

SONGKRAN ROAD SAFETY BLITZ TO BEGIN > PAGE 2

WANTED



Migrant workers ready for 'inspection'.
Photo: Thalang District Office

INDUSTRY FIGURES BRAND MIGRANT WORKERS 'VITAL' FOR PHUKET

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun
reporter1@classactmedia.co.th

Amid a campaign by officials targeting Myanmar migrant workers on the island, and amid much derision against foreign workers in comments online many Thais, several key local industry figures have come to the defence of Phuket's migrant workforce, saying plainly that the development of Phuket relies on foreign workers, mostly from Myanmar, to fill labour shortages in industries vital for the island.

The raids targeting communities of Myanmar migrant workers began late last month, under the banner of an "ongoing effort to crack down on illegal

immigration and uncover any unlawful activities".

In one raid, officials including officers from Phuket Immigration "inspected" Myanmar workers in the impoverished community in front of the Phuket Fishing Pier on Sri Suthat Rd, Ratsada, on Mar 24.

The impoverished community lives on Koh Siray, directly across the renowned Soi King Kaew slum.

All Myanmar workers "inspected" were found to have legal work permits. As a result, there were no arrests, officials reported.

That raid was followed by more "inspections" by officials from the Thalang District Office, this time targeting migrant worker camps in Moo 2 and Moo 6, Thepkasattri.

The two impoverished worker's camps are home to some 150 workers in total, the Thalang District Office noted in its brief report.

The Thalang raids were reported as carried out under the direction and command of Thalang District Chief Siwat Rawangkun, through Deputy District Chief Wisut Romin and a host of officers from the Phuket Provincial Employment Office, the Phuket Provincial Welfare and Labour Protection Office, Phuket Immigration and the District Public Health Office.

While claiming that the health officials were present for the benefit of the migrant workers, the Thalang District Office in its report admitted that the Myanmar

workers, who work in Phuket's construction industry, were urine tested for drugs and "screened for diseases".

Work permits and passports were also inspected, yet again no illegal activity was found, the Thalang District Office also confirmed.

The Thalang District Office reported that the officers provided "recommendations" and emphasised the importance of maintaining proper building conditions, security, hygiene and camp regulations, as well as ensuring continued compliance with the labour guidelines, the report said.

Additionally, village headmen in the area were instructed to inspect and supervise the camps closely...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NEWS PAGE 3

Tour speedboat explodes off Koh Maithon



LIFE PAGE 8

Savouring the charm of the Med at Melia



SPORT PAGE 16

Jutatip makes history with hat-trick win



execeditor@classactmedia.co.th

News



Chinese state builder probed for safety > p5

Migrant workers bear the brunt

Continued from page 1

So far it has not been reported whether the raids of Myanmar worker's camps across the island will continue.

SLAVES FOR SEAFOOD

Pikun Chairat, Director of the Phuket Fisheries Management Division, openly admitted to *The Phuket News* that the number of migrant workers hired in Phuket's fishing industry was because Thai nationals simply did not want to perform the hard, menial labour required to supply Phuket, and elsewhere, with daily fresh seafood.

"The reason people choose to hire more of these workers, more than Thais, is because Thais don't like a job to go on boats very often, or they quit after a only short time," Ms Pikun said.

"And the work on boats is hard work. It requires high endurance and is dangerous, even risking their lives," she added.

"These workers are very important for Phuket's commercial fisheries," she added.

Ms Pikun explained there are currently 346 legally registered commercial fishing boats operating out of Phuket Fishing Pier.

The Phuket Provincial Employment Office (PPEO) reports that of the 1,850 foreigners working in Phuket's fishing industry, 1,798 are Myanmar men and 15 are Myanmar women. The remainder comprise nationals from Laos (14 men, two women) and 21 men from Cambodia.

Further, of the 279 foreigners issued work permits for the "Continuing marine fisheries",



Migrant workers wait for processing at a construction camp in Thalang. Photo: Thalang District Office

144 are Myanmar men and 128 are Myanmar women. The remaining seven are all from Laos (three men, four women).

CONSTRUCTION

So inflammatory is the issue of migrant workers 'stealing Thai jobs' that Maetapong Upatising, President of the Phuket Real Estate Association, declined to comment on migrant labour used in Phuket's construction industry.

"There's room for everyone, no nationality is stealing jobs from anyone," was all he would say to *The Phuket News*.

Myanmar labour has been used for decades for many government construction projects, including the new Phuket Provincial Hall. Migrant workers are also critical for the construction of the thousands of condos, luxury villas and housing developments on the island.

In short, Myanmar migrant labour is often rightly credited as literally building Phuket, at the base minimum wage while living in deplorable conditions.

According to the PPEO, there are 56,622 migrant workers legally working in Phuket's construction industry.

Of those, an overwhelming number – 56,050 (98.989%) – are from Myanmar.

The hard labour is not restricted to the men. While 37,238 legal foreign construction workers in Phuket are Myanmar men, 18,812 are Myanmar women.

The remainder are from Laos (131 men, 107, women), Cambodia (174 men, 145 women) and Vietnam (nine men, six women).

A further 1,186 workers from Myanmar (905 men, 270 women) work in the 'Production or distribution of construction materials', reports the PPEO.

Myanmar migrant workers also lead the way in Phuket homes, with 2,277 (327 men and 1,727 women) working in the category 'Housework'.

THAIS' CHOICE

Despite the 'crackdowns' on migrant workers, some officials

have emphasised the importance of these workers, and the workers' right to work and education.

Migrant workers are used in all types of industries across Phuket, including schools, wholesale, retail and sales, petrol stations, landscaping and even recycling centres. There is not a facet of life on Phuket that remains untouched by them. They are needed – and wanted – everywhere.

According to the PPEO report for April 2025, a total of 135,626 foreigners have been issued work permits in Phuket. Of those, 120,006 were of four nationalities: Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.

An overwhelming majority of those four nationalities are Myanmar migrant workers, with 117,245 work permits issued to them. The remainder comprise workers from Laos (1,602), Cambodia (481) and Vietnam (678).

Kongsak Koophongsakorn, President of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, said Phuket needs immigrant workers, especially in jobs Thais avoid.

"It's not just Myanmar workers; we have many other nationalities working here, including foreigners who come to work in management positions or high positions. However, the real labour shortage is in jobs that Thais don't take, especially in construction, housekeeping and dishwashing," he said.

"As the tourism economy expands, we need these workers," Mr Kongsak told *The Phuket News*.

Mr Kongsak also openly supported the need to provide for migrant workers' rights, and the right of their children to education.

"They should study alongside Thai students in a legal school, receiving proper care and education. As more workers settle and raise families in Thailand, education helps their children integrate, understand Thai culture and become valuable members of society," he said.

"Instead of pushing them out, it is better to bring them into the system to teach. We cannot deny that we need this group of people," Mr Kongsak noted, in response to the last month's targeted raids of the schools operated by the Good Shepherd Foundation, which provide free education and even school lunches to children of Myanmar migrant workers living in poverty.

Mr Kongsak raised concerns about unauthorised businesses operated by immigrant workers, such as illegally working as 'samlor' vendors, whereby migrants make a living by selling food on the street from a motorbike 'mobile stall'.

"I do not agree with immigrant workers joining together to do their own business, setting up their own businesses without a license," he said.

Yet Mr Kongsak remained adamant that migrant workers deserved fair care.

"If we push these workers out, Phuket's growth will come to a halt. We must face reality and adapt," Mr Kongsak said.

Songkran road safety blitz to get underway

PHUKET OFFICIALS are ramping efforts to ensure road safety during the upcoming Songkran Festival by implementing strict preventive measures, with the 'Seven Days' strict enforcement period string today (Apr 11).

A meeting of the Phuket Road Safety Center Committee was held at Phuket Provincial Hall on Apr 2, chaired by Phuket Vice Governor Adul Chuthong along with Wichit Sutthaso, the new Chief of the Phuket Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office (DDPM Phuket), and other relevant officials.

The meeting focused on strategies to prevent and reduce road accidents during the Songkran Festival 2025, a time when travel activity is at its peak.

Officials reviewed data on road safety, including accident and fatality statistics, law enforcement efforts on key traffic violations and the regulation of rental vehicles, which are seen as a major risk factor for road accidents, said an official report of the meeting.

Reports from the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) and the Phuket Provincial Police provided insights into past accident trends and outlined urgent measures needed for

the upcoming holiday, the report added.

Of note, the PPHO reported that more than 72% of accidents in Phuket involved alcohol, and the 80% of those injured on motorbikes were not wearing helmets.

The committee also examined lessons learned from the 2025 New Year holidays to improve safety measures for Songkran. Discussions centered on sharing best practices with relevant agencies and educating children and youth about road safety. Additionally, the meeting emphasised the importance of collaboration between government and private sectors in reducing accidents.

A key highlight of the meeting was the launch of the Phuket Road Accident Prevention and Reduction Operation Center, which will operate under the theme 'Driving Safely, Thailand Without Accidents'.

The annual intensive 'Seven Days' campaign will run from Apr 11-17, coinciding with the period of highest travel volume, the report confirmed.

Officials outlined a plan to set up main checkpoints, community checkpoints and 'public service points' across the island to enhance safety and enforce traffic laws more strictly.

To minimise road accidents during the period,



An officer at a checkpoint in Patong during Songkran last year. Photo: Patong Police / file

the committee identified five priority areas for action:

- Effective road safety management – Strengthening coordination among agencies.
- Road infrastructure improvements – Ensuring roads are in safe condition.
- Vehicle and driver supervision – Strictly monitoring public transport and rental vehicles.
- Public awareness campaigns – Promoting a culture of responsible driving.

• Emergency preparedness – Enhancing accident response and medical assistance.

Officials also addressed other pressing concerns, including the acceleration of road construction projects to minimise disruption during Songkran.

In cases where work cannot be completed in time, temporary safety measures will be put in place. *The Phuket News*

Police target youth gangs

The Phuket News

editor@classactmedia.co.th

Wichit Police have arrested the teenage leader of a youth gang known as the 'Villains' and seized homemade bombs, a firearm and ammunition in an operation aimed at cracking down on street racing and illegal weapons.

The arrest followed an expanded investigation into a group of young street racers previously detained for violating traffic laws and curfew restrictions, explained Pol Col Somsak Thongkhang, Chief of Wichit Police.

An investigation uncovered evidence linking the gang to illegal weapons and explosive materials. Acting on this information, Wichit Police officers conducted a raid last Friday evening (Apr 4), targeting several locations in Mueang Phuket District, he said.

The search led to the discovery of two homemade bombs, a homemade gun with ammunition and a machete, hidden in the home of a gang member.

The gang, consisting of over 15 youths aged between 14 and 15, is led by a 17-year-old boy identified only as 'T'.



Photos: Wichit Police

Police later escorted him to his residence in Koh Siray, east of Phuket Town, where additional evidence was seized. He now faces charges of illegally producing and possessing explosives and firearms, for which licenses cannot be issued, Pol Col Somsak said.

According to police, the homemade bombs – constructed using gunpowder, rocks, paper and black tape – were inspired by materials found on social media. The gang allegedly intended to use them during motorcycle clashes with rival groups, raising fears of serious harm or fatalities.

"This operation is part of our ongoing effort to eliminate the dangers posed by illegal street racing and youth gangs," said Pol Col Somsak. "The seizure of

these weapons may have prevented a deadly incident."

Earlier last Friday, Wichit Police set up checkpoints to enforce laws against underage street racing and curfew violations, resulting in the arrest of 17 minors and the seizure of 10 motorbikes. Parents of the minors were summoned for legal briefings under the Child Protection Act.

Pol Col Somsak noted that the crackdown follows a wider policy, led by Region 8 Police Commander Pol Lt Gen Surapong Thanomchit and Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum, to improve public safety by targeting high-risk areas.

Investigations are ongoing as police work to dismantle youth

gangs and remove illegal weapons from the community, Pol Col Somsak said.

EARLY WARNING

The targeted campaign against youths began on Apr 1, when parents of 14 minors apprehended in a police operation in Ao Yon faced legal consequences for allowing their children to engage in illegal activities.

Wichit Police Chief Pol Col Somsak stated that the parents were summoned to Wichit Police Station, where they were informed of the charges under Section 26(3) of the Child Protection Act B.E. 2546.

Section 26(3) of the Act prohibits individuals from forcing, threatening, inducing, or allowing children to engage in inappropriate behaviour or actions that could lead to wrongdoing.

According to Section 78 of the Act, violators face penalties of up to three months in prison, a fine not exceeding B30,000, or both.

The operation on Apr 1 specifically targeted gangs of young street racers and minors riding illegally modified motorcycles.

Such groups reportedly gather after 10pm, disturbing residents in the area. In response, police launched a crackdown to curb

street racing and ensure public safety, Pol Col Somsak explained.

During the operation, officers seized nine motorcycles and detained 14 minors.

ONGOING

Pol Col Somsak made it plain that the campaign targeting wayward youths, especially teen street racers, will continue.

"Police will ensure that parents understand their children's behaviour and take steps to prevent repeat offenses," he said.

"Additionally, we are gathering intelligence on gangs operating in the area to preempt any further incidents and aid ongoing investigations."

"Police will arrest them and seize the motorcycles used. Then the parents of those arrested will be called to hear about their children's behaviour to help prevent repeated offenses," he said.

"At the same time, the task force will collect in-depth information about the various gangs in the area to prevent future incidents, as well as use this information for investigations to lead to the arrest of the perpetrators who commit crimes in the area," he added.

Additional reporting by Eakkapop Thongtub

Tour speedboat explodes off Maithon

PHUKET MARINE OFFICIALS have launched an investigation into the speedboat explosion that occurred off the coast of Koh Maithon, southeast of Phuket, on Apr 1, leaving six people injured.

Natchapong Pranit, Chief of the Phuket Marine Office, led an inspection team to the boat dock in Chalong, where they collected evidence on Apr 2 to determine the cause of the fire, which completely destroyed the vessel.

The investigation is being conducted in coordination with local police, forensic experts, public health officials and representatives of the boat's owner.

The speedboat, 'Thana Marine 555', departed from Chalong Pier, carrying 37 foreign tourists, guides and crew members, the Phuket Marine Office reported.

The explosion occurred while the boat was anchored, allowing passengers to swim and view coral before heading to Phi Phi Island.

The injured included the boat's engine mechanic, who sustained 50% burns



Photo: NBT Phuket

and remained in treatment at Vachira Phuket Hospital. Other injured individuals have since been discharged, the report confirmed.

Officials have imposed a temporary ban on the boat's use, and the owner has moved it to a dock for further examination.

Marine Department Director-General Kritphet Chaichuay has ordered a fact-finding committee to report its findings within seven days, with a full forensic analysis expected to take around 30 days, the Phuket Marine Office noted.

Preliminary findings suggest the fire originated from the boat's left-side stern while the mechanic was attempting to fix an engine failure.

At the time of the incident, only four people –

the guide, helmsman, mechanic and a crew member – remained onboard, as passengers had disembarked.

The investigation team is investigating whether mechanical faults or other factors contributed to the explosion, the report said.

In response to the incident, officials have announced stricter regulations for boat inspections. The frequency of mandatory checks for fibreglass speedboats will be increased from once a year to at least twice a year.

Additionally, boats must undergo thorough safety checks before departure, including maintenance assessments and oil residue cleaning to prevent potential fire hazards, the Phuket Marine Office said.

The Phuket News

Senators eye traffic woes

A GROUP OF SENATORS visited Phuket last Friday (Apr 4) as part of the 'Senators Meet the People' project, aiming to listen to residents' concerns and seek solutions within their authority.

The visit also marked the opening of a new 'Senate Coordination Center' in Phuket, established to receive public complaints and facilitate problem-solving efforts.

The delegation was led by Senator Sunthorn Chaowakikha alongside Nipon Ekwanich, the Phuket member of the Thai Senate. Also present was Senator Noppadol Phringsakul and other senators.

The delegation was welcomed by Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Thiraphong Chuaychu as well as Phuket Chamber of Commerce President Kongsak Khoopongsakorn.

Key issues discussed included economic challenges, tourism concerns, environmental sustainabil-



Photo: PR Phuket

ity and infrastructure development, said an official report of the visit.

Particular attention was given to traffic congestion, small hotel licensing regulations and difficulties faced by SMEs – issues that were described as of "significant impact to the province's economy".

During the visit, the senators officially opened the Phuket Provincial Senate Coordination Center, located on Thepkasattri Rd in Ratsada. The centre will serve as a hub for receiving complaints and ensuring that public concerns are addressed by relevant authorities, said the official report.

The senators emphasised the importance of collaboration between government agencies, the private sector and the local community to drive sustainable development.

Residents and business owners have long urged the Senate to accelerate solutions for pressing issues such as traffic congestion and waste management, which are seen as major obstacles to Phuket's long-term growth.

The newly established coordination center will be a key point of contact for residents seeking to raise concerns or propose solutions, the report said.

The Phuket News

The Phuket News

CONTACT US

editor@classactmedia.co.th 076 612 550

PURIYA BEAVAN
Editor**CHRIS HUSTED**
Executive Editor
084 307 7408
executive@classactmedia.co.th**BEN TIREBUCK**
News / Sport Editor
061 806 8132
editor3@classactmedia.co.th**CHUTHARAT 'UM' PLERIN**
Thai Editor
088 796 1615
thai@classactmedia.co.th**NATNAREE 'MILD' LIKIDWANASAKUN**
Reporter / Translator
082 295 3244
reporter1@classactmedia.co.th**JASON BEAVAN**
General Manager
086 479 7471
gm@classactmedia.co.th**SIRIPORN (NOK) SEANGMAS**
Sales Support
086 479 7470
sales@classactmedia.co.th**NIRAVIT 'MOS' VORAVANITCHA**
Graphic designerf The Phuket News
@thephuketnews

ADVERTISING

ClassAct Media

The Phuket News

WINDOW ON PHUKET

Where to eat in PHUKET

Новости Phuket

ข่าวภูเก็ต

NEWS TV

LIVE 89.5

Phuket TICKETMASTER

076 612 550 ext. 605

Fax: 076 612 553

info@classactmedia.co.th
thephuketnews.com99/7 Moo 1 (Billion Plaza),
T. Kathu, A. Kathu, Phuket 83120

PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

FRI APRIL 11

High: +36°
Low: +29°

Wind 11 m/s

SAT APRIL 12

High: +36°
Low: +28°

Wind 11 m/s

SUN APRIL 13

High: +35°
Low: +28°

Wind 11 m/s

MON APRIL 14

High: +35°
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE APRIL 15

High: +35°
Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

WED APRIL 16

High: +37°
Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

THU APRIL 17

High: +36°
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

Israeli man arrested for rape on Koh Samui

A 36-YEAR-OLD ISRAELI man wanted for the alleged rape of a Finnish tourist on Koh Samui was arrested at Phuket International Airport while attempting to flee the country, police have reported.

The suspect, identified as David Israel Ezra, was detained by Phuket Immigration officers, in coordination with Region 8 Investigation Police, Tourist Police and Sakhu Police on Mar 30.

The arrest followed a report from Surat Thani Immigration that linked him to an attack on a 19-year-old Finnish woman near Chaweng Beach.

According to the report filed at Bo Phut Police Station, the incident took place on Mar 29.

The victim (name withheld) was at the Ark Bar with friends when she encountered the suspect. She later walked along Chaweng Beach with him, where the alleged assault occurred.

The victim, who was



Photo: Phuket Immigration

intoxicated, reported the incident to police early the next morning.

Investigators reviewed CCTV footage and matched the suspect's identity with immigration records. Based on the evidence, Koh Samui Provincial Court issued an arrest warrant for rape by force or coercion.

Police then tracked Ezra to Phuket Airport, where he was intercepted before he could board a flight.

Ezra denied the charges but was informed of his legal rights and taken back to Bo Phut Police Station on Koh Samui for further proceedings, police reported.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Female tourist violently assaulted in Old Town

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

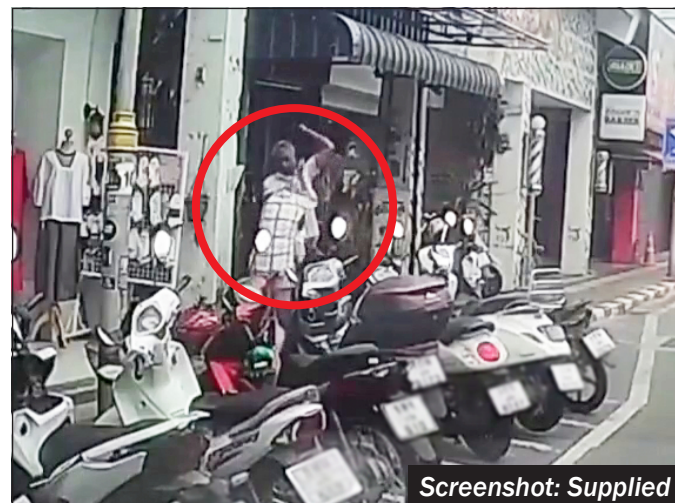
A Thai man believed to be mentally unstable has been arrested after assaulting a foreign female tourist in broad daylight in Phuket Old Town last Friday (Apr 4).

The incident, which was captured on dashcam footage and widely circulated on social media, sparked public outrage and a swift police response.

The attack took place on Thepkasattri Rd, near the intersection with Thalang Rd, just before 1pm. In the video, the tourist can be seen standing at the roadside when the man suddenly approached, violently pulled her hair and began beating her.

The video shows the man, while still grabbing the woman's hair, punching the woman in the face and then striking her on the back of her head with a closed fist.

Still grabbing the woman by her hair, the man then pushes her forcibly down onto parked motorbikes, then forces her to the ground, where he keeps beating her.



Screenshot: Supplied

He then stomps on her three times before bystanders could intervene and pull the attacker away.

Phuket City Police Chief Pol Col Chatree Chueakaew said he was informed of the attack and quickly dispatched officers to the scene.

The suspect, a 40-year-old Thai man, was later apprehended and taken in for questioning.

"He was incoherent and claimed to be drunk, showing signs of mental instability," said Pol Col Chatree. "We are continuing to investigate to determine the full circumstances and ensure he faces legal consequences."

The tourist involved has given a statement to police, saying she bears no grudge over the incident. However, authorities have confirmed that legal proceedings will move forward regardless.

One of the good Samaritans who helped stop the attack was identified as Chindanai Leelasattakul, 34, a finance officer at a local motorcycle dealership. He recounted witnessing the assault and immediately rushing to the woman's aid.

"I saw her being attacked and ran across the road to help," he said. "I shouted at the man and pushed him away. He didn't respond and just walked off. I'm proud I could help."

Frenchman rescued after eight hours trapped in ravine

A 72-YEAR-OLD FRENCHMAN was rescued after spending more than eight hours trapped at the bottom of a steep ravine in Karon last week.

Rescue teams from Karon Municipality's Laem Sai unit and the Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation were dispatched to Soi Patak 12 at around 2:35pm on Apr 3, after reports that a foreign man had fallen into a deep ravine earlier in the day.

The victim, later identified as Celou Cairety, a resident of Rawai Condo, had called his girlfriend at 10:36am to say he had fallen and was unable to climb out on his own.

Emergency teams coordinated efforts and brought specialised equipment to the scene, including a pulley system to reach the



Photo: Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation

injured man in the steep terrain.

After more than four hours of challenging rescue operations, Mr Cairety was safely pulled from the ravine at approximately 7pm. He was then taken to Dibuk Hospital for a medical evaluation. His current condition has not been disclosed.

Authorities have not yet confirmed how the man came to fall but praised the coordinated efforts of all rescue personnel involved in the successful operation. Eakkapop Thongtub

Tourist crashes car, dances at scene

LOCAL RESIDENTS WERE left stunned last week by an accident in Mai Khao that saw a foreign woman, allegedly intoxicated, dancing and taking photos at the crash scene after the car she was travelling in collided with a parked car then flipped onto its roof, where it remained in the middle of the road.

According to a Facebook post by user Prapasiri Ravangpai, who shared a video of the scene, the incident occurred in front of the SuperCheap store in Moo 4, Mai Khao, at about 1pm on Apr 3.

The woman was accompanied by a male companion, also a foreign national.

Eyewitnesses reported that after the accident, the woman appeared incoherent, playing loud music, dancing around the wreckage, and even posing for photos inside the overturned MG car. She was also seen smoking while ignoring the damage caused.



Screenshot: Prapasiri Ravangpai / Facebook

Local residents identified the woman as the same tourist who, just days earlier on Apr 1, had lost control of her motorbike and crashed into another parked vehicle in the same area before fleeing without taking responsibility.

Rescue teams from Mai Khao Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor) arrived at the scene and provided first aid to those involved. Fortunately, no serious injuries were reported.

The incident quickly gained attention on social media, where users expressed their usual frustration and concern over the behaviour of some foreign tourists in Thailand. Eakkapop Thongtub

Chinese contractor faces scrutiny

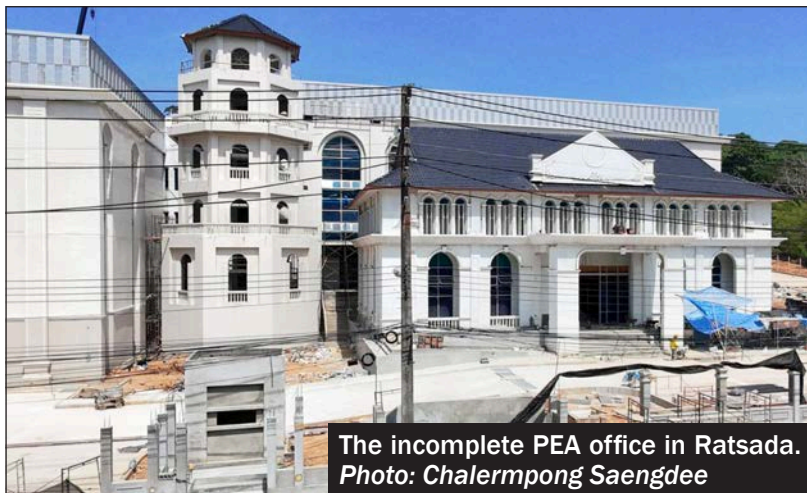
Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee has raised concerns over the construction of the Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) office in Ratsada after it was discovered that one of the contractors working on the project is the same company responsible for the construction of the State Audit Office building that collapsed in Bangkok on Mar 28.

MP Chalermpong posted on his official Facebook page that he and his team had inspected the PEA customer service center under construction in Moo 2, Ratsada, following complaints from local residents.

According to the complaints, one of the two contractors involved in the project is China Railway Number 10 (Thailand) Ltd – a local unit of China's state-owned China Railway Group – the same Chinese company that had built the now-collapsed State Audit Office in Bangkok.

The collapse of the incomplete Auditor General's office came after an earthquake in Myanmar caused structural damage in Bangkok and surrounding areas. Given the situation, concerns over the structural integrity of other



The incomplete PEA office in Ratsada.
Photo: Chalermpong Saengdee

buildings constructed by the same company have intensified, MP Chalermpong said.

Construction of the PEA building in Ratsada began on Feb 18, 2021, with a budget of B210 million. Now, four years later, the building remains incomplete, with cracks showing in the concrete.

MP Chalermpong stressed the need for thorough inspections of the Phuket PEA building to ensure that the materials and construction processes meet safety standards.

He called on relevant authorities to verify whether the materials used match the approved designs.

At the building site in Ratsada on Apr 1, workers were still on-site, installing electrical systems and completing structural extensions.

However, cracks were found on multiple floors, raising further concerns.

When reporters attempted to take photographs, workers quickly placed black shade cloth around the perimeter, obscuring visibility.

MP Chalermpong also revealed that the Chinese contractor had previously faced allegations of wage fraud, with at least 16 workers suing for unpaid compensation.

Additionally, questions have been raised regarding the government bidding process, with reports that the Chinese company had subcontracted work to a property firm, which then failed to pay its workers. A related lawsuit is currently ongoing in court.

"I will be gathering all these issues and submitting them to the Budget Monitoring Committee for review," MP Chalermpong stated.

"It is critical to examine how government funds are being used and whether the materials and structural integrity of these projects meet safety regulations."

MORE THAN ONE

Officials from the Phuket Provincial branch of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning (DPT Phuket) inspected the long-delayed female student dormitory at Phuket Rajabhat University on Apr 3 also built by China Railway Number 10 (Thailand) Ltd.

The seven-storey dormitory, built under a budget of B132.146 million, has been completed and is in the process of being inspected and accepted, DPT Phuket officials explained.

Ditthaphon Kaewmunichoke, the engineer supervising the construction of the building, said that construction of the student dormitory started in 2020 and was initially scheduled to be completed in 2022.

Mr Ditthaphon admitted that there "may have been some problems" during the construction.

Due to the COVID-19

pandemic, the contract deadline was exceeded and the delay has extended the completion of the building by almost two years. The company was also fined, he said.

However, Mr Ditthaphon assured that in the past both steel and cement construction materials used were inspected to ensure that they met the required standards.

At first, the DPT officials yesterday could not enter the building because the university had not yet given permission and had informed them that they would have to submit a letter to conduct the inspection, Mr Ditthaphon said.

Of note, in this inspection, officials were following national orders from Bangkok to inspect the condition of the building to see if its structure was strong and durable after the Myanmar earthquake rattled the capital on Mar 28.

After waiting for about half an hour, officials from Phuket Rajabhat University came to "negotiate" and lead the DPT officials of the inspection inside – but the DPT officials were "asked" not to record any images inside the building.

From the initial inspection by the officials, no cracks or damage were found. The building is still in normal use, the DPT officials reported.

Hospital donation boosts emergency care on Phuket

BUMRUNGRAD INTERNATIONAL Hospital Phuket has donated B100,000 to strengthen emergency response efforts across the island, funding replacement pads for life-saving defibrillator equipment used by local EMS crews.

The donation will cover the purchase of 40 sets of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) pads, vital tools used in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest. The hospital said the move supports a Rotary Club of Patong Beach initiative that has already helped save four lives since it began.

Phuket's public EMS teams are responsible for responding to emergencies across a challenging island landscape while serving a population that swells with over 8 million visitors each year. But many units struggle with limited budgets and outdated or depleted supplies – including AED pads, which are designed for single use and are often in short supply.

"This contribution directly supports the front-line teams who save lives every day, ensuring they're better equipped when every second counts," said Mr. David Boucher, CEO of Bumrungrad International Hospital Phuket.

The Rotary-led project was sparked by a presentation from Jeff Craig, a 30-year licensed EMT and long-time Phuket golf professional, who alerted



Photo: Supplied

members to the urgent need for new AED pads.

He estimated that Phuket sees nearly 500 cardiac arrest cases annually, while many of the island's 24 EMS units lack the resources to maintain their life-saving equipment.

In response, the Rotary Club of Patong Beach also committed B100,000 to the initiative, with Bumrungrad joining shortly afterward to match the support.

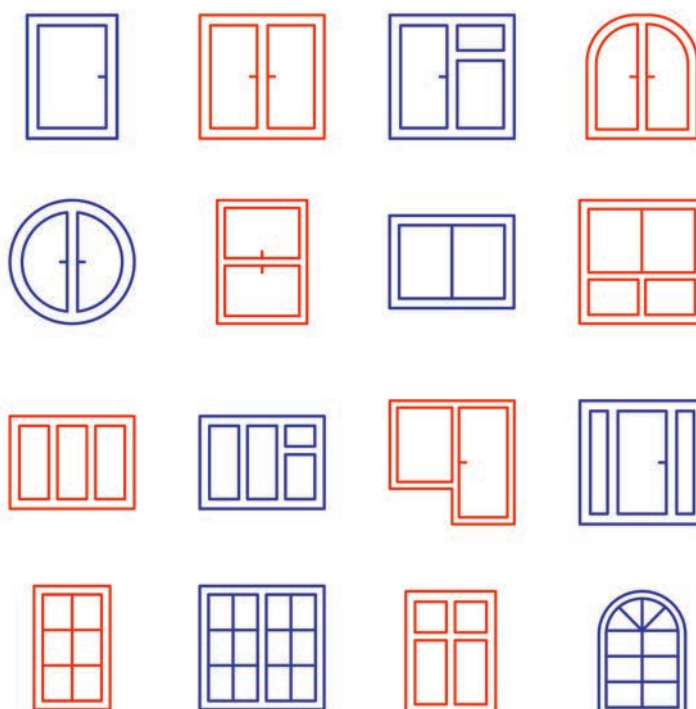
"At Bumrungrad, we believe in equitable, timely care for all—residents and visitors alike," Mr Boucher said. "We're proud to support this vital initiative and to stand with our community in strengthening emergency healthcare on Phuket."

The hospital said it remains committed to being a long-term healthcare partner in the region, investing in improved emergency systems and better health outcomes for all.

The Phuket News



Safe, Secure, Soundproof Windows and Doors



087 061 7631 Nathan Window Man Brown pvcphuket.com

Thailand targets US trade surplus

Bangkok Post

Finance Minister Pichai Chunhavajira is to lead a delegation to the United States to discuss trade issues and tell the US that Thailand is not only an exporter but also a reliable friend of the US, Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra said last Sunday (Apr 6).

She said the US had imposed a 36% tariff on Thai exports and that many other countries were in a similar situation and were preparing measures in response.

"We believe that the world will see fierce retaliations through tax instruments. Many countries have decided to talk with the US government but none have seen any conclusive results," Ms Paetongtarn said.

"The new measure has a significant impact on our exports, especially electronics, processed foods and farm products," the prime minister said.

Ms Paetongtarn said the government on Sunday formed a working group to discuss the issue and consider proposals with the private sector and representatives of the US, both formally and informally.

"This week, Mr Pichai Chunhavajira, deputy prime minister and finance minister, will leave for discussions with many



Thailand must reduce its trade surplus by any means possible, said Finance Minister Pichai Chunhavajira. Photo: Ministry of Finance

parties in the US – the government sector, the private sector and stakeholders," the prime minister said.

"We will tell the US government that Thailand is not only an exporter but also an ally and economic partner that the US can rely on in the long term," she said.

The government has come up with policy-related proposals including an increase in imports from the US in the energy, aircraft and farm sectors, the prime minister said.

Thailand plans to develop cooperation with the agricultural, industrial and other sectors in the

US and there are many more details relevant to the matter, Ms Paetongtarn said.

Thailand will request that the US grant promotional privileges for Thai investors and fewer obstacles to Thai exports. It would also suppress products for export that claim to originate from Thailand (but in fact come from other countries), the prime minister said.

She said she was confident that the US would accept Thailand's proposals so that the two countries remain allies and trading partners.

The Thai government was ready to listen more to the US and

people could rest assured that the proposals that the government would prepare are all aimed at protecting the interest of Thailand, Thai people and business operators, the prime minister said.

She said that her government would introduce immediate and long-term measures to help affected Thai business operators - small and medium-sized enterprises and large-scale industrialists.

Ms Paetongtarn said that she would meet parties concerned to discuss plans to protect the national interest and economy.

TRADE SURPLUS

Thailand needs to quickly reduce its trade surplus with the US by any means possible, Finance Minister Pichai said last Friday (Apr 4).

He said Thailand should import more items from the US for which there is substantial demand, such as agricultural products, automobiles, electronics and liquefied natural gas (LNG), which the country uses to generate electricity.

In the agricultural sector, Thailand must accept being both an exporter and importer of various products as changes in the local production structure mean raw materials are imported

for processing into agricultural products, such as animal feed and food for people, said Mr Pichai.

He also discussed Thailand's potential in the global canned tuna industry, stating raw tuna supply is insufficient, making imports necessary.

Thailand could import tuna from the US for processing and export it not only to the US, but also to other countries, maximising the use of cold storage and processing facilities available, said Mr Pichai.

Regarding LNG, he said Thailand produces the gas in the Gulf of Thailand and imports it from Myanmar and other countries, but these gas reserves are dwindling.

The US has abundant LNG at competitive prices, and any purchases from that market should be made at reasonable prices, said Mr Pichai.

"Reducing the trade surplus with the US to a level they find acceptable is key. The closer to zero, the better. This can be achieved in two ways: maintaining the same size of the economy [bilateral trade volume], and increasing imports from the US," he said.

"We want to increase the size of the economy, with both imports and exports rising."

Russians top Phuket work permits

THE PHUKET PROVINCIAL Employment Office (PPEO) has released its 'Labour Market Review' for April 2025, showing that 25% of all work permits currently valid in Phuket have been issued to Russian nationals.

According to the report, a total of 15,620 valid work permits have been issued to foreigners working in Phuket.

Of those, 3,926 have been issued to Russian citizens.

The rest of the 'Top 10' countries of origin of foreigners issued work permits were given as: Philippines (1,470); China (1,202); UK (1,150); France (856); India (707); Italy (446); United States (402); Australia (363); Ukraine (355); Germany (333); Türkiye (232); South Africa (201); Canada (191); and Myanmar (191).

The remaining 3,595 work permits currently valid have been issued to a variety of other nationalities, the PPEO reported.

Of the current work permits issued, real estate remained the top industry for work permits, with 2,407 issued for foreigners to work in the industry, the PPEO also noted.

A 1,538 work permits have



Photo: The Phuket News / file

been issued for foreigners working in hotels, along with 1,461 permits issued for foreigners working in Food & Beverage and a further 1,301 permits issued to foreigners working at schools and other education institutions on the island.

There are 1,102 foreigners working legally in Phuket as consultants, along with 876 working with 'Travel Agents and Tour Operators'.

The remainder of the Top 10 'categories' saw 224 work permits for foreigners working in 'Computer-related Establishments', followed by 199 in 'Sports Facilities (Diving, Windsurfing, Golf, Tennis)'; 187 in 'Other Entertainment Activities'; and 141 in 'Other Residential Facilities'.

The remaining 6,184 work permits issued were described as for 'Other Activity Types'.

The Phuket News

Senators push for eased licensing of small accommodation operators

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON Commerce and Industry has presented a study report advocating for the licensing of medium-sized and small-sized accommodation operators in Phuket, aiming to enhance sustainable tourism and promote the province as a standardised and safe tourist destination.

The committee, led by Nipon Ekwanch, Vice Chairman of the Committee and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Studying Approaches to Upgrading and Promoting SME Entrepreneurs, held a press conference at Parliament House on Apr 1.

Of note, Mr Nipon is the only person from Phuket selected as a member of the 200-seat Senate.

The focus of the event was the study report titled 'Promoting Medium-sized and Small-sized Accommodation Operators, Other than Hotels, to Receive Licenses for Sustainable Tourism Development: A Case Study of Phuket Province'.

Phuket, as one of Thailand's key tourist destinations, relies heavily on the accommodation sector to support its economy. However, a significant number of small and medium accommodation businesses are operating without proper licenses, which raises



Photo: PR Phuket

concerns about safety, service standards and legal compliance, Mr Nipon noted.

The committee's study aims to address these issues by facilitating the licensing process and improving regulatory frameworks, he added.

"The subcommittee has been working closely with government agencies, private sector stakeholders and hotel operators to identify the challenges faced by unlicensed accommodations," Mr Nipon said.

"It has examined businesses that have successfully obtained licenses, those in the application process, and those struggling with regulatory barriers.

"Among the key obstacles identified are ministerial regulations defining the characteristics of buildings eligible for hotel licenses, as well as limitations that prevent unlicensed operators from accessing government support and benefits," Mr Nipon added.

To tackle these challenges, the study report proposes the establishment of a 'One-Stop Service Center for Medium-sized and Small Accommodation License Applications', Mr Nipon explained.

The centre would provide legal guidance, support in permit applications and assistance with necessary building renovations to ensure compliance, he said.

Additionally, the committee suggests the development of an 'E-Licensing system' and a 'Smart Licensing platform' to streamline the application process, he added.

Legislative amendments are also recommended to refine existing laws and improve coordination between relevant ministries in processing hotel business licenses, Mr Nipon noted.

"Phuket Province will serve as a case study for these efforts, with the goal of implementing similar strategies in other tourist destinations across the country," he said.

The initiative is expected to boost the standards and competitiveness of small and medium-sized accommodation businesses, ensuring they align with national and international tourism expectations, said an official report of the event. The Phuket News

Thaksin urges casino support

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra has warned members of the ruling coalition to support the casino-entertainment complex bill or face expulsion from the government, according to sources close to the matter.

The sources claimed that Thaksin had told all parties in the Pheu Thai-led coalition to vote in support of the bill, which had its first reading in the House on Wednesday (Apr 9). Those who break ranks will be expelled from the coalition, they said.

Most parties in the coalition, including the Bhumjaithai and United Thai Nation parties, have pledged to support the bill, although the Prachachat Party, which has nine MPs under its wing in the House, has previously voiced its opposition to the bill.

Prachachat is led by Pol Col Tawee Sodsong, who is notably the only Buddhist among the party's MPs in parliament. The rest of its MPs in the House are Muslims from the predominantly Muslim border provinces in the deep South, who oppose the move to legalise gambling in the country on religious grounds.

According to the sources, Pol Col Tawee did not attend a Cabinet meeting on Mar 27 that was called to endorse the casino-entertainment complex bill. In fact, he never brought



Protesters at Government House on Mar 27. Photo: Bangkok Post

up the topic for discussion with other MPs from the party, they noted.

Sugarno Matha, a Prachachat MP representing Yala, explained that Pol Col Tawee had sent a letter to the Cabinet's secretary-general on Jan 13 to express his concerns about the potential negative impact of casino legalisation, such as a negative impact on the country's youth and an increase in crime rates including corruption among state officials.

Mr Sugarno went on to say that Pol Col Tawee had pointed out that gambling is also frowned upon by other faiths, including Buddhism.

Pheu Thai secretary-general Sorawong Thienthong, who is also the Minister of Sports and Tourism, on Monday (Apr 7) admitted that the Prachachat Party has expressed concerns about the casino-entertainment complex bill.

"It is normal because the party's support base is in the three southern border provinces, and most of the party members are Muslims. However, we can explain and reach an understanding with them," he said.

However, he denied that Thaksin had threatened to expel coalition parties who do not support the bill. "These claims are false, but we cannot control what people choose to believe."

The government is facing sharp criticism for trying to fast-track deliberation of the entertainment-casino complex bill in parliament despite the lack of a comprehensive study to support it.

Opposition to the bill had gathered pace ahead of the House's deliberation of the bill on Wednesday with doctors, academics and schools joining protests.

Casino bill 'will help offset' US trade move

BANGKOK

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER Phumtham Wechayachai has defended the Entertainment Complex Bill, which was sent to parliamentary debate on (Wednesday) Apr 9, as a vital economic measure amid rising US tariffs on Thai goods.

While opposition continues inside and outside parliament, Mr Phumtham insisted the bill's fate should be decided through democratic processes – not protests.

The bill, which includes casino operations within an integrated entertainment complex, aims to generate significant revenue and counter the 36% US tariff hike on Thai goods – far higher than Singapore's 10%, he said.

Mr Phumtham argued the measure would boost Thailand's financial resilience and dismissed concerns that it promotes gambling addiction. He said strict entry rules, including age and income restrictions, would help mitigate risk.

"This isn't about encour-



Deputy PM Phumtham. Photo: Bangkok Post

aging gambling – it's about economic survival," he said.

He urged critics to join the parliamentary debate and cited results from the government's online public hearing held between Feb 28 and Mar 14, in which more than 70,000 people participated, with around 80% supporting the bill.

While acknowledging the right to protest, he warned such demonstrations should not be seen as representing the entire nation.

He said public opinion often differs from that of opposition parties and civil groups, stressing the need to respect the democratic process and let parliament decide.

He added that the bill could inject billions into the economy. *Bangkok Post*

First national census in 15 years underway

BANGKOK

A NEW NATIONAL census has begun to collect updated demographic data that will help address key trends such as declining birth rates, an ageing population, labour shortages and a growing foreign population.

This is the country's first census in 15 years, making an update to the national database much needed, said Phutthaphong Notthaisong, director of the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The data will be used to shape policies related to welfare, education and infrastructure, he said.

The NSO aims to gain a clearer picture of Thailand's demographic structure, including migration patterns, living conditions and employment trends – crucial factors in drafting future housing and labour policies.

The NSO expects about half of the population to complete the census questionnaire online, compared to just 14% in the last census. Participants will receive text message reminders to take part.

The census will be available on the NSO



The census runs until June 19. Photo: Bangkok Post

website and through the government's Thang Rath app from Apr 1 to June 19. The NSO is offering incentives, including smartphones and other gadgets, for those who complete the questionnaire online between Apr 1 and 20.

A budget of B400 million has been allocated for the census, covering the costs of hiring over 40,000 Thailand Post personnel to conduct face-to-face interviews from Apr 21 to June 19.

Interviews will be conducted with some 4 million households across 11 provinces – Bangkok, Samut Prakan, Pathum

Thani, Ayutthaya, Chon Buri, Si Sa Ket, Roi Et, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phuket and Songkhla – particularly for those in remote areas or without internet access.

The questionnaire consists of 12 main topics, including, for the first time, a section on LGBTQ+ demographics.

Once the census concludes in June, the data will be analysed using AI and big data technology to enhance accuracy. The final report is expected to be released between October and December.

Bangkok Post

Sniffer dogs withdrawn from site of Bangkok collapsed tower building

BANGKOK

SNIFFER DOGS WERE WITHDRAWN from searching for survivors at the collapsed State Audit Office building in Bangkok on Monday (Apr 7).

Investigators started collecting evidence from amid the rubble on Tuesday as the probe begins in earnest into why the 30-storey unfinished building collapsed during the Mar 28 earthquake.

Suthikiart Sophanik, director of K9 USAR (canine urban search and rescue) Thailand, said on Monday that sniffer dogs normally worked a disaster site for seven to 10 days. The search at the site in Chatuchak district had continued for 11 days.

The dogs and their trainers had done their best and it was now time to bring in heavy machinery to remove the debris, he said.

K9 USAR Thailand deployed nine sniffer dogs and their trainers at collapse site and K9 USAR Canada had one dog there.

The investigation into why the building collapsed when other highrises in Bangkok remain structurally sound began on Tuesday and will primarily involve the Department of Special Investigation, the Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning and the Metropolitan Police Bureau.

Pol Maj Woranan Srilam, DSI director for consumer protection, said on Monday that DSI officials and inspectors from the public works department and



Sniffer dogs and handlers at the site on Mar 28. Photo: Bangkok Post

the Thai Industrial Standards Institute would check the quality of the concrete and steel at the collapse site and the DSI would look into the possible use of Thai nominees by the construction company.

He advised three Thai nationals listed as shareholders of China Railway No.10 Engineering Co to report to police and share what information they have with authorities. CREC 10 is part of the ITD-CREC consortium contracted to build the 30-storey State Audit Office at a cost of B2.1 billion.

Pol Maj Gen Noppasin Poonsawat, deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said police investigators would collect samples of steel rods, concrete used in the construction and other material evidence, for examination.

This came as the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration confirmed it is to provide financial aid to city residents affected by the earthquake, with 50 district offices now accepting registrations for assistance and compensation. *Bangkok Post*

Mediterranean charm in Phuket

Ben Tirebuck
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Let's be honest, a time out is always welcome, not least of all in recent months as Phuket has become increasingly hectic. The chance to slow down, take a breath, relax, unwind and recharge is sometimes exactly what we need.

And this is exactly what my partner and I blissfully experience on a recent lunch trip to the Meliá Phuket at Mai Khao. With its first resort hotel in Mallorca in the 1950s, and well over 100 hotels throughout Spain today, it is no surprise to see the strong Mediterranean influence throughout the Meliá property.

Time almost seems to slow down as we turn off from the main road and enter the bountiful grounds of the property, where we are greeted by genuinely friendly staff and escorted to the open, spacious and welcoming reception. Here we are served the in-house special *Power Drink*, a delightfully refreshing concoction consisting of ginger, goji berry, cinnamon and coconut sugar. It feels like a mini vacation almost immediately.

The affable Food and Beverage Director, Luc Jiguet, then affords us a brief tour of the property, where plush accommodation is generously enveloped in nature and greenery – a genuinely welcome and reassuring respite from the endless construction that is



Delicious shrimp tacos. Photo: Supplied

strangling the more central and southern parts of the island.

Meliá's Mediterranean influence is clear in the design and décor of the buildings, which instantly transport you to Spain's islands of Mallorca and Menorca. Having spent regular holidays in such locations growing up, the warm feeling of nostalgia this induces is delightful.

Next, we enter a charming area leading to the pool, where we are seated for lunch and instantly served the house special ginger mocktail, which is incredibly refreshing and extremely moreish. The Mediterranean influence is once again evident throughout the menu, as a range of tantalising dishes sit alongside more familiar Southeast Asian offerings, making our selection a challenge as literally everything looks tempting! On the recommendation of head chef Saiful, we opt for shrimp tacos and the artichoke dip. I am not typically a huge artichoke fan but this

dish, mixed with a range of cheeses and served with crudités and freshly baked pita chips and crostini, is incredibly tasty and leaves me reevaluating my artichoke bias! The shrimp tacos are delicious too.

For main course we cannot but help order the Surf 'n' Turf special. We are not disappointed when it arrives at our table and we eagerly tuck in. Succulent steak cooked to perfection complemented by the juicy prawns, sitting on a bed of exquisite, deep-fried potato wedges and asparagus. It is so good that when finished we consider ordering again, before sense sets in and we remember variety is the spice of life and order the playfully named *Mai Khao Juicy Lucy Burger* instead. Stuffed with gouda cheese and topped with fresh beetroot, rocket and house pickle, it is as good a burger as either of us have had in a long, long time.

Thankfully, we leave just about enough space for dessert. My partner

opts for the *Crema Catalana*, a sweet (but not too sweet) ginger and orange custard topped with a sugar brûlée, which is eagerly consumed! Being a bona fide chocoholic, I select the *Chocolate Almond Brownie*, a dense, almost fudge-like brownie served with a quenelle of rum raisin gelato and handmade honeycomb. I am not exaggerating when I declare this to be one of the finest desserts I have ever experienced – genuinely 10 out of 10!

The entire experience at Meliá is a true delight and one that is easy to recommend. The food is great and the staff are warm and accommodating in an authentic way, keen to talk without being intrusive or appearing disingenuous. The location and design of the venue is fantastic and leaves one feeling relaxed and refreshed, perfect for an extended holiday or even just a time out at the weekend. As we headed south into the traffic, construction and mass tourism, we agreed it very much felt like we had been on a mini vacation. Being able to enjoy an authentic Mediterranean experience without the cost or hassle of actually having to venture halfway across the world, Meliá is a spot we both agreed we will definitely be returning to soon.

GAIA Mediterranean Restaurant and Bar is situated at the Meliá Phuket Mai Khao. Open Daily 11am-11pm. Reservation: 076 563 550. www.melia.com/en/hotels/thailand/phuket/melia-phuket-mai-khao

eatinphuket.com'."/>

The May/June 2025 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

Distributed in resorts/hotels lobbies, in a high number of restaurants and coffee shops, plus inserted in one issue of *The Phuket News* each month, it is a great way to Talk to Phuket about your F & B outlet

Want to be in it?

✉ CONTACT JASON TODAY – gm@classactmedia.co.th

Understanding AI agents and workflows



THE AI EDGE

Joe Smith

Until now using AI has been like consulting an oracle in a cave. It tells you lots of amazing things, but it's up to you to act on that information. Now the AI genie is escaping the bottle to play in the real world by itself. This is Agentic AI, and its consequences are monumental.

The excitement around AI agents is feverish. In 2025, declared by *Forbes* the year of agentic AI, Deloitte predicts that 25% of large enterprises will implement agent-driven schemes. Futurum forecasts that AI agents will contribute a staggering US\$6 trillion to the world economy by 2028.

What Agentic AI means is a machine deciding what steps it should take to achieve a goal and then executing those steps autonomously. It's the difference between AI suggesting a travel itinerary and going ahead and booking flights, making restaurant reservations and negotiating an overdraft with your bank. It's the leap from using AI to write blog posts to letting it run your entire marketing strategy – planning, executing, analysing and optimising with no human in the loop.

What could go wrong when you hand AI the reins? Plenty. Empowering millions of intelligent agents to pursue goals independently poses staggering societal and security risks. Unintended



Image: Victoria Page from Victoria's Studio

consequences aren't just likely – they're guaranteed. Some will be disruptive; others could be seismic. These developments raise urgent questions about accountability, control, and oversight – questions we've currently no idea how to answer.

But the potential benefits are equally vast. To see what autonomous AI systems could do for you, consider how Phuket marketer Gael Ovide-Etienne has been able to automate marketing for his wife's property agency.

Every few hours, his AI system springs to life, identifying the top questions potential Phuket property buyers are asking. The most compelling becomes a headline, which is spun into a blog post and published on the agency's website. That blog is then transformed

into a podcast, voiced by two lifelike digital personalities, and converted into a video clip. The system produces four new videos a day which are pushed out across multiple platforms – YouTube, Facebook, TikTok and anywhere else that supports reels. The agency's YouTube channel alone gained tens of thousands of subscribers in just a few weeks and business grew tenfold. Gael's daily input? Zero.

"Once in a while, I check our feeds – and I'm always amazed by the quality," says Gael. The entire operation costs his company, Turquoise Digital, as little as \$10 a day in API compute costs. Replicating the same output manually – either by doing it himself or hiring a designer and account manager – would cost 50 to 100 times more.

In fact, though, what Gael is using is not true agentic AI, but a precursor: AI workflows. AI workflows are an intermediate step towards machines that pursue goals independently, automating tasks through a predefined sequence of operations that are still set by humans.

Gael explains: "AI workflows are linear operations. There's a set of tools and chains of commands you dictate at the outset. With AI agents, you just specify the goal, and the agent picks the tools and determines the steps."

Gael's method employs Open AI's API, Midjourney and Topaz for generating and enhancing images, and an automation platform like Zapier for stringing them together.

And though he's avidly following news about Agentic AI, for now Gael prefers AI workflows. "They make me less nervous. With agents, you never know what they'll come back with – like human staff."

The era of AI agents is here and poised to reshape our world. By adopting AI workflows now, you can harness the transformative power of automation while mitigating the risks of fully autonomous agents.

Joe Smith is Founder of the AI consultancy 2Sigma Consultants. He studied AI at Imperial College Business School and is researching AI's effects on cognition at Lancaster University. He is author of The Optimized Marketer, a book on how to use AI to promote your business and yourself. Contact joe@2Sigmaconsultants.com.



THAI
RESIDENTIAL

Phuket's No.1 Trusted Real Estate Advisor

Katamanda is one of Phuket's most renowned luxury resorts, within walking distance to Kata Noi and Kata beaches. The resort has a club house, gymnasium, tennis court, onsite management office and 24 hour security. Expertly run by CBRE, this villa would make a fabulous family home or an excellent investment property.

Key Features

- 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms
- 32 M THB
- 647 Sq m Land Plot
- 520 Sq m Build
- Gated Community + 24 hour security
- Stunning Seaviews
- Fully Furnished
- Protected/Secured Leasehold

An amazing value sea view villa for sale on one of Phuket's most prestigious estates. This 4 bedroom villa set on 3 stories, consists of 4 en-suite bedrooms, large living area, all set within an amazing tropical environment.



PHUKET@THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM | +66 94 8411 918 | WWW.THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM
THAIRESIDENTIAL CO., LTD. 82/37 SAM PAO COURTYARD, MOO4, PATAK ROAD, T.RAWAI, PHUKET, 83130

POP QUIZ

1. What is a word, phrase, number or other sequence of characters that reads the same backward as forward?
2. What is the largest Spanish-speaking city in the world?
3. Which planet in the Solar System is the hottest?
4. Where is the strongest human muscle located?
5. Who was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

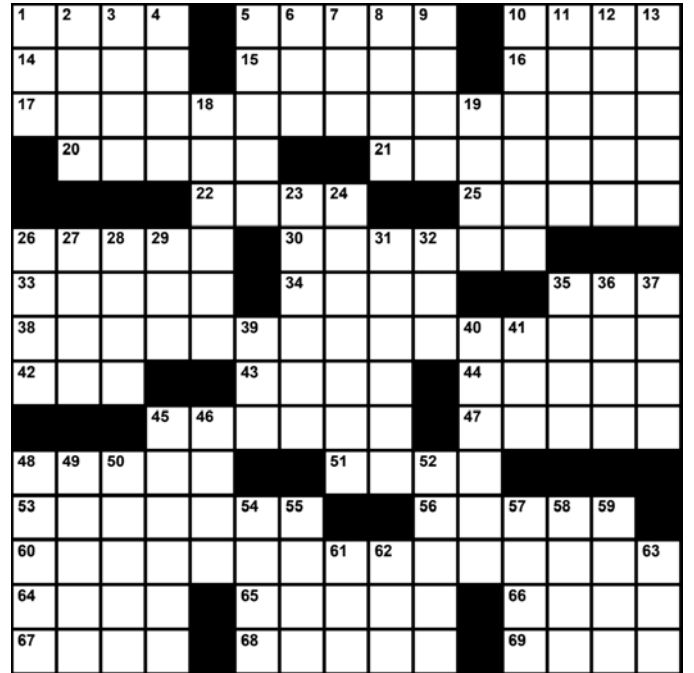
Across

1. Book part
5. "Cut it out!"
10. Five-time U.S. Open champ
14. Almond
15. Auspices
16. All-night party
17. Gardening guy?
20. Boreal forest
21. Old Germans
22. ___ and aahs
25. Dentist's direction
26. "Blue ___"
30. Opens
33. Brilliance
34. Denials
35. Eerie gift
38. Romantic guy?
42. Haw partner
43. Ricelike pasta
44. Diminished by
45. More lively
47. Sportscaster
48. Ski trail
51. "Get ___!"
53. Profound
56. Contradict
60. 1991 Tinka Menkes film

64. Took advantage of
65. Zeno, notably
66. Assortment
67. Sea slitherers
68. Old Roman port
69. Don't believe it

Down

1. Affranchise
2. Genuine
3. Zone
4. Film maker
5. Chocolate source
6. "A rat!"
7. "Give it ___!"
8. Sort carefully
9. To be, to Brutus
10. Free
11. Radioactive element
12. A plant of the rose family
13. Shield figure
18. Rabbitlike rodent
19. Engine sound
23. Driven
24. Big bore
26. "Little Women" woman
27. Yearn
28. Hypothetical form of matter
29. Symbol of strength
31. Earlier
32. Wednesday tree?
35. Coastal raptor
36. Bowl over
37. "Check this out!"
39. "___ any drop to drink." - Coleridge
40. Insignia
41. Cause of inflation?
45. Mounts
46. ___ Station
48. Arouse
49. Sign on a plane facility
50. Brace
52. Banana variant
54. C-worthy
55. New newts
57. Come into view
58. Deeply
59. Cut, maybe
61. "I" lid
62. "Rocky ___"
63. Scale note



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Palindrome; 2) Mexico City; 3) Venus; 4) Jaw; 5) Marie Curie

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

B	E	L	O	W	A	L	B	S	D	E	F	T		
A	R	U	B	A	N	E	A	P	A	N	O	A		
A	G	A	I	N	S	T	T	H	E	C	L	O	C	K
S	O	U	T	A	R	S	C	O	L	L	I	E		
S	O	U	Z	O	N	E	P	U	M	A	S			
A	C	T	I	N	G	P	O	L	E	S	T	A	R	
C	O	R	N	D	O	N	U	T	R	N	A			
C	L	O	C	K	W	I	S	E	M	O	T	I	O	N
R	I	P	R	A	V	E	S	H	E	L	D			
A	C	E	T	A	T	E	S	S	C	A	R	E	S	
S	A	L	V	E	R	A	C	N	E	P	A	S		
C	L	E	A	N	S	O	N	E	S	C	L	O	C	K
A	B	E	L	K	L	A	N	H	O	O	H	A		
B	A	K	U	I	D	L	E	T	E	G	R	E	T	

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2.5

days are spent every year by the average American looking for misplaced items

14

countries share a border with China

98

percent of the atoms in your body are replaced every year

1,373

is how many combined calories there are in a Big Mac, large fries and large soda from McDonald's

48,519

miles is the combined distance of the U.S. Interstate Highway System

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



A quiet moment at Kubur Beach, Rawai. Photo by Chris Pählman.

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to editor3@classactmedia.co.th

This week in history

Apr 11, 1814

The Treaty of Fontainebleau ends the War of the Sixth Coalition against Napoleon Bonaparte, forcing him to abdicate unconditionally for the first time.

Apr 12, 1945

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies in office and is succeeded by Vice President Harry S. Truman.

Apr 13, 1204

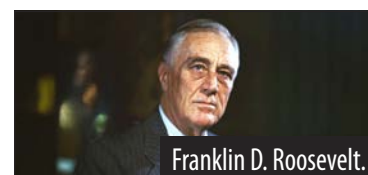
Constantinople falls to the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade, temporarily ending the Byzantine Empire.

Apr 14, 1912

The British passenger liner RMS Titanic hits an iceberg in the North Atlantic and begins to sink.

Apr 15, 1865

U.S. President Abraham



Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Lincoln dies after being shot the previous evening by actor John Wilkes Booth. Three hours later, Vice President Andrew Johnson is sworn in as president.

Apr 16, 2014

The South Korean ferry MV Sewol capsizes and sinks near Jindo Island, killing 304 passengers and crew.

Apr 17, 1492

Spain and Christopher Columbus sign the Capitulations of Santa Fe for his voyage to Asia to acquire spices.

Source: Wikipedia

Trades & Services

 The Phuket News
 @thephuketnews

OTHER

HOME IMPROVEMENT

CORPORATE SERVICES

Want your BUSINESS listed here?
Reserve your space **NOW!**

076 612 550
sales@classactmedia.co.th

HOUSE - CONDO - VILLA
CLEANING SERVICES
AT YOUR DOOR STEP

BABYSITTING SERVICES

- IN-HOME BABYSITTING
- EVENING AND WEEKEND BABYSITTING
- EMERGENCY BABYSITTING
- BABYSITTING FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

BOOK NOW

089 6548873 Spotless Cleaning and Babysitting Service
Phuket - Thailand
nammcasing@gmail.com

VERTIGO
VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

VERTIGOVideoproductions.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT

HOME IMPROVEMENT

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Waterproofing & Crack Repair

20 year WARRANTY

under yearly checkup plan...

Drone Survey

Pipe Inspection

TCM Asia Co., Ltd - quality services since 2003
office@tcm-asia.com 086-9439834

25 Jahre

WOOD FLOOR PHUKET

Solid and engineered wood floor
Sand & refinish wood floor
Solid wood deck

 /solidwoodfloorphuketthailand
 Matt 081 271 2684 or Jessika 062 372 6624

tile-it™
SMART TILES
Tile Leveling System

PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE

Baan Wana - Cherg Talay
Tel : 076 620168

www.tile-asia.com | letstalk@tile-asia.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT

OTHER

MARINE SERVICES

Plumber
German Water Team Ltd.Part
We repair what your husband fixed

MASTERCRAFTSMAN
WE REPAIR AND BUILD NEW:

- ALL KINDS OF HOT AND COLD WATER SYSTEMS
- HOT WATER SOLAR SYSTEMS AND SOLAR PUMPS
- POOL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE
- REPAIR ALL KINDS OF WATER SYSTEMS AND POOL PUMPS
- A VARIETY OF WATER FILTRATION SYSTEMS TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

SHOWROOM NEXT TO WAT CHALONG
OPEN FROM 8AM TO 5PM

094 594 8868 (THAI)
089 645 4848 (GER / ENG)

www.germanwaterteam.com
Email: germanwaterteam@yahoo.de
22/12 Moo 6 Chaofa R.d.west Chalong A.Muang Phuket 83130

Want your BUSINESS listed here?
Reserve your space **NOW!**

076 612 550
sales@classactmedia.co.th

C&C MARINE  

MARINE ENGINEERING SPECIALISTS

C&C Marine (Thailand) Co., Ltd.
Tel: +66 076 272049 Fax: +66 076 273248
Email: cholmes@candc-marine.com
www.candc-marine.com
16/2 Moo 4, Soi Koh Kaew 33, Thepkassatri Rd,
Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83000, Thailand

WANT TO TALK TO PHUKET?

The **Phuket News** Your Island - Your Paper
Новости **Пхукета** Твой остров - твоя газета
ข่าว **ภูเก็ต**

WINDOW ON PHUKET
The map of PHUKET Карта Пхукета 普吉岛 地圖
English 中文 Русский
Where to eat in PHUKET
LIVE 89.5 **NEWS TV**

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

FRI
11 APR

STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT
98/18 Vises Road, Rawai
OI: 081 891 4381
www.shakersphuket.com
shakersphuket@gmail.com
FB: shakersphuket

Friday Mussels Night

6 PM onwards: Belgian style mussels served with French Fries. All you can eat. Your choice, Your style: Marinere, Selected drinks, Provencale, Garlic & cream, Creamy curry, Blue cheese or Thai style We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 325 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

SUN
13 APR

STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT
98/18 Vises Road, Rawai
OI: 081 891 4381
www.shakersphuket.com
shakersphuket@gmail.com
FB: shakersphuket

Sunday Roast

12PM – 9PM: All you can eat Sunday Roast Buffet Beef, Pork & Capon chicken – Cauliflower, Broccoli, Peas, Carrots, Fried mushrooms, Grilled Tomatoes – Yorkshire pudding – Roasted Potatoes, Mashed Potatoes – Gravy, Mushroom sauce, Horse raddish, Mint Sauce. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 350 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

Want your
EVENT
listed here?
Reserve
your space **NOW!**

076 612 550
sales@classactmedia.co.th

MON
14 APR

STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT
98/18 Vises Road, Rawai
OI: 081 891 4381
www.shakersphuket.com
shakersphuket@gmail.com
FB: shakersphuket

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

WED
16 APR

STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT
98/18 Vises Road, Rawai
OI: 081 891 4381
www.shakersphuket.com
shakersphuket@gmail.com
FB: shakersphuket

Wednesday 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

THU
17 APR



Skål Phuket Songkran Soirée: Splash into New Connections!

We are delighted to invite you to our next Skål dinner. Our host of the month of April, Marie Berthe, extends a warm invitation to all Skalleagues for a Songkran Celebration at the Hilton Garden Inn Bangtao, Phuket. Registration from 6pm. Members B1,200 - Non-Members B1,600. Bookings - contact@skalphuket.org

FRI
25 APR



ANZAC Day Memorial Service – Phuket

Phuket Veterans invite you to join us in honouring the sacrifices of Australian and New Zealand service members at our ANZAC Day Memorial Service. Time: 5:30 AM. Location: Kamala Beach (Meeting point: Kamala Police Station). Following the service, all attendees are invited to a Gunfire Breakfast at Devils Bar, Kamala. Dress Code: Smart Casual / Uniform. We look forward to commemorating this important day with you. For more info - facebook.com/phuketveterans

FRI
2 MAY



Grow Boating Evening - May 2025

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Isola restaurant at the Royal Phuket Marina from 5pm. There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by Isola Restaurant for all attendees and as always, all your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket/

WANT TO TALK TO
PHUKET?

WINDOW ON PHUKET

The map of PHUKET
English 中文 Русский

Where to eat in PHUKET

The Phuket News
Your Island - Your Paper

LIVE 89.5

Новости Phuket
ข่าวภูเก็ต NEWS TV

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

CLASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR RENT

URGENT

Commercial units and 25 apartments
A unique opportunity to start making money ASAP. New luxury apartment building for rent only 5 mins walking distance to Boat Avenue on Bandon-Chemtalay Rd. Currently offering 5 rental options, unfurnished - 1: Take over whole building (5 commercial units and the 25 apartments), 2: Take over the 5 commercial units, 3: Take over the 25 apartments, 4: Take over an individual commercial unit, or 5: Take 1 apartment and decorate by yourself on long-term contract, cats or quiet animals allowed. With high season fast approaching now is the perfect time to take one of the above investment opportunities. For more details and to arrange a viewing please contact K. Pam (Thai and English) on 062 143 6559 or phuketmyhouse@gmail.com, WhatsApp: 062 143 6559, Line ID: pamsirithan828

LIVE 89.5 Radio
Your Island, your radio station.
On FM and online.

LISTEN ONLINE

PROPERTY FOR RENT

2bdr apartments for rent
Bel Air Condominium, Panwa Sea Facing, Large 130-150m2, w/balcony w/Plunge Pool, Recently Refurbished, THB35-45K/month. Contact Paul +65 9651 7134.

BOATS, YACHTS FOR SALE

HENRI CAPTAIN
MORE THAN 100 USED BOATS FOR SALE IN THAILAND
HENRI-CAPTAIN.COM

Alcoholics Anonymous

If you want to drink that is your business
If you want to stop that is ours
Daily Meetings
Patong, Chalong, Phuket Town, Bang Tao & Karon

CALL
081 895 4763
help@aaphuket.org
Google www.aaphuket.com



GROW BOATING EVENING - APRIL 2025

The April event was held at Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at Phuket Boat Lagoon on Friday, Apr 4. Thanks to the drinks sponsor for the evening, Phuket Boat Lagoon. As always there was a delicious buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar. Come and join in the fun next month, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. Find more information at facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket



Scheffler and McIlroy chase history at Masters

GOLF

TOP-RANKED DEFENDING champion Scottie Scheffler and world number two Rory McIlroy will take a swing at golf history in this year's Masters.

The 89th Masters showdown got underway yesterday (Apr 10) at Augusta National.

Scheffler, the 2022 and 2024 Masters green jacket winner, seeks his third major title and could become just the fourth back-to-back Masters champion after Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods and Nick Faldo. Only Nicklaus has won three of four as Scheffler can.

McIlroy, a four-time major winner seeking his first major triumph since 2014, can complete a career Grand Slam with a Masters victory.

The 35-year-old from Northern Ireland arrives at Magnolia Lane off victories at Pebble Beach in February and The Players Championship in March – the first year he has come to the Masters with two titles already won.



McIlroy. Photo: AFP

The PGA-LIV split continues, with the majors the only place where the best from each series compete.

LIV players at Augusta include reigning US Open champion Bryson DeChambeau, five-time major winner Brooks Koepka and past Masters winners Jon Rahm and Sergio Garcia of Spain, South African Charl Schwartzel and Americans Dustin Johnson, Phil Mickelson, Patrick Reed and Bubba Watson.

Also playing this week is 2009 Masters winner Angel Cabrera. However, Vijay Singh, the 62-year-old Fijian who won the 2000 Masters, withdrew from this week's event with an undisclosed injury. He had played in every Masters since his 1994 debut. *AFP*

Verstappen pips Norris in Japan

FORMULA ONE

AFP

Four-time world champion Max Verstappen said he will "keep grinding" after winning the Japanese Grand Prix last Sunday (Apr 6) for his first victory of the 2025 Formula One season, ahead of McLaren's championship leader Lando Norris.

The Red Bull driver led from pole to chequered flag to cross the finish line almost 1.5 seconds in front of Briton Norris, who held off his McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri of Australia in third.

The win on a damp but drying track at Suzuka was Verstappen's fourth straight victory in Japan and closed the gap on Norris at the top of the drivers' championship to a single point.

Verstappen has struggled to get to grips with his Red Bull this season. He was second in the season-opener in Australia and fourth in China.

"From our side, we want to be better than just sometimes," said Verstappen. "We just keep working hard and see where we can be in Bahrain."

Norris has 62 points after three races, with Verstappen on 61 and Piastri third on 49.

The McLarens made a dominant start to the season, with Norris winning in Australia and Piastri leading his teammate in a one-two



Verstappen on the podium. Photo: AFP

finish in China before they both again made the podium in Japan.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finished fourth ahead of the Mercedes pair of George Russell and Kimi Antonelli.

Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton was seventh, with RB's Isack Hadjar next ahead of Williams' Alex Albon and Haas's Oliver Bearman.

Yuki Tsunoda finished 12th in his first race for Red Bull since replacing Liam Lawson, having started from 14th on the grid in his home grand prix. Lawson was 17th for RB.

MR MOTIVATOR

McLaren's double podium extended their lead in their constructors' title defence to 36 points over Mercedes.

McLaren have 111 points, Mercedes are second on 75 with Red Bull third on 61, all scored by Verstappen.

"There's no better tonic for motivation than winning," said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner, as he hailed Verstappen for keeping the team in the title race.

"Verstappen is like Mr Motivator. It was a flat-out race, there was no tyre saving.

"For us all priority is on the drivers' championship, for us the constructors' will be harder."

Antonelli briefly took the mid-race lead while Verstappen and Norris were in the pits, to become Formula One's youngest-ever race leader at 18 years and 224 days old.

Verstappen was four days older when he won the 2016 Spanish Grand Prix to become the youngest Formula One race winner.

The action moves to Bahrain this weekend (Apr 11-13), with the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix next weekend (Apr 18-20).

Fiji and New Zealand seal sevens wins in Singapore

RUGBY SEVENS

FIJI WON THE MEN'S TITLE AT the World Sevens Series in Singapore with a 21-12 victory over surprise finalists Kenya last Sunday (Apr 6), while New Zealand lifted the women's trophy after defeating arch-rivals Australia.

The Black Ferns sealed first place in the women's regular season standings with a 31-7 victory in the final, while Argentina finished top of the men's table after finishing third.

Fiji finished runners-up in the men's standings after overcoming Kenya with a strong second-half performance at the National Stadium.

Kenya reached a World Sevens Series final for the first time since 2018 with victories over Ireland, France and Spain in their earlier games.

Argentina took the bronze medal in Singapore after they recovered from a 14-point deficit to beat Spain 33-14 in the third-place play-off.

The Pumas topped the men's regular season standings on the back of three tournament wins this season in Perth, Vancouver and Hong Kong.

They will be joined in the sevens world championship in Los Angeles next month by Fiji, Spain, South Africa,



Fiji's men celebrate. Photo: AFP

France, Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain, who completed the top eight in the season standings.

Despite their heroics in Singapore, Kenya finished in ninth place and will face Uruguay, Ireland, the United States and four teams from the challenger series in a promotion and relegation play-off to decide the 2025-26 sevens series line-up.

In the women's tournament, New Zealand and Australia met in a sevens series final for the fourth time in six tournaments this season with the Black Ferns producing a dominant performance to seal first place in the standings.

Canada secured third place in Singapore after a 21-5 victory over France in the play-offs.

Fiji and Great Britain confirmed their places in the top eight with their performances in Singapore and they will be joined in next month's world championship by New Zealand, Australia, France Canada, Japan and the United States. *AFP*

Plenty of Lions' places still up for grabs for tour Down Under: Farrell

RUGBY

BRITISH AND IRISH LIONS COACH Andy Farrell has said that 75 players are still in contention for the tour of Australia just weeks before he names his squad.

Farrell, seconded from his role as Ireland coach, was speaking on Mar 26 after naming his five assistant coaches for a tour that features three Tests against the Wallabies.

Ireland's recent interim head coach Simon Easterby, who deputised for Farrell during this season's Six Nations, joins him from the Irish set-up along with scrum specialist John Fogarty and backs coach Andrew Goodman.

England deputy Richard Wigglesworth and Scotland forwards coach John Dalziel complete Farrell's line-up.

The Lions squad comprises leading players from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, with Farrell and his team now looking to finalise a squad of around 37 players before an announcement on May 8.

France were this season's Six Nations champions, but both England and Ireland also won four of their five games and Farrell said plenty of players were still in the race for tour selection.

"We (Farrell and his assistants) came up with about 75 names or something like that," he said. "Every single one of them deserves to be on that list.

"There's going to be a hell of a lot of good players that don't make the plane,



Andy Farrell. Photo: AFP

and that's exactly where we wanted to be. We want this to be as competitive as we possibly can."

The Lions traditionally tour either Australia, New Zealand and South Africa once every four years.

There had been fears Australia, eliminated at the pool stage of the 2023 Rugby World Cup would struggle to provide tough opposition, but they have improved under Joe Schmidt.

"This was always going to be the best of the best," said Farrell. "The Australians are always going to be tip-top shape by the time the Lions come round.

"This competition, this tour, is going to be as competitive and as exciting as any of the previous ones."

The Lions have not won a Test series since 2013 in Australia and Farrell said his side would be looking to "right those wrongs". *AFP*

Reds slip at the Cottage

FOOTBALL

AFP

Liverpool slumped to just their second Premier League defeat this season as Fulham clinched a shock 3-2 win over the runaway leaders at Craven Cottage last Sunday (Apr 6).

Arsenal's 1-1 draw at Everton on Saturday left Liverpool needing just 11 points to secure a record-equalling 20th English top-flight title.

Arne Slot's men were unbeaten in 26 league games and looked set to take another step towards the title when Alexis Mac Allister's stunning strike opened the scoring.

But poor defending allowed Ryan Sessegnon, Alex Iwobi and Rodrigo Muniz to turn the game around for Fulham.

The Reds appear to be running out of steam after challenging in four competitions for most of Slot's largely impressive first season since replacing Jurgen Klopp.

But Liverpool are still almost certain to win their first title since 2020 with only seven games remaining for second-placed Arsenal to catch them.

Leandro Trossard's opener for the Gunners was cancelled out by Iliman Ndiaye's penalty at Goodison meaning any faint hopes of catching Liverpool are almost over.

Elsewhere, Southampton are the



Liverpool's players are left dejected at full-time. Photo: AFP

first ever Premier League team to be relegated with seven matches still to play after their 3-1 loss at Tottenham on Sunday.

Ipswich and Derby were relegated with six games left in 1994-95 and 2007-08 respectively but the Saints' 25th defeat in 31 games means they now hold the unenviable record.

They are also still one shy of matching Derby's 2007-08 record low Premier League total points of 11.

Southampton were pushed to the brink of relegation when fourth-bottom Wolves came from behind to beat Ipswich 2-1 on Saturday, leaving Saints 22 points from safety. Southampton manager Ivan Juric was dually sacked on Monday after only 14 games in charge.

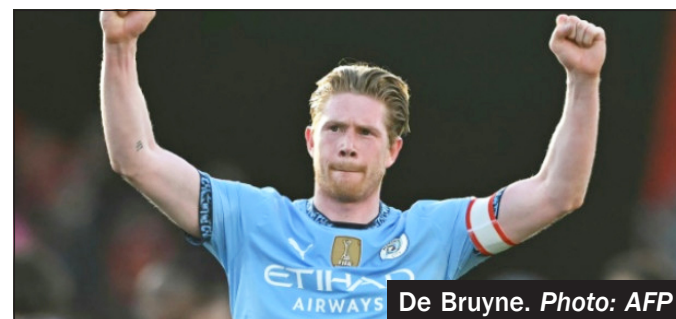
Cole Palmer was left on the bench for almost an hour as fourth-placed Chelsea's winless run on the road

continued with a 0-0 draw at Brentford while Newcastle moved up to fifth place following a straight forward 3-0 win at Leicester City.

Manchester City and Manchester United played out a dour 0-0 draw at Old Trafford, while Aston Villa bolstered their bid for Champions League qualification with a 2-1 win against Nottingham Forest thanks to early goals from Morgan Rogers and Donyell Malen.

Villa are currently seventh behind Manchester City on goal difference and within two points of Chelsea in fourth.

Crystal Palace beat Brighton 2-1 despite finishing with nine men in a bruising battle featuring three red cards at Selhurst Park while Evanilson scored twice as Bournemouth drew 2-2 with West Ham at the London Stadium.



De Bruyne. Photo: AFP

De Bruyne to leave Man City at end of the season

FOOTBALL

KEVIN DE BRUYNE WAS hailed by Pep Guardiola as one of the Premier League's all-time greats after the Belgian confirmed last Friday (Apr 4) that he will leave Manchester City at the end of the season.

De Bruyne, 33, has won 14 major trophies since joining City from Wolfsburg in 2015, including six Premier League titles and the Champions League in 2023 and has been instrumental in City's rise to become the dominant force in English football.

He was twice crowned players' player of the year in 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The Belgium captain sits second in the Premier League's all-time standings for assists on 118 and has

scored 106 goals in 413 appearances for City.

"He's one of the greatest we've ever seen," said City manager Guardiola.

"His assists, his goals, his vision in the final third, it's so difficult to replace. What he's done here for the past decade has been outstanding.

"We've won a lot of trophies and he's been involved in every single one."

De Bruyne has been linked with a move to the Saudi Pro League or Major League Soccer in the United States after he contracts with City expires at the end of June.

"Every story comes to an end, but this has definitely been the best chapter," De Bruyne added. "Let's enjoy these last moments together!"

AFP

Semi-automated offside tech set for Premier League debut

FOOTBALL

THE PREMIER LEAGUE WILL USE semi-automated offside technology for the first time in matches starting from tomorrow (Apr 12).

The system made its debut in English football in seven of the eight FA Cup fifth round ties in March.

Following additional non-live testing in the Premier League, the technology has now been cleared for use in the top-flight.

Semi-automated offside technology is designed to improve the accuracy of tight offside calls by making parts of the process automatic.

Virtual offside lines and graphics will be used, alongside optical player tracking for those watching at home or in a stadium.

VAR officials check the system has followed the process correctly before confirming the decision to the referee, who then informs the players.

ELITE LEVEL

The technology was first used at the elite level in the 2022 World Cup in Qatar and has also featured in the Champions League, Serie A and La Liga.

"Semi-automated offside technology automates key elements of the offside decision-making process to support the

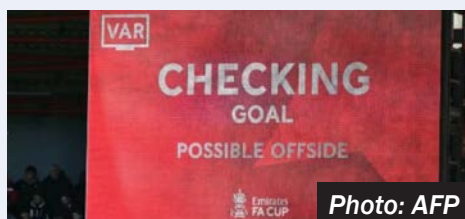


Photo: AFP

video assistant referee (VAR)," a Premier League statement said.

"It provides more efficient placement of the virtual offside line, using optical player tracking, and generates virtual graphics to ensure an enhanced in-stadium and broadcast experience for fans.

"The technology maintains the integrity of the process while enhancing the speed, efficiency, and consistency of offside decision-making."

Using 30 cameras around a stadium, the technology is set to be used in close offside decisions and will help confirm or suggest a change to the on-field decision made by the referee.

The Premier League has worked with Professional Game Match Officials Ltd and Genius Sports to develop the technology.

It will debut in the Premier League when Manchester City host Crystal Palace in the early kick-off tomorrow (Apr 12), and with other fixtures including Arsenal's home game against Brentford. AFP

WANT TO TALK TO PHUKET?

The Phuket News Your Island - Your Paper

Новости Пхукета Твой остров - твоя газета ข่าวภูเก็ต

Where to eat in PHUKET

WINDOW ON PHUKET

LIVE 89.5 PHUKET NEWS TV

The map of PHUKET English 中文 Русский Карта Пхукета 普吉岛地图

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Sport



Season's first win for Max at Suzuka > p14



Overall winner Jutatip Maneephan (centre) and her teammates pose with their trophies on Apr 2. Photo: Supplied

CYCLING

Bangkok Post

Asian champion Jutatip Maneephan took home the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Cup Women's Tour of Thailand 2025 overall title on Apr 2 after reigning supreme in all three categories of the three-stage race.

Defending champion Jutatip had been a dominant force in the prestigious road racing competition, winning all three stages of the event in Sa Kaeo with a total time of 6:33:53 hours.

The 37-year-old from Roi Et province also bagged the Best ASEAN Rider of the event and the Overall Best Sprinter awards in the Tour.

"It has been a very successful event for me this year as I won all three stages and overall title," said Jutatip after the final day's race.

"We followed our plans for the event and a big thank you to Sa

Kaeo residents for cheering us throughout the tournament. I hope the Thai people cheer us at the 33rd SEA Games in Thailand later this year."

The Thailand Women's Cycling Team star made it three out of three by taking on the 76.35 kilometre final stage on Apr 2 in a time of 1:48.42 hours, after Sa Kaeo Governor Parinya Phothisat flagged off the final race at the province's Main Stadium.

Finishing second on Apr 2 was Li Ning Star cyclist Liu Jiali of China, while Hong Kong's Lee Sze Wing took third place with both of them clocking the same time as the Thai champion.

Fellow Thai riders and national team members Kamonrada Khaoplot and Rungnapha Kuson finished sixth and eighth respectively.

The Intermediate Sprint of the First Point (IS1) was won by Thai rider Chanitporn Batriya of Thailand Women's Cycling Team with teammate Jutatip finishing second. Malaysian Zubir Nul

Aisyah Mohamad was the winner of the Second Point (IS2) contest.

'A GOOD DAY'

Jutatip won the 87.90km first stage on the opening day with a time of 2h 3m 2s while also taking possession of three different coloured jerseys – she claimed the yellow jersey as the overall leader, and also the purple and green jerseys for emerging as the best ASEAN rider and the best sprinter, respectively.

"I am very happy because we have achieved our first target," Jutatip said after the first day's success.

"My teammates really helped me a lot. We had discussions and planned continuously. The most important thing is that we must be patient and avoid the tendency to underestimate our opponents. Overall, it was a good day," she added.

Day two of the competition started from Watthana Nakhon and finished at Sa Kaeo, covering a distance of 105.50km.

Jutatip maintained her fine form from the opening day's race to cross the line in top spot with a time of 2h 42m 45s, while also managing to retain the overall leader's yellow jersey with a total time of 4h 45m 21s.

She also kept the purple jersey as the best ASEAN rider and the green jersey as the best sprinter for the second successive day.

'BIG CHALLENGE'

Hong Kong topped the overall team competition with a total time of 19h 43m 37s. They were followed by Thailand Women's Cycling Team, who finished second with the same time.

Thanks to Jutatip's hat-trick of stage wins, Thailand Women's Cycling Team won the Best ASEAN Team title, with Indonesia's national team settling for second place and the Thai national team completing the podium.

"This year, we achieved our targets by finishing among the top 20 in the men's event and taking

the Best ASEAN Team award in the women's tournament," Thai Cycling Association (TCA) president Gen Decha Hemkrasri said at the conclusion of the race.

"We will have 17 gold medals at stake in the SEA Games in road, track, BMX and mountain bike competitions. We will be facing a big challenge from Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam at the Games," he added.

The women's event took place immediately after the five-day men's tour, which was won by Denmark's Alexander Salby of Li Ning Star team on Mar 29.

The Danish rider claimed the overall title with a time of 17h 19m 52s, followed by teammate Simon Pellaud from Switzerland in 17h 19m 57s and Italian rider Lorenzo Quartucci in third place with a time of 17h 20m 04s.

Next year's 'Tour of Thailand 2026' will take place in Nong Khai, officials confirmed at the conclusion of the women's race on Apr 2.

Phuket hosts the 10th edition of the Tekkim Cup

FOOTBALL

THE HUGELY POPULAR Tekkim Cup football tournament took place in Phuket recently with 24 teams fighting it out for the title of champions and for a share of the B240,000 cash prize on offer.

The 10th annual edition of the competition kicked off on Tuesday, Apr 1, and concludes today (Apr 11), taking place at 7 Soccer Club Stadium at the Wichit Arena and Sports Venue.

Competing teams were from Phuket and surrounding provinces and contested the competition in senior and junior age categories, with six teams in the under 10 age group.

Each team was limited to seven players on the field at any one time but with a rolling substitution format meaning players were permitted to swap at will throughout the games.

There were trophies for the winners in both the senior and youth age groups as well as

awards for top scorer in each category.

There was a total of B210,000 in cash to be won in the senior age category, with B120,000 going to the winning team, B50,000 to the beaten finalist, B30,000 to the third place team and B10,000 to the team that finishes fourth.

Thammawat Wongcharoenyot, President of the Phuket Sports Association, presided over the opening ceremony of competition around at the

artificial football fields on the evening of Apr 1.

He was joined by Kritsada O-in, assistant secretary of the association; Songyot Hemhong, and Suphatchai Phetkhong, both assistant registrars of the association; Kamnuen Khanthanon and Yongyut Unnuch, both from the association executive committee; and Pol Maj Gen. Sinlert Sukhum, commander of the Phuket Provincial Police.

In addition to developing skills among players, Mr Tham-



Photo: PR Phuket

mawat explained that the competition aims to encourage young people to get active and involved in playing sports to enhance fitness levels and dissuade youngsters from getting involved with drugs and any form of illegal activities.

The Phuket News