

MAN ARRESTED FOR PATONG STREET SHOOTING > PAGE 3

SICK SLICK

OFFICIALS SEEK LEGAL ACTION AS OIL SLICK, TAR BALLS PLAGUE WEST COAST

A young green turtle is cleaned after becoming smothered in the oil. Photo: DMCR

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket Marine Chief Natchapong Pranit on Monday (Aug 7) filed a formal complaint at Chalong Police Station in the hope of bringing legal action against the culprit responsible for unleashing a tide of oil that plagued Phuket's west coast beaches last weekend.

Mr Natchapong explained that the damage done included the harm done to sea animals, the water and the beaches affected, which included the beaches in all three districts along the west coast.

Under Section 119 of the Navigation in Thai Waters Act, people causing such damage were liable to

up to three years in prison or a fine of up to B60,000, or both, he said.

"And they must pay for the expenses incurred in cleaning up the toxic substance and compensation for damages as well," Mr Natchapong added.

Mr Natchapong had earlier filed a similar official complaint with Sakhu Police in an effort to identify the offender.

The Phuket Regional Marine Office together with officers from the Andaman Maritime Safety and Traffic Control Center (CSCA) checked for likely offenders through the Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) system monitored at the centre, which can monitor vessels up to 95 nautical miles from Phuket's west coast, Mr Natchapong

explained on Monday.

From July 26 to Aug 3, a total of 81 vessels passed through the area, comprising 62 merchant ships, 18 tanker ships and one tug supply ship, Mr Natchapong said.

Helicopters from the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command, based at Cape Panwa, had carried out aerial surveys along the coast of Phuket, and found no further oil slicks on the water, he said.

If the weather continued as expected, the oil that plagued Phuket's beaches for nearly a week was "expected to be gone within one to two days", he added.

Meanwhile, cleanups continued along the west coast, Mr Natchapong noted.

"Officers at Sirinat National Park have joined with many parties, including volunteers and local government organisations in the area, to accelerate the cleaning and removal of oil patches and debris stained with oil from the area as soon as possible," Mr Natchapong said.

At Koh Racha Yai, south of Phuket, a cleanup effort led by local Navy personnel on Monday cleared some two tonnes of oil-marred sand and oil-stained debris from the island.

OIL EVERYWHERE

The alarm of an oil slick washing ashore on Phuket was first raised by local environmental group Sustainable Mai Khao last Friday.

However, officers from the...

NEWS PAGE 3

**No action over
tour speedboat
'storm driving'**



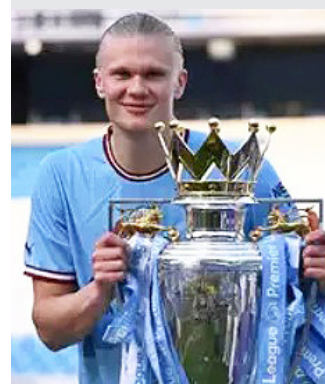
LIFE PAGE 9

**Walter Wyler
takes the helm
at Rotary Patong**

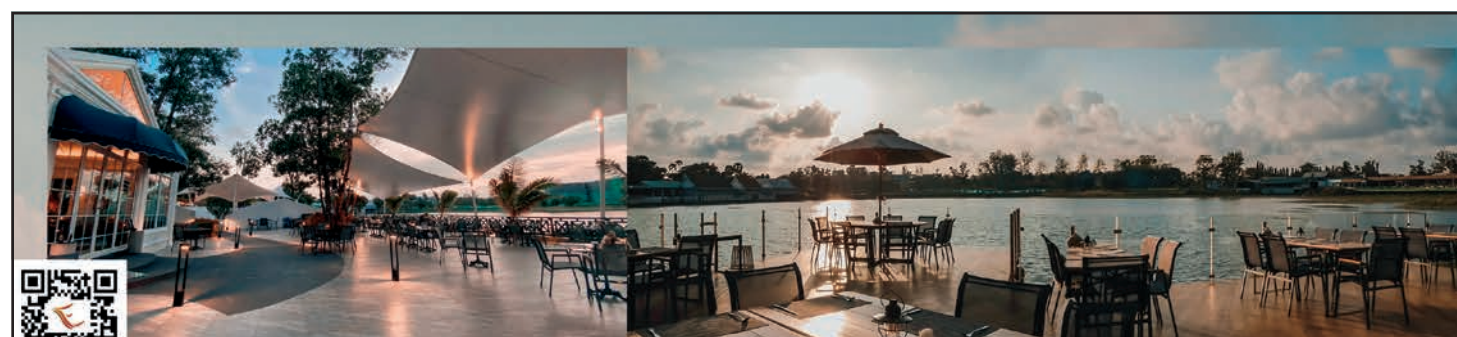


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News



Navy recovers tsunami warning buoy > p5

Mass efforts join oil cleanup

Continued from page 1

...Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) had already held a beach cleanup at Khuk Khak, north of Khao Lak in Phang Nga, the day earlier. The cleanup team had removed 57 kilogrammes of oil and oil-stained debris from the beach.

Several beaches in the northern parts of Phuket were the first to be reported to be suffering from oil washing ashore, and the subsequent formation of tar balls.

"A mere oil spill from a single vessel can inflict harm upon countless creatures and result in extensive beach pollution," Sustainable Mai Khao lamented in a Facebook post.

At around 2:40pm, the group revealed more disconcerting revelations. Small tar balls, which were notably challenging to eliminate, were also discovered strewn across the beach.

"So sad to say – it's back. The dreaded tar balls are back. We thought that was just an oil spill with normal oil, but it seems to be the sticky tar



A Navy cleanup at Koh Racha Yai removed some two tonnes of oil-stained sand and debris. Photo: Phuket Info Center

that we've encountered a few times already," Sustainable Mai Khao reported, demonstrating the pollution in a live broadcast.

"As you can see, there are thousands of pieces of polystyrene that are very difficult to pick up. And now they are mixed with the tar balls which makes it even more difficult

to pick up," the group further explained.

Soon after beachgoers documented on social media oil and tar on Nai Yang Beach, a protected area within the boundaries of Sirinath National Park. As of 4:30pm, the national park authorities had not issued any official statements concerning the beach

contamination. Phuket officials had also yet to release a public statement on the matter.

The official silence on the impact of the oil slick was broken by the DMCR in reporting a young green turtle found lathered with oil at Koh Racha Yai. The turtle, just 14cm long, 12cm wide and weighing a mere 100 grammes,

was in very weak condition.

The turtle was taken into care by the Sireetarn Marine Endangered Animal Rescue Center, whose marine life experts carefully removed the oil and nursed the youngling back to health.

Also found lathered in oil was a small bird, whose condition and recovery was not reported.

BEACH CLEANUPS

Clean-up efforts were launched at beaches all along the west coast, from Mai Khao in the north to Nai Yang, Nai Thon and Layan, where Sirinath National Park officials separated into teams, to Patong Beach and as far south as Nai Harn.

Sorasak Rananan, Head of Sirinath National Park, revealed that he was informed by the head national park ranger at Police Station 4 at Layan Beach that a long line of black oil slick was found late last Friday afternoon.

Mr Sorasak then coordinated with the Upper Andaman Coast Marine Resources Research Center, the Region 15

(Phuket) Office of the Environment and Natural Resources and additional relevant agencies to inspect the area at Layan in addition to beaches at Nai Yang, Nai Thon and Mai Khao.

On doing so, officials discovered lumpy oil and tar balls as well as oil slicks at all destinations, samples of which were taken in efforts to determine the exact nature of the pollutants and where they may have originated from.

Teams consisting National Park officials, lifeguards and volunteers in each of the four locations then proceeded to clear the pollutants and any other debris from the respective beaches.

National Park officials also issued a warning for people not to swim in the waters at each of the four beaches in the event excess oil slick may still be floating.

Despite the mass cleanups over last weekend, as of Tuesday (Aug 8) tourists and beachgoers were still finding their hands and feet sticky with residue oil still in the sand.

Cyber Crime police crack down on fraud, scam gang mule accounts

OFFICERS FROM THE Cyber Crime Investigation Bureau (CCIB) have arrested a man in Wichit for opening a bank account for an online fraud operation that has defrauded people out of more than B1.4 million.

The man, named by the CCIB only as "Mr Toei", 25, was arrested in front of a house in the Wichit area, the CCIB reported last Saturday (Aug 5). The actual date and time of arrest was not reported.

Mr Toei was arrested on a warrant issued by the Songkhla Provincial Court on charges of "jointly defrauding the public Import into the computer system false computer information, whether in whole or in part, or false computer data in a way that is likely to cause damage to other people or the public", explained the CCIB report.

Mr Toei's arrest followed officers receiving complaints from many victims who said

they had been tricked into investing in crypto coins, the CCIB explained.

The criminals contacted their victims via Facebook and sent messages to persuade them to invest. The scam gang offered high returns through the "Coinbase Wallet" application. At first investors saw high returns for small investments, encouraging the victims to invest more, but in the end the investors were unable to withdraw their money, the CCIB report said.

Later it was learned that the same group of criminals had at least six bank accounts among separate banks to use as a channel for receiving money from the victims. Officers had confirmed that the six bank accounts were linked.

Mr Toei confessed to his role in the scam, the CCIB report continued.

About two months ago, for only B800, he opened a bank account for a person and handed over the bankbook and ATM card for the account.

Pol Col Panithan Yamanon,



CCIB officers arrest 'Mr Toei', 25, in Wichit. Photo: CCIB

Deputy Superintendent of CCIB Region 5 branch, said that arrest warrants had been issued for 11 suspects wanted for their involvement in the online fraud.

"Officers will expedite their investigation into the operation to track down and arrest all remaining offenders," he said.

The announcement of Mr Toei's arrest came just two days after another man, named by police only as "Mr Ekapol", was reported as recently taken into custody at Freedom Beach.

Mr Ekapol's arrest was announced by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) Aug 3).

The CIB launched an investigation into an alleged investment scam in 2022 after several victims came to Tao Poon Police Station in Bangkok and lodged reports.

The victims described falling prey to an investment scheme that eventually turned out to be fraudulent. The financial losses sustained by the investors tallied to hundreds of thousands of baht.

Following his arrest, Mr Ekapol admitted to having opened two bank accounts for a "friend" from Myanmar, for which he received a payment of B2,500 per account.

Cyber Crime law targets scams, financial crimes

Parliament has passed another cyber crime law targeting online scams and financial crimes, reported state news agency NNT on Monday (Aug 7).

Digital Economy and Society Minister Chaiwut Thanakamanusorn informed Parliament of the need for measures to prevent and suppress cyber crimes. The aim is to tackle illegal bank accounts and illegal mobile numbers through which criminals make money transfers.

Following the first law to address these issues being enacted earlier this year, the new Prevention and Suppression of Cyber Crimes Decree will grant more power to relevant agencies so they suppress scam activities more effectively, said the report.

The new law will also allow organisations – such as the Royal Thai Police, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society and the Anti-Money Laundering Office – to request information related to suspicious accounts, including

information about the ownership of mobile numbers and network traffic.

Additionally, the law will require banks to immediately suspend any suspicious transactions, either detected by the banks themselves or after having been notified by the victims. Other banks related to such transactions must also be notified, with cases reported to the police within 72 hours.

According to official figures, a daily average of 790 cyber crime cases were reported between the beginning of this year and Mar 16.

Officials have successfully seized B87 million from fraudulent transactions and the number of daily cases has since dropped to around 600 cases per day, following the first enactment of the cybercrime law. The report also indicated that officials were able to seize B256mn from fraudulent accounts. *The Phuket News*

Boat safety rules waved on

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Dangerous driving by a speedboat driver returning from Phi Phi Island amid large waves with tourists on board, who were not wearing life jackets, has been explained away at a press conference organised by the Phuket Marine Office. The Phuket Marine Office launched an investigation into the dangerous driving only after a video clip was posted online showing a tour speedboat plainly identified as the 'Natthicha 555' ploughing through large waves at speed on Aug 1.

The 'Natthicha 555' changed direction erratically behind another tour speedboat, the 'TSK 6', from which it could be openly seen that tourists on the 'Natthicha 555' were not wearing life jackets, in flagrant disregard of a water safety notice issued by Phuket Marine Chief Natchaphong Pranit in response to heavy sea conditions that Phuket was experiencing at the time.

Subsequent reports by officials repeatedly noted that both speedboats were under investigation, despite



Photo: Courtesy of Teerapong Hempitak

no claims whatsoever being presented that the operator of the TSK 6 speedboat had done anything wrong.

The Phuket Marine Office confirmed that the two speedboats were returning to Phuket from Phi Phi Island at about 2:30pm on Aug 1 amid waves reaching up to three metres tall, said a report by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

The 'Natthicha 555' was returning to Vanich Pier in Ratsada with 11 people on board, eight of whom were passengers. The 'Natthicha 555' was legally registered

and the two operators on board, driver 25-year-old Jiratheep Pramongkit and mechanic 32-year-old Pichet Pramongkit, both have valid permits to operate the boat, said the report.

The 'TSK 6' was returning to AA Pier at Laem Nga, on Koh Siray, Ratsada, east of Phuket Town. The 'TSK 6' had 42 tourists on board, as well as two guides and three crew members. The boat driver, 31-year-old Rewut Phutthawong, had a valid boat operating licence, and the on-board mechanic, Khwanchai Pramongkit, 48, also held the correct valid certificate, the

report added.

Marine officials had inspected the boats and found them both to be seaworthy. All safety equipment required was on board and in functioning order, the report said.

The boat operators were under investigation of Section 291 of the Navigation in Thai Waters Act, said the report.

Under Section 291, the Marine Office has the authority to suspend boat-related licences for up to years if "any pilot, master, navigator, boatswain, helmsman, steersman, chief engineer or engineer of a vessel who has obtained the certificate or license but

becomes incompetent or behaves inappropriately for the capacity, failing to comply with the law or regulations concerning navigation or his or her capacities".

However, a press conference was held at the Phuket Marine Office on Aug 3, where marine officials disclosed no action against the 'Natthicha 555' boat driver 25-year-old Jiratheep Pramongkit for the dangerous operation of the boat in dangerous sea conditions. No action was reported to be taken against the company that operates the boat.

Instead, according to an official report of the press conference, "all parties insisted on operating in accordance with the highest safety supervision guidelines".

Present for the press conference were Phuket District Chief Phairot Srilamul, Adul Raluekmoon of the Phuket Marine Office and Phuket City Police Chief Col Pratuang Pholmana.

At the press conference, Mr Jiratheep said that conditions were safe when the 'Natthicha 555' departed Phi Phi Island at 3pm. But when he reached open water he

encountered storm conditions, which he said "forced him" to drive close to the bigger boat near him, the TSK 6, in order to take shelter from large waves.

According to the official report of the press conference, instead of commenting on what action the Phuket Marine Office was to take over the incident, Mr Adul recited statistics of Phuket marine traffic, noting "there are approximately 3,500-4,000 vessels that must be supervised, of which approximately 1,500 are domestic passenger ships. In addition, they are fishing vessels and there are a total of 23 piers operating".

"They are all following strict safety measures," Mr Adul said.

Mr Adul added, "When such an event occurs again, we will require strictness by requesting in-depth cooperation with all travel agencies that must carry out strict security checks, especially in caring for tourists and must ask tourists to wear life jackets 100% seriously, in order to increase the intensity of the existing measures, which is regarded as taking care of safety as a top priority."

Man charged with attempted murder after Patong shooting

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED a man wanted for a street shooting in Patong last week that left two men injured in hospital.

Nattapong Nachom, 34, was taken into custody on an arrest warrant issued by Phuket Provincial Court on Aug 4, Patong Police confirmed last Sunday (Aug 6).

Nattapong has confessed to the charges against, police said.

Under the arrest warrant Nattapong faces charges of attempted murder, illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition, carrying a firearm in a public area without reasonable cause and discharging a firearm in a public area, police confirmed.

Nattapong was returned to the scene of the crime last Saturday afternoon (Aug 5) to re-enact the shooting. He was under heavy armed guard during the public display.

The shooting, near the intersection of Petchkut Rd and 50 Pi Rd in the hills at the southern end of Patong, saw Nuttawut Hemra, 20, from Trang, and Jirawat Santirak, 20, registered as living in Ratsada, rushed to Patong



Photo: Patong Police

Hospital with gunshot wounds.

Nuttawut had been shot in his right leg and Jirawat had been shot in his left hand. At last report both were in care at Patong Hospital.

Police confirmed last Friday that two suspects present for the shooting had been taken into custody for questioning. They were named as Chalermchon Atsorn, 37, registered as living in Srisoonthorn, and Sukanya Suwannoi, 28, from Nong Khai.

Four others in a black Honda sedan seen leaving the scene of the shooting, were involved in the attack, including Nattapong, police said.

According to Patong Police the incident began when a man named Patcharadanai Kingchampa contacted a woman named Sukanya Saksri via Facebook and asked her to pay B3,000, police explained.

Sukanya, registered as

living on 50 Pi Rd, was in the black Honda sedan at the time of the shooting.

What the B3,000 was supposed to be payment so far has not been explained by police.

The demand for payment led to Sukanya and her colleagues, including Nattapong, being "dissatisfied", police said.

The group went to the rented room on 50 Pi Rd where Patcharadanai lives. He was home, but refused to open the door. The group tried to force open the door, but failed, police reported.

Patcharadanai called his brother, Panthakarn Kingchampa, who soon arrived at the room with about seven friends.

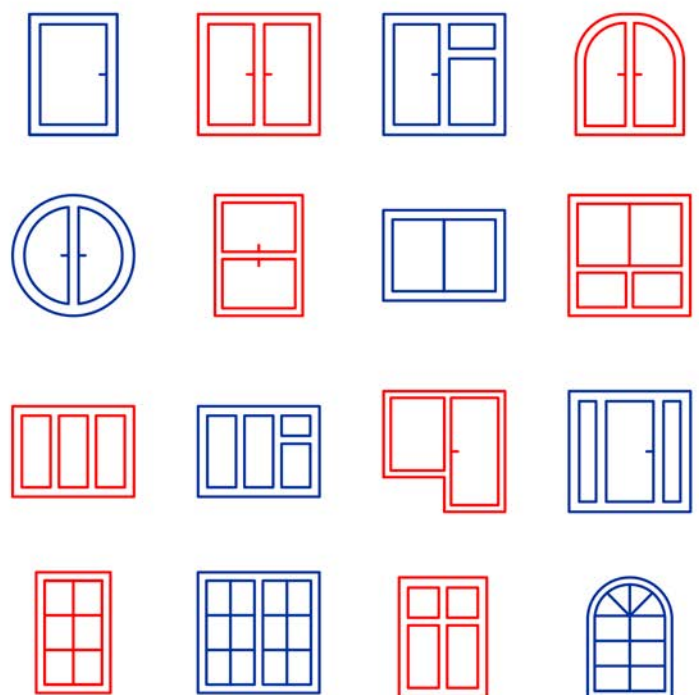
However, the group attempting to enter the room had a firearm. They threatened Panthakarn and his friends, and took Panthakarn away in the black Honda car.

While driving off, a person used the firearm to shoot at Panthakarn's friends, injuring Nuttawut and Jirawat, police said. The shooter is now confirmed to have been Nattapong.

Eakkapop Thongtub



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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
088 766 1615
thai@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**
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Employer charged for illegally hiring foreigners

A 38-YEAR-OLD woman in Patong is to be charged with illegally hiring foreigners at her barber shop after she was found with her second foreigner working illegally at her salon.

**Egyptian Mohamed Bassem was caught cutting hair. Photo: Patong Police**

Patong Police named the woman only as "Ms Petladda, 38 years old (employer)", following the arrest of an Egyptian man found working illegally cutting tourists' hair at the 'Professional Barber Shop' on the Patong beach road (Thaweewong Rd).

Patong Police reported the arrest last Sunday (Aug 6).

The foreigner arrested was named as 38-year-old Egyptian national Mohamed Bassem. Seized as evidence were hair clippers, a hair dryer, one comb, a hair brush and a razor. Presented as evidence were photos of Bassem cutting a tourist's hair.

Bassem now faces charges of working illegally and with staying in the Kingdom of Thailand after his permit to stay had expired (often called 'overstay'), Patong Police reported.

Petladda faces a charge of "admitting foreigners to work without a work permit", Patong Police noted.

Both Petladda and Bassem were taken to Patong Police Station "for further legal action", said the Patong Police report.

The incident marked the second time Petladda had been caught illegally hiring foreigners as barbers. She was named by Patong Police as the owner of the Professional Barber Shop on Rat U-Thit 200 Pi Rd where police arrested a Jordanian national named by police only as "Mr Osamh (alias)" last month.

The Phuket News

Police chase ends driving spree, lands cocaine arrest

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

A police chase through Kathu brought to an end a dangerous driving spree across central Phuket last week that began in Cherng Talay and resulted in many cars being damaged, and ended with a Nigerian man arrested for possession of cocaine.

Phuket Provincial Police first received a report from Cherng Talay Police at 1:15pm on Aug 3, reporting a man driving a grey Mazda 2 driving dangerously, hitting other cars as he made his way along the busy road past the Cherng Talay Police Station.

Similar reports soon followed from Phuket Immigration officers and Phuket Tourist Police officers.

The grey Mazda 2 was reported as heading towards Baan Pasak and Baan Don, in Moo 4, Thepkasattri, and exiting at Khao Lan Intersection on Thepkasattri Rd in Srisoonthorn.

The man then drove south to the Heroines Monument, turned left towards Pa Khlok, made a U-turn and headed back to the Heroines Monument before heading towards Wat Tha Ruea.

The man then took the back roads through to Koh Kaew and made his way onto the road past the golf course towards Kathu.

Kathu Police set up a roadblock near the Loch Palm Golf

**Photo: Cherng Talay Police**

Course, but as the man approached, he stopped and turned around and sped off. Police gave chase.

Further up the road the man lost control of the car, which ended up wedged in a small roadside ditch.

The man in the car attempted to flee on foot, but police had him in custody some 300 metres later.

Officers found no illegal substances inside the car, and failed to find the man's passport.

However, the man identified himself as George Ananare, a 25-year-old Nigerian national.

Ananare's passport expired years ago, during the COVID pandemic. He had overstayed by 1,408 days. A check of his criminal record found that he

previously sold cocaine in Cherng Talay, Kamala and Patong, police said.

A search of Ananare's residence in Moo 4, Bang Jo, Srisoonthorn, found at least eight small pouches of cocaine, police noted. The amount of cocaine was not reported.

Officers also found many keys to other people's residences.

Ananare was taken to Cherng Talay Police Station for questioning and to determine compensation for damage done to other people's cars while he was fleeing police.

Police did not report whether Ananare was tested to determine whether he was under the influence of any substances at the time of his arrest.

FARANG AFFAIRS

By Stephff

<https://farangaffairs.com>

... YOU ARE NOT ENTIRELY SURE THE SICK BUFFALO IS REAL OR NOT.



Pickup slams into tree on road onto Phuket

POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING how a Chalong man lost control of the pickup truck he was driving and slammed into a tree while driving onto the island in Mai Khao last Sunday afternoon (Aug 6).

Pol Maj Akaraphon Siwilai of the Tha Chatchai Police was informed of the accident, opposite Ban Tha Chatchai Mosque on Thepkasattri Rd in Moo 5, Mai Khao, at 4:55pm.

Rescue workers from the Mai Khao Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBor-Tor) and Phuket Kusoldharm Foundation arrived to find the Phuket-registered four-door Isuzu pickup off the southbound lane with heavy damage in the impact.

The driver, Piya Chan-

**Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub**

narong, 43, a resident of Moo 1, Chalong, had suffered an injury to his forehead but was conscious. However, rescue workers were unable to recover Mr Piya from the wreck as his legs were pinned.

Rescue workers brought hydraulic equipment to free Mr Piya from the wreck and rush him to Thalang Hospital.

Police said Mr Piya lost control of the vehicle after he clipped a small cement divider separating from the far right lane. *Eakkapop Thongtub*

Navy recovers wayward tsunami warning buoy

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The tsunami warning buoy that had drifted from its installed location some 340 kilometres northwest of Phuket in the Andaman Sea has been recovered and brought back to the mainland for inspection.

The buoy, Station 23461, ceased transmitting data on July 31. By Aug 3, Chaowalit Nitharat, Director of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) Region 18 office, based in Phuket, announced that efforts were underway to recover the buoy.

At that time, the buoy was reported to be some 44km from its original position, and was floating in the sea some 198km north of the Surin Islands, Mr Chaowalit said.

The DDPM on Monday (Aug 7) reported that the Royal Thai Navy offshore patrol vessel HTMS Prachuap Khiri Khan departed the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command base in Phang Nga at 8:30am last Sunday (Aug



Photo: DDPM

6) to recover the buoy.

By 2:20pm last Sunday the HTMS Prachuap Khiri Khan had located the buoy about 30km northwest of the Surin Islands.

The tsunami warning buoy had been recovered, and the HTMS Prachuap Khiri Khan returned to the Phang Nga Naval Base at about 8am on Monday, the DDPM reported.

The buoy will be kept at the Phang Nga Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office and inspected

to determine how it had been dislodged from its mooring.

Among the list of reasons given by the DDPM as to why a tsunami warning buoy might cease transmitting data was that a buoy being displaced more than two kilometres from its installed location would break its tether to the bottom pressure recorder (BPR) on sea floor, thus rendering the buoy unable to record measurements of wave heights.

The DDPM assured that

its officers were working on rectifying the problem and to have the tsunami warning redeployed in its original location as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, the other tsunami warning buoy maintained and operated by the DDPM, Station 23401, located about 965km west of Phuket, remains functioning normally, the DDPM reported.

Station 23401 forms part of a multinational tsunami detection network in the Bay of Bengal.

Fireworks checks find no infringements

PHUKET OFFICIALS CONTINUING their checks on all stores of fireworks in Muang District have yet to find any business operators operating illegally or in breach of safety regulations.

The checks were launched on July 30 following the deadly blast at a fireworks warehouse in Narathiwat that killed 12 people and left 121 more injured.

Muang District Chief Phairot Srilamul led more inspections of warehouses and vendors of fireworks, and firecrackers on Aug 2. Joining him was District Deputy Chief Thitichai Siemlek and personnel from the Volunteer Defense Corps (OrSor).

The officials checked the operators' license to store and sell fireworks, as well as the type and size of fireworks, and the operators' storage methods.

According to an official report of the inspections, the checks were being conducted to crack down on violations of the law – and also to “support the upcoming Vegetarian Festival”. This year the annual Phuket Vegetarian Festival is scheduled to be held from Oct 15-24.

There are currently 47 operators with licences to store or sell fireworks, said the report.

So far officials have inspected 56 boxes of fireworks, comprising four boxes of 500 units, 29 boxes of 1,000 units, seven boxes of 5,000 units and 16 boxes of 10,000 units.

While no infractions were found during the inspections, officials still reminded operators of the law and safety requirements regarding the storage and sale of fireworks, the official report concluded.

The Phuket News

PLTO donate plate auction proceeds to help disabled

THE PHUKET LAND Transport Office (PLTO) last week donated a portion of the proceeds from a recent online auction of ‘lucky’ vehicle licence plates to nine people who have been impacted and left disabled by road accidents.

The auction, held on July 22 and which raised over B25 million, offered licence plates featuring the Thai letters จอ (KorJor) with the scenic Phuket-specific background, which can be used only on private vehicles registered to carry no more than seven persons.

Starting bids for the lucky numbers ranged from B2,000 to B5,000 to B20,000, depending on the lucky number. The last number to be auctioned off, จอ 9797, went for 97,000.

In closing the event, Pitak Arsuwan of the PLTO announced that the top successful bid was B915,000, though he did not clarify for which licence plate number; the cheapest successful bid was B27,000.

Funds raised by the licence plate auctions go towards road-safety projects carried out by the national Road Safety Fund.



Photo: PR Phuket

This saw nine people who had been seriously injured and rendered disabled in road accidents receive aid equipment, including prosthetic limbs, walking sticks, crutches and wheelchairs.

An official ceremony was held at the Phuket Merlin Hotel in Talat Yai on Aug 4, presided over by PLTO Chief Adcha Buachan.

Mr Adcha was joined by Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) Chief Dr Kusak Kukkiattikoon; Pol Col Kasidin Chaikratok of the Phuket Provincial Police; Dr Piyarat Sakulpipat, Acting Director of the Primary Care Service Group at Vachira Phuket Hospital; Kornpitak Assuwan, Head of the PLTO's policy division; and Napaporn Wiriyanan, Director of the

Phuket Handicapped Service Center.

Mr Adcha explained how proceeds from the plate auction allowed the purchase of equipment to help those who had been seriously impacted in road accidents. In addition to prosthetic limbs, walking sticks, crutches and wheelchairs this included customised beds, mattresses, cushions, hearing aids, visual aids and general medical equipment and supplies.

He added that the online auction was a worthwhile initiative that not only provided buyers with their desired, specialised number plates but that created a charity drive that could help disabled people integrate into society much easier.

The Phuket News

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Hua Hin Airport set for new expansion plan

THE DEPARTMENT OF Airports (DOA) is embarking on an ambitious plan to elevate Hua Hin Airport to international status, as part of efforts to bolster regional tourism.

The airport, managed by the DOA, recently completed the expansion of its runway, now 2.1 kilometres long and 60 metres wide, capable of accommodating Airbus A320 aircraft. Three parking bays have also been set up to help service planes.

Currently, Thai AirAsia operates a three-times-a-week one-stop service between Hua Hin and Chiang Mai, but the airport's vision extends beyond domestic routes. To welcome international flights, safety improvements around the airport are in the works. These include the expansion of the traffic tunnel on Phetkasem Road, approximately one kilometer from the airport, as well as enhancements to the airport train tunnel and the safe zone surrounding the airport, which will comply with International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards.

The DOA has identified a company for the safety expansion project, which will require



Photo: NNT

approval from the Ministry of Transport. The ministry will further forward the budget request to the Budget Bureau before the project can commence. The estimated duration for completion, following the signing of the contract, is estimated at around 600 days.

The airport is also conducting an assessment of its facility expansion options and planning to hold meetings with commercial airlines to understand their concerns. A comprehensive report is expected to be compiled this year and subsequently submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) for the approval of an international airport license.

According to Nopasit Chakpitak, President of Aeronautical Radio of Thailand, the facility currently handles around 30,000 private jets annually, with the capacity to attract more air traffic. *NNT*

Brokers upbeat on new government prospects

Bangkok Post

Although prolonged political uncertainty has been weighing on the stock market, brokers share a positive view of Pheu Thai Party's leadership role in forming the new government as the party has policies to drive the economy and investment through capital markets, benefitting large-cap stocks.

The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) index fell by 1.37% on Aug 3 after the Constitutional Court postponed its ruling on prime minister nominations to Aug 16. As a result, House Speaker Wan Muhamad Noor Matha indefinitely postponed the third round of voting initially scheduled on Aug 4.

The Pheu Thai Party, now leading the formation of the next government, also postponed its announcement regarding its new coalition partners, causing the formation of the government to be delayed by at least two weeks, said Asia Plus Securities (ASPS).

A new government is



An investor examines stock market movement at Asia Plus Securities headquarters. Photo: Bangkok Post.

expected to be formed in September, close to the end of fiscal 2023. Foreign fund inflows are unlikely to return and the SET index may fluctuate over the next two weeks, the brokerage said in a research note.

Citing several sources, ASPS said Pheu Thai's new coalition probably includes Bhumjaithai, Democrat, Chartthaipattana and Prachachart parties, which together have 263 MP seats and would need 112 more votes from other MPs and senators to successfully form a government.

Pi Securities said a new government led by the Pheu Thai Party, which has policies that support the capital market, will boost market sentiment.

Measures proposed by the Pheu Thai Party include a B10,000 digital wallet, a B600 minimum daily wage, a B25,000 salary for university graduates, debt suspension of three years for principal and interest, B2 million of funding for each village fund and a subsidy of B30,000 per farming household.

After the new government is established, the top prior-

ity is to stimulate domestic consumption.

"There are several policies the Pheu Thai Party can implement immediately to boost domestic consumption and tourism," Pi said.

Sectors that are expected to benefit from Pheu Thai policies include retail, tourism, hospitals, banks and alternative energy. Retail loans and power plants, on the other hand, are expected to be negatively affected.

Pi has recommended 11 stocks to benefit from Pheu Thai policies including Bangkok Bank, Krung Thai Bank, Tisco Financial Group, Airports of Thailand, Central Plaza Hotel, Central Pattana, CP ALL, Berli Jucker, Home Product Center, Siam Global House and BCPG.

"If the government is successfully formed by the new coalition, concerns over a political vacuum will subside and the SET index may rebound, driven by speculation on stocks benefitting from stimulus measures under the new Pheu Thai coalition," ASPS said.

Chinese arrivals to Phuket spike in July

DIRECT ARRIVALS TO Phuket from Mainland China reached 74,766 visitors in July, marking a 70% increase compared with June, according to the most recent report by Phuket Immigration.

The overall volume of Chinese tourists is even higher, as the report marks only tourists passing passport clearance at Phuket International Airport, and does not include those making a stop in Bangkok before proceeding to the island.

The 74,766 visitors from China show a marked increase compared with the preceding months: March 45,147 visitors; April 46,697; May 37,949; June 44,066.

As reported by Phuket Immigration on Aug 4, arrivals from other top source markets did not show any drastic changes compared with June. The main sources of tourists for the island in July were:

- China – 74,766 (44,066 in June);
- Russia – 35,521 (25,947);
- Australia – 24,761 (21,902);
- India – 17,224 (20,223);
- Hong Kong – 13,817 (15,234 from Singapore).



Phuket International Airport recorded 320,264 passengers from abroad in July. Photo: TAC Phuket

A total of 320,264 arriving international passengers passed through Phuket Immigration counters at the airport in July compared with 248,325 in June, meaning a 29% surge in direct arrivals from abroad.

Not fully satisfied with the pace of the recovery, Thai tourism operators have already urged the authorities to reintroduce a visa fee waiver scheme for Indians and Chinese to boost arrivals from these two countries.

The call has been pub-

licly supported by Marisa Sukosol Nunbhakdi, President of the Thai Hotels Association (PHA), and Sisdivachr Cheewaratnapanorn, President of the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA).

Mr Sisdivachr said that once the government has been formed, it should immediately introduce the visa fee waiver scheme for at least three months, as seen in 2014 and 2018, *Bangkok Post* reported.

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Pheu Thai, Bhumjaithai forge pact

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The Pheu Thai and Bhumjaithai parties have forged a political alliance with 212 House seats to form a coalition government, saying they already have the backing of MPs from other parties to ensure a solid House majority.

Key figures of the two parties announced their bid to form a government at Pheu Thai's headquarters on Monday (Aug 7).

Bhumjaithai leader, Anutin Charnvirakul, said that Bhumjaithai has no objection to Pheu Thai forming a government as long as Section 112 of the Criminal Code, otherwise known as the lese majeste law, is left untouched.

He added that Bhumjaithai does not support a minority government and will not join any government if the Move Forward Party (MFP) is part of it.

"Today, we have been informed by Pheu Thai that it has agreed with us on these matters. Therefore, from now on, efforts to steer the country forward must go ahead without



Bhumjaithai and Pheu Thai members at the announcement on Monday (Aug 7). Photo: Bangkok Post

obstacles," Anutin said.

"Pheu Thai has now gathered the support of 212 MPs – 141 from Pheu Thai and 71 from Bhumjaithai. When more parties are invited to join, we are confident that this alliance will be able to form a government.

"Pheu Thai also confirms that coalition parties already have the support of more than half of [the total of 500] MPs. We will work together to seek additional support from other MPs and senators to ensure a solid majority in parliament.

"Regarding the nomination of a prime ministerial candi-

date, Bhumjaithai must act in line with the proposal from Pheu Thai and the schedule set by the parliament president."

'SPECIAL POLITICAL SITUATION'

Pheu Thai leader Cholnan Srikaew said he was grateful that Bhumjaithai had agreed to join Pheu Thai "to solve people's problems and national crises, especially those concerning the constitution".

"The 212 votes of Pheu Thai and Bhumjaithai will be the base for the government's formation, and there will be more to provide majority sup-

port in the House.

"So, there are no worries about the possibility of a government with a minority of votes," Dr Cholnan said, adding that Pheu Thai welcomes support for its prime ministerial candidate from all parties.

"The support can come from all parties, possibly from individual members of any party," he added.

"In this special political situation, amid conflict in society, we ask for votes from all parties to support Pheu Thai's candidate for prime minister."

He confirmed that Srettha Thavisin remained Pheu Thai's candidate for the role.

The Pheu Thai leader also confirmed the new coalition would not include the MFP. Other parties and senators would not support a coalition government if it included the MFP, Dr Cholnan said.

"The problems facing the country are severe. The faster a new government is formed, the faster the problems will be solved," he said.

Dr Cholnan went on to say that the new government would step up efforts to revitalise the economy and restore

democracy and unity among the people.

NEW CONSTITUTION A PRIORITY

Amending the constitution is another priority, and when the new government is formed, the first Cabinet meeting will push for a referendum on the drafting of a new constitution to be held, Dr Cholnan explained.

Asked if the so-called "uncle" parties will also be invited to join the Pheu Thai-led coalition, he replied: "The two uncles are not mentioned in the announcement, but we don't mind if any individual MPs or senators support our PM candidate."

The "uncles" refer to Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, the former United Thai Nation Party chief adviser and prime ministerial candidate, and Gen Prawit Wongsuwon, the Palang Pracharath Party leader and its prime ministerial candidate.

Deputy Pheu Thai leader Phumtham Wechayachai said that the alliance between Pheu Thai and Bhumjaithai was a good starting point.

He added that he now expected other parties from the original bloc that was led by the MFP to join the alliance.

Thaksin postpones return from self-exile

BANGKOK

FUGITIVE FORMER prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra said last Saturday (Aug 5) he was postponing his return from self-exile, as Thailand struggles to overcome a political deadlock after the May 14 general election won by opponents of military rule.

Thaksin, a former telecoms tycoon, spent years trying to resist military interference in governments led by his populist party and was eventually ousted in a 2006 coup.

Thaksin posted on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, that he needed a medical check up and would delay his return, originally planned for Aug 10, by a couple of weeks.

"I want to postpone the return date to Thailand from (Aug 10) until not more than two weeks. I will inform the date and time again. A doctor calls me to undergo health check-ups."

On Aug 3, Pheu Thai Party deputy leader Phumtham Wechayachai insisted that Thaksin's planned return to his home country remained unchanged, denying rumours of his delayed return.



Shinawatra: called for medical tests. Photo: Bangkok Post

However, another Pheu Thai source said that Thaksin's planned return will be postponed until a Pheu Thai-led government is formed.

The decision was taken to ensure his return goes smoothly. The source said Thaksin decided to delay his return upon hearing the prime ministerial vote scheduled for Aug 3 was postponed, pending a Constitutional Court decision on whether or not Move Forward Party (MFP) leader Pita Limjaroenrat's renomination as a prime ministerial candidate in the second parliamentary vote was constitutional.

On Thaksin's 74th birthday on July 26, his daugh-

ter Paetongtarn "Ung Ing" Shinawatra, also a prime ministerial candidate of Pheu Thai, announced on Instagram that her father, who is widely believed to be Pheu Thai's de facto leader, is set to arrive at Don Mueang airport on Aug 10.

Whistleblowers, including Chuvit Kamolvisit and Jatuporn Prompan, said they did not believe Thaksin will return to Thailand next week to face prison time.

The fugitive former prime minister has been living in self-imposed exile since being overthrown by a military coup on Sept 19, 2006.

Bangkok Post

More charges likely in fatal fireworks explosion case

NARATHIWAT

WARRANTS MAY BE sought for the arrest of additional suspects in the huge fireworks warehouse explosion that devastated a community in Sungai Kolok district on July 29, the Provincial Police Region 9 chief said on Monday (Aug 7).

Pol Lt Gen Nanthadet Yo-inual said Sompong Nakul, 42, and his wife Piyanuch Puengwirawat, 42, the owners of the illegal warehouse that blew up at Ban Mun, surrendered to police after returning from Malaysia last Saturday (Aug 5).

They were charged and were being questioned further at provincial police headquarters. The investigation was continuing and arrest warrants might also be sought for other suspects in the case.

Twelve people were killed by the explosion, 121 injured and 292 houses damaged, many of them destroyed.



The devastated area. Photo: Border Patrol Police Unit 4414

Sompong and his wife have been charged with negligence causing deaths, importing and/or selling fireworks without a permit and violating the Emergency Decree for the Southern region and could face additional charges.

Asked about police accused of taking bribes in the case, Pol Lt Gen Nanthadet said they were being investigated both for disciplinary and legal action, a process expected to take about a

week.

On Monday, caretaker Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon and his entourage visited the community devastated by the explosion.

He thanked the people who had so far donated about B23.24 million to help the shocked survivors and instructed officials to ensure transparency in their use of the money.

Bangkok Post

A snapshot of the South



GREEN THOUGHTS

Patrick Campbell

To my amazement, the party – celebrating my partner's family acquisition of a new house – went on all day. I should have expected it. After all, the previous day's preparations had been exhaustive, and the cost far above what anyone might expect in a poor rural community. No expense had been spared.

In the forecourt, a dozen tables were decked with red cloths and arranged under an awning. Non-stop food and drink. Mountains of rice. Forty kilos of snapper in two huge tureens of fish stew, a sour one made with green pineapples and a sweeter, fragrant concoction. A clear chicken soup with mushrooms and Chinese herbs. Simply delicious.

What was less surprising was the palpable sense of a local community putting on its best face, a celebratory occasion when friends and neighbours might give unstintingly to a respected and popular family. Everyone came bearing gifts: money in sealed envelopes, and items for the new home including a refrigerator, a water heater, no fewer than five electric fans, potted plants and, more in keeping with tradition, a caged singing bulbul, and numerous framed pictures of the usual



An auspicious occasion, celebrated Southern style. Photo: Patrick Campbell

culprits – His Majesty The King, and a celebrated local monk.

In fact, the Buddhist tradition of blessing a new venture was strictly observed. On a day long before chosen for its auspicious vibrations, five monks had arrived early to intone the chants that sanctify such occasions. These prayers called on the Almighty to bestow good fortune and prosperity on the new dwelling and its occupants, a 'tum boon baan' ritual that involved sprinkling lustral water, and binding the home with white string. In return the monks received money and the first lavish breakfast. By eleven o'clock they had gone.

Certain behaviour patterns were discernible to the outsider – and I was the only 'farang' – especially unexpected differences between the younger and older

generations, and the men and women. Though the party went on all day, with maybe 150 people coming and going, no one seemed to be worse for wear.

Nonetheless, the young bloods, all moustachioed like young Clark Gables, made frequent trips to the huge cooler box that contained the drinks – not to extract a beer as one might expect – but to pour a cloudy, brownish liquid into their insulated mugs. Kratom. Now legal tippie, but a key element in Southern Thai culture and long enjoyed by generations of rural Thais.

A plant from the coffee family, the deeply ribbed leaves are boiled in water to make a kind of concentrated tea. Acting on the same brain centres as opioids, kratom is a mild stimulant and pain reliever. Offered a swig, I noted

that the slightly acerbic taste of the infusion had been masked by some kind of sweetener.

Bucking the trend, one table of young men drank 'Hong Thong', a Thai-style rum made with sugar cane molasses. But there was no sign of *lao khao*, the cheap rice whisky that is standard tippie among indigent rice farmers in the northern provinces.

As for the women, they drank nothing alcoholic apart from the odd beer. And in contrast to their menfolk, none of them smoked. The men, on the other hand, were rarely without a cigarette pressed between their lips – a rather worrying sight – at least to my jaundiced Western eyes. I wondered idly whether such differences in lifestyle might account for the fact that while the men were spare and slim, their partners were mostly 'pumpui'. And be-trousered. Hardly a skirt or dress in sight. Phibun would have turned in his grave.

As a Westerner, one is inured to spoilt kids at parties screaming and shouting. What a contrast. Here there were many children, seen but not heard. And they were respectful, happy to wait and serve, fetching and carrying food and drink for their elders.

This might not be a prosperous community, at least by Western standards, but it still observed its time-honoured traditions with both pleasure and pride. Traditions worth preserving.

It was a privilege to be there.

The September/October 2023 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

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At the helm of Rotary Patong

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Walter Wyler has been elected President of Rotary Club of Patong Beach, the only English-language Rotary Club on the island. This is his second term as President, re-elected late last month to take up the mantle from outgoing President Best Wanamakok.

A long-term Phuket expat and a longstanding active member of Rotary Patong, Walter here presents his first message to the Phuket community:

I am humbled to be elected president of the Rotary Club of Patong Beach in 2023-24 for the second time in my 11 years' membership of the club – although I must admit it was not planned.

I have stepped in while our President-Elect, Hans Guelich, has medical treatment. We wish Hans a speedy recovery and look forward to welcoming him back home to resume his presidency.

While I am president I am determined to lead our dedicated and passionate Rotarians to deliver on our existing projects: a swimming program to help Thai children learn to swim; a long-running scholarship educational programme, and our new 'Lenses for Learning' project providing spectacles to Thai schoolchildren with impaired



eyesight. We are always evaluating new projects.

Here, I must pay public tribute to our Past President Best Wanamakok who steered the club through the difficult days of the pandemic. Our club and our ability to help Thai children on Phuket has emerged stronger than ever. Congratulations to PP Best and his team for receiving a well deserved 2022-2023 Rotary Citation Award.

I suppose I am typical of the Rotarians in our club from a very wide range of occupations and backgrounds who bring their unique knowledge and skills to the table to benefit Phuket. I

completed my Swiss National Air Force service before moving to Singapore in the '90s to work in the power and transmission and distribution industry.

I was president of the Rotary Club of Singapore East from 2009-10; president of our club from 2015-16 and was Assistant Governor in 2017-18. I am also a district club trainer and proud Paul Harris Fellow, which recognises service to the club and the community. I like to think I have used my experience positively to be a mentor to Rotarians on management and administration.

Rotary's work is not just with people of need in the immediate com-

munity. This year Rotary International President, R. Gordon R. McNally has chosen 'Create Hope in the World' as his presidential theme for 2023-24. This is particularly relevant in view of what is happening in Ukraine.

Here in Thailand our District Governor, Dr Chatchawal Telavanich has set an admirable goal to keep up with the new technologies overwhelming all of us by encouraging Rotarians to use more online services such as My Rotary and Rotary Club Central, and other electronic media.

In this regard, one of my objectives as president is to ensure members attend meetings as regularly as possible to get the best benefit from their membership. This not only lends itself to fellowship, but to also learning from our guest speakers and to attracting new members. It's easy for Rotarians and prospective new members, just click the registration link on our website <https://www.rotarypatong.org/>

We meet Tuesdays at 7pm at Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Patong Beach three weeks a month, with a delicious buffet dinner and interesting guest speakers. We have a dinner out on the first Tuesday of each month. Meeting dates are published on our event calendar on the website.

For more information email info@rotarypatong.org; visit Facebook: Rotary Club of Patong Beach (or RCoPB); or go to the website <https://www.rotarypatong.org/>



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Answers below, centre

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Across	48. Bit of a draft	25. Kind of center
1. Deer sir?	50. Go parasailing	26. Like Bo-Peep's charges
5. Short musical piece	51. Take a nap	27. Unchangeable
10. Small amphibians	59. Natural emollient	28. Coquette
14. Designer Chanel	60. Accustom	29. Grimm beginning
15. Pondered	61. Meticulousness	30. 100 qintars
16. Seed covering	62. Computer list	32. Assign
17. Caspian Sea feeder	63. Recuperation	33. In a playful manner
18. Stigmatize	64. Large-scale	35. Leader opposed by the Bolsheviks
19. Fix up	65. Chick's sound	38. Exclamation of displeasure
20. Get some shuteye	66. College leave	39. Stretch (out)
23. Bounders	67. Guff	40. Greeds
24. Fool		46. Most demure
25. Prayer beads	Down	47. Turn left
28. Medicinal balsam	1. Soviet ballistic missile	49. Freeze
31. Mas' mates	2. Unit of pressure	50. Narrow groove
34. ___ and anon	3. Berry	51. Summer place
35. Dogma	4. Links sight	52. On the calm side
36. Hostile	5. Personify	53. Smooth
37. Call it a night at 9 p.m.	6. Racetracks	54. Cameo stone
41. "Gimme ___!" (start of an Iowa State cheer)	7. One of seven: abbr.	55. Diversion
42. Pronouncement	8. Nick's cousin	56. California county or its seat
43. Six-stringed instrument	9. Taro variety	57. TV angel Munroe
44. Big ___	10. Noblemen	58. Parts of a min.
45. Plain and simple	11. Nonconformist	
46. Talkative	12. Ocean motion	
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	21. La Brea goo	
	22. Brown	

1) Universal Serial Bus; 2) Saving Private Ryan; 3) Serbia; 4) Bob Hope; 5) Barry McGuire

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Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

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6	S	A	L	E	M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
7	A	C	E	T	A	X	E	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	S	A	V	E	O	N	E	S	O	W	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	S	P	A	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10	A	R	N	O	L	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
11	M	I	S	R	E	A	D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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14	S	A	T	E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW

A scenic view of a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and yellow. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. Several boats are parked on the wet sand in the foreground. The ocean is calm, and distant islands are visible on the horizon.

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

The 'Wow! Signal' recorded.

A bomb explodes near the Erawan Shrine in Bangkok, killing at least 19 people and injuring 123 others.
Source: Wikipedia

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FRI 11 AUG



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SUN 13 AUG



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MON 14 AUG



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WED 16 AUG



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SAT 19 AUG



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FRI 25 AUG



Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners hosted by AustCham

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber (AMCHAM), British Chamber (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber (GTCC), Netherlands-Thai Chamber (NTCC), Phuket Chamber and Thai-Swedish Chamber, invite you to the Joint Chamber Phuket Sundowners at NH Boat Lagoon Phuket Resort, on Friday 25 August 2023, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. THB 500 for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members, THB 900 for non-members, includes cocktail-style food, and free-flow selected beverages. More info - austchamthailand.com



Briefing on Phuket Marine Industry hosted by AustCham

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with partner Chambers, invite you to an insightful Member Briefing on "Phuket Marine Industry – Charting New Waters" from 17:00 to 18:00 hrs. The event will be hosted at NH Boat Lagoon Phuket Resort. The briefing will feature insightful presentations and dynamic panel discussion, bringing together prominent industry leaders to shed light on key facets of the marine sector. Our distinguished speakers will delve into critical topics that have a profound impact on the marine industry in Phuket including: Marine supply chain, outlook of the charter tourism and local initiatives,

outlook of the regattas / sailing events in Thailand & Phuket. Speakers: Ian Lok; East Marine Asia, Shaun Stenning; 5-Star Marine, Simon James; IRC International Race Officer. Moderator: Matthew Cutt; BDO in Thailand and Treasurer at AustCham Thailand. Email office@austchamthailand.com

THU 31 AUG



Skål International Phuket Dinner - August

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FRI 1 SEP



Grow Boating Evening

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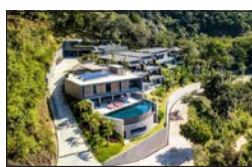
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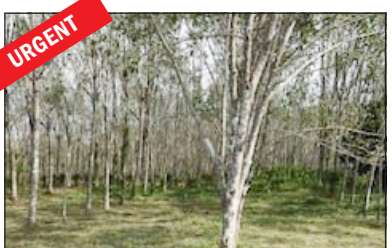
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GROW BOATING EVENING - AUGUST 2022

Another great turn out for this month's event, held at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the Phuket Boat Lagoon on Friday, Aug 4. Thanks to the drinks sponsors for the evening, The Thai Yachting Business Association and the Thailand Charter Week. An extra thanks for the delicious finger food buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro.



Nitithorn refinds form to win Indonesia Open

GOLF

THAI GOLFER NITITHORN Thippong clinched the Mandiri Indonesia Open last Sunday (Aug 6), rediscovering the form that made him emerge as one of the brightest young regional talents last year to win his third Asian Tour title.

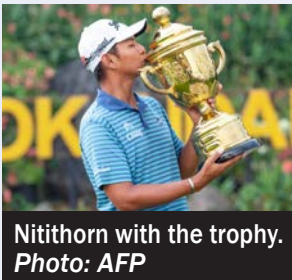
The 26-year-old finished the final round with an even-par 72 for a tournament total of 18-under-par 270 in a close finish at the Pondok Indah Golf Course in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta.

For the Thai golfer nicknamed 'Fever', victory came after a poor first half of the season.

"I feel so happy about this win you know. The last few weeks I didn't feel confidence like this," he said.

"I didn't think I was going to win this year to be honest, but I just planned to just keep doing my best."

He secured a US\$90,000 (B3.1 million) prize for his efforts on the Indonesian leg of the Asian Tour.



Nitithorn with the trophy. Photo: AFP

Nitithorn was trailed by Australia's Scott Hend, England's Steve Lewton and Taiwan's Lee Chieh-po, who all carded four-under-par 68s in the final round to finish two shots behind overall.

Both Lewton and Lee missed late chances to snatch victory from Nitithorn.

South Korea's Yongjun Bae tied for fifth place after breaking the course record with a final round nine-under-par 63.

He tied with fellow countryman Mingyu Cho, Thailand's Pavit Tangkomprasert and Taiwan's Chang Wei-lung.

The next leg of the Asian Tour is the International Series England in Newcastle, which begins on Aug 17. AFP

All Blacks playmakers look to World Cup with confidence

RUGBY

AFP

Playmakers Aaron Smith and Richie Mo'unga say the All Blacks have taken "massive steps" from their troubles of last year and are ready to challenge for the Rugby World Cup.

The pair showcased their class when emerging from the bench to help a weakened New Zealand come back from 17-3 down to edge Australia 23-20 in Dunedin last Saturday (Aug 5).

Scrum-half Smith provided direction while fly-half Mo'unga landed a 79th minute penalty to ensure the All Blacks remained unbeaten this year and upbeat about their prospects five weeks out from the World Cup in France.

The pair loom as key figures at the global showpiece, which could see their final appearances in Test rugby, with both having signed to play for Japanese clubs next season.

Smith was heartened by the All Blacks' form during an imperious run through the Rugby Championship, fol-



New Zealand flyhalf Richie Mo'unga. Photo: AFP

lowed by Saturday's fighting win from a new-look starting side featuring 12 changes.

The 34-year-old highlighted the progress made from last year, when they suffered an uncharacteristic four defeats and struggled for cohesion.

"I think we've taken some massive steps from 2022. I'm actually proud of how far we've come this year," Smith said.

"I'm really excited about the future and what this year holds and where our team's at.

"We just played an amazing Test, blooded some more new boys into our brotherhood. When we got our game plan and our structure going, we were able to dictate terms."

A 118-Test veteran, Smith said it was emotional to play a final Test in New Zealand in front of his home supporters in Dunedin, particularly when leading the pre-game haka.

However, the 34-year-old said he couldn't afford to be distracted as he drove

his forward pack to be more intense, something he says they'll need to be in France.

"It wasn't pretty but in the end we won. A scrum penalty to win the game, that shows it's the way forward, using our forwards to create opportunities," he said.

Mo'unga explained his confidence was buoyed by the All Blacks' superior off-field culture this year.

"We're in a really good place. I'm really happy with the little changes we've made as a team, not just the performances on a Saturday but what I see on a Monday to Friday," he said.

Elsewhere, a much-improved second-half performance from South Africa earned a 24-13 victory over Argentina in Buenos Aires on Saturday, while Caelan Doris scored two tries as Ireland overpowered Italy 33-17.

Wales beat an uninspired England 20-9 in Cardiff while Scotland's 25-21 win over France in Edinburgh was overshadowed by an injury to scrum-half Ben White and a red card to prop Zander Fagerson.

The Phuket News

Новости Phuket ข่าวภูเก็ต

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NFL legend Brady invests into Birmingham City FC

FOOTBALL

AFP

NFL legend Tom Brady said he “couldn’t be more excited” after becoming a minority owner in English second-tier football club Birmingham City.

The 46-year-old seven-time Super Bowl champion has partnered with the club’s holding company Knighthood Capital Management LLC and becomes chairman of a new advisory board, it was confirmed on Aug 4.

“HERE WE GO!” the former quarterback wrote in an Instagram post.

“Couldn’t be more excited to be part of the Blues family.

“This is a city and club on the rise and I can’t wait to experience the St Andrews’ atmosphere for myself.

“The road’s been long for Birmingham, but these fans never stopped believing,” said Brady.

“We’ve got a song that says, no matter what, ‘keep right on til the end of the road’ and I’ll be on that road with you.

“I’ll see you at St Andrews soon. It’s time to get to work. Let’s go.”

Brady is the latest high-profile American to become involved in English football.

Hollywood stars Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney bought Wrexham in 2020 and celebrated as the team returned to the English Football League in April.

Elsewhere, three-time golf major winner Jordan Spieth is involved at



Brady playing for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Oct 2022. Photo: AFP

Leeds United after buying shares in 49ers Enterprises, the investment arm of NFL franchise the San Francisco 49ers.

Championship side Birmingham have twice won the League Cup but the last time they did so, in 2011, they were relegated from the Premier League and they have not returned to the top-flight since.

A decade of controversy ensued under mysterious Chinese ownership that saw the club neglected to the extent that one of the stands at the stadium has been inoperable for several years. Many star players were also sold with little investment going back into the team. The team finished 17th in the Championship last season.

US-based Shelby Companies Limited, a subsidiary of Knighthood Capital Management, completed its takeover in July.

Birmingham chairman Tom Wagner, co-founder of Knighthood, said bring-

ing Brady on board was a “statement of intent”.

“We are setting the bar at world class,” he said.

A statement from Knighthood said Brady would “become chairman of the new advisory board, working directly with the club’s board and members of Birmingham City Football Club’s leadership team.”

It added he would “apply his extensive leadership experience and expertise across several components of the club, including working alongside the sports science department to advise on health, nutrition, wellness, and recovery systems and programmes”.

Birmingham’s new owners said they would be there in person for the first Championship home game of the season, against Leeds tomorrow (Aug 12). The Blues drew their season opener at Swansea 1-1 last Saturday.



Somyot. Photo: Bangkok Post

No lofty targets for Thai team, says FAT chief

RUNNING

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION of Thailand (FAT) president Somyot Poompunmuang has refused to set any lofty targets for the men’s national team in the Asian zone qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup, saying it would put the players under unnecessary pressure.

“I don’t think it will serve any good if we set high goals for the team and put the players under unwanted pressure,” Somyot said on Aug 4, adding the FAT will support the team in every way it can.

“You can say that we are in a tough group, but there are no easy groups there – every team in the tournament will be striving to qualify.”

Thailand were drawn in Group C for the second round of the Asian zone qualifiers

along with South Korea and China, with the fourth team the winners of a play-off between Singapore and Guam.

The top two teams from each of the nine groups will make it to the third and final stage of the qualifiers. Asia has been given a quota of 8.5 teams in the 2026 World Cup.

Former striker Piyapong Pue-on said that Somyot’s future would depend on the War Elephants’ performance in the qualifying tournament.

“If we can qualify for the next phase of the qualifying tournament it would restore fans’ faith in the FAT leadership,” said Piyapong.

“Our main objective should be to get to the 18-team final stage.

“Everything must be planned properly and the team must be given 100 % support. No excuses should be accepted.” *Bangkok Post*

Broad’s farewell ‘written in the stars’

CRICKET

BEN STOKES SAID IT WAS “written in the stars” after retiring paceman Stuart Broad took the last two wickets as England won the fifth and final Ashes Test against Australia on July 31.

Australia, chasing 384 to win, collapsed from 264-3 to 334 all out, meaning England won by 49 runs at The Oval to level the series at 2-2.

Broad finished with figures of 2-62, dismissing Todd Murphy and Alex Carey, taking his overall Test tally to 604 wickets – fifth in the all-time list.

Off-spinner Moeen Ali (3-76) and all-rounder Chris Woakes (4-50) led the way before Broad, England’s all-time leading Ashes bowler, polished off the tail.

“Once we got a couple we really started to believe,” said Broad, who announced on July 29 he would be retiring after the match.

“The crowd were unbelievable. It was so loud and we just jumped on the back of that.

“You wonder what your last ball will be so to take a wicket to win an Ashes Test match is pretty cool.”

England captain Ben Stokes said, “I have played with Broady



Stuart Broad. Photo: AFP

for a long, long time. He has been an unbelievable performer for England and to watch him come in and bowl the way he did – it was written in the stars.”

The skipper also had special praise for Ali and Woakes.

“Mo came into this squad through an unfortunate injury to Jack Leach,” he said. “A few things were said about him but I chose him because I know what he can do on his best days.

“When it really mattered he produced one of his best days. He changed the game for us. For him to do what he has done is just incredible. He has been a great servant to England.”

Stokes said 2-2 was a fair reflection of a thrilling series in which

England had to battle back from 2-0 down.

“I don’t think many teams would have been able to respond from 2-0 down,” he said. “I am incredibly proud of everyone’s efforts.

“I genuinely believe this is what Test cricket needed,” he added.

“Every player in an England and Australia shirt is a massive advocate for Test cricket to stay alive.

“We have been very vocal about that being an objective in the way we play and I think this series has really done that.

“It has captivated so many new fans and attracted a new audience. Test cricket is the purest form and I absolutely love it.

“I hope this series has made it even bigger.” *AFP*



Tawanchai (left) and Superbon. Photo: Bangkok Post

‘Thaitans’ Tawanchai, Superbon to face off

MMA

AN EPIC SHOWDOWN BETWEEN two Muay Thai superstars is set for ONE Fight Night 15 on Oct 7 where Tawanchai PK Saenchai will defend his ONE featherweight Muay Thai world title against Superbon Singha Mawynn at Lumpinee Stadium in Bangkok.

Tawanchai is on a four-fight winning streak, including three crushing knockouts.

At ONE 161 in September last year he claimed a unanimous decision over long-time divisional champion Petchmorakot Petchyindee to win the ONE featherweight Muay Thai world title.

Most recently, the 24-year-old needed just 49 seconds to dispatch

Turkish challenger Jamal Yusupov to secure the first defence of his 26-pound gold belt.

Superbon is looking to become a two-time ONE world champion, this time under a different rule set. Up until recent months, he reigned over the featherweight kickboxing division for two years.

The 32-year-old relinquished his title after a shocking second-round TKO loss to Chingiz Allazov in January. However, he rebounded with a showstopping head-kick knockout of Tayfun Ozcan at ONE Fight Night 11 in June.

The Tawanchai fight will be Superbon’s first under Muay Thai rules since joining the ONE roster in 2020. But he has competed mostly in “the art of eight limbs” throughout his 114-35 career. *Bangkok Post*

Sport

editor3@classactmedia.co.th



NFL star Brady singing the Blues > p15

KICK-OFF!

New Premier League season promises to be a thrilling ride

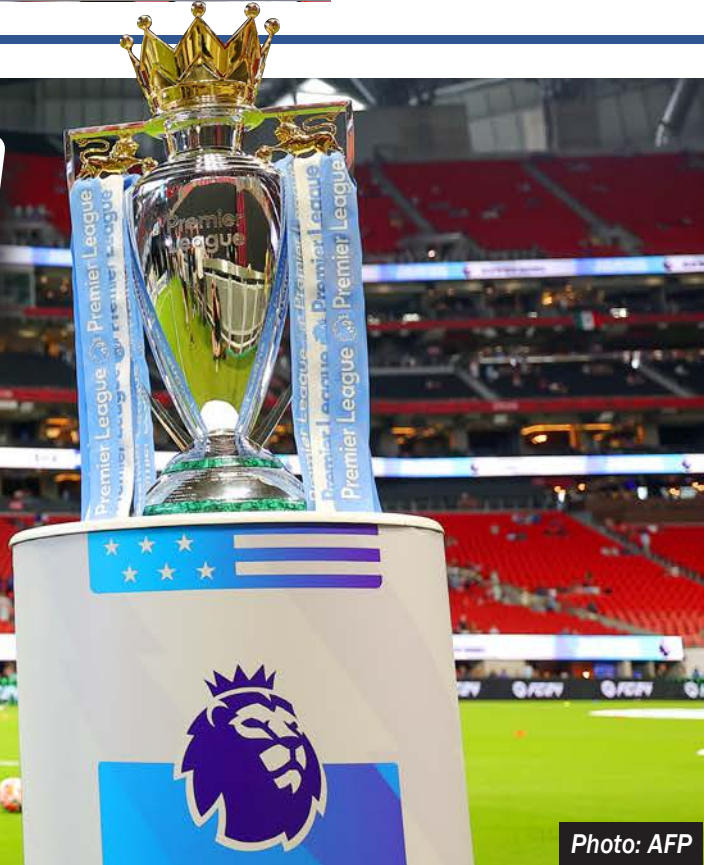


Photo: AFP

FOOTBALL

Ben Tirebuck

editor3@classactmedia.co.th

One of the most eagerly anticipated Premier League season's in recent years gets underway this evening (Aug 11) as defending champions Manchester City travel to newly-promoted Burnley to kick-off the 2023/34 campaign.

Pep Guardiola's City were the dominant force last season when they won their third consecutive Premier League title – their fifth in six seasons – in addition to the FA Cup and the Champions League.

They will once again be the team to beat, with goal machine Erling Haaland leading the line, ably supported by Kevin de Bruyne, Jack Grealish and Phil Foden. Norwegian Haaland scored a staggering 52 goals in 53 appearances last campaign, including 36 in 35 Premier League games, and will be looking to repeat or better the feat this time around.

Last season's runners-up Arsenal bought shrewdly during the summer as they aim to go one better this season. England midfielder Declan Rice arrived from West Ham in a record-breaking £105 million (B4.7 billion) transfer, while Kai Havertz will look to provide some magic in midfield and Jurrien Timber will help bolster an already strong defence.

The Gunners beat Man City on penalties to win last Sunday's FA Community Shield and provide a pre-season boost although traditionally the season's curtain-raiser rarely provides any form of accurate indication as to what lies ahead.

Manchester United have also strengthened with Cameroonian goalkeeper André Onana arriving from Inter Milan, Mason Mount moving from Chelsea and 20-year-old Danish striking sensation Rasmus Højlund switching from Atalanta. United won the League Cup last season and showed strong signs of progress under manager Erik ten Hag, which many expect to continue this campaign.

Liverpool were disappointing last season and will be hoping new signings Alexis Mac Allister and Dominik Szoboszlai can help them push on after losing club captain Jordan Henderson, Fabinho, Roberto Firmino and James Milner from their ranks over the summer.

CALAMITOUS

Tottenham have a new manager in Ange Postecoglou, the first Australian to manage in England's top flight, and will be hoping he can help focus the club after a disappointing last season. New signing from Leicester James Maddison will provide much needed creativity from midfield although much rests on the future of captain Harry Kane who, at time of press, was still the subject of serious interest from Bayern Munich.

Chelsea are also under new management with former Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino now in the hot seat, hoping to realign matters after a calamitous last campaign that saw three managers come and go.

Newcastle, bustling with Saudi money, expect much this season after a mightily impressive fourth-place finish last campaign and Aston Villa could well live up to their tag of dark horses under wily coach Unai Emery who took the club from near relegation to a seventh-place finish in just five months last season.

Brighton are another club on the rise, hugely exciting and entertaining under Roberto De Zerbi. Expect them to continue to impress although the factor of European football for the first time in their history could prove a potential distraction.

Brentford and Fulham rounded out last season's top ten and will be looking for repeat performances, although the Bees will miss star striker Ivan Toney until January due to a ban for betting violations.

Crystal Palace will once again be under the stewardship of 75-year-old Roy Hodgson, the oldest manager to ever ply his trade in the English top flight, although the loss of talisman Wilfried Zaha to Turkish club Gal-

atasaray may prove key. Bournemouth will be looking to progress under new coach Andoni Iraola, likewise Nottingham Forest in their second season back in the top flight.

West Ham have yet to spend any of the money from the Declan Rice sale and their supporters enter the new campaign apprehensive, as do Wolves and Everton, whose managers Julien Lopetegui and Sean Dyche have both constantly complained of a lack of funds for new signings.

Of the promoted clubs, Burnley seem the best equipped to survive, having run away with the Championship last season under former Man City captain Vincent Kompany. They play positive, attacking football and could provide a few surprises.

Experts don't hold out much hope for the other two newbies, Sheffield United and Luton Town, although as has been said many times before football is a funny old game full of surprises, so you never know what lies ahead in what promises to be a thrilling ride of a season.

Phuket honours National Youth Games Wushu medal winners

WUSHU

EIGHT YOUNG ATHLETES who won medals in the sport of Wushu while representing Phuket at the recent Thailand National Youth Games were honoured in a special ceremony last Friday (Aug 4).

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew welcomed the youngsters and their parents at Provincial Hall where the athletes were recognised and praised for their achievements.

The team won 16 medals overall while representing the province at the 38th edition of the tournament in Nakhon Sawan between Mar 31 to Apr



Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

3, including six gold medals, two silver medals and eight bronze.

Phuket finished the tournament in 17th place overall and fourth in the southern-ranked region with an overall medal haul of 53, including 12 gold, 11 silver and 30 bronze.

Leading the medal haul for the young Wushu competitors was Pakin Mutitakul who won three gold medals in different classes of the sport.

Tacharat Phimolphan won one gold, one silver and one bronze while Natthaphon Chanchaoensin secured one gold

and two bronze medals.

Kanyawee Wongthanavirun won one gold medal and one silver medal, while Kanyaphat Wongthanavirun won two bronze medals.

Nichapat Laoprasertsiri, Thanainan Rakna and Petch Handicraft all won one bronze medal each.

Developed in 1949, Wushu is the Chinese term for martial arts and is a full-contact combat sport, including styles such as "short hitting" Nanquan and Nantao, a variation that utilises swords.

At Friday's ceremony Governor Narong expressed his admiration for all of the young athletes who he said

had performed impressively at the tournament, citing their dedication, perseverance and determination. He further declared his appreciation and gratitude for their achievements, explaining they had brought great pride to Phuket and its residents.

Governor Narong also thanked the local schools, teachers and coaches that train the youngsters and help them realise their potential, while also reserving special praise for the children's parents, whose support was key to the athletes' achievements, he said.

Held annually, the Thailand National Youth Games cater specifically to young athletes

throughout the country by providing a platform to encourage and develop success in a wide range of sporting disciplines. The first edition was held in 1985 in Nakhon Ratchasima and the recent edition in Nakhon Sawan saw a total of 46 different sports contested with 16,346 athletes and officials involved.

Some of the other sports that Phuket won medals in at this year's Games included tennis, poomsae, jiu-jitsu, motocross and skateboarding.

The 39th edition of the Thailand Youth Games is scheduled to take place in Ratchaburi province between Mar 21-31, 2024. *The Phuket News*