the value chain from its traditional base as a hub for producing shoes, clothes and furniture.

Vietnam hopes to cash in on the US move to become less dependent on China for key resources including high-tech chips.

And last week, Vietnamese state media reported that Musk's SpaceX plans to invest \$1.5bn in the communist country.



Photo: Bangkok Post

Marriage Equality Bill becomes law

BANGKOK

THE MARRIAGE EQUALITY Bill has been endorsed by His Majesty the King, making Thailand just the third country in Asia after Taiwan and Nepal to recognise same-sex marriage.

The law will take effect 120 days after its Sept 24 publication in the Royal Gazette, enabling same-sex couples to begin legally registering their marriages on Jan 22, 2025.

"The law is a monumental step towards equal rights in Thailand," Waaddao Anne Chumaporn, the founder of Bangkok Pride, said following the announcement.

The Senate in June passed the final reading of the bill, the culmination of more than two decades of effort by activists. It was supported by an overwhelming majority of lawmakers in the upper house. LGBT advocates hailed

the move at the time, noting it would make Thailand the first nation in Southeast Asia to enact marriage equality legislation.

The law on marriage now uses gender-neutral terms in place of "men", "women", "husbands" and "wives", and also grants adoption and inheritance rights to same-sex couples.

"The Marriage Equality Bill will be one of the most gender-inclusive bills as it will amend around 60-70 sections in the Civil and Commercial Codes," the international human rights expert and legal scholar Vitit Muntarbhorn told a recent forum.

He said that around 50 other laws, such as the Surrogacy Bill, Gender Recognition Bill, employment-related bills, and welfare-related bills, need to be amended to ensure equal and inclusive legal protections for LGBTQ+ communities in Thailand. *Bangkok Post*

'No restrictions' on B10,000 handouts

BANGKOK

RECIPIENTS OF THE B10,000 HANDOUT can spend the money on anything they see fit, according to Deputy Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai.

Mr Phumtham was responding to reports which said many people who are eligible to receive the handout in the first phase of the scheme, which officially began on Sept 25, are planning to use it to help clear their debts.

"They have the right to use the money to solve their problems," said Mr Phumtham, who is also defence minister.

"This is proof that the government will deliver its promises. The next phase of the scheme will be rolled out, we just have to wait for the first phase to end."

He downplayed threats by some critics who said they plan to call for an investigation into whether or not the scheme is a vote-buying attempt.

"We're not concerned about that. We're focusing on tackling people's problems," Mr Phumtham said.

Separately, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Anutin Charnvirakul warned lenders against intimidating recipients into using the handout for paying their debts, citing it as an illegal act.

The warning came amid reports that loan sharks were seen queuing alongside handout recipients at ATMs to withdraw the B10,000 handout on the first day of the scheme.



A woman in Buriram shows off her handout on Sept 25. Photo: Bangkok Post

Pol Lt Gen Akkaradet Pimonsri, assistant national police chief, on Sept 26 ordered police nationwide to take action against loan sharks who intimidate handout recipients.

The first phase, which will run until Sept 30, prioritises the distribution of funds to 12.4 million state welfare cardholders and 2.1mn disability cardholders via PromptPay, which is linked to their national ID numbers.

However, only about 3.1mn welfare cardholders and disabled people – out of a total of 14.5mn – received their B10,000 handout on Sept 25 due to the limitations of the PromptPay system.

State welfare cardholders have been urged to link their national ID card numbers to the PromptPay system by the end of the year to receive the B10,000 handout.

More than 11mn state welfare cardholders have linked PromptPay to their ID numbers, leaving over 1mn in this group still needing to link to the payment system.

Bangkok Post

Patong Beach
Rotary
Club

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SAT | 19 OCT | 7PM

6.30 - 7PM Registration	7PM - 9PM Buffet	9PM - 11PM Concert
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Carbon neutrality gets a push

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun
reporter1@classactmedia.co.th

The project for the Phuket Old Town area to attain 'carbon neutrality' status and becoming a 'zero-emission' destination by 2065 is gaining momentum.

Bhumikitti Ruktaengam, Chairman of the Sustainable Tourism Development Foundation, led a team presentation of the 'Phuket Old Town Carbon Neutrality Project' at the 25th International Island Tourism Forum (ITOP), held at the Pullman Karon Beach Phuket Resort on Sept 25-26.

The forum attracted over 150 leaders and policy-makers from island destinations worldwide.

Mr Bhumikitti's daughter, Ms Kanruthay, Project Coordinator, took to the stage to present data gained as the first step of the project. With actual metrics, policies can be created to achieve specific results.

The data was accumulated through a collaborative project by Phuket City Municipality, and the Big Data Institute, along with the Pollution Control Department Region 15 branch and Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus, Ms Kanruthay explained.

The data aggregation began after talks with the project partners were held in December last year. The goal of the meeting was to explore how data technology can be used to assess the carbon footprint of various activities in the Old Town area.

Ms Kanruthay explained the goals of reducing carbon emissions by 30% by 2030, achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, and reaching net-zero emissions by 2065, as announced earlier this year.

The starting point was assessing the current greenhouse gas emissions in Phuket Old Town, which Ms Kanruthay said from January to June 2024 were:

- Transportation, released at 34,531 (KgCO₂e)



Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

- Waste released at 12,529 (KgCO₂e)
 - Wastewater released at 36,513 (KgCO₂e)
 - Electricity usage released at 442,259 (KgCO₂e)
- "As a result, Phuket Old Town released in total at 525,832 (KgCO₂e)," Ms Kanruthay said.

A Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) is the unit of measurement for the warming effect of greenhouse gases. Kg/CO₂e is the exchange rate of other greenhouse gases to carbon.

The exchange rate expresses how many kilograms of carbon dioxide emissions warm the climate equally as 1kg of another greenhouse gas, over a certain period of time (most often 100 years).

CO₂e translates the potency (how much infrared radiation a ton of each gas absorbs) and longevity (how long a ton of each gas radiates the heat back to the atmosphere) in relation to the emissions of a ton of carbon dioxide. CO₂e allows observers to compare and equate the effect of different greenhouse gases into a singular climate footprint, explains the Carbon Cloud website.

Ms Kanruthay explained that a system using AI and CCTV in the Phuket Old Town area is now being used to estimate the number of cars and tourists travelling in the area.

"This data will be important information for as-

sessing the carbon footprint of the old town," she said.

So far the system has estimated that 334,592 people visit the Old Town area each month, about 13,428 people per day.

"Phuket Old Town produces 17 tons of solid waste per month, all sent to the incinerator, once incinerated, this accounts for 29,575 KgCO₂e in greenhouse gas emissions," she added.

SEPARATION IN THE BAG

"The second solution the project is working on involves waste management through the strategic use of three types of plastic bags in local shops," Ms Kanruthay also explained.

The bags to be differentiated by colour were: Blue bags for waste destined for incineration; Green bags for organic waste; and Yellow bags for recyclable materials.

"These bags are designed to encourage residents to separate their trash and dispose of it in the appropriate bins," Ms Kanruthay said.

"Organic waste will be processed using a machine that converts it into liquid fertiliser and generates gas for electricity.

"The separation of trash into different categories is currently being supported by young ambassadors who provide guidance and promote environmental awareness throughout Phuket Old Town," she added.

The final aspect of the project is to support the use of electric buses (EV buses) in Phuket Town.

"These buses provide an eco-friendly alternative to diesel vehicles, helping to reduce emissions and improve air quality," Ms Kanruthay said.

There were economic and financial benefits to be had by reducing carbon emissions, Ms Kanruthay noted.

"By implementing this initiative, we aim to reduce carbon emissions by 30% by 2030. Additionally, we anticipate generating revenue of B24 million from carbon credits, valued at B90 per KgCO₂e," she said.



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A trio of virtuous vines



GREEN THOUGHTS

Patrick Campbell

Vines have to come up the hard way. In Thailand's tropical, broad-leaved jungles, they start at the bottom, denizens of the understory, but fight their sinewy way to the forest canopy, where they can enjoy the sunlight. A key component of these verdant ecosystems, vines or more accurately, lianas, use trees as a means of vertical support, often employing tendrils or twining mechanisms to attach their woody stems to a reluctant host.

In the jungle, they are a mixed blessing. While they provide a rooftop bridge, a flyover used by creatures from ants to lemurs and monkeys, they derive nutrients including sunlight and water at the expense of trees, and increase arboreal distress. At worst they can strangle their hosts. And they can be huge. One jungle bauhinia in Surinam was measured at over 600 metres.

No such giants will invade your garden. Most, if not all, domestic vines have been hybridised in order to produce more conspicuous and more colourful flowers. In the process, much of their inherent vitality has been lost. Nonetheless, we still look to climbers to cover man-made eyesores, or add a natural look to bare walls, trellises or buildings.

One of the easiest to cultivate is the Bengal clock vine, a climber which still grows wild in parts of Southeast Asia. A member of the Thunbergia genus, it has a twining habit, which means it is self-supporting. The pale pink or white blooms are borne on hanging stems which hang down in front of heart-shaped foliage. Outpacing most shrubs with its rate of growth, the clock vine will cover a wall or tree trunk in a matter of months. Propagated by cuttings, it is an ideal starter for the new garden. One fine local example is at 'WE Café' on Chao Fa West Rd. The trellised walkway is completely enveloped by a vine which welcomes guests with an ever-present display of pendulous blooms.

The Rangoon creeper (Quisqualis indica) also thrives in local conditions. Of all the cultivated climbers, it is arguably the most spectacularly floriferous. Hence my decision to put a photograph

of it in full bloom on the cover of my gardening book. The first time I encountered it, the vine was draped over a high boundary wall, replete with masses of vibrant, trumpet-shaped flowers in profuse clusters of white, pink and red. It stretched for a full 20 metres. Amazingly, it is still there today. Originally the vine grew wild in secondary forest in Burma (Myanmar) and the Philippines, but horticulturalists soon recognised its value as a garden shrub.

In the dry season, quisqualis erupts into full flower fed by earlier monsoon rains that have already given the bright green foliage a lush appearance. The flowers, in technical parlance, are terminal racemes and have a distinctive feature: the buds open white or cream, turn pink on day two and then red on day three. Rather like the blooms of the cotton rose (hibiscus mutabilis) which undergoes the same visual mutation in one day, with quisqualis, all three colours appear in the same cluster, delicately poised at the end of slender stalks. And as an added benefit the blooms are gently fragrant.

Very easy to cultivate, The Rangoon creeper has extended its influence and become naturalised in certain parts of the globe, though not in Thailand. It prefers slightly acidic soil which may present a problem in the alkaline conditions one often encounters in newly developed plots. If this is the case, a few spadefuls of loam or compost should help.

There is only one downside: the vine is not reliably self-supporting and though its long branches quickly become woody (lignous), they are often not robust enough to support unaided the heavy tresses of flowers. Pruning may help, but it is better to provide ties on bare surfaces such as walls.

The third member of this lusty trio is the passion flower, or passiflora edulis. It takes its name from the floral arrangement of its uniquely exotic flowers, which are said to resemble elements of Christ's passion. One of the most rampant of climbers, mine competed successfully for years with a bougainvillea. Because it is, unlike quisqualis, a tendrillous vine, it can utilise any structure, natural or otherwise – for support, and in the right conditions, can attain a height of three metres. The large, 10-petalled flowers (up to 10cm across) are utterly distinct-

tive, and range from the bluish white of cerulea, to the commonest hybrid, edulis, which sports white blooms shading to lavender, with a dramatic blue or purple crown.

Most, though not all varieties, also produce attractive and edible fruit which is marketed commercially as a drink. Round and hard, they begin green and turn yellow or even purple. The seeds from decomposing fallen fruit will often germinate.

All varieties are especially vigorous climbers, with lots of lobed, deep green leaves. Generally unfussy about soil conditions, in common with most

tropical vines, they will bloom more profusely in sunshine. Above a trellis, they will form a dense canopy. Pollinated primarily by harmless carpenter bees, these purple-black insects will arrive in numbers once they are aware of a passiflora in the vicinity. Not a bad choice... for man or bee.

Patrick Campbell's book 'The Tropic Gardener', described in one Bangkok review as the best book on Thai gardening for 50 years, is available for B500 (half price) to personal callers from 59/84 Soi Saiyuan 13 in Rawai (Tel: 076-613227 or 085-7827551).



The November/December 2024 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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POP QUIZ

1. How much water does 1,000 cubic centimetres contain?

2. Which part of the eye has the Latin name meaning 'little doll'?

3. In which year did the Kingdom of Siam start using surnames?

4. Which three European countries begin with the letter 'C'?

5. Where was Rudyard Kipling born?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

		6			5	7		3
			4				8	
			9	3				
	4					2		1
		1				3		
6		5					4	
				1	4			
	1				9			
2		4	3			6		

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

1. Fair-sized garden

5. Strait-laced

9. More likely

14. Coin opening

15. Aesop's also-ran

16. Cartoon art

17. Light sailboat

19. Not bold

20. Uncomfortably near someone

22. Robert Burns's "Whistle ____ the Lave O't"

23. Dark horse

24. Sizes

28. Icky stuff

30. Dog command

33. Eyelashes

34. Despicable sort

35. "Not to mention ..."

36. Lack of passion

39. Purely academic

40. Hurry

41. Opinions

42. Fully anesthetized

43. Fill to the gills

44. Bloviates

45. Choose

46. Handling

47. Complete view

56. Wind instrument

57. Instinctive desires

58. More artful

59. Nostradamus, for one

60. Stationer's stock

61. Belt

62. Sen. Stevens and others

63. Sneaker, e.g.

Down

1. Fungal spore sacs

2. Hatfields or McCoys

3. Drilling grp.

4. List abbr.

5. Moon stages

6. Harder to find

7. Mideast hot spot

8. Computer offering

9. Persian governor

10. Agreement

11. "The ____ of the Ancient Mariner"

12. Mideast bigwig

13. Cincinnati team

18. Cabbage

21. Domicile

24. Bonehead

25. Cat cry

26. Dole out

27. Boost

28. Spiny shrub

29. Homebuilder's strip

30. Wasn't vigilant

31. Emerge

32. Charges

34. Lacking slack

35. Ballerina Pavlova

37. Muse of love poetry

38. Nonstop

43. Area

44. Willows

45. Young but wise one?

46. Hiked

47. Recipe amt.

48. Kind of skirt

49. Protection: var.

50. Bringing up the rear

51. Old blade

52. Peaks

53. Its motto is "Industry"

54. Work over

55. To be, in old Rome

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

(1) One litre; (2) Pupil (after the reflection in it); (3) 1913; (4) Croatia, Czechia; (5) India (Bombay)

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
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47	48	49				50	51				52	53	54	55
56						57								
58						59					60			
61						62					63			

Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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GOT YOUR NUMBER

1.26

seconds is approximately how long it takes for a ray of moonlight to reach the Earth's surface.

5

different parts of your brain are used to understand and laugh at a joke.

50

percent of murder cases in the US each year are actually solved, one of the lowest clearance rates in the industrialised world.

521

years is the half-life of DNA, which means that genetic material can't be recovered from dinosaurs and 'Jurassic Park' is impossible.

5.5 million

years ago, the Mediterranean Sea went completely dry.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Low tide at Mai Khao by Natcha Yutthaworawit

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to execeditor@classactmedia.co.th

This week in history

Oct 4, 1997

WikiLeaks is launched by Julian Assange.

Oct 5, 1607

Assassins sent by Pope Paul V attempt to kill Venetian statesman and scientist Paolo Sarpi, who survives 15 stiletto thrusts.

Oct 6, 1976

Dozens are killed by Thai police and right-wing para-

Oct 7, 1959

U.S.S.R. probe Luna 3 transmits the first ever photographs of the far side of the Moon.

Oct 8, 1978

Australia's Ken Warby sets the current world water speed record of 317.6mph (511km/h) at Blowering Dam, Australia. There have only been two official attempts to break Ken Warby's

Oct 9, 1967

A day after being captured, Marxist revolutionary Ernesto 'Che' Guevara is executed for attempting to incite a revolution in Bolivia.

Oct 10, 1897

German chemist Felix Hoffmann discovers an improved way of synthesising acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin). Source: Wikipedia

The dark side of the Moon.

militaries in the Thammasat University massacre. Afterwards, the Seni Pramoj government is toppled in a

military coup.

record, both attempts resulted in the death of the driver.

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Grow Boating Evening - October 2024

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Monday BBQ Night

6 PM onwards: All you can eat BBQ buffet cooked to order. Beef, Pork, Chicken, Burgers, Sausages, Fish, Prawns & Squids, salad buffet and veggies, Choice of potatoes, cold and hot sauces, Bread, Buns & garlic bread. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 395 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 195 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

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Wednesday BBQ Night

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SAT 19 OCT



REGGAE WAVES

Prepare yourself for an unforgettable night at Carpe Diem Beach Club as we invite all reggae lovers to come together under the stars! Live Performance by Job2Do. Feast on an exquisite buffet. A night for a noble cause, all proceeds from this event will benefit the Thai Child Development Foundation. Dress Code: Reggae Vibes. More info - facebook.com/RCOPB

SAT 26 OCT



AFL Andaman Cup 2024

All welcome for the over 35s Australian Rules Football tournament in paradise. From 10am on Sat Oct 26 at the ACG cricket & Sports facility, Baan Liphon, Phuket. Men's division over 35s, 12 a side, 2 x 12 min halves. Fun, fitness, footy and friendship. More info on FB - ThailandTigers or thailandtigers@gmail.com



Halloween Family Fun

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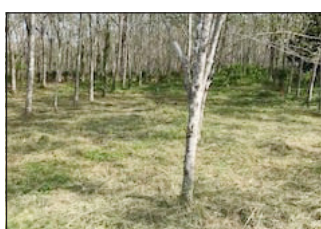
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Date for landmark Satree School charity run confirmed

RUNNING

THIS YEAR'S LANDMARK Satree Phuket School charity run will take place on Sunday, Oct 20, organisers have confirmed.

The Phuket Women's Alumni Association announced at a press conference on Sept 24 that the "SPK RUN 2024 Running with Heart, Together for 115 Years of Phuket Women" will celebrate the founding of Satree Phuket School in 1909.

Heading the press conference held at the Phuket Women's School was Dr Waranee Susangrat, President of the Phuket Women's Alumni Association, who was joined by the Head Director of the Women's School, Panya Hatthi, and Vice President of the Phuket Women's Alumni Association, Sutat Phruengkamornkul.

The landmark occasion celebrates the 115th anniversary of Satree Phuket school by raising funds to support education programmes at the school as well as



Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

purchasing medical equipment for Thalang Hospital, explained Dr Waranee. It is also an excellent platform to build and enhance relationships between current and past students from the school, she added.

There will be 3.5-kilometre and 6.5km Fun Runs as well as a 10.2km Mini Marathon which will all start at 5am on the morning of Oct 20. The starting point for the race is at Satree School on Damrong Rd in Talat Yai and the route will continue through Phuket Old Town before finishing at Saphan Hin Public Park.

There have been expressions of interest from over 2,000 participants already, Dr Waranee said. For more information, call 0657 829 265, 0831 762 392, or 0621 939 949. *The Phuket News*

All Blacks down Wallabies



THE GLOBAL RUGBY COACH

Having retained the Bledisloe Cup a week previous in Sydney, New Zealand once again defeated Australia for a series clean sweep last Saturday (Sept 28), winning 33-13 in Wellington.

The Wallabies looked bright early on and went ahead although the All Blacks are not fazed by going behind. Instead they continue to concentrate on the basics by moving forward with variation in their attacks, which isolates opposition defenders and puts them in vulnerable positions. Both wingers are hungry for the ball and frequently appear in support in midfield, especially Caleb Clarke.

Quality technique, be it passing or tackling, enables them to keep the attack going forward, particularly evident via "X Factor" players in both Barrett brothers and Will Jordan. The latter is a try scoring enigma whose timing onto the ball from full back is exquisite and whose pace on the wing is blistering.

For Australia, Joe Schmidt is trying to plant some firm roots in their style of play, a mixture of flair and toughness up front. At times in the first half the Wallabies played with high intensity and some copybook support play. However, the story ends there. They tend to start well but then almost predictably the intensity drops, time in possession decreases and the opposition start to score, leaving one asking whether conceding



New Zealand's Caleb Clarke breaks a tackle in the 33-13 win against Australia. Photo: AFP

points is a result of poor defence or the opposition raising their game?

Australia will no doubt continue to improve and the acid test will be the quality of their performances on the upcoming tour of the Northern Hemisphere.

Meanwhile, South Africa won their first rugby championship since 2019 when they defeated Argentina 48-7 last Saturday, with Eben Etzebeth earning his 128th cap to become the Springboks' most capped player.

The result speaks volumes about the formidable squad coach Rassie Erasmus is building. Despite a strong set of scrumming forwards and robust defence, it is their backline attack that is starting to purr, often receiving the ball on the front foot with power, evasiveness and pace meaning half chances have now become real chances. They too will measure

their improvement on the upcoming tour of Europe.

Elsewhere, week 2 of the Gallagher Premiership in England produced few surprises with Saracens heading the table, Harlequins easily disposing of Newcastle, while Gloucester won the Southwest derby, beating Bristol away.

Last season's champions Northampton Saints overcame Exeter, while Bath sent out a message of intent that they want to go one step further this season by winning at Leicester Tigers, something few teams do.

The Global Rugby Coach, Mike Penistone, is a globally renowned professional rugby coach based in Phuket who is also an ambassador for the Asia Center Foundation, a charity for disadvantaged children. For more information visit: www.rugbycoachingconsultancy.com

Patama declines IOC bid

OLYMPICS

KHUNYING PATAMA LEESWADTRAKUL, a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), has declined calls to contest for IOC presidency and has offered her full support to all seven candidates.

Despite being approached by several parties, Khunying Patama said she has opted out of the race for the position of the IOC president to succeed current chief Thomas Bach, citing her numerous current responsibilities.

Khunying Patama however expressed her support for the seven candidates running for the role, all of whom she knows personally and believes are capable of leading the organisation forward.

"I am pleased to support all seven candidates, as I know them personally and hold them in high regard. Each one is knowledgeable and capable of advancing the IOC's mission," she said.

Khunying Patama also emphasised her desire to continue supporting the IOC in other capacities.

The election will be held at the IOC Session in Athens, Greece, which runs from March 18-21 next year.

The seven candidates for the IOC presidency are:

- Prince Faisal Al Hussein, President of the Jordan Olympic Committee, 63, a former wrestler and rally driver.
- Lord Sebastian Coe, President of World



Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul and current IOC President Thomas Bach. Photo: Bangkok Post

Athletics, 67, from the UK, who was also the chair of the organising committee for the 2012 Olympic Games.

- Kirsty Coventry, a 41-year-old former swimmer from Zimbabwe who competed in five Olympic Games and currently serves as the country's Minister of Sports.

- Johan Eliasch, President of the International Ski and Snowboard Federation, 62, from Sweden.

- David Lappartient, President of the International Cycling Union (UCI), 51, from France, and also the President of the French National Olympic Committee.

- Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr., IOC Vice President, 64, from Spain, and son of the late Juan Antonio Samaranch, who served as IOC President for 21 years.

- Morinari Watanabe, President of the International Gymnastics Federation, 65, from Japan. *Bangkok Post*

PM honours Paralympic heroes

PARALYMPICS

MORE THAN B212 MILLION in cash rewards were handed out to Thailand's Paralympic Games contingent from Paris during a reception party at Government House last Friday (Sept 27).

Using money from the National Sports Development Fund (NSDF), Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra awarded the athletes, as well as their coaches and associations, a total of B212,150,000 for their performances in Paris.

Thailand finished 21st in the overall medal standings with six gold, 11 silver and 13 bronze medals, the country's most successful Paralympic campaign ever.

The PM praised the athletes for their excellent performance in Paris.

"I would like to congratulate all the athletes for their performance in Paris. All of you are Thailand's heroes," said the PM, who presided over the reception.

"I followed the competition in Paris and I felt such pride. After all the training and the dedication, you have achieved your goals.

"I hope these financial



PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra and Saysune Janna. Photo: Bangkok Post

rewards help you to continue training hard to represent Thailand. Your success will inspire the younger generation to follow in your footsteps," she added.

Also present at the function were Tourism and Sports Minister Sorawong Thienthong and Sports Authority of Thailand governor Gongsak Yodmani.

Under the NSDF's bonus scheme for the Paralympic Games, a gold medallist receives B7.2mn, a silver medallist B4.8mn and a bronze medallist B3mn.

Wheelchair fencer Saysune Janna had the biggest payday, earning B24.6mn, after winning three gold medals and one bronze medal in Paris.

The 50-year-old swept three golds in individual events – sabre, foil and epee – while also taking bronze in the women's epee team competition.

Wheelchair racer Pongsakorn Paeyo, who won one gold and two silver medals, received B16.8mn while para table tennis player Yuttajak Glinbanchun, who won one silver and two bronze medals, pocketed B10.8mn.

In all, 25 Paris medallists received B162,600,000, while coaches and associations received B44,150,000. Athletes who did not win any medals received B100,000 each and two guide runners got B50,000 each. *Bangkok Post*

Reds go top as City slip up

FOOTBALL

AFP

Manchester City felt the absence of star midfielder Rodri as the Premier League champions were held to a damaging 1-1 draw at Newcastle last Saturday (Sept 28) and Liverpool went top with a 2-1 win at Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Rodri has been ruled out for the rest of the season after surgery on a knee injury suffered in last the bruising 2-2 draw with title rivals Arsenal on Sept 22.

City lacked the control and poise so often provided by Rodri on and off the ball and, despite Josko Gvardiol putting them in front at St James' Park, Newcastle were well worthy of the point given to them by Anthony Gordon's second-half penalty.

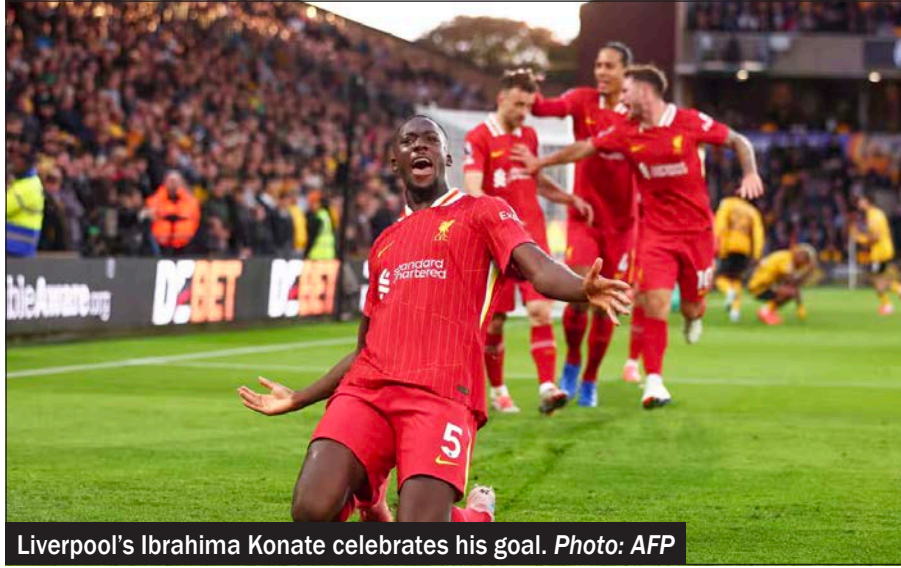
Guardiola described Rodri, who is unbeaten in his past 52 Premier League appearances stretching back to February 2023, as "irreplaceable".

Liverpool took advantage of City's slip thanks to Mohamed Salah's winner from the penalty spot at Molineux.

Ibrahima Konate headed the visitors in front but was then culpable in a defensive mix-up that allowed Rayan Ait-Nouri to equalise.

Wolves were only on level terms for five minutes before Nelson Semedo bundled over Diogo Jota and Salah converted just after the hour mark.

Earlier Saturday, Arsenal scored twice in stoppage time to beat Leicester



Liverpool's Ibrahima Konate celebrates his goal. Photo: AFP

4-2 and move level on points with City.

Trailing 2-0 at half-time, the Foxes came roaring back to level before an own-goal from Wilfried Ndidi and a late Kai Havertz strike secured three valuable points for the Gunners.

PALMER RUNS RIOT

Meanwhile, Cole Palmer became the first player ever to score four goals in the first half of a Premier League match with a stunning display at Stamford Bridge as Chelsea beat Brighton 4-2.

His tally included a 10-minute hat-trick and a stunning 25-yard free kick as Enzo Maresca's side move up to fourth in the table.

Tottenham piled more pressure on Erik ten Hag's position as Manchester United manager with a dominant 3-0 win at Old Trafford, with Brennan Johnson,

Dejan Kulusevski and Dominic Solanke on the score sheet, while Ipswich Town managed a credible 2-2 draw with Aston Villa on Sunday.

Brentford became the first Premier League team to score in the first minute in three consecutive games when Bryan Mbeumo put them ahead after just 37 seconds against West Ham before Tomas Soucek equalised just before half time to ease the pressure on under-fire Hammers boss Julen Lopetegui.

Dwight McNeil struck twice in the second half as Everton beat Crystal Palace 2-1 to end their winless start to the league season, just days after the Goodison Park takeover by a group led by American billionaire Dan Friedkin, while Raul Jimenez's 51st minute penalty gave Fulham a 1-0 win at Nottingham Forest.



Thailand's Muhammad Osamanmusa (right) in action against France. Photo: Bangkok Post

Heartbreak for Thailand at futsal World Cup

FOOTBALL

THAILAND'S DREAM OF making a historic appearance in the FIFA Futsal World Cup quarter-finals in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, was shattered by a 5-2 defeat at the hands of France last Friday night (Sept 27).

Defeat means that Thailand have fallen for the fourth consecutive edition at the last 16 stage of the tournament.

France came out strong in last Friday's game with Thai goalkeeper Arun Senbat doing well to stop a powerful shot from Arthur Tchaptchet before the ball fell to Steven Bendali who squeezed in a low shot in the ninth minute. Mamadou Toure then made it 2-0 to France on 23 minutes.

For Thailand, Suphawut Thuean- klang struck on 25

minutes only to see France's Abdessamad Mohammed restore their two-goal edge a minute before the break.

The Thais scored another goal from Narongsak Wingwon in the 33rd minute, but Souheil Mouhoudine (38) and Ayoub Saadaoui (39) completed the job for France.

A disappointed Thailand assistant futsal coach Eloy Alonso said after the match: "It's a pity that we lost as we created several chances in the first half."

After the match, Thailand coach Miguel Rodrigo was red-carded.

"The referee penalised Miguel and showed him the red card, but it wasn't Miguel who had caused the trouble. He had gone to congratulate the French team in fact," said Alonso.

Bangkok Post

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Sport



All Blacks' Bledisloe Cup delight > p14



Photo: Supplied

AFL

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The 5th installment of the AFL Andaman Cup promises to be bigger and better than ever before as players from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Bangkok make their way to the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) on Oct 26 for some pulsating Australian Rules Football (AFL) action.

The Pacific Cross Health Insurance AFL Masters Cup will see games consisting of two 12-minute halves, with 12 players per side and players aged 35 years or older.

The Singapore Sharks are returning to defend their 2023 title. Last year was a tri-series between the Sharks, Thailand Tigers and Phuket Power. Singapore took the title with a 4 goal win against Phuket

Power and a 5 goal win against the Thailand Tigers.

Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia are strongholds for AFL in Asia due to their large Australian Expat communities and long running AFL programs. Teams from Malaysia and Indonesia are both previous winners of AFL Masters tournaments in Phuket, and, returning for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, they are joining forces and should provide very stiff competition for the other teams.

Local side The Phuket Power are looking for a stronger showing than past tournaments. During the past 12 months, AFL has grown exponentially in Phuket, largely due to players from other sporting codes such as rugby, netball and the Hash House Harriers applying their skills in a new domain and several local AFL matches were played in July and August.

In the recent AFL Asian Championships held in Chonburi, Thailand's men's and women's teams featured a total of 12 players from Phuket including three indigenous Thais, with the Phuket players handling themselves admirably against national teams from across Asia. Billy Costoglou, Jacob King, Joshua Spoke and Shaun Kober all polled well in Thailand's recent best and fairest vote count, while Kym Gillian-Downey received 'All Asia' honours for her performances in the Asian Championships. She was also runner-up in Thailand's AFL Women's vote count.

ROUGH TACKLES

AFL is a popular winter sport in Australia, with the highest spectator attendance and television viewership of all domestic sports Down Under. The AFL Grand Final, held annually at the Melbourne Cricket Ground

(MCG), is the second-highest-attended club championship event in the world. Last Saturday (Sept 28), the Brisbane Lions swept aside the Sydney Swans to win the 2024 Championship in front of 100,000 fans at the MCG.

AFL is an exciting contact sport due to its fast pace and physicality. Points are scored by kicking the oval shaped ball through the goals or point posts at each end of the ground. Players run, tackle, block, kick, catch and hand pass the ball in order to get it to their teams goals. Many of the game's skills can be found in Gaelic football, rugby, American football, as well as traditional football.

The AFL Masters use the same rules as open age AFL matches but umpires apply stricter interpretations and free kicks for rough tackles and unwarranted contact during a marking contest.

Admission to the ACG on Oct

26 is free so spectators, sports enthusiasts and families are encouraged to come along and add to the atmosphere of international sport in Phuket, with hot food and cold drinks available for purchase throughout the day.

Exact match fixtures will be released closer to the date with the first game of the morning slated for a 10am start.

Awards will be handed out after the match by tournament sponsors, including Pacific Cross Health Insurance, LadyPie, Aussie Divers Phuket, PhuketGolf.net, The Phuket News and Legends Sports Bar Patong, who will have their work cut out selecting the best players.

New players of all ages are welcome to contact the Phuket Power through their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PhuketPowerAFL>. The next friendly match is scheduled for Oct 13 at the ACG.

Hard-fought draw a step in the right direction for PAFC

FOOTBALL

PHUKET ANDAMAN FC (PAFC) will be pleased with a hard-earned point after last Sunday's (Sept 29) 1-1 home draw against a resilient Nara United FC side, which will give their supporters plenty to be optimistic about.

The improved pitch conditions at Sarakul Stadium were a welcome change, allowing Phuket to showcase the fluid, possession-based style they aspire to. When in full flow, they are a delight to watch – a high-pressing, slick-passing team

who move the ball with pace and purpose.

However, Nara United, marshalled brilliantly in defence by the tenacious Argentine, Juan, proved to be formidable opponents. Their forward line, led by Adam, Caio, and the ironically named Phuket, posed a constant threat, particularly down the right flank.

The early stages belonged to Nara until Phuket found their rhythm. Game and Petch, the wide players, pushed forward, causing problems for the opposition full-backs, while Keng, at right-back, made a compelling case for retain-

ing his place with excellent link-up play and distribution.

The breakthrough came in the 13th minute when a Game free-kick from the left was met by a superb diving header from Bank.

Unfortunately, however, the 3:30pm kick-off in the scorching sun took its toll on both teams, highlighting fitness levels that still require improvement. Phuket, in particular, dropped deeper instead of pressing, allowing Nara more space. The visitors eventually capitalised on this, with Adam's shot deflecting off Bee into the goal.

The second half saw Nara

twice hit the woodwork on swift counter-attacks before the game became increasingly scrappy, with several strong challenges going unpunished by the referee, who ultimately required a police escort off the pitch at full-time.

The presence of experienced coach and club owner Russ Horsley on the touchline rather than the stands undoubtedly had a positive impact on PAFC. While work remains to be done, particularly on fitness and midfield control, the team can travel to Phattalung on Sunday with ambitions of securing a win and climbing the table.



Photo: Supplied

A crowd of close to 1,000, including a sizeable contingent from Nara United and over 300 'Farangs' created an encouraging and diverse atmosphere. Hopefully, this will continue to grow throughout the season.

The result leaves Phuket Andaman FC in 10th place in the table following two defeats and a draw.

Simon Causton