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THE PASS

An aerial view of the current road over Patong Hill. Photo: Chalermpong Sangedee

PHIPHAT INSISTS PATONG TUNNEL DELAYS WILL BE 'ONLY MINIMAL'

The Phuket News
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Local residents, business leaders and elected officials have united in one of the strongest calls yet for the government to finally break ground on the long-promised Patong Tunnel project, warning that decades of delays have left Phuket's primary west-coast access route dangerously overstretched and unworthy of an island marketed worldwide as a premier tourist destination.

The show of force began on Patong Hill on Nov 4, when former

Patong Mayor Chalerm Sak Manesri led a gathering of local residents demanding that construction of the Patong Tunnel proceed immediately after nearly 30 years of stalled studies, revised designs and shifting policy directions.

Their protest came just days after Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn unexpectedly ordered the decades-in-planning project to undergo yet another full design overhaul. His instructions included narrowing the tunnel's width from 17 metres to 10m, removing toll gates, and transfer-

ring responsibility away from the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT).

The dramatic shift has thrown the project's future into renewed uncertainty, with immediate questions raised about whether motorbikes will be allowed to pass through the tunnel at all – or whether they will require new safety infrastructure, further altering costs and timelines.

Minister Phiphat issued the redesign order barely one week after publicly declaring that the government was spending B130 billion nationwide on road

infrastructure “for the benefit of Phuket”, a comment that struck many local leaders as sharply at odds with the project's latest setback.

'AN URGENT NECESSITY'

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee wasted no time in joining the chorus of frustration, stating that the people of Phuket “have waited long enough”.

“For nearly three decades, the demand for the Patong Tunnel has been shelved, seemingly unimportant, even though it should have been implemented long ago,” he said.

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Phuket Mixed touch rugby a massive hit



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Patong Tunnel in sight

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Calling Patong Hill “the island’s main artery”, Mr Chalermpong said tens of thousands of people rely on the route every day – tourists, residents, workers and students – yet remain at risk from chronic congestion, steep gradients, poor weather, road collapses and frequently fatal accidents.

“Is this the image of a world-class tourist city the government portrays?” he asked. “What we need is immediate construction – not another delay, not another study. The Patong Tunnel is not a dream; it is an urgent necessity. Phuket should not have to wait just to cross a single mountain.”

BUSINESS STEPS IN

In a coordinated show of unity, 24 private-sector organisations convened in Phuket Town the same day to deliver their own message: the island’s growth, safety and competitiveness are being choked by insufficient infrastructure, and delays to major transport projects can no longer be tolerated.

The joint meeting, held at the offices of Phuket City Development Co Ltd (PKCD), brought together some of the island’s most influential business voices, including Phuket Chamber of Commerce President Kongsak Khoophong-

sakorn, Federation of Thai Industries (FTI Phuket) chairman Montawee Hongyok, and Phuket Tourist Association President Thaneth Tanti-riyakit.

Their conclusion: Phuket’s infrastructure is not keeping pace with the island’s rebound in tourism, investment and population – and unless the government turns plans into construction, the country’s top tourism earner risks being overtaken by regional competitors.

“Traffic jams continue to paralyse Phuket,” Mr Kongsak said. “We cannot wait another five years for plans to turn into action. These projects must start now.”

Despite the Highways Department recently adjusting 10 major intersections on Thepkasattri Rd, trimming airport-to-town travel times from 60 minutes to about 40, Mr Kongsak noted that the improvements were small relief compared with the island’s overall infrastructure needs.

At the meeting, business leaders outlined a three-stage strategy they say must advance without delay:

Immediate phase: Further improvements to U-turns and intersections along Route 402 (Thepkasattri Rd); Expand Route 4027 through Pa Khlok to four lanes to strengthen the airport connection.



Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn. Photo: PR Phuket

Short-term phase: Accelerate the Phuket Expressway Project under EXAT, particularly Phase 1 (Kathu-Patong, the ‘Patong Tunnel’, 3.98km) and Phase 2 (Airport-Kathu, 30.62km).

Continuing phase: Advance five strategic developments: a new Sarasin Bridge, the MR9 Surat Thani-Phuket rail line, the Thap Put-Krabi rail corridor, the Phuket Light Rail and the Andaman Airport Project.

“These projects are not luxuries,” Mr Montawee said. “They are the backbone of Phuket’s future. Without them, we risk losing investment and tourism to other destinations.”

GROWTH SURGING BEYOND CAPACITY

Phuket Tourist Association President Thaneth reported that Phuket generated B398.9 billion in tourism revenue between January and September 2025, with earnings expected to surpass B500bn before year’s end.

“Phuket’s tourism is rebounding faster than our

ability to manage it,” he said. “We need roads, airports and safety systems that match our global status as a world-class destination.”

He warned that new flight routes from Mumbai and Paris opening this high season will increase passenger volume even further, while major international events – including the Phuket Contemporary Art Festival, EDC Thailand, the Asian Massage Championship, PRIDE Phuket and the Global Wellness Summit – will continue drawing record crowds.

Mr Thaneth also called for stricter enforcement of international driving licence requirements for foreign renters and improved regulation of car rental operators to ease road chaos and reduce accidents.

Equally urgent, business leaders said, is the long-overdue expansion of Phuket International Airport. Built to handle 12 million passengers per year but now exceeding 15mn, the facility is “bursting at

the seams”, Mr Kongsak said.

The airport has only one runway and 25 aircraft parking bays, yet more than 400 flights now land and depart each day during peak season.

“The expansion must move ahead immediately to handle at least 18 million passengers a year,” he said. “Delay will strangle Phuket’s economy.”

FRESH DELAYS

The private sector is particularly frustrated by the Transport Minister’s decision to redesign the Patong Tunnel – already more than 90% through its land expropriation process, years into planning, and officially approved in 2021 before being shifted from EXAT to the Department of Highways.

Under the existing schedule, construction was slated to begin in February 2027. However, the redesign could set progress back by another four or five years.

“If tolls are an issue, the government can subsidise part of the cost – but the tunnel must be built,” Mr Kongsak insisted. “Any redesign now will only push us further behind.”

Mr Montawee warned that narrowing the tunnel could force the removal of motorcycle lanes, rendering the route less safe and less practical for local residents.

“This is not acceptable,” he said.

While pushing the government to accelerate the tunnel, business leaders also urged immediate improvements to the new smaller road being prepared as an alternative route over Patong Hill. The existing steep, accident-prone road has been the scene of repeated landslides, collapses and fatal crashes.

“Even a temporary road must be safe,” Mr Montawee said. “The people of Phuket cannot rely on a mountain pass that fails every rainy season.”

UNITED MESSAGE

Across the protest on Patong Hill and the private-sector summit in Phuket Town, the message remained consistent: Phuket’s infrastructure crisis can no longer be managed with studies, redesigns and promises.

“The tunnel, the expressway, and the airport expansion are not future plans – they are Phuket’s lifeline today,” Mr Thaneth said. “We are asking the government to act now, before opportunity and safety are lost.”

As Phuket’s leaders warn, the island stands at a crossroads. Whether the country’s most important tourist province continues to rise – or risks falling behind – now depends on whether the government chooses to move forward.

Officials launch crackdown on illegal taxis at airport, in Patong

PHUKET AUTHORITIES HAVE ramped up their crackdown on illegal public taxis, known locally as ‘black-plate taxis’, following renewed complaints from operators and concerns over impacts on public safety and service standards.

At a meeting last Friday (Nov 7), Phuket Governor Saransak Srikrueanetra chaired discussions with affected operators and key agencies, including Vice Governor Samawit Suphanpai, Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Pol Col Phasakon Sonthikul and Phuket Provincial Transport Office (PLTO) Chief Adcha Buachan.

Governor Saransak emphasised that resolving the issue required listening directly to operators, particularly over problems with public driver’s licences and the use of fake ID cards to register with ride-hailing apps, which has led to false data being entered into official systems.

Relevant agencies have been instructed to expedite data collection for legal action, with the province set to explain the outcome publicly once investigations are concluded, said an official report of the meeting.

Pol Col Phasakon reported that CCTV under the ‘Phuket Eyes’ project continues to play a key



Photo: PLTO

role in tracking offenders by recording routes and behavioural patterns. Local businesses told officials they were willing to connect to the system if adequate internet support is provided.

PLTO Chief Mr Adcha apparently noted that since Oct 2, more than 100 checkpoints had

been set up across the island. Several vehicles using unauthorised mobile apps have already been seized, he confirmed, with revealing any specifics, including how many illegal taxi drivers were caught.

The senior officials present reportedly agreed to further integrate operations between agencies, with immediate focus on Phuket International Airport and the Kamala area.

“The province is ready to address the issue comprehensively, with a focus on fairness, tourist safety, and Phuket’s image as a world-class tourist destination,” Governor Saransak said,

noted the official report.

Although the PLTO reported conducting a ‘blitz’ of checks on illegal taxis at Phuket Airport throughout last week, the agency did not disclose whether any drivers were apprehended.

Meanwhile, Patong Police on Monday (Nov 10) reported arresting a Thai man, whom they named only as ‘Mr Chatchai’, near the football field on Thaweewong Rd at 11pm last Sunday night (Nov 9) for operating an illegal taxi. Officers later arrested three more Thai nationals on similar charges just hours later, between 1:30am and 3:30am. *The Phuket News*

Heavy weather strikes again

The Phuket News

editor@classactmedia.co.th

Local residents are hoping the storm-warning heavy weather that battered Phuket last week has marked the end of the worst of this year's rainy season.

Phuket endured a third consecutive week of severe weather disruptions on Nov 6 as heavy rain triggered islandwide flooding, landslips and marine emergencies, including the rescue of four foreign tourists stranded on Koh Mai Thon.

Patong was already grappling with extensive flooding from overnight rain when Governor Saransk Srikruanetra on Nov 6 issued a province-wide weather warning, urging residents to beware flash flooding and landslides. The alert remained in place until Sunday (Nov 10) as downpours continued to soak low-lying areas and hillside communities.

Flooding persisted across Patong, Rawai and surrounding districts. At 2:30pm on Nov 6, a minor landslide on the east side of



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Patong Hill brought down a tree and power poles, briefly knocking out local power and causing traffic to grind to a halt. Volunteer rescue teams were dispatched to assist residents affected by the damaged electrical pole.

Shortly after 5pm, Patong Police, acknowledging the severe congestion, urged motorists to avoid the hill entirely. The route was finally cleared and reopened to normal traffic at 7:20pm.

Patong Municipality reported no new incidents on 50 Pi Rd, which suffered its own landslide two weeks earlier.

Elsewhere, Wichit officials moved quickly to clear a landslide on the Khao Khad-Ao Yon Road. Wichit Municipality councillor Jirasak Kepsap joined engineering teams and disaster-prevention officers at 4:30pm after soil and mud swept across the steep route following hours of heavy rainfall. Backhoe loaders were deployed and the road reopened once safe conditions were restored. The municipality again urged motorists to take extra care on slopes during the rainy season and confirmed that response teams remain on standby around the clock.

Karon Municipality earlier in the day issued an urgent alert to residents of Kata Soi 6, Soi 8 and Soi 2, warning of potential landslides from the Nakkerd Hills. Villagers were asked to prepare to evacuate if conditions deteriorated, and a temporary shelter was established at Kata School.

At 9:24pm, the Phuket Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office (DDPM) issued a heavy-rain warning via cell broadcast, citing ongoing rainfall in hillside zones, low-lying areas and canal corridors that could trigger flash floods and mudslides.

Officials advised residents to remain calm but vigilant, to monitor updates closely, and to stay alert to sudden changes in soil and water conditions. The announcement did not explain why many mobile users did not receive the alert.

Governor Saransk, acting as provincial disaster-prevention director, ordered all local authorities to inspect water-flow routes, clear drains and address recurring flood hotspots. He also requested hourly weather updates from the regional Meteorological Center to support continuous public warnings.

The DDPM, alongside districts, OrBorTor offices, kamnans, village headmen and partner agencies, deployed teams to monitor at-risk areas 24 hours a day. Red flags remained posted along beaches to warn tourists against swimming amid strong winds and dangerous surf.

The same severe weather contributed to a marine emergency off Koh Mai Thon late on Nov 6, when a speedboat carrying four foreign tourists ran aground

on rocks. Vice Admiral Weerud Muangchin, Director of Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Centre Region 3 (Thai MECC 3), ordered patrol vessel T.272 to respond after the tourists had already reached the island and were awaiting help.

T.272 departed at 7:50pm but was unable to safely approach due to powerful winds and heavy waves. The operation was temporarily scaled back to coordinate with Phuket Marine Police, who deployed additional equipment, including rubber boats and support from patrol vessel T.114. With reinforcements in place, rescuers successfully retrieved all four tourists, bringing them back to port at 12:10am on Nov 7.

Thai MECC 3 said it continues to monitor sea conditions and remains on standby to assist mariners in distress. For flood emergencies, residents can call the 24-hour hotline 1784 or the Phuket DDPM at 076-510098-9. For maritime emergencies, Thai MECC 3 can be reached at 1465.

Trial launch of Boat Taxi service postponed

PHUKET OFFICIALS have postponed the trial launch of the province's new Boat Taxi service along Phuket's west coast to Dec 15-30, citing unstable weather and safety risks.

The trial run was originally planned for Nov 15-30. However, the Thai Meteorological Department reported that ongoing heavy rain and strong waves in the Andaman Sea pose safety risks for passengers and operators.

"To ensure safety and proper navigation standards, the trial period has been moved to Dec 15-30, when weather and sea conditions are expected to improve," Phuket Governor Saransk Srikruanetra confirmed at a meeting held last week.

The initial pier at Sirinat National Park has been fully designed and is now awaiting engineering certification and final approval from the Department of National Parks to use the temporary trial area, Governor Saransk said.

A request has also been submitted to the central government to permit passenger vessels to operate in the zone, he added.



Photo: PR Phuket

At Patong Beach, land-use issues for the terminal pier have been cleared, although relevant agencies have been instructed to enforce strict security measures.

The pier in Kamala, previously deemed unready, has undergone additional surveys, Governor Saransk noted.

Patong Municipality has proposed a joint inspection with operators and local authorities to assess route suitability and safety.

Private operators expressed full support for the postponement, saying the December launch aligns with the high tourist season, creating more interest and safer sea conditions after the monsoon, Governor Saransk explained.

"They highlighted that the service will not only help relieve severe traffic, especially in Patong and along airport routes, but also offer a unique travel

experience, including sea-view journeys and a potential new tourism landmark," he said.

"The Boat Taxi will offer an alternative travel option aimed at easing road congestion, particularly in key tourist zones such as Patong and the airport access roads," he added.

The decision was concluded during a Provincial Hall meeting on 'Connecting Transportation Networks and Water Transport to Address Traffic Problems' on Nov 6, chaired by Governor Saransk. The meeting was joined by Vice Governor Adul Chuthong, and relevant government agencies, the private sectors, and local administrations.

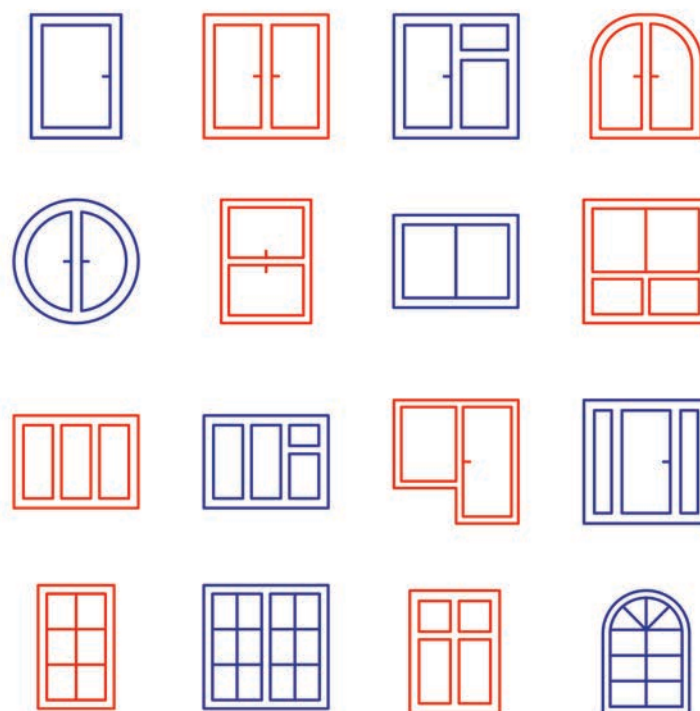
"The Boat Taxi project must deliver value for money, safety and sustainability, ensuring it develops into a standardised water-transport network and long-term solution to Phuket's growing traffic problem," Governor Saransk said.

Park entry fees for operators and foreign tourists will also be reviewed, he noted.

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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FRI NOVEMBER 14



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Low: +29°
Wind 11 m/s

SAT NOVEMBER 15



High: +36°
Low: +28°
Wind 11 m/s

SUN NOVEMBER 16



High: +35°
Low: +28°
Wind 11 m/s

MON NOVEMBER 17



High: +35°
Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

TUE NOVEMBER 18



High: +35°
Low: +28°
Wind 4 m/s

WED NOVEMBER 19



High: +37°
Low: +28°
Wind 4 m/s

THU NOVEMBER 20



High: +36°
Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

Slow loris tout arrested in Karon

KARON POLICE HAVE confirmed that a repeat wildlife crime offender has been arrested after being caught offering a slow loris to tourists for paid photographs at the Karon Night Market – less than a month after officials conducted a similar raid at the same location.

“The same person arrested last time has now been arrested twice before and is currently before the prosecutor’s office, but has committed the same offence again,” said Karon Police Chief Pol Col Khundet Na Nongkhai.

The woman was detained at the police station for further questioning and her case will be forwarded to the prosecutor. Officers are also expanding their investigation to identify other individuals exploiting wildlife in the area.

The arrest was made on Nov 6 by a team led by Karon Deputy Mayor Trin Thipmongkol, supported by municipal officers and staff from



Photo: Chalermpong Saengdee / Facebook

Khao Phra Thaeo Wildlife Sanctuary. Officers found the slow loris being taken to a foreign tourist to pose for photographs.

The woman was charged with illegal possession of protected wildlife under the Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act. The rescued loris will be transferred to the Phang Nga Wildlife Breeding Station for rehabilitation and eventual release, Pol Col Khundet confirmed.

The same woman was arrested on Oct 10 for the same offence.

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee said the recurring problem highlights weak deterrence and low public awareness. He urged tourists not to support wildlife exploitation and to report sightings by calling 1362.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Tour guide strangled in car park horror

Eakkapop Thongtub
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Police have arrested a 43-year-old man from Phang Nga after the body of a missing tour guide was discovered inside her abandoned car in Ratsada on Monday night (Nov 10).

Wichit Police had begun investigating after relatives reported that Orathai ‘Guide Klang’ Ayupong, 56, had failed to return home last Friday (Nov 7). Ms Orathai typically parked her own car at Lotus Phuket in Ratsada before travelling to work in a company vehicle, returning to the mall each evening.

CCTV footage later showed that at about 4:47pm on Nov 7, after she returned from work and walked towards her Nissan sedan, she was followed by a man later identified as Jirasak Yodbamrung, 43. As Ms Orathai opened the driver’s door, Mr Jirasak entered the car via the rear left door. He remained inside for about two hours before driving away in her vehicle, police said.

Investigators tracked the

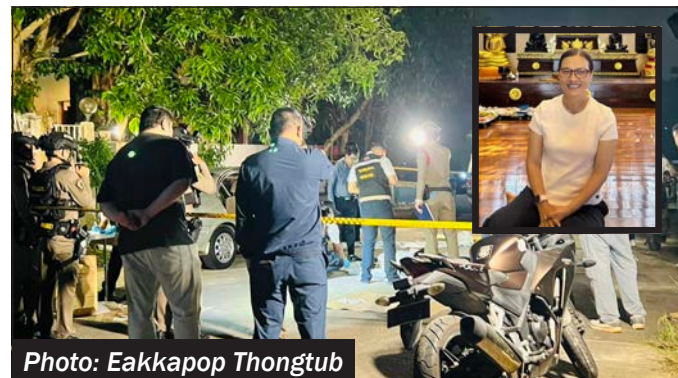


Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

suspect to the bypass road, where officers signalled for him to stop. Police said Jirasak confessed to strangling Ms Orathai with a rope and assaulting her, resulting in her death.

He admitted to stealing a gold necklace, a mobile phone, two gold-framed Buddha images and a red handbag, later selling the necklace for B48,420 at a gold shop inside Lotus Phuket.

The victim’s Nissan sedan was found at about 7:30pm last night, abandoned beside an empty house under a mango tree in Soi Sri Suchat Grand View 2. Her body had been concealed on the front passenger side using a floor mat.

Senior Phuket Police,

including Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum and Phuket City Police Station officers, attended the scene with forensic investigators and a forensic pathologist from Vachira Phuket Hospital. The body was later transported by rescue workers for further examination.

Pol Maj Gen Sinlert confirmed that CCTV analysis, witness interviews and vehicle tracking all led to the suspect. He was arrested near the Bang Khu intersection in Koh Kaew and brought in for questioning, during which he admitted to the killing, police said.

Police are continuing to gather evidence as the investigation proceeds, Pol Maj Gen Sinlert added.

Market fire quickly contained

A FIRE THAT BROKE OUT at Kwang Rd Market in Wichit last week was brought under control within 15 minutes after firefighters arrived, with no injuries or fatalities reported.

The blaze was reported at around 1pm on Nov 5, prompting a rapid response from Wichit Municipality’s Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and Security Unit. Firefighters were joined at the scene by Yodchai Suanlim of Wichit Municipality, officers from Wichit Police and other relevant agencies.

Officials confirmed the fire was contained shortly after 1:15pm. Initial investigations suggest the cause may have been a gas tank leak.

Following the incident, Wichit Municipality’s Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Unit provided on-site training to market vendors on the safe use



Photo: DDPM Wichit

of gas tanks and how to properly extinguish cooking gas fires.

Municipal officials also reminded residents that the Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Unit provides 24-hour emergency services across Wichit Subdistrict through three centres:

- Relief Centre (Sriphuwat Park area): 076-525-199
- Panwa Centre (Ao Makham side): 076-684-443
- Surakul Centre (behind Surakul Stadium): 076-540-899

Eakkapop Thongtub

Israeli lands from Samui with bullets

AN ISRAELI TOURIST WAS arrested at Phuket International Airport on Nov 6 after security staff discovered a magazine loaded with 29 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition inside his checked baggage.

Sakhu Police confirmed the arrest took place at about 4:30pm after officers at the domestic terminal’s baggage x-ray room alerted police to suspicious items inside a black suitcase belonging to the 26-year-old traveller, who had arrived on a Bangkok Airways flight from Koh Samui.

Pol Lt Col Wisanu Chalok, Investigation Officer at Sakhu Police Station, notified his superintendent, Pol Col Salan Santisananakul, before attending the scene. Officers inspected the bag and found a single magazine loaded with 29 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition.

The tourist was informed of his rights and taken into custody on suspicion of illegal possession of



Photo: Sakhu Police

ammunition for which the registrar cannot issue a licence. Officers seized the magazine and rounds as evidence.

He was later handed over to investigators at Sakhu Police Station for further legal proceedings, Sakhu Police confirmed through the Phuket Provincial Police Operations Centre.

No threats or dangerous behaviour were reported at the airport, and the incident is being handled as a criminal possession case. Eakkapop Thongtub

Chalong-Patong road gains momentum

The Phuket News
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The long-awaited road linking Chalong and Patong is moving forward after a site inspection on Nov 4 by PPAO President Rewat Areerob, Patong Mayor Lalita Maneesri and Chalong Mayor Samran Jindapol.

The officials surveyed the proposed 3.1-kilometre route – recently referred to in official reports as the ‘Wang Kata Road’ – to review design progress and discuss construction challenges with engineers and community representatives. Also joining the inspection were PPAO Council Vice President Supachat Kitdamnoen, PPAO Engineering Office Director Wasana Samhuai, PPAO Construction Engineering Division Director Rewadee Madsakul, and municipal officers from Chalong and Patong.

Mr Rewat said the road will significantly shorten travel time between Chao Fa West Rd and Patong, while providing a scenic corridor expected to become a new attraction for visitors and a convenient link for residents. “This will be a route that not only eases traffic but also offers a new check-in point for visitors,” he said, confirming the design phase will finish



Photo: PR Phuket

by year-end. He thanked the Royal Forest Department and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment for supporting the project, which requires permission to build through protected forest areas.

According to the PPAO, about 2.3km of the route lies within Chalong and 800 metres within Patong. The project will be fully funded by the PPAO, with the feasibility study and structural design to be completed this year before being submitted to the PPAO Council for approval. Construction is expected to start in mid-2026.

Chalong Mayor Mr Samran said

the aim is to reduce congestion on Patong Hill and prepare for Phuket’s future growth. “We are coordinating closely with all agencies to expedite this project for the benefit of residents and tourists alike,” he said.

The initiative follows several inspections earlier this year. In March, then-Governor Sophon Suwanarat visited the same route and instructed officials to push ahead after earlier attempts stalled due to steep terrain and budget issues. The new road will cross similar hilly ground to the dirt track opened in early 2023 after the 2022 Patong Hill landslide cut the main Kathu-Patong route.

Parents protest against local school director

THALANG DISTRICT officials have launched an investigation after a group of parents staged a protest calling for the removal of Cherng Talay Witthaya School Director Pajaree Suwatthikun.

About 20 residents gathered outside the school on Sunday (Nov 9), holding signs urging the Ministry of Education and the Phuket Provincial Education Service Area Office to transfer the director. Some signs read, “Get Out! It will be better for the Youth!”, “Director Pajaree, finally become a school administrator” and “We don’t want you, Director!”

The protest followed a formal petition submitted to the provincial education office challenging Ms Pajaree’s suitability for the role, the Thalang District Office explained in an online statement.

The petition alleged administrative problems within the school that have created friction among staff, as well as conflicts between the director and external agencies, including the local administrative organisation,



Photo: Thalang District Office

which has plans to upgrade the school’s football field.

Parents also raised concerns about transparency over revenue generated from advertising billboards on school grounds, said to bring in substantial income.

Thalang District Office confirmed it is reviewing the complaints and coordinating with relevant agencies. “We will continue to monitor progress on the relevant actions,” the office said.

The situation comes as the school begins the 2025 academic year. A parent-teacher meeting went ahead as scheduled on Sunday.

The Phuket Provincial Education Service Area Office, led by Director Panna Phromwichian, has yet to issue any public comment regarding the allegations or the school’s leadership.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Loy Krathong marked with tribute to Queen Mother

LOY KRATHONG CELEBRATIONS lit up Phuket on Nov 5 as municipalities across the island held ceremonies marked by cultural performances, environmental campaigns and tributes to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit the Queen Mother.

In Patong, Mayor Lalita Maneesri presided over the opening ceremony at the temporary pond set up on Patong Beach. Before festivities began, Mayor Lalita led a 93-second silence in remembrance of the Queen Mother.

Mayor Lalita again urged people to float eco-friendly krathong in the specially built temporary pool – six metres wide, 60m long and 80cm deep – instead of the sea, in an effort to reduce marine waste.

“This event promotes local culture and boosts tourism, while protecting our environment,” Mayor Lalita said. The ceremony drew large numbers of residents, community leaders and tourists.

In Phuket Town, Mayor Suphachok La-ongphet joined crowds in front of Suan Luang Rama IX Park, where festivities continued despite heavy rain.

Municipal executives, school representatives, officials and tourists joined in floating krathongs on the park reservoir.

Phuket City Municipality also promoted traditional beliefs linked with Loy Krathong, including placing coins on the krathong for prosperity and floating away bad luck.

In Ratsada, celebrations were held at Phuket Rajabhat University under the



Photo: Phuket Tourist Police

theme ‘Mother of the Nation, Her Grace Transcending Time’.

Phuket Vice Governor Samawit Suphanphai, Ratsada Mayor Jirayut Songyot, officials, teachers and students joined in a candle-lighting ceremony and moment of silence in honour of the Queen Mother.

More than 100 shops joined the event, alongside cultural shows including Khon, Manora and Rong Ngen performances.

In Wichit, celebrations took place at Khlong Mudong, Ban Borae and Laem Dinso Viewpoint, where crowds gathered despite the rain.

Festivities were also held in Srisoonthorn, as communities joined together to keep the tradition alive for both Thai residents and visitors.

Meanwhile in Rawai and Karon, municipalities did not organise decorated festival grounds this year, but residents and tourists were still able to float krathongs at natural waterways in the local area.

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

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Push for new expo bid

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun
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Leading Phuket business figures have thrown their support behind a renewed bid for the island to host the Specialised Expo 2033, this time under a redefined theme of 'Longevity' aimed at positioning Phuket at the forefront of global healthy-aging innovation.

Phuket Tourist Association President Thaneth Tantipiriyakij confirmed the development following a recent joint meeting between the Phuket branch of the Federation of Thai Industries and the Thailand Industry Council. Both agencies agreed unanimously to endorse the province's new direction and support its return to the competition, he said.

However, Mr Thaneth noted that Phuket will need "stronger preparation and a more comprehensive presentation" than in its previous bid, which saw the island lose out to Serbia for the Specialised Expo 2027/28.

Phuket's earlier proposal focused on wellness and medical tourism under the theme 'Future of Life: Living in Harmony, Sharing Prosperity'. The revised concept builds on those foundations but shifts the emphasis to the global challenge of extending



Phuket Youth Ambassador Ananda Lakkhana takes centre stage at the Expo 2028 presentation bid in Paris in 2022. Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs / file

healthy years of life.

"The new direction expands that idea into longevity, positioning Phuket as a destination where people not only live longer, but remain healthier for more of those years," Mr Thaneth told *The Phuket News*.

"Life span" represents the length of time a person lives, while 'health span' refers to the number of years lived in good health. The longevity concept aims to close the long-standing gap between the two," he said.

Globally, people spend an average of nine to 10 years in poor health at the end of their lives, often facing mobility challenges, dependence on medical care and steep household costs, he noted.

"Phuket's proposal aims to showcase solutions that could ensure people enjoy a healthy life equal to their full lifespan," he added.

Mr Thaneth stressed that longevity differs from conventional medical tourism, which caters to those already ill. Instead, the longevity model integrates lifestyle, prevention, innovation and sustainable living "to maintain wellbeing while still healthy".

Phuket will highlight its expanding roster of major events as proof that the island already possesses the international infrastructure, logistics capacity and global profile required to host a specialised expo, Mr Thaneth noted

Between late 2025 and 2026, the island will stage a series of high-profile gatherings, including the Thailand Biennale international art exhibition; the Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC) Thailand; the NewMa Asia Massage Championship; the InterPride World Conference; the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Summit (April 2026); Global Wellness Summit (end of 2026).

"These sit alongside long-standing annual sporting fixtures such as the King's Cup Regatta and the Laguna Phuket Triathlon and the Laguna Phuket Marathon," Mr Thaneth said.

"The whole year's events will be presented as evidence that Phuket already has the infrastructure, logistics and international reputation required to stage a specialised expo," he added.

THE FAILED BID

However, Phuket's failure in its bid to host the 2027/28 Specialised Expo had significant repercussions.

As Thailand's proposal lost to Belgrade at the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) general assembly in June 2023, momentum behind several major infrastructure projects began to wane.

At the time, then-Governor Narong Woonciw warned that the failed bid could slow down long-planned developments, including cross-province road upgrades, tunnel projects, the proposed light-rail system and improvements to Phuket's water supply.

"Since Phuket was not chosen for the expo, the execution of these infrastructure improvements may not happen as quickly as we had hoped," Governor Narong said in 2023.

The government had previously allocated B4.18 billion for preparations, with the government touting that the expo would generate B50 billion in economic value, attract 5 million visitors and create more than 113,000 jobs.

What will become of the 141-rai site earmarked for the original expo, after years, still has yet to be determined.

Despite the setback, Mr Thaneth said the province is entering the new competition with greater clarity and international confidence.

"I believe that with a new theme, a clearer message and growing international momentum, Phuket is in a stronger position than during the first bid," he told *The Phuket News*.

Restaurants upbeat for high season

DESPITE THE DECLINE IN foreign arrivals during the first 10 months of this year, including Chinese tourists dipping by one-third, the Phuket-Andaman Restaurant Club is optimistic about the upcoming high season.

The organisation said the restaurant sector in the province is gearing up for the high season.

From Jan 1 to Oct 31, Thailand recorded 26.7 million foreign arrivals, a 7.23% year-on-year decline, according to the Tourism and Sports Ministry.

The top source markets were Malaysia (3.86 million), China (3.77 million), India (1.98 million), Russia (1.42 million) and South Korea (1.27 million).

Travellers from Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia markets declined year-on-year. The top sources of tourists from these regions such as China and Malaysia decreased by 33.9% and 6.95% year-on-year, respectively.

In contrast, Europe, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa recorded increased tourist arrivals year-on-year.

Pisut Suttijindawong, Vice President of the Phuket-Andaman Restaurant Club and owner of two restaurants in Phuket, said during the recent Vegetarian Festival he felt the province's tourism was vibrant.

However, vibrancy in the city centre and Patong area still has not reached last year's levels and there are fewer tourists,



Photo: Bangkok Post

especially Chinese, compared with last year, said Mr Pisut.

He said this year's tourism high season for Phuket should start later than usual.

Indicators suggesting the approach of the high season, such as high demand for quality raw materials such as seafood products, typically results in skyrocketing prices, but this trend has yet to develop, said Mr Pisut.

However, he said he is optimistic this year's high season in Phuket will be buoyant.

"I believe there is definitely a high season for Phuket, and the vibrancy will return," said Mr Pisut.

However, he said he is unsure whether this year's high season, typically starting in November, will extend longer than usual, possibly until April or May.

People have flocked to Phuket for work during the tourism high season, which lifts the local economy, said Mr Pisut.

He also acknowledged the positive impact of the government's 'Khon La Khrueng Plus' (Half-Half Plus) co-payment scheme on local restaurants as it attracts more Thai diners.

Bangkok Post

Leaders blast airport expansion delay

PHUKET TOURISM leader Thaneth Tantipiriyakij, President of the Phuket Tourist Association, has criticised the prolonged delay of the Phuket International Airport Phase 2 expansion, saying that waiting almost another decade will leave the island unable to cope with soaring passenger demand.

"The project is moving far slower than originally promised, despite the airport already operating near full capacity," Mr Thaneth said at a meeting held at Splash Beach Resort in Mai Khao.

"According to the first plan, the second phase was expected to be completed around 2028-2029," he said. "But after today's meeting, officials said completion may not come until 2031. That means waiting another nine years."

"By then, 18 million passengers will no longer be enough. Phuket should be planning for at least 25mn a year," he added.

Mr Thaneth noted that Phuket is already handling between 15-17mn passengers annually, putting growing pressure on airport



Photo: AOTGA

operations, ground transport and tourism services.

"Without expansion, Phuket risks losing international competitiveness and flight slots to competing destinations," he added. "Phuket cannot wait until 2031."

The delay was confirmed at the meeting on Thursday, which was led by Phuket Vice Governor Samawit Suphanphai, joined by Chief of Phuket Airport General Manager Monchai Tanode his Deputy Chief Tuanchai Tansuriyawong, along with government agencies and business operators.

Phase 2 of the expansion at Phuket Airport includes major improvements to engineering and service systems and the expansion of the international terminal, increasing annual capacity, Monchai explained.

Mr Monchai said the project design is now more

than 50% complete. "We expect design completion in the second quarter of 2026, then move to budgeting and construction," he said. "Contractor selection should be finalised by the end of 2026, and construction should begin in 2027. The build will take about two and a half to three years."

From January-October this year, Phuket Airport handled more than 90,000 flights, expected to reach 120,000 by the end of the year. Passenger numbers stand at around 14 million and may exceed 18 million by late 2025, he noted.

Vice Governor Samawit said the expansion is critical as Phuket's economy depends almost entirely on travel and services.

"In 2024, Phuket earned 92% of its total revenue from tourism, welcoming more than 14mn visitors and generating over B500 billion

"With these numbers, Phuket must accelerate basic infrastructure development, especially the airport," he said.

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

Anutin suspends border truce

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has suspended implementation of the Thai-Cambodian peace agreement and planned release of 18 captured Cambodian troops after four Thai soldiers were injured by a landmine while patrolling the border in Si Sa Ket province.

One of the Thai soldiers, Sgt 1st Class Therdsak Samaphong, lost his right foot in the explosion around 9:30am on Monday (Nov 10).

Private Watchira Thantana suffered chest pain and internal trauma, Private Apirak Srichomchai suffered shrapnel wounds in his legs and Private Anucha Sujaree was hit with explosive chemicals in his eyes.

Anutin said that he had been fully briefed on the incident, which occurred in an area opposite Cambodia's Preah Vihear Temple, and that he agreed with the Defence Ministry and armed forces' recommendation to halt the implementation of the peace agreement.

"What happened demonstrates hostility towards Thailand and a continued security threat. Our soldier lost his leg," the prime minister said ahead of visiting the injured soldiers in Si Sa Ket on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Nattapon Narkphanit said the landmine was



One of the four injured Thai soldiers is taken away for medical treatment on Monday (Nov 10). Photo: Royal Thai Army

likely freshly laid because the explosion occurred on a path regularly patrolled by Thai soldiers.

"This is an act by a Cambodia that does not observe the declaration signed on October 26, 2025," Gen Nattapon said.

The Defence Ministry had sent a written protest to Cambodia via the Foreign Affairs Ministry. It would take additional action if the investigation concludes that the explosion indicated an intention to violate Thai sovereignty, the defence minister said.

Further condemnation came from the Thai army with spokesman Maj Gen Winthai Suvaree saying that forensic officials inspected the landmine explosion site on Monday afternoon and found an explosion pit and three more anti-personnel mines nearby.

According to the spokesman, since Oct 17, Thai soldiers have secured the

area, removed landmines, laid defensive barbed wire and patrolled the locality.

On Sunday, the barbed wire in the area was destroyed. Thai soldiers then checked the area on Monday morning and stepped on a landmine.

On Monday afternoon Thai bomb experts found an explosion pit which was 55 centimetres in diameter and 18cm deep, fragments of a PMN-2 anti-personnel mine in the pit and adjacent area and three more PMN-2 mines about one metre from the pit.

"The evidence led to the conclusion that intruders secretly removed the barbed wire and laid the landmines in the Thai territory, targeting the personnel who conduct regular patrols there," Maj Gen Winthai said.

"The act shows Cambodia's insincerity in reducing conflict and reflects hostility which violates the jointly signed declaration," he added.

Heavy rainfall filling up many dams nationwide

BANGKOK

MANY LARGE DAMS and reservoirs across Thailand are currently close to or exceeding their full water storage capacities due to continuous rainfall, the Royal Irrigation Department (RID) announced on Monday (Nov 10).

The department said the dams and reservoirs include Mae Ngat Sombun Chon Dam in Chiang Mai – 102.46% (exceeding capacity), Mae Kuang Udom Thara Dam in Chiang Mai – 94.09% (near full capacity), Kiew Kho Ma Dam in Lampang – 115.30% (exceeding capacity), Thap Salao Dam in Uthai Thani – 93.26% (near full capacity) and Pasak Jolasid Dam in Lop Buri – 96.90% (near full capacity).

They are among 23 dams and reservoirs nationwide where water storage has reached between 81% and more than 100% capacity, prompting the department to regulate discharges to maintain safety and manage downstream flow.



Bhumibol Dam reservoir in Tak province. Photo: Bangkok Post

According to the Meteorological Department, rainfall across northern Thailand has decreased, although isolated thunderstorms are still expected. This is due to a low-pressure trough covering the western part of the North and neighbouring Myanmar. Residents in these areas are advised to remain on alert for potential hazards from thunderstorms, while farmers are urged to take precautions against possible damage to their crops.

Meanwhile, at time of press, Typhoon Fung-wong, which struck the Philippines on Sunday, was expected to move towards the upper South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait on Tuesday and Wednesday and consequently not affect Thailand. Bangkok Post

Government, hospitals act to bring down drug costs

BANGKOK

A NEW AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE Thai government and private hospitals aims to reduce living costs by B32 billion by promoting transparency in drug pricing and giving consumers more options when purchasing medications.

The 'Happy Body, Happy Wallet' initiative aims to empower patients to purchase medicines outside hospitals, which may encourage them to utilise the services of private hospitals and ease the burden on public facilities.

More than 300 private hospitals nationwide are participating in the project. The Private Hospital Association signed a memorandum of understanding for the programme on Nov 4 with the Department of Internal Trade at the Ministry of Commerce, the Department of Health Service Support at the Ministry of Public Health, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Commerce Minister Suphatee Suthumpun said the project would help patients reduce their medicine expenses by 30%.

The FDA has screened and selected participating pharmacies, with more than 3,400 of the estimated 21,000 pharmacies nationwide taking part so far.

Under the initiative, patients can take prescriptions from private hospitals and purchase medicines at registered



Photo: Ministry of Commerce

pharmacies that display the Happy Body, Happy Wallet logo.

Patients can also purchase medicines through telepharmacy services certified by the Pharmacy Council of Thailand, where they can consult with pharmacists and enquire about medicines and prices.

Outpatients at private hospitals frequently complain about excessive markups on drugs, often ranging from 50% to 100% over what outside pharmacies charge. Many private hospitals also carry only a limited number of generic drug alternatives, though doctors will offer advice on generics if asked.

Chayin Chaturapornprakit, president of the Thai Pharmacies Association, said the project is expected to enhance the standards of pharmacies, allowing for more effective dispensing of prescribed medicines through an official prescription system.

Surachai Kaewhiran, director of Vichavej International Hospital Group, estimated that initially around 5% of the hospital's patients would choose to purchase medicine externally, with the figure rising steadily in the future.

Bangkok Post

The Phuket News

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HOME DELIVERY

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Sora2 – When Everything is Reel



THE AI EDGE

Joe Smith

Sora2 is OpenAI's new tool to create videos of yourself doing anything imaginable.

It's so popular that it got a million downloads in five days when it was launched in North America – more even than ChatGPT. Now Sora2 is available in Thailand.

What it does is create photorealistic videos of up to 15 seconds from any prompt, for you to upload to Instagram, TikTok, or Sora2's own platform.

Sora2's killer feature is making cameos of you from a few seconds of uploaded footage, so you can create clips of yourself flying spaceships or riding tigers or whatever outlandish thing you fancy.

It has generated an outcry over the inordinate amount of compute and power needed to float the app. A 10-second video costs \$.50 – vastly more than a ChatGPT query. Free tier users can make 30 per day. OpenAI, people feel, will need to start making money soon, or the whole AI-fuelled tech stock bubble might blow up.

This is a technology tipped to solve global warming daily burning through amounts of energy that could power cities to make "internet slop" for our SM feeds.

That said, the results, especially of the self-cameo feature, can be breathtaking. And as well as social media, this technology will revolutionise marketing.

So when slop is this good, maybe it's time to get your hands dirty.

I tried Sora2 and, within a minute, had created videos of myself turning into a dolphin and growing wings and flying away.

What blew me away, first, was that it could render my likeness so well after the 10 seconds of video I fed



it. Second is its "world model" – its understanding of object permanence and physics.

Dream big

Here then is a thumbnail guide to what you can do with Sora2.

First, dream big. Sora2 can render intricate scenes with multiple characters, specific motions and detailed backgrounds. Because your prompts will need to be extensive, you might consider the desktop app as well as the mobile.

A game-changer for creators, you can direct the camera. Specify camera movements like pans, tilts, zooms and tracking shots to give your clips a truly cinematic feel.

Sora2 can also take an existing video or image and transform it. Upload your media and then, with a prompt change the entire style, setting, or action.

When you prompt, try to articulate four things: Subject, Action, Setting, and Mood. Don't say, "A dog on a street." Say something more like: "A high-angle wide shot of a golden retriever [Subject] running playfully through a fountain [Action] on a sun-drenched cobblestone street in Rome [Setting]. The scene is joyful and vibrant, with shallow depth of field [Mood/Lighting]."

And don't just describe a continuous action. Break it into "beats". Instead of "a man walks," try: "A man in a trenchcoat walks three steps, pauses under a flickering neon sign, looks up, then turns left."

Describe the camera movements. Say things like "close-up on" and "over-the-shoulder shot" or "dolly in slowly".

Don't forget the audio. Add details like "rain tapping on a metal roof" or "distant traffic hum" to build a richer world.

What's off-limits? Well, in response to early misuse – like viral deepfakes of historical figures saying offensive things – OpenAI now blocks the text-to-video generation of public figures.

You can't use someone's likeness without their permission – and be very leery of giving other people permission to use yours.

And you can't use it to animate copyrighted characters, though of course, people are finding ways around this.

Sora2 is an incredibly powerful tool. For those willing to learn the craft, it represents a new frontier for digital creativity.

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 Chulalongkorn 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.



The December/January 2026 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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Waste dumped by the roadside on Patak Soi 14, Karon. Photo: Courtesy of Mona



Photo: Phuket City Municipality



Photo: Phuket City Municipality

A waste of a 'Clean Province'

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun
reporter1@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket's mounting waste management problems have come under renewed focus after the island failed to secure a place in this year's national 'Clean Province' Community Waste Management Awards – a stark contrast to last year's third-place finish among small provinces.

The annual awards, organised by the Ministry of Interior to recognise provinces demonstrating excellence in sustainable waste practices, were held in Nonthaburi on Oct 30, with Deputy Interior Minister Sakda Wichienilp presiding. While Satun, Lampang and Chanthaburi took top honours this year, Phuket was notably absent from the list.

Officials say the omission reflects deeper, long-standing environmental challenges rather than a simple loss in competition.

"Phuket's problems go beyond the award process," said Wutthichai Bamrungrat, Chief of the Provincial Department of Local Administration. "We're dealing with hidden populations, tourism pressure and a waste volume that far exceeds our disposal capacity."

Phuket generates more than 1,200 tonnes of garbage each day – a figure expected to climb to 1,500 tonnes daily during the upcoming high season. Yet only one incinerator, capable of burning 700 tonnes a day, is in operation. The remainder is buried in the overburdened landfill at Saphan Hin, now spanning more than 120 rai.

Adding to the strain is the island's unique population dynamic. Although just 400,000 people are officially re-

gistered, the real figure, including migrant workers and long-stay residents, exceeds two million. Combined with over 10 million tourist arrivals each year, the volume of waste far outpaces available infrastructure.

Legacy waste

Efforts to ease the crisis include community waste banks and household separation schemes in areas such as Chalong, Cherng Talay and Samkong, where recyclables are exchanged for community funds. However, collection delays in Patong, Ratsada and Cherng Talay – often due to private contractors missing schedules – continue to hamper progress.

Cherng Talay in particular has seen a sharp increase in construction waste from new real estate projects and worker camps.

To manage legacy waste, Phuket

City Municipality has partnered with private firms to convert old landfill rubbish into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) for use in cement factories in Saraburi. Around 600 tonnes of old waste can be processed daily, but current funding – B35 million from the central government and B5mn from the provincial budget – has already run out.

Looking ahead, plans are underway for a second incinerator capable of processing 500 tonnes per day, expected by 2027, while a third is under review by the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), likely to be built in Bang Khanun.

Despite these plans, Mr Wutthichai acknowledged that without stronger waste reduction at the source, Phuket's environmental balance remains precarious. "We need to change how we think about waste – not just how we burn it," he said.

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POP QUIZ

1. Which actress starred in the original King Kong film in 1933?
2. What was the first credit card known as?
3. What did Britain swap Havana for with Spain in 1763?
4. What is the crime of embracery?
5. Where is the world's largest gold depository?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Easy

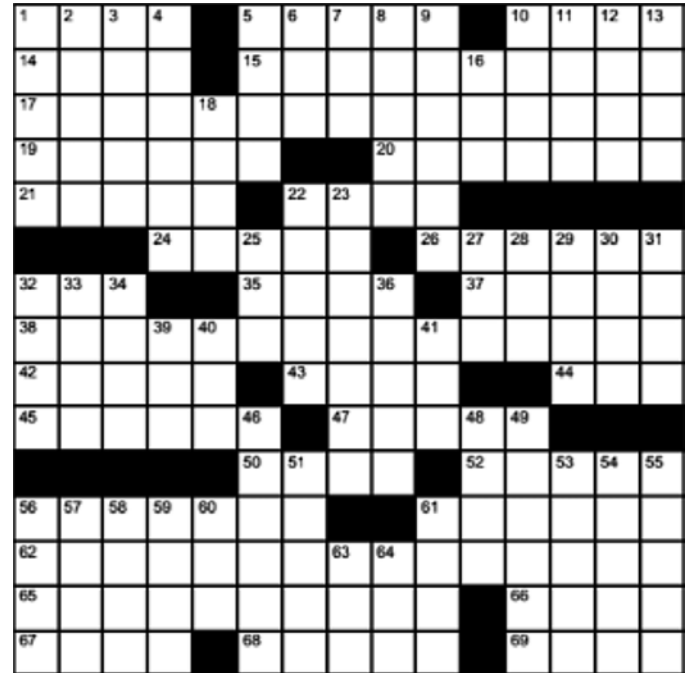
		2			3		7	
5					6	4		
7	8		9					
		1		2			4	
9				5				2
	4			6		3		
					2		3	4
		3	5					1
	9		1		6			

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
1. Fungal spore sacs
 5. Bashes
 10. Quarrel
 14. Pettifoggery
 15. Figurative
 17. Makes a poor purchase
 19. Aim
 20. In a bowl
 21. Riyadh resident
 22. Puffed up
 24. Fey
 26. Rag
 32. Oriental tie
 35. Pastoral sounds
 37. "___ Her to Heaven" (1945 Tierney film)
 38. Getting older
 42. Separate the strands of a rope
 43. Word with steel or snare
 44. Put the kibosh on
 45. Go up and down
 47. ___ one
 50. Theories
 52. Iran-Contra Affair figure Oliver
 56. English playwright John
 61. Some computer
- Down
1. Old Jewish scholars
 2. "King Cotton" composer
 3. South American rodent
 4. Private
 5. Goggle
 6. Singer DiFranco
 7. Time delay
 8. Out
 9. Voiced
 10. Dwelling: var.
 11. Desktop feature
 12. Gridiron move
 13. Vamoosed
 16. ___ furnace
 18. Seed covering
 22. Choice dish
 23. Word jumble
 25. Hoover's org.
27. HBO's "Da ___ G Show"
 28. Shamus
 29. Bit of filming
 30. Square
 31. Tear to bits
 32. ___ probandi
 33. Shade of white
 34. Cruise stopover
 36. Dashes
 39. Father figures
 40. Scandanavian rug
 41. "Interesting!"
 46. Out of breath
 48. Chinese leader?
 49. City slicker
 51. Brief brawl
 53. Busts
 54. Mulgas, e.g.
 55. Wiesbaden's state
 56. Decides
 57. Did in
 58. Island east of Java
 59. Court cry
 60. Ad ___ (relevant)
 61. Bishop's seat in ancient churches
 63. Biddy
 64. It comes before long

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Fay Wray; 2) Diners Club; 3) Florida; 4) Jury bribing; 5) Federal Reserve Bank of New York



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

4

in 10 professional UK footballers have decaying teeth and 1 in 20 has irreversible gum disease, according to a British health study in 2015.

12

minutes is the average time a plastic bag is actually used before being discarded.

60

doors in total were destroyed by Jack Nicholson for his iconic "Here's Johnny!" scene in 'The Shining'.

50,000

to 70,000 thoughts are experienced by the average person every day.

1.5 million

million people worldwide were killed by tuberculosis in 2014, making it a greater cause of death than AIDS.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Rainbow sky in Cherng Talay. Photo by Priya Isaac

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

This week in history

Nov 14, 1680

German astronomer Gottfried Kirch discovers the Great Comet of 1680, the first comet to be discovered by telescope.

Nov 15, 1933

Thailand holds its first election.

Nov 16, 1849

A Russian court sentences writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky to death for anti-government

activities linked to a radical intellectual group; his sentence is later commuted to hard labour.

Nov 17, 1800

The United States Congress holds its first session in Washington, D.C.

Nov 18, 1963

The first push-button telephone goes into service.

Nov 19, 1969

Brazilian football player Pelé scores his 1,000th professional goal.

Nov 20, 1985

Microsoft Windows 1.0, the first graphical personal computer operating environment developed by Microsoft, is released.

Source: Wikipedia



Trades & Services

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FRI14NOV



Grow Boating Phuket Evening - Nov 2025

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Isola restaurant at the Royal Phuket Marina from 5pm. We are delighted to announce that our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Royal Phuket Marina. Royal Phuket Marina is a distinguished world-class destination combining luxury waterfront living with a state-of-the-art marina. Asia's most sophisticated high-tech yachting haven, Royal Phuket Marina is the proud holder of the prestigious 5 Gold Anchor Award bestowed by the British Yacht Harbour Association. See royalphuketmarina.com/marina 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. If you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket/>

SAT22NOV



SPECIAL CHEESE NIGHT

Cheese Night Returns – Join us from 6:30 PM for an unforgettable evening where flavor meets atmosphere. Indulge in our decadent buffet featuring: - European & Thai Cheeses – from soft and creamy to bold and mature - Premium Italian & Spanish Cold Cuts – the perfect match for fine cheeses - Freshly Baked Artisan Breads – warm and crusty, straight from the oven - Classic French Onion Soup – rich and comforting - Live Tartiflette Station – sizzling, cheesy, and prepared right in front of you Price: 1,395 THB per person (drinks not included) Seats are limited – book early to secure your spot at this delicious celebration of cheese! Contact us: +66 62 245 5704 WhatsApp, LINE and Phone calls infuse@diamondresortphuket.com www.restaurantinfuse.com

FRI28NOV



EABC x Phuket Rendezvous 2025

Join the vibrant Thai-European business community for our End-of-Year "Thank you Member" networking event. Get ready for an evening of festive conversation, forging powerful new connections and new opportunities at Akara Grand Ballroom, Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong Beach Resort, registration from 6pm. Members - THB 1,300, non-members - THB 1,800. For more information, please contact EABC Business Development Director, Ms. Petch Chojnacki, at business.director@eabc-thailand.org or 064 310 3559.

WED24DEC



Christmas Beach Market

Celebrate Christmas Eve in tropical style at our Christmas Beach Market. Join us at XANA Beach Lawn on 24 December 2025 for an enchanting evening by Bang Tao Beach. Stroll beneath the stars and discover festive delicacies, tropical Thai favourites, artisanal gifts and sparkling drinks. Enjoy live music, DJ beats and timeless carols carried by the Andaman breeze. Share the moment to your families with fun-filled activities including face painting, balloon artistry, wish-writing to Santa and a cozy Christmas movie corner. Capture joyful memories at the Santa meet-and-greet and take part in exciting lucky draws for luxurious prizes. Wednesday, 24 December 2025 | 18:00 - 00:00 hrs. At Xana Beach Lawn Free Entrance for all. A selection of free-flow food and drinks will also be available for your enjoyment.

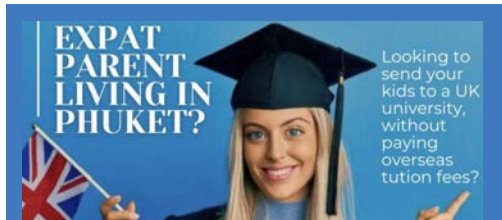
TUE18NOV



Rotary Club of Patong Beach

The only English-speaking Rotary Club in Phuket, we welcome Rotarians from around the world! With members from 18 nationalities, we are a diverse, dynamic, and well-known club in Thailand. 1st Tue each month - Fellowship dinner at different locations in Phuket, 3rd Tue each month - dinner meeting at Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong. Join us! If you are passionate about making a difference. More info - www.facebook.com/RCoPB

TUE25NOV



Send Your Kids To UK University Without Overseas Fees

UK & Irish expat parents in Phuket — learn how to send your kids to UK universities without paying overseas tuition fees! Join our free seminars - Tuesday November 25th – 10:30am at Hickory Phuket (Kathu) or 5:30pm at Woodland Café (Bang Tao). Free refreshments & expert advice from UK Study Options. Save £100,000s on fees regardless of university or course — book now, limited seats available! Drew Mitchell, drewmitchell@international-wealth.com, 062 352 4991

SAT29NOV



Snowbirds Charity Golf Classic

Tee off at one of Phuket's most anticipated charity tournaments — the 3rd Annual Snowbirds Charity Golf Classic, happening Saturday, November 29, 2025 at the stunning Aquella Golf & Country Club. Limited to just 88 players, this Texas Scramble promises a day of friendly competition, great prizes, and unforgettable networking with business and community leaders. With raffles, auctions, and sponsor showcases, it's more than golf — it's the event everyone wants to be part of this season. TheSnowbirdsGolf@gmail.com

THU25DEC



Italian Christmas Feast

Savour the spirit of Christmas at Azzurra, Phuket's authentic Italian beachfront restaurant. Enjoy an intimate Italian Christmas Feast where the warmth of Italy meets the beauty of Bang Tao Beach. Delight in artisanal Vitello Tonnato, Gratinated Sea Scallop, Roasted Capon with Rosemary Potatoes, Pork Cotechino with Lentils, Stewed Salt Cod, Cep Mushroom Risotto and Pumpkin Ravioli with Brown Butter Sage Sauce, finishing with Panettone and Hazelnut Ice Cream. With live entertainment and Italian festive melodies, the evening unfolds as a symphony of flavours and togetherness, offering a truly unforgettable Christmas dinner in Phuket. Thursday, 25 December 2025 | 18:00 - 22:30 hrs. At Azzurra Restaurant THB 1,250++ per guest THB 2,400++ per couple Kids under 12 years charged at half price

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MELBOURNE CUP BRUNCH RAISES FUNDS FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

The annual Melbourne Cup Brunch fundraiser was once again a runaway success, hosted by Casa Boho at the Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort. Guests soaked up the stunning panoramic views across Kamala Bay while enjoying a delicious free-flow brunch. Elegantly dressed guests joined the hotly contested Fashions on the Field, adding extra sparkle to the day. Most importantly, it was a party with a purpose. Thanks to kind prize donors, nearly B300,000 was raised for the Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation, helping to fund free English education for disadvantaged children in Phuket. A fantastic fundraiser for a truly meaningful cause.



OVER 100 VOLUNTEERS JOIN MASSIVE NAI YANG BEACH CLEAN-UP AFTER TYPHOON DEBRIS WASHES ASHORE

More than 100 volunteers came together on Saturday morning, November 8, for a major beach clean-up at Nai Yang Beach, following days of heavy rain and a typhoon that left the shoreline covered in debris and washed-up waste. The event was co-organised by Skål International Phuket and the Sustainable Maikhao Foundation, with strong support from UWC Thailand, local schools, hotels, and community partners. In total, volunteers collected an impressive 645 kilogrammes of waste. Through detailed sorting, 480kg will be recycled while 165kg will go to landfill. The clean-up effort included residents, hotel teams, business owners, families, and students, showcasing the strength of Phuket's community spirit. Skål International Phuket and the Sustainable Maikhao Foundation extend their thanks to all volunteers, donors, and partner organisations who made the clean-up a success.

Thai MotoGP hosting gets Cabinet support

MOTO GP

THE CABINET HAS approved a proposal for Thailand to continue hosting the MotoGP World Championship for another five years, from 2027 to 2031, with a budget allocation of B3.99 billion.

Deputy government spokesperson Aiyarin Phanrit announced that the funding will cover operational costs associated with hosting the prestigious global motorcycle racing event, considered the world's fastest and most popular road racing competition.

She said MotoGP attracts a global audience of over 800 million viewers, with millions following the races both on-site and through live broadcasts.

Thailand has hosted MotoGP since 2018, positioning itself as a key sporting hub in Southeast Asia. The government credits the event with showcasing the nation's organisational capacity and enhancing its reputation on the international stage.

However, the previous



The Buriram circuit. Photo: Bangkok Post

Pheu Thai-led government had considered not extending the contract with MotoGP organisers after next year's event amid a growing conflict between Pheu Thai and Bhumjaithai, then a coalition member.

MotoGP events have been held at Chang International Circuit in Buri Ram, which is Bhumjaithai's political stronghold.

Between 2018-2025, MotoGP has generated an estimated B24.9bn in economic value for the country, Ms Aiyarin said. According to her, surveys indicate that each MotoGP event draws an average of 206,000 spectators, including both Thai and international visitors. The influx contributes significantly to revenue in related sectors such as accommodation, food, transport and tourism.

Bangkok Post

Norris extends F1 title lead

FORMULA ONE

AFP

Lando Norris extended his lead in the drivers' world championship to 24 points ahead of McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri with a well-judged victory in last Sunday's (Nov 9) dramatic Sao Paulo Grand Prix – but Red Bull's Max Verstappen stole the show by racing from a pit-lane start to finish third.

In a tense and incident-filled contest, Norris won by 10.388 seconds ahead of Mercedes' teenage Italian rookie Kimi Antonelli with the four-time champion Verstappen just 0.362s behind after a charging drive, including a puncture, to a podium finish.

Mercedes' George Russell came fourth ahead of the luckless Piastri and three remarkable rookies in Haas's Oliver Bearman and the Racing Bulls of Liam Lawson and Isack Hadjar. Nico Hulkenberg was ninth for Sauber and Pierre Gasly 10th for Alpine.

It was Norris's seventh win of the season and the 11th of his career, moving him within sight of a first world title with a comfortable advantage ahead of Piastri, who fought hard and collected a 10-second penalty, with three rounds remaining.

Norris now has 390 points in the title race ahead of Piastri on 366 and Verstappen on 341.

Asked about the title race, Norris said: "I'm not thinking about it, not



Lando Norris celebrates on the podium with the trophy after winning the Sao Paulo Formula One Grand Prix last Sunday (Nov 9). Photo: AFP

yet, not at all. It's a great win, but to see Max and how quick he was today. That's where my mind is at. And there is a long way to go."

Norris made a clean start from his 15th career pole to lead Antonelli, before Piastri attacked the latter which forced Lewis Hamilton's Ferrari to collide with teammate Charles Leclerc and saw the seven-time world champion lose his front wing.

Verstappen, who had made good progress to move up the order, was hit with a puncture, forcing him to pit and re-join 18th. However, by lap 18 he rose to ninth and then seventh when others pitted.

The Dutchman's pure pace, 24 hours after saying his car was undriveable, was astonishing. By lap

25, he was fourth.

Norris pitted from the lead on lap 31 for softs, giving Piastri the lead, and re-joined behind Verstappen in fourth.

Making use of fresh rubber, Norris swept past Verstappen on lap 33 to regain third which soon became second when Verstappen and Russell pitted, re-joining 12th and sixth.

Norris pitted again for mediums on lap 51. He came out third as Verstappen inherited the lead with Piastri second before he too came in and emerged seventh as the leaders began an 18-lap sprint to the flag.

Verstappen attacked on lap 63 to take third, but Antonelli resisted to secure second with impressive aplomb.

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November-December 2025 issue



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Autumn Nations Series a chance to fine-tune



THE GLOBAL RUGBY COACH

THE CURRENT AUTUMN Nations Rugby Series is clearly providing teams opportunity to prepare for the 2027 World Cup in Australia.

South Africa is the team with the most playing depth, the most rigid and most resilient, as demonstrated by their 32-17 win over France in Paris last Saturday (Nov 8), despite having a man sent off. France, without Antoine Dupont, lacks spark and unpredictability.

England survived an improving Fiji to triumph 38-18, but a question mark hovers over their midfield and the guidance offered from 10. Who plays 12 and 13 will significantly affect who plays 10. Fiji was so creative and exciting for 60 minutes, but ill-disciplined play haunts them. If they can alter this, they can beat anyone.

Ireland eventually beat Japan 41-10, but questions remain. Is the squad too old? Is Crowley better than Prendergast? Japan, like Fiji, plays exciting rugby, but size, or rather lack of it, remains an issue in the game of the giants.

Italy did not surprise many in beating Australia 26-19. Their best players are playing in the French league and their team play is improving in both under-



South Africa's Grant Williams. Photo: AFP

standing and execution quality. A Tenor singing opera welcoming teams onto the pitch is worth the entry fee alone! For Australia, this could be a long and demoralising tour. When they play to their DNA, they are captivating. Sadly, it seems to have gone walkabout.

New Zealand's playing style is consistent with their history and DNA. They have resilience and stay focused when the opposition is having a good time or fighting back, as demonstrated in their 25-17 win against Scotland on Saturday. Their default mechanism is always a quality technique, plus one or two world-class players. Scotland has not beaten New Zealand at home in over 100 years, a statistic that remains.

Wales entered a new era under new coach Lee Zammit and showed some potential against Argentina, before Jac Morgan limped off injured and the Pumas took control to win 52-28.

Black Cats tame Gunners

FOOTBALL

AFP

Arsenal's 10-game winning run came to an end as Brian Brobbey's last-gasp goal gave Sunderland a dramatic 2-2 draw against the Premier League leaders last Saturday (Nov 8).

Former Arsenal defender Dan Ballard fired the Black Cats ahead with a powerful finish in the 36th minute at the Stadium of Light before Bukayo Saka levelled and Leandro Trossard smashed the visitors ahead in the 76th minute.

Then came Brobbey's equaliser in the fourth minute of stoppage time that ended the Gunners' run of eight consecutive clean sheets in all competitions.

It was the first time Mikel Arteta's side had failed to win in any competition since a 1-1 draw with Manchester City in the league on Sept 21.

As they chase a first English title since 2004, Arsenal hold a four-point lead at the top after Manchester City who defeated Liverpool 3-0 on Sunday in what was City boss Pep Guardiola's 1,000th game as a manager at the top level.

Erling Haaland missed an early penalty at the Etihad Stadium, but the City striker recovered to give Guardiola's side the lead before further goals from Nico Gonzalez and Jeremy Doku sealed the win.

It was the perfect way for former



Brian Brobbey fires in the last-gasp equaliser against Arsenal. Photo: AFP

Barcelona and Bayern Munich boss Guardiola to mark the latest milestone in a glittering 17-year career, which includes 716 victories.

Liverpool have lost seven of their last 10 matches in all competitions and trail Arsenal by eight points.

Tottenham Hotspur played out a dramatic 2-2 draw at home to Manchester United, with Bryan Mbeumo firing United ahead in the 32nd minute, resulting in the home team being booed off at half-time.

Spurs hit back and looked to have secured a dramatic victory after Mathys Tel equalised in the 84th minute and Richarlison scored in the 91st minute.

However, United defender Matthijs de Ligt powered in a 96th minute header to extend his side's unbeaten run to five games.

Chelsea move up to third after beating rock bottom Wolves 3-0 with goals from Malo Gusto, Joao Pedro and Pedro Neto, while Aston Villa hammered Bournemouth 4-0 to move into sixth.

Everton ended a three-game winless run with a 2-0 victory over Fulham, Brentford defeated Newcastle 3-1 and Crystal Palace and Brighton shared a 0-0 draw at Selhurst Park to leave both teams in mid-table.

West Ham boosted their bid to avoid relegation with a 3-2 win against fellow strugglers Burnley at the London Stadium, while Nottingham Forest also bolstered their survival bid after defeating Leeds United 3-1, in what was their first league victory since beating Brentford on the opening weekend of the season in August.

LIV Golf switching to 72-hole format in 2026

GOLF

LIV GOLF WILL ABANDON its abbreviated 54-hole format in favour of 72-hole tournaments in 2026, officials confirmed on Nov 4.

The Saudi-backed circuit had previously touted its three-round tournaments as a core distinction from traditional golf events.

However the 54-hole format prevented LIV events from earning Official Golf World Rankings points, making it harder for LIV players to qualify for golf's majors.

A statement from LIV said the circuit's events will now be played over four days, with most starting on a Thursday.

The decision to adopt the 72-hole format also boosts the chances of LIV reaching an agreement with the PGA Tour over unifying golf. The two circuit's different formats had reportedly been a key stumbling block in ongoing negotiations.

The circuit's decision was welcomed by LIV's biggest stars, with former



Photo: AFP

world number one Jon Rahm describing it as "a win for the League and the players."

Two-time major champion Bryson DeChambeau said he hoped the move would enable more LIV players to compete in majors.

"Everyone wants to see the best players in the world competing against each other, especially in the majors, and for the good of the game, we need a path forward," DeChambeau said.

Launched in 2022, LIV Golf divided the sport after signing a slew of golf's biggest names to big-money deals including Rahm, DeChambeau and Dustin Johnson.

The 2026 LIV Golf season tees off in Riyadh in February. AFP

Thai prodigy leads SEA Games golf charge

GOLF

RIISING STAR PONG-sapak 'Fifa' Laopakdee is among seven national golfers who will compete at the upcoming Southeast Asian (SEA) Games after the Thailand Golf Association (TGA) announced its list of players for the biennial tournament last Friday (Nov 7).

Pongsapak became the first player from Thailand to win the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship title in Dubai last month, earning coveted invitations to the Masters Tournament and the British Open next year.

Pongsapak is part of the four-player men's team, which also includes Prarin Sarnsamut, who was a member of the Thai team that finished seventh at the recent World Amateur Team Championship 2025, Thanawin Lee and Warut Boonrod.

The women's players are Prim Prachnakorn, Pimpisa Rubrong and Krittichanya Kaoephattanasakul.

Prim and Pimpisa recently claimed the women's team silver medal at the 2025 Asian Youth



Pongsapak 'Fifa' Laopakdee poses with his trophy after winning the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship in Dubai last month. Photo: Supplied

Games in Bahrain while Krittichanya won the women's team title in the Singapore Open Amateur 2025 and was runner-up at the Junior Golf World Cup 2025.

"Our golfers have been practising hard and competing in international tournaments regularly with some great results. I believe the Thai golf team will have good results at the SEA Games as well," said TGA president Rangsarit Luksitanon.

There are four gold medals on offer in the 33rd SEA Games golf competition, including the men's

and women's individual events and men's and women's team events.

Thailand won two golds in the men's and women's team events and a silver in the women's individual competition at the 2023 edition in Cambodia.

The golf competitions will be played at Siam Country Club Rolling Hill in Chonburi between Dec 11-14.

Bangkok, Chonburi and Songkhla will host the SEA Games between Dec 9-20, while the ASEAN Para Games will take place Jan 20-26, 2026, in Nakhon Ratchasima. Bangkok Post

Senator slams SEA Games prep

SEA GAMES

A SENATOR HAS SLAMMED preparations for the 33rd Southeast Asian (SEA) Games, warning that venues are still incomplete with less than a month to go.

Senator Chamlong Anantasuk, spokesman for the Senate Committee on Tourism and Sports, has raised alarm over Thailand's readiness to host the tournament, scheduled for Dec 9-20, citing poor management by the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT).

Mr Chamlong said on Nov 5 that during an inspection two days earlier at the National Sports University in Chonburi, he found serious shortcomings.

He said the hockey field was still being resurfaced, with only a few workers laying new artificial turf after the old surface had been removed. The women's football stadium, he said, required further upgrades, with dilapidated seating still in place. Weightlifting and judo venues lacked curtains, air-conditioning, and proper lighting, he added.

"With just over a month to go, preparations should already be complete, not under construction," the senator said, questioning why the SAT had allowed such delays.

He also criticised the lack of clear signage and publicity, noting that banners in Chonburi only welcomed



The opening ceremony of the SEA Games Coordination Centre on July 2. Photo: Bangkok Post

visitors to the SEA Games without specifying which sports were being held at which venues.

Mr Chamlong further urged organisers to work on safety, traffic management, and proper facilities before the event begins.

The senator's criticism comes despite an official Coordination Centre for the tournament being officially unveiled on July 2 which Tourism and Sports Minister Sorawong Thienthong said at the time would "be an important part of operations and coordination domestically and internationally to facilitate and increase work efficiency for both games."

Bangkok, Chonburi and Songkhla will host the SEA Games, while the ASEAN Para Games will take place Jan 20-26, 2026, in Nakhon Ratchasima.

Bangkok Post

editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Sport



Black Cats halt Gunners charge > p15

IN TOUCH

ACG mixed gender touch rugby a big hit

Cup Grand Final winners The Hickeys. Photo: Jacob King



TOUCH RUGBY

Jacob King

Mixed gender touch rugby has found a new home in Phuket, as witnessed at the inaugural Phuket Mixed Touch Tournament 2025 recently.

The one-day tournament, fondly referred to as 'Phuket Mixed', made its bow at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) in Thalang on Saturday, Oct 11, and proved to be a huge success both on and off the field.

A total of 10 teams battled it out on the pitch, with one team travelling almost 800km from Pattaya to test themselves against Phuket's finest.

Others participating included the 'Toe Ends' who were made up of players from the local Headstart school, as well as four teams from the Phuket Vagabonds rugby family; the senior teams were expertly named 'The All

Ballers' and 'The Kings' while the academy teams were 'Moodeng' and 'The Flying Lizard.'

Four other local Phuket-based teams included 'The Hickeys,' the 'Phuket Piranhas Ogs', the 'Hat Yai Pretty Mammoth', and 'The Barbarians', while the touring 'Pattaya Panthers' made up the numbers.

INCLUSIVE

Touch rugby, or touch footy as it is commonly known in Australia, is a non-contact variant of rugby meaning no tackling. Instead players lightly tap their opponent with their hand to stop the play then restart the action by putting the ball backwards through their legs.

This lighter approach to a traditionally high-contact sport makes for a much more inclusive environment, meaning male and female players of any age are able to compete on the same field –

perfect for the whole community!

The Oct 11 tournament was played on two high standard pitches and began with a fiery group stage, consisting of two pools of five teams. The knock-out stages then followed, including Plate and Cup semi-finals, third place matches and Grand Finals.

Intermissions in play were filled by a players raffle provided by tournament sponsor Radisson Red Hotel, as well as a footrace, which was won by Kyle Addison of 'The Hickeys'.

With an enthusiastic crowd roaring on from the grandstand, the Cup Grand Final saw The Hickeys run out 1-0 winners against The All Ballers, with Merrick Fairall supplying a strong left-handed pass out to Josh Keys on the wing, who capably dove over the line for the winning try.

The 2nd and 3rd tier Grand Finals were won by The Pattaya

Panthers and Moodeng, respectively.

TEAM EFFORT

An array of individual awards were also won, including: the men's Most Valuable Player (MVP) going to Merrick Fairall of The Hickeys; the women's MVP to Ruth Weakliam of the Pattaya Panthers; the Golden Girl being shared by Pan and Noon of the Flying Lizards; the Golden Boy to First of Moodeng; and the Super Senior to Sam Schofield from The All Ballers.

The event was a huge success and sincere congratulations go to all those that participated and helped organise the event – a true team effort!

Despite travelling such a long distance, the Pattaya Panthers thoroughly enjoyed the tournament, with team captain Ruth Weakliam commenting "[We] will definitely be there next year... it

was a memorable tour for us as a club."

Moving forward, the sky is the limit for touch rugby in Phuket, and indeed Asia as a whole. The next edition of the Phuket Mixed aims to take place in the not too distant future, hoping to draw even more talent from the island's development systems and afar by extending the invitation for international teams to get involved.

In the meantime, regular training takes place with the Phuket Vagabonds RFC every Monday evening from 6:30pm at 99 Grand Arena, Samkhong Boat Plaza. Also, Family Touch takes place every Saturday morning at the ACG from 9am.

Follow the game's development on Facebook and Instagram (@phukettouchrugby) as well as on YouTube at 'Phuket Mixed Touch Rugby' where action from the recent tournament can be viewed.

PHA charity golf day declared a big success

GOLF

A LOCAL GOLF TOURNAMENT that helped raise much needed financial support for Patong Hospital took place at Blue Canyon Golf and Country Club recently.

Organised by the Patong Hotels Association (PHA), the inaugural 'PHA Charity Golf Tournament 2025' saw 111 golfers take to the course on Nov 1 for a good cause.

Furthermore there were over 60 sponsors from the hotel industry, the private

sector and various partner organisations who aligned to provide organisational assistance, financial support and a range of prizes.

Among these was a Hole-in-One prize worth up to B200,000 on the Par 3 holes 2, 12, and 17, while a B50,000 prize was up for grabs on the 8th hole. There was also a special prize for the best shot on the Par 3 hole.

The event aimed to support the purchase of essential medical equipment for patient care in the local area, as well as fostering



Photo: PR Phuket

relationships within the hotel industry, private organisations and various agencies, enabling them to participate in creative corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.

An official donation ceremony took place after the on-course action where

PHA President Chularat Chantakul presented a cheque for B100,000 to Dr Sunantha Khajornrungrang, Acting Director of Patong Hospital, to support the purchase of medical equipment.

"The association is extremely proud that this

inaugural charity golf tournament has been warmly received by business partners and various sectors," commented Ms Chularat.

"This event not only builds networks and strong relationships within the tourism industry, but also reflects the power of social collaboration, which will sustainably improve the quality of life for the people in the Patong community."

The event reflected PHA's commitment to organising social activities and creating projects to develop the Phuket com-

munity, while promoting tourism growth alongside the sustainability of the local community, Ms Chularat added.

"The association would like to thank all partners for their support as well as all the golfers who came to play," she said.

"The whole occasion was the perfect illustration of how collaboration, sharing and the power of giving can create a stronger and warmer environment for our local community," Ms Chularat concluded.

The Phuket News