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TREAT ME



Wastewater at Bang Tao Beach.
Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROJECTS STILL BOGGED DOWN IN RED TAPE

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Phuket beachgoers should ready themselves for another bout of untreated wastewater flowing into the sea at Phuket's main tourists-popular beaches. It has been one year since the China Water Environment Group (CWEG) signed an agreement to begin work on new wastewater treatment plants at key locations across Phuket – and still nothing has been done.

New wastewater treatment systems at Karon and Kamala were proudly touted as CWEG's first priority – two beaches that have long suffered from black, rancid wastewater flowing across the sand and into the sea where tourists swim.

The stinking runoff, which reappears after almost every rainy season, remains an annual embarrassment for Phuket's tourism image – and a recurring health risk for swimming in the water at key Phuket beaches. Yet despite signed agreements, planning and multiple site visits, no construction has begun.

According to Somkid Chokhong, Advisor to the Phuket Governor, the plan to have new wastewater treatment systems installed at key beach areas has fallen apart simply because the bureaucracy has failed.

Plans have yet to be finalised and approved, and funding still has yet to be approved, and the funding cannot be approved until the Terms of Reference are spelled out in detail.

"Some areas have not yet been able to outline the TOR. For example, the Cherng Talay is still in the process of outline, but there is still a lack of budget for construction," Mr Somkid said.

"The Terms of Reference must be finalised before construction can begin," Mr Somkid said plainly.

"Wastewater management is complex and expensive. We held a meeting last month to outline the TOR framework and identify responsible agencies," he added.

Mr Somkid gave no other explanation as to why the entire project has been snarled up in red tape.

BANG TAO CAN WAIT

One key area expecting dire outcomes from poor wastewater

treatment capability is Bang Tao, in Cherng Talay, where the ongoing construction boom has already seen the local population increase by more than 20,000.

Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor) Chief Manoch Panchalad was plain in his prediction in the 'Bang Tao boom' fallout.

"Overall, the Cherng Talay OrBorTor wastewater system is designed to serve more than 50,000 families across Cherng Talay, Bang Tao, Pasak and Khok Tanod," he said.

"We do not have the facilities to treat wastewater from such a large population. There's nothing we can do – we simply do not have the budget."

Years of planning and design...



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face backlash
from local MPs



LIFE PAGE 8

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sounds SOS for
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SPORT PAGE 16

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PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE

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News



Expressway plans hit bump > p5

Wastewater woes go untreated

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...work have stalled due to a lack of funding, despite Cherng Talay being one of the island's most ready sites.

The Bang Tao wastewater system that currently exists was built using more than B300 million from local and environmental fund budgets. That system is now operating and has significantly reduced wastewater flowing into nearby canals and beaches, Mr Manoch said.

However, further expansion planned to serve communities in Pa Sak, Cherng Talay, and Khok Ta Nod has yet to begin.

"The designs and land are ready, but the project cannot move forward because there's no budget," Mr Manoch explained.

"We've submitted proposals through the province and are waiting for approval from the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) under the Environmental Fund," he said.

"I believe Bang Tao's wastewater problems can be solved," Mr Manoch said. "But the expansion will require hundreds of millions of baht and cannot start until new funding is approved."

KARON STALL

In Karon, where black water has repeatedly stained the beachfront, the municipality has completed its system design and secured land for construction. However, the project remains at the funding stage, awaiting roughly B200mn from ONEP.

Somsak Rueanphae, Secretary to the Karon Mayor, said Karon Municipality has two projects under its current action plan. "The first involves fixing the existing wastewater treatment system, partly funded by the municipal budget," he said.



Wastewater in the canal through the heart of Kamala remains a critical issue. Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

"The second – a new system planned for Kata along the Pak Bang Canal – is under review to determine whether funding will come from the ONEP Fund or next year's municipal budget. Karon still has significant unspent funds available."

The first project, covering maintenance and upgrades to existing systems, has already begun.

The ST&BK Joint Venture was awarded the contract as the lowest bidder, offering to complete the project for B5,592,044.70, about 6.8% below the original budgeted amount. The contract was officially announced on Sept 27 this year.

"However, the second project, which involves installing a new treatment system by CWEG, has not yet started," Mr Somsak added. "We already have a sufficient budget, but the TOR is still under review before we can proceed."

KAMALA WOES

Kamala Beach continues to battle

black wastewater discharges stretching up to 250 metres into the sea. Authorities have implemented short- and long-term measures while awaiting funding for a new treatment plant.

Kamala OrBorTor's wastewater treatment system currently operates at only 30% of its 1,000-cubic-metre daily capacity as it is in dire need of repairs, said Kamala OrBorTor Deputy Chief Santhat Khummit.

Short-term remedial measures being rolled out include deploying 'effective micro-organism balls' ('EM balls'), installing temporary pumps and closely monitoring wastewater discharge from hotels and businesses, he said.

As for the new CWEG system long-promised to come, Mr Santhat said, "The system design is complete, but a new site is needed due to narrow space at the existing facility."

"Previously, the pumping system was unbalanced because clean water from a mountain waterfall was mixed into the wastewater line," he explained.

"Now, the Wastewater Management Authority (WMA) has built a water retention point near Kamala Police Station to pump wastewater directly from the source. This separates clean water from wastewater and has partially solved the problem."

The WMA funded the project, which has eased some of Kamala's long-standing wastewater issues – but full treatment capacity remains far from sufficient, Mr Santhat noted.

Another critical area is the Sirinath National Park Canal, where black water continues to flow untreated into the sea.

"The WMA has allocated B40mn this year to build a wastewater treatment pond at Sirinath National Park," Dr Somkid said. "The Sakhu OrBorTor has received approval from the Sangha Supreme Council to lease land from Wat Nai Yang for the project. Additional funds from the province (B2mn) and a private donation (B600,000) bring the total to B2.6mn."

Once complete, the system will allow treated water to be reused for non-consumptive purposes, reducing discharge into coastal waters.

HELPING HAND

"The main problems with wastewater management are primarily at Kamala, Surin and Bang Tao," Phuket MP Thitikan Thitipruethikul told *The Phuket News*.

"At Bang Tao Beach, the Environment committee and I conducted a site visit and worked with the Cherng Talay OrBorTor to monitor water quality. Following our observations, we coordinated the installation of water quality meters to track contaminants, chemicals and other impurities. According to the latest measurements, the water quality

is currently within standard limits," he explained.

"Cherng Talay OrBorTor is working with the Progressive Movement team from the People's Party, which installed pH sensors that alert Cherng Talay OrBorTor if the water is abnormal," he added.

"There have been no complaints filed regarding wastewater at this time," he confirmed.

At Surin Beach, the main problem is the filtration system, which has problems during the rainy season, MP Thitikan noted.

"The solution, replacing the system, requires significant funding. As far as I know, this problem is already in the implementation plan. The project, designed by the CWEG, will require funding from the ONEP for implementation. I'm currently pushing for the Cherng Talay OrBorTor to address this issue," he continued.

"Another area I oversee is Kamala. Kamala's problem is frequent wastewater problems.

The wastewater problem stems from the existing wastewater treatment system, which has been in place for many years," he said.

"However, the number of tourists and hotel rooms in Kamala has increased rapidly, the same as Bang Tao," he noted.

"As the population has increased, the system has become overloaded. Meanwhile, installing an additional wastewater treatment system is facing budgetary and bureaucracy challenges.

"The previous governor pushed hard for this. The new governor will need to keep pushing this issue," MP Thitikan told *The Phuket News*.

"We are currently in the low-season, so we need action on this. The problem will return when the tourism peak season arrives," he concluded.

Cyber safety campaign launched after B900mn in online scams

PHUKET PROVINCIAL Police have launched a major public education drive on cyber safety after revealing that online scams have cost victims on the island more than B900 million over the past three years.

The 'Phuket Cyber Security (Cyber Check)' campaign, led by Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum, was officially

launched on Oct 7 at the Phuket Provincial Police headquarters.

The event marked the start of a training course for community relations officers, teachers, hotel staff and department store employees, aimed at helping them recognise and respond to online threats, and share that knowledge within their communities.

Speakers included officers from the Techno-



Photo: PR Phuket

logy Crime Suppression Division 1, who demonstrated how to use the Cyber Check application (on Google Play and the App Store).

Cyber Check is designed to verify suspicious phone numbers and social media

pages, and to help block contact with known scammers.

Pol Maj Gen Sinlert said the initiative aligns with the national police policy to strengthen cybercrime prevention at the local level.

"Cyber threats are evolving rapidly, and prevention is the key," he said. "The CyberCheck app allows people to verify and block potential scams before damage occurs."

According to police data, from 2022 to Sept 30, 2025, more than 15,000 people in Phuket have reported being victims of online fraud, with total losses exceeding B900 million. This year alone, authorities have recorded around 4,000 new cases.

Pol Maj Gen Sinlert urged the public to follow the core principle of cyber safety promoted by the Royal Thai Police: 'Don't

trust, don't rush, don't transfer.'

He added that those trained under the Phuket Cyber Security program will help extend awareness throughout schools, businesses and neighbourhoods across the island.

"We want this knowledge to spread to every family, every workplace, and every child," he said. "Cyber safety starts with awareness." *The Phuket News*

MP slams alcohol law for graft, confusion

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Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee has criticised Thailand's outdated alcohol laws for creating confusion and corruption, calling for urgent reform to support a sustainable nightlife economy.

"It's time to reform the Entertainment Venue Act to be modern – for a sustainable nightlife economy," Mr Chalermpong told *The Phuket News*, after inconsistent interpretations of the law again caused uncertainty during the Buddhist Lent holiday on Oct 7.

He said the law should clearly define entertainment venues and specify that only those in authorised zones such as hotels, airports and licensed nightlife areas are permitted to sell alcohol during Buddhist holidays. "7-Elevens can't sell alcohol because they're not entertainment venues," he said.

The Entertainment Venue Act, enacted in 1966,



Photo: Patong Police

has become "a tool for bribery and extortion", Mr Chalermpong said, adding that reforms must decentralise authority to local governments, allowing residents to decide where entertainment zones should be located.

"The entertainment business in Thailand has long been plagued by unjustified bribery from officials," he said. "Outdated laws have become a tool for illicit gain. Reforming this law isn't just about entertainment – it's about national income that should return to the people."

His comments followed confusion over alcohol sales in Phuket on Oct 7, when Patong Police Chief Pol Col Chalermchai Hernsawat confirmed that alcohol sales were banned at convenience stores and restaurants not registered as entertainment venues.

"Only places such as hotels, airports and legally licensed entertainment venues are permitted to sell alcohol on the five main Buddhist holidays," Pol Col Chalermchai said, noting that overlapping regulations from the Interior and Public Health ministries had

deepened confusion.

Patong Police conducted inspections on Oct 7 but made no arrests, instead issuing warnings and carrying out "public relations activities" to inform business operators of the ban. Several venues closed voluntarily for the day after the police announcement.

Ironically, police notices specifically highlighted Bangla Rd entertainment venues – which are exempt from the ban both because they are licensed and because they are located in a designated "tourist area".

The same confusion surfaced in July, when Phuket police closed selected bars and restaurants during Asarnha Bucha and Khao Phansa days, again citing unclear regulations.

"The lack of clarity only highlights why reform is essential," Mr Chalermpong said. "It's time to stop using vague laws as tools for corruption and start building a transparent system that supports both tourism and fairness."

Phuket prepares for HRH Princess visit

PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS have begun final preparations to welcome Her Royal Highness Princess Ubolratana Rajakanya Sirivadhana Barnavadi, who will visit Phuket to perform private royal duties during the annual Vegetarian Festival from Oct 19-23.

Phuket Governor Saransak Srikuarnetra chaired a high-level meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on Oct 10 to coordinate readiness for the Princess's visit.

Attending the meeting were Vice Governors Samawit Suphanphai and Suwit Phansengiam, Rear Admiral Praphan Srisuvipa, Deputy Director of the Phuket Provincial Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), Rear Admiral Sompot Thodsanit, Chief of Staff of the Third Naval Area Command, and Pol Col Phasakon Sonthikul, Deputy Commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, along with representatives from local shrines and relevant government agencies.



Her Royal Highness Princess Ubolratana in Phuket in June this year. Photo: PR Phuket / file

Governor Saransak instructed all agencies to ensure full readiness in all aspects of the royal visit, including the procession route, venues, traffic management and public safety. He emphasised that lighting, communications systems and CCTV cameras must be fully operational along the entire route.

He also called for cooperation from the public, particularly in refraining from selling or lighting firecrackers containing cement, which could pose safety hazards.

In addition, security and administrative agencies have been ordered to strictly regulate drone activity in the area throughout the visit to ensure maximum safety, the Governor noted.

The Phuket News

Airport flights disrupted after Navy plane 'belly landing'

PHUKET INTERNATIONAL Airport was forced to close its runway for nearly three hours on Oct 8 after a Royal Thai Navy aircraft experienced a landing gear malfunction during touchdown.

Airports of Thailand Phuket branch (AoT Phuket), which operates Phuket Airport, confirmed that the twin-engine Cessna 337 military aircraft landed at about 11:18am but was unable to move after its landing gear failed to deploy properly. No injuries were reported.

Firefighters arrived at the scene within minutes, and airport authorities immediately suspended all flight operations. The runway was officially closed from 11:42am while the disabled aircraft was removed.

AoT Phuket reported that it coordinated closely with the Royal Thai Navy's Third Naval Area Command, the aircraft's pilots and mechanics, and



Photo: PR Phuket

ground-handling companies to clear the runway.

Equipment and forklifts were brought in, and fuel was safely drained from the aircraft before it was lifted and moved off the runway at 1:49pm.

Airport teams then carried out a full Foreign Object Debris (FOD) inspection and cleaned up a minor oil spill. The runway was cleared for reopening at 2:30pm – around 30 minutes earlier

than originally expected.

In total, 70 flights were affected during the temporary closure, including over 30 international flights, with two flights canceled, AoT Phuket reported.

AoT Phuket thanked all agencies involved for their rapid response and coordination to restore normal operations as quickly and safely as possible.

The Phuket News

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s



Photo: Phuket Marine Police

Tourist saved from propeller accident

OFFICERS FROM THE Phuket Marine Police rushed to prevent a female foreign tourist from being struck by a non-moving boat propeller on Oct 7 – and later arrested the vessel's captain for operating the boat without a valid licence.

The incident occurred at about 10:30am while officers from Marine Police Region 3, Division 8, were conducting a crime suppression patrol in Ratsada, on Phuket's east coast.

While officers were conducting their patrol, a foreign female tourist screamed as she fell from the back of the tour speedboat while she was trying to climb aboard.

The woman landed on the sand, but the boat started moving backwards, with the propellers approaching dangerously close to her.

The boat's engine was not on and the propellers were not engaged, but with the woman in clear danger, the officers rushed to render assistance, as did other tourists standing by and the boat crew.

The tourist was brought safely ashore and treated for minor injuries.

After ensuring the woman's safety, police inspected the boat and questioned the operator, identified only as 'Mr Tharawut', who was unable to present a certificate of competence or a valid boat operating licence.

Tharawut was subsequently charged with operating a vessel without the required certification and licence, in violation of Section 150 of the Thai Maritime Navigation Act, Marine Police confirmed.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Patong fireworks fiasco leaves one man injured

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Two foreigners set off fireworks that dangerously detonated on Patong Beach early last Saturday morning (Oct 11), causing minor injuries to a beachgoer and property damage.

Patong Police reported that the incident occurred at around 12:15am. The details were confirmed in a report submitted to the Commander of Phuket Provincial Police for information.

According to the police report, Patong lifeguards detained two Omani nationals – Mr Al-Amri Basim Badar and Mr Al-Breiki Hamood – after fireworks were set off on the beach. The pair were accused of igniting the fireworks.

Lt Wisanu Chumee, Deputy Investigating Officer at Patong Police Station, said two witnesses initially claimed to have seen the foreigners light the fireworks. However, both later retracted their certainty in written statements.

When questioned, the two Omani men told investigators they had been walking along the Patong beach road when they heard fireworks being set off. They crossed the road to see what was happening, but were soon surrounded by lifeguards who accused them of being responsible.



Screenshot: MonsoonGarbage Thailand

The men provided a video clip to police showing their location and the unfolding events. Upon reviewing the footage, investigators confirmed that their statements were consistent with the evidence.

Further investigation included reviewing CCTV footage from the area, which showed two other individuals – a man wearing white and a woman wearing black, both resembling foreigners – setting off the fireworks, which detonated in a barrage right on the

beach. Police noted that the individuals' appearances did not match those of the detained Omani men.

As a result, both Mr Al-Amri and Mr Al-Breiki were released. Police confirmed that the investigation is continuing to identify and track down the real perpetrators.

The victim, identified as Mr Alsuhibany Abdulkarim Saleh M, told police he sustained only minor injuries and did not wish to press charges, as he wanted to rest.

Patong Police confirmed that updates on the case have been forwarded to the Phuket Provincial Police Commander and that officers are reviewing additional CCTV footage to locate the two suspects seen in the video.



Photo: DDPM Rawai

Foreign man escapes car fire

A FOREIGN MAN WAS taken to hospital after escaping a car fire that destroyed his vehicle on Wiset Rd in Rawai on the evening of Oct 9.

Rawai Municipality firefighters received a report at about 10:50pm from local residents who saw flames coming from a Ford sedan parked on the roadside. Two water trucks were dispatched to the scene.

On arrival, officials found the front of the car engulfed in flames. Fire-

fighters worked quickly to bring the blaze under control, taking about 20 minutes to fully extinguish it.

The Ford, registered in Phuket, was completely destroyed.

The driver, described as a foreign man, suffered smoke inhalation and was taken by rescue workers to Bangkok Hospital Phuket for treatment.

At last report, fire investigators were inspecting the vehicle to determine the cause of the blaze.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Drunk husband shoots wife in the arm

A MAN HAS BEEN ARRESTED after shooting his wife in the arm while intoxicated at their home in Ratsada late on Oct 9.

Phuket City Police were alerted to the shooting at 11:40pm by the 191 Emergency Call Centre, reporting that a woman had been shot by her husband at a house located on Sri Suthat Rd.

Lt Col Yutthaphon Phromdao, Investigating Chief at Phuket City Police Station, received the report and coordinated with Phuket City Police Superintendent Pol Col Chatree Chukaew, along with Deputy Superintendents Lt Col Atthawat Suwannarat and Lt Col Thanatrang Wuttiwong, to lead a team to the scene.

Rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation also joined the response.

At the house, police found the suspect, later identified as Phakhawat Phumchan, visibly intoxicated. He admitted to shooting his wife, Ms Phatphassorn Kongmongkol, 45, who was discovered hiding in a second-floor bedroom with a gunshot wound to her right arm.



Photo: Phuket City Police

Ms Phatphassorn was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital for treatment.

A search of the property uncovered a firearm and ammunition kept in a safe in the suspect's bedroom. The weapon and ammunition were seized as evidence.

Phuket Provincial Forensic Police were called to examine the scene and collect evidence.

Mr Phakhawat was taken into custody and faces legal action over the shooting, police confirmed.

Police said that the investigation was continuing to determine the exact circumstances of the incident.

Eakkapop Thongtub

More red tape for Phuket expressway

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Progress on the second phase of the Phuket Expressway Project, connecting Muang Mai, Koh Kaew and Kathu, has moved forward as officials prepare the proposal for Cabinet approval, with the aim of opening the new route alongside the first phase in 2030.

The update came during a meeting held at 9:30am on Oct 9 at the Phuket Highways Office, presided over by Phuket Governor Saransak Srikuangtratra. The meeting reviewed the latest design and implementation details of the expressway's second phase.

Attending were representatives from the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT), including Phase 2 Project Manager Therdsak Puangjinda and the project's consulting team, along with Phuket provincial officials and local leaders.

Among them were Phuket Provincial Palad (Chief Administrative Officer) Thiraphong Chuaychu, Phuket Highways Director Somkit Kittisopit, Phuket Land Transport Office Chief Adcha Buachan, the Minister of Transport's working group led by Wiwat Jindapol and Ploythala Laksamisanchan, and



Photo: PR Phuket

Patong Deputy Mayor Sanakorn Kisin.

Governor Saransak said the project is one of the government's urgent transport policies under Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, aimed at easing chronic congestion and strengthening Phuket's transport network to support urban growth and tourism.

"The expressway is essential for improving convenience, speed and safety, and for enhancing the province's long-term

development potential," Gov Saransak said.

He added that a provincial working group will be established to coordinate with EXAT to ensure the smooth execution of the project, with public hearings to be held in affected areas such as Kathu and Patong to build awareness and understanding among residents.

EXAT has divided the Phuket Expressway Project into two main phases.

* Phase 1, the Kathu-Patong section (Patong Tunnel), covers

3.98km, including a four-lane at-grade road and a tunnel with a dedicated motorcycle lane and a central safety control centre. The Cabinet approved the phase in August, land acquisition is more than 75% complete, and construction contractors are now being procured. The route is expected to open in April 2030.

* Phase 2, the Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu section, spans 30.62km with a four-lane at-grade road and tunnel works. The environmental impact assessment has been completed,

and the plan is being finalised for Cabinet consideration, with the goal of also opening in April 2030.

A representative from the Minister of Transport's working group noted that the government is prioritising solutions to Phuket's traffic problems, given its role as a global tourism hub. "The Minister will personally visit Phuket to follow up on progress and ensure the project proceeds as quickly as possible," the representative said.

Patong Deputy Mayor Sanakorn Kisin said Patong Municipality is developing a management plan to make the best use of land beneath and around the expressway. "We plan to use partially expropriated areas for public parking and transport services to help improve traffic flow and accommodate future tourists," he said.

The long-awaited Phuket Expressway Project, combining both phases, is seen as a major milestone in modernising the island's infrastructure.

Once complete, it is expected to significantly reduce travel times, relieve congestion on main roads, and strengthen Phuket's connectivity, supporting sustainable economic and tourism growth in the years ahead, said an official report of the meeting.

Phuket marks World Food Day

MORE THAN 40 PUBLIC and private organisations joined forces at Sriphuwat Park in Wichit last Friday (Oct 10) to mark World Food Day 2025, promoting equal food access and support for vulnerable communities across Phuket.

The event, organised by the Phuket Provincial Corporate Social Responsibility Centre (CSR Phuket Centre) in collaboration with Wichit Municipality and partner networks, was presided over by Phuket Governor Saransak Srikuangtratra.

Also in attendance were his wife, Ms Ruedeewan, who now serves as President of the Phuket Red Cross; Sompit Sriksamhaeng, Director of the Phuket Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office; Wirintra Paphakityotsapat, President of the Phuket Provincial Business Social Responsibility Promotion Centre; and Wichit Mayor Kreetta Chotiwichpipat, along with heads of government offices, business representatives, volunteers and more than 500 local residents.

Governor Saransak said



Photo: PR Phuket

food security was a fundamental human right, noting that everyone should have access to safe and nutritious food. "Today's event demonstrates the cooperation of all sectors in tackling food inequality," he said.

Governor Saransak added that Phuket's efforts align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Zero Hunger and Zero Food Waste, to build a more equitable and sustainable society.

The event featured booths promoting sustainable consumption and nutrition, environmental awareness activities, and the distribution of more than 10,000 meals, drinks, snacks and essential items to local residents and vulnerable groups in Wichit and nearby areas, including

Ratsada, Kathu, Chalong and Phuket Town.

The deliveries were coordinated through a network of social development volunteers and municipal teams.

This year's World Food Day carried the theme 'A society of sharing, leaving no one behind', reflecting the combined efforts of government, private and civil society partners to strengthen community resilience and reduce social inequality through sustainable food systems, explained an official report of the event.

Observed annually on Oct 16 and designated by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Day raises global awareness of the importance of sustainable food production, consumption and accessibility.

Phuket Provincial has now hosted local events to commemorate the day for five consecutive years, expanding its network of cooperation and reaffirming its commitment to improving quality of life for all residents, the official report said. *The Phuket News*



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Seaplane ready to launch test run

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Thai Seaplane Co Ltd CEO Kasinpoj Rodko says his company is fully ready to begin operations using the country's first newly acquired seaplane, as part of a planned government-private 'Sandbox' test project expected to launch later this year.

Mr Kasinpoj told *The Phuket News* the initiative aims to make Phuket the regional hub for seaplane travel across the Andaman Sea, offering short, direct flights between the island and key destinations such as the Similan Islands, Krabi and Koh Lipe.

"Phuket will serve as the main gateway," Mr Kasinpoj said. "Passengers will be able to land here and connect directly to nearby islands. We aim to reduce travel time, strengthen tourism, and create new opportunities for the local community."

The company is currently awaiting final operational approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) and the new Phuket Governor, following advice from Vice Governor Samawit Suphanphai to allow time for review. The seaplane operator is also coordinating with the Aeronautical Radio of Thailand (Aerothai) on the testing phase.



Photo: Thai Seaplane

If approved, Thai Seaplane will initially bring in five aircraft, expanding to a fleet of 30 within five years, Mr Kasinpoj said.

"Each aircraft can carry up to 10 passengers, with retractable wheels allowing them to take off and land on both land and water," he added.

The company's first seaplane, registered 'HS-TSP', is now stationed in Phuket. The chosen hub site will be off Koh Taphao Yai, off Phuket's east coast, selected for its calm, deep water and proximity to Phuket Town.

The water-based 'runway' requires only 600 metres of surface and a depth of 30-50cm, which Mr Kasinpoj said makes operations "less disruptive than traditional boats or ferries".

He highlighted the time savings compared to existing routes:

* Phuket Airport to the Deep Sea Port: 10 minutes

* Phuket to Koh Kradan: 25 minutes (instead of 5-6 hours by boat)

* Phuket to Koh Lipe: 40 minutes

* Phuket to Krabi: 15 minutes

* Phuket to Koh Phi Phi: 10 minutes, with an estimated fare of about B4,000 (US\$120) per trip.

The service will initially connect Phuket and Trang under a controlled testing 'Sandbox' programme hoped to launch next month, allowing Aerothai to monitor environmental effects, including engine noise, oil residue, and coral impact. If results show no negative effects, commercial operations could begin by mid-2026, Mr Kasinpoj explained.

Thai Seaplane has commissioned the Faculty of Environ-

ment at Kasetsart University to conduct a comprehensive environmental impact assessment (EIA). The study covers marine ecosystems, air and water quality, and the potential effects on coral reefs and marine mammals such as dugongs.

"To mitigate impacts, our engines and propellers are mounted above the fuselage, preventing collisions with marine life," Mr Kasinpoj explained. "Unlike speedboats, seaplanes don't produce underwater vortices that damage coral reefs."

The company also plans to transition to sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and recycled oils in the near future to lower its carbon footprint.

All EIA results and community feedback will be made public once the report is finalised. "We're committed to transparency and ensuring safety and sustainability," said Mr Kasinpoj.

Beyond tourism, the company aims to strengthen Phuket's aviation workforce. Thai Seaplane has partnered with Thalang Technical College to provide scholarships and mechanic training, preparing local youth for aviation-related jobs. Each aircraft will require about six pilots and a full team of mechanics and ground crew,

creating long-term employment opportunities for residents.

"We want Phuket's young people to build their futures here, not have to leave the island," Mr Kasinpoj said. "Our goal is to grow a Thai-led aviation sector that connects communities and opens the skies to new possibilities."

Thai Seaplane currently has five pilots, including two licensed Thai seaplane pilots – the first in the country – trained in Germany and the Maldives with Trans Maldivian Airways (TMA), the world's largest seaplane operator. Future Thai captains will be trained under a mentorship model, with one foreign captain training up to five local pilots at a time.

The project, entirely privately financed, will also support emergency medical transport and strategic operations in addition to tourism.

Over the next three years, the company expects to expand routes to cover the entire southern region, with Phase 3 connecting the Andaman Coast to the Gulf of Thailand.

"This project is about more than transport," Mr Kasinpoj said. "It's about positioning Phuket as the leader in sustainable aviation, where air and sea meet – connecting people, protecting nature, and strengthening the region's economy."

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Sophon stays on as new honorary advisor for Commerce Chamber

THE PHUKET CHAMBER of Commerce (PCC) has appointed former Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat as its new Honorary Advisor, strengthening cooperation between the public and private sectors to support the island's economic growth.

The appointment was made during the Chamber's monthly board meeting held at Phuket Country Club, chaired by Chamber President Kongsak Khoophongsakorn.

The meeting was attended by board members, former presidents, advisors and members of the Young Entrepreneurs Chamber (YEC).

Mr Sophon, who concluded his two-year term as Governor of Phuket on Sept 30, will provide strategic advice to the Chamber in guiding the province toward sustainable economic development.

The meeting also



Former Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat (centre, left) receives a congratulatory bouquet from Phuket Commerce President Kongsak Khoophongsakorn. Photo: PR Phuket

welcomed newly appointed Phuket Governor Saransak Srikuaneetra and his wife, honorary President of the Phuket Red Cross, Ms Ruedeewan, marking their first official engagement with the province's business community.

PCC President Mr

Kongsak noted that the Chamber and its partners in the private sector remain committed to close cooperation with government agencies to advance Phuket's economic and social development policies, ensuring balanced and stable progress across all sectors. *The Phuket News*

Anutin defends tactics in Cambodia border dispute

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has reaffirmed Thailand's adherence to legal and ethical standards in managing cross-border issues with Cambodia, following criticism over the use of psychological tactics near the frontier.

In response to questions about whether the airing of documentaries and eerie sound effects constituted a gradual escalation of measures to push back Cambodian nationals, Anutin, also the interior minister, said on Monday (Oct 13) that he had already delegated full authority to the military to make operational decisions. This included matters of diplomatic engagement, which fall under the remit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Reporters also enquired whether the use of ghostly sound effects near the border might constitute a violation of human rights, given that some members of the Senate had raised concerns.

The prime minister said that he had yet to listen to the audio himself, explaining that he had spent the entire weekend in the field.

Nonetheless, he emphasised that all actions must remain within the



'We are safeguarding our sovereignty,' says Anutin. Photo: Bangkok Post

bounds of the law – both Thai and international – and must comply with universally accepted norms and principles.

When asked whether such tactics might damage Thailand's standing on the international stage, Anutin replied: "We are safeguarding our sovereignty."

On Sunday evening, the ghost-themed broadcast with an open-air film screening near the border was changed to a documentary titled Camp 511, which recounts historical events involving Cambodian refugees who once fled violence in their homeland. Thailand had extended humanitarian support by offering them refuge.

The documentary, presented in the Khmer language, was previously published on the Royal Thai Army's Facebook page.

It describes the history of "Camp 511", known officially as the Nong Chan Refugee Camp, which sheltered Cambodians escaping the Cambodian Civil War approximately 40 years ago.

A key segment of the film states: "Nong Chan did more than welcome strangers. It gave them a chance to grow rice, farm, and begin life anew. But some refused to return home, establishing new roots on Thai soil. And today, they seek to encroach and harm Thai soldiers."

Meanwhile, a report from the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit revealed that two additional anti-personnel landmines were discovered in the Ban Nong Ya Kaeo area in Sa Kaeo's Khok Sung district on Monday, taking the total found to seven in just three days.

The first device was identified as a fixed-position anti-personnel mine of the MN79 type, fully operational. Nearby, a second device was found – an operational fixed-position anti-personnel mine of the PMN type.

Both mines were safely neutralised and removed by the EOD team in accordance with standard procedures.

Ban on sale of kratom near schools confirmed

BANGKOK

SELLING KRATOM products, including leaves and tea, within one kilometre of a school is now strictly prohibited, with violators facing fines of up to B50,000, says the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB).

Pol Maj Suriya Singhagamol, ONCB secretary-general, said the ban took effect last Sunday (Oct 12) and all regional offices nationwide have been directed to enforce the new regulation.

Under the regulation, vendors are barred from selling kratom within a 1km radius of any education institution, reports the *Bangkok Post*.

The new rule also prohibits sales through mobile stalls, vehicles, hawking or temporary stands in all public areas.

Pol Maj Suriya said public awareness campaigns are being



Kratom products on display in Bangkok in 2021. Photo: Bangkok Post

launched. He emphasised the ban is not intended to suppress the kratom trade but to ensure its proper use and safeguard public health, particularly to prevent young people from gaining easy access to the substance.

He urged the public to report violations via the ONCB's 1386 hotline.

The regulation is based on the Kratom Plant Act 2022, which governs sales, advertising and consumption.

The latest measure was introduced amid growing concerns over its widespread availability, including at roadside stalls near schools.

Bangkok Post

Newin's brother to advise PM

BANGKOK

POL GEN PERMPOON CHIDCHOB, a former education minister and younger brother of Newin Chidchob – widely regarded as the real power behind the governing Bhumjaithai Party – has been appointed as an adviser to Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul.

The Cabinet approved the appointment along with those of several other political officials on Oct 7.

Pol Gen Permpoon served as education minister in the administration of former prime minister Srettha Thavisin, an appointment that drew sharp criticism at the time, particularly from the now-defunct Move Forward Party.

The opposition party, the predecessor of the People's Party, cited his role in the fatal hit-and-run case involving Vorayuth 'Boss' Yoovidhya.

The heir to the Red Bull fortune, Vorayuth crashed his Ferrari into a motorcycle driven by a police officer in the Thong Lor area of Bangkok on Sept 3, 2012.

The National Anti Corruption Commission found that Pol Gen Permpoon, while serving as an assistant to the national police chief, failed to object to prosecutors' decision to drop two charges against Vorayuth.

Pol Gen Permpoon faced unspecified disciplinary action at the time but was not among those indicted in 2024 for



Permpoon. Photo: Bangkok Post

offences including manipulating speed estimates that resulted in the charges being dropped.

Two former senior prosecutors were sentenced to jail in April this year for misconduct in connection with the "Boss" case.

Former deputy attorney-general Nate Naksuk was sentenced to three years in jail for making a decision on the case without relying on facts, a violation of Section 157 of the Criminal Code, dereliction of duty by a public official, the court said.

The court also ruled that Chainarong Saengthong-aram, then senior prosecutor, violated Section 172 of the Corruption Prevention and Suppression Act by collaborating to alter witness statements and reduce the reported speed of the Ferrari. He was sentenced to two years in jail.

The last remaining charge against Vorayuth, reckless driving causing death, carries a penalty of up to 10 years in jail, and expires in September 2027.

Bangkok Post

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Natai Beach on Oct 2, 2025. Photo: Todd Miller



Tar balls on Mai Khao beach, early October 2025. Photo: SALA Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort

Was 6,000km Euro cycle in vain?



GLOBETROTTER

Todd Miller

I recently cycled across Europe – from Estonia all the way to Gibraltar – driven by a mission to cross a continent the hard, slow way to help Save Our Seas. What I didn't expect was for this mission to end with an urgent SOS of my own.

Sitting in a bike saddle eight hours a day, day after day, takes a physical and

mental toll. I wound my way through the Carpathians, the Alps and the Pyrenees – racking up enough elevation to summit Everest five times over. Some days were sublime, such as cycling through Slovenia or along Spain's Costa Brava. Many days were a slog; often this journey felt like it would never end. But I pushed through the tough patches because I was powered by a higher purpose.

After 10 weeks on the road, my wheels had traced a line from the cold Baltic to the warm mouth of the Mediterranean.

Back in Phuket, I started sketching

a celebratory piece for this paper – something between an adventure story and a geriatric field report. I'd share the intimate details of what 100 kilometres a day does to a body, especially one old enough to know better. I'd also reflect on how this ride reshaped my views on age and ageing, and the eternal debate between the journey and just wanting the journey to be over.

But before I could write any of this, I went for a walk on Natai beach.

The beach looked much as it always does this time of year. After nearly three months in Europe, it felt blissful to sink my toes once again into the Andaman sand. The flotsam no longer shocked me – plastic and glass bottles, the occasional flip-flop, tree trunk or unlucky fish scattered along the tide line. It's a familiar sight during monsoon season and one of the reasons I chose to ride 6,000 kilometres in support of the Sustainable Maikhao Foundation, which organises beach cleanups, eco-education and recycling drives across Greater Phuket.

Tragic

As I returned home from that walk, I noticed something tragic. My feet were smeared in tar-like oil.

I had just burned through a continent's worth of calories to help Save Our Seas. I thought I was taking on a plastics problem. Turns out, plastic is only the tip of a much oilier iceberg. The real villains – tar balls and oil slicks – have seeped into the Andaman, into the sand, into our fragile ecosystem.

When I looked down, the evidence was right there: a black, sticky ooze plastered to my feet, wedged between my toes. If it's on me, it's in the fish we eat, the turtles we rescue, the birds that skim the surf. The sea isn't just polluted – it's poisoned.

It's a tragedy hiding in plain sight – and no one's shouting about it. Hardly anyone's even talking about it.

After spending half an hour hunched over with an old toothbrush, scraping the tar from my feet, I switched into investigative mode. I reached out to friends – locals and longtime expats – to find out what was going on. To my surprise, most had no idea this was happening. Even worse, the contamination isn't confined to Natai Beach. Mai Khao and other stretches of Phuket's Andaman coastline are suffering the same oily fate.



Todd in Gibraltar on his 6,000km Euro cycle. Photo: Todd Miller

Exasperation

This oil contamination, I was flabbergasted to learn, has occurred multiple times on our West coast, most recently in 2021 and 2023. A report by Chulalongkorn University identifies more than 40 mystery oil spill incidents in Thailand's Andaman and Gulf waters since 2014.

"It's a disaster," one friend commented with a whiff of exasperation. "This was probably caused by boats dumping oil at sea, which the recent storm washed ashore."

One hotel GM told me he reported this situation to the local authorities, but he believes the only response will be to further kick the problem upward to higher authorities.

I turned to the person who knows the most about Saving Our Seas. "Almost every year we have this recurring problem of the sticky tarballs," Michelle Mouillé, the founder of Sustainable Maikhao, explained to me. "I first noticed this in June 2022, a week before the country opened up for tourism after COVID. Since then, it happens every year between June and October. The Department of Marine and Coastal Resources is trying to track the tarball footprint, but it's hard to pinpoint which ships in the Andaman Sea are responsible for this contamination."

She ended our conversation with this sobering message: "The problem is so much larger than our resources."

For an island whose prosperity rests upon pristine waters and picturesque beaches, this should be an urgent SOS distress call – to Save Our Seas.

Todd Miller lives at Natai Beach. His 5,911 km TransEuropa 2025 bike ride is in support of Sustainable Maikhao Foundation. The Phuket News is the media sponsor. <https://sustainablemaikhaofoundation.org/>

WINDOW ON PHUKET

The December/January 2026
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.

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Celebrating the HeadStart Class of 2025: A Landmark Year of Academic Achievement

HeadStart International School is proud to announce another year of exceptional results from its graduating students. The remarkable success of the 2025 graduating class has opened up a world of opportunity, securing their places at leading universities across the globe.

This year, our A Level students set an exceptional standard. For the full A Level, an incredible 47% of grades were A* or A (significantly above the 28.3% UK average), with 92% at A* to C and a 100% pass rate. This success is exemplified by Krittat, a member of the HeadStart family since Preschool, who is now studying Politics, Philosophy & Economics at Stanford University after receiving offers from five Ivy League universities.

Reflecting on his accomplishments, Krittat credited the school's unique learning environment: "HeadStart's teachers are true educators - open to discussion and discourse; to challenging points of view and listening to those of others. It is a really supportive learning environment."

This story of success is also shared by Erica. After being named 'Top in Thailand' for A Level Psychology



by Cambridge Assessment International, she is now studying Law at Durham University, one of the UK's most prestigious Russell Group institutions. "Being offered a place at Durham felt incredible as it was my top-choice university," said Erica. "It feels like the perfect place for me to take the next step in my education after HeadStart."

This level of ambition and achievement defines the entire 2025 cohort, with a culture of excellence seen across all HeadStart programmes. Our Year 13 BTEC students achieved an amazing 60% Distinction* or Distinction grades, with all passing at Merit or above. Our IGCSE cohort also built a strong foundation for future A Levels, with 42% securing A* or A grades, 92% A* to C, and a 100% pass rate.

Our Head Teacher, Adam Drew, commented, "The success of students like Krittat and Erica exemplifies the achievements of our entire graduating class. It's a testament to their collective dedication, our outstanding teachers, and the supportive community we nurture here. Congratulations to them all!"



For more Information about HeadStart

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POP QUIZ

- What is a Ha Ha?
- Who discovered blood circulation?
- Portugal has had six Kings with what first name?
- In 1911 the archaeologist Hiram Bingham discovered what lost city?
- Who wrote 'Gulliver's Travels'?

Answers below, centre

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

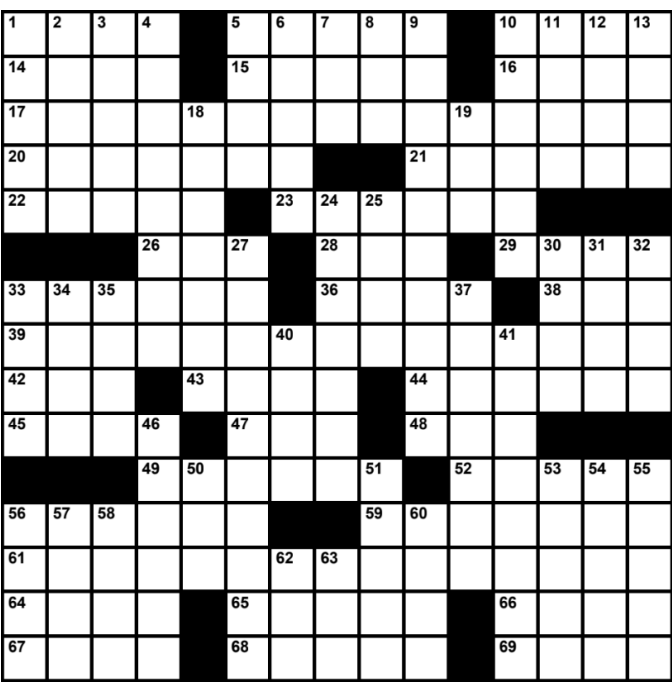
- Anita Baker, for one
- Dandruff
- Latte locale
- High-five, e.g.
- Hollywood agent "Swift"
- City on the Yamuna River
- CASE
- Punishes legally
- Sneak
- Microwave, e.g.
- Tree adornment
- Lookout point
- "Welcome" site
- Q-Tip
- Retro car
- Decorous
- Clod chopper
- CASE
- U.N. workers' grp.
- Merlin, e.g.
- Actor Wesley
- Call to attention
- Atlanta-based station
- Scale notes
- Good-for-nothing
- Kind of battery
- Catalog

Down

- Indian state
- Andean animal
- Accounts
- The Mikado, e.g.
- Pivot
- Art able to
- Action film staple
- Backstabber
- Most musty
- Intrigues
- Long, long time
- At liberty
- Benjamin Disraeli, e.g.
- Moves screen text
- ___ simple
- Pier 1 merchandise

- Knotting technique
- CASE
- Nanking nanny
- Woven fabric
- Canal of song
- British Conservative
- Garden tool
- Bluster

- Bust maker
- Recurrent
- Congressional enforcer
- Bang-up
- Panhandles
- Radar image
- Congers
- Freudian topics
- Cartilage disks
- City near Sparks
- Ailment
- Grin modifier
- Encouraging word
- "South Pacific" hero
- Mrs. Bush
- At full speed
- Found a new tenant for
- Doctor's abbreviation
- Clash of heavyweights
- Antares, for one
- Assert
- Affirmative action
- Archaeological site



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

SUDOKU

Easy

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

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:
Harvey: (3) John; (4) Machu Picchu; (5) Jonathan Swift
1) A sunken garden feature such as a fence or wall; 2) William

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2
Volkswagen Beetles only were sold in the car's first year of production, 1949.

70
percent of female online gamers choose to play as male characters rather than contend with sexual harassment.

80
percent of office kitchen teaspoons disappear within five months, according to one study.

400
years old is how long that Greenland sharks, a native species of the North Atlantic, can live.

1 million
plastic bottles are sold around the world every minute.

482 billion
US dollars is the net worth of Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla Motors and Space X, and owner of X (formerly Twitter), as of October 2025.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW

Beached on Layan. Photo by Cynthia Tomaszewski

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

This week in history

Oct 17, 1943
The Burma Railway (Burma - Thailand Railway) is completed.

Oct 18, 1867
The United States takes possession of Alaska after purchasing it from Russia for US\$7.2 million. Celebrated annually in the state as Alaska Day.

Oct 19, 2005
Saddam Hussein goes on trial in Baghdad for crimes against humanity.

Oct 20, 1973
The Sydney Opera House is opened by Elizabeth II after 14 years of construction.

Oct 21, 1854
Florence Nightingale and a staff of 38 nurses are sent to the Crimean War.

Oct 22, 1797
André-Jacques Garnerin makes the first recorded parachute jump, from 1,000 metres (3,300 ft) above Paris.

Oct 23, 2001
Apple Computer Company releases the iPod.

Source: Wikipedia

Sydney Opera House.

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Wednesday BBQ Night

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

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FRI24OCT



2025

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FRI | 24 | OCT

6.30PM

LOCATION: CARPE DIEM

MUSIC BY: JOB2DO

MORE DETAILS WILL FOLLOW SOON

REGGAE WAVES

Rotary Club of Patong Beach is pleased to announce the return of Reggae Waves to be held at Carpe Diem Beach Club - Bang Tao, Phuket. Block the date for a great evening of fun and for a noble cause, all proceeds from this event will benefit the local community. More details coming soon.

SAT25OCT



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WHEN: SATURDAY 25th OCTOBER 2025 9:00AM Start

WHERE: ACG CRICKET & SPORTS FACILITY, PHUKET, THAILAND

FORMAT: MEN'S DIVISION OVER 35'S / 12 A SIDE / 2 X 12 MINUTE HALVES

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AFL Masters Cup 2025

AFL Masters is confirmed for Phuket on October 25 from 9am at the ACG Cricket & Sports facility, Baan Liphon. This one day event features AFL teams from Indonesia, Singapore, Australia and Thailand. Players must be 35 years or older. Matches consist of 2 x 12-minute halves with a final between the top sides to decide who raises the Pacific Cross Health Insurance AFL Andaman Cup. For more info visit facebook.com/ThailandTigers

FRI31OCT



JOINT CHAMBERS PHUKET SUNDOWNERS

Friday, 31st October 2025 18:00 - 21:00 hrs.

Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town

650 THB for AustCham members, Partner Chambers members, and Australian Alumni Members 1,200 THB for non-members

AustCham Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners - October

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, AMCHAM, BCCT, Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber, CanCham Thailand, FTCC, GTCC, NTCC, NZTCC, Phuket Chamber of Commerce and Thai-Swedish Chamber, will host the Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs., at Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town. Join us for a wonderful night of making new connections and catching up with familiar faces in the Australian-Thai business community in Phuket. 650 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members, 1,200 THB for non-members. To book contact - office@austchamthailand.com

SAT1NOV



CHARITY HALLOWEEN FAMILY FUN

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TUE4NOV



Melbourne Cup

4th November 2025 9.30am to 2.30pm

Casa Boho, Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort, Kamala

Dress code: At the races

Donation: 3,000 THB NET

For tickets, please contact Tina Hall: tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org

Melbourne Cup Brunch

The fabulous Melbourne Cup Brunch is back at Casa Boho, Hyatt Regency Kamala Tuesday, 4th November 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM • Free-flow drinks & brunch • Fashions on the Field with prizes for Best Hat, Best Dressed, Best Suited & Chicest Couple • Raffles & auctions • Live screening of the race that stops a nation • DJ with ocean views Casa Boho is the perfect brunch spot: air-conditioned, with ocean breezes and panoramic views across Kamala Bay. All proceeds go to Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation, funding free English education for disadvantaged children. Donation: 3,000 THB Tickets: tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org Don't miss this party with a purpose!

FRI7NOV



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. See royalphuketmarina.com/marina There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by Isola Restaurant for all attendees. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. Find us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket/

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SAT8NOV



08 NOV 2025

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SAT29NOV



Register to Play | Partner as a Sponsor

Snowbirds Charity Golf Classic

17 Saturday, November 29, 2025

Aquella Golf & Country Club

CanCham Thailand TheSnowbirdsGolf@gmail.com Patong Beach Rotary Club

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

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CANADIAN THANKSGIVING DINNER

The spirit of Thanksgivings follows us wherever we may go. This year's Canadians in Phuket Thanksgiving Dinner, held on October 12 at the Avista Hideaway Resort, Tri Trang, Patong, was extra traditional, with a special guest chef: Chef David Marteau, a Canadian Certified Master Chef who formerly called Quebec home. Thanksgiving is about community, gratitude and sharing a meal together, values that travel with Canadians no matter where they live.

Photos: YoungJayDog



PHUKET BUSINESS NETWORKING - OCT 2025

Held on Friday October 10 at the Oasis Bar in Koh Kaew a great group of new and regular faces attended the last Phuket Business Networking event for the year. Follow them on Facebook for updates on their next event - facebook.com/PhuketBusinessNetworking

Kunlavut gets cold feet at Arctic Open

BADMINTON

KUNLAVUT VITIDSARN had to settle for a runner-up spot after losing to defending champion Chou Tien-chen in the final of the US\$475,000 (B15.2 million) BWF Arctic Open in Vantaa, Finland, last Sunday (Oct 12).

Second seed Chou prevailed in three games, 21-11, 13-21, 21-19, against the top-seeded Thai to claim the Super 500 title – his first since Vantaa 2024, reports the *Bangkok Post*.

It was Kunlavut's third straight defeat against Chou this year. He also lost to the Taiwanese star at the Indonesia Open and the China Open.

Earlier, world No.1 pair Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin defeated two-time defending champions Feng Yanzhe and Huang Dongping 21-19, 24-22 to take the mixed doubles title.



Top-seeded Kunlavut Vitidsarn had to settle for second best in Finland. Photo: Bangkok Post

Sunday's final was the third consecutive year the two pairs fought for the title.

Feng and Huang dispatched Thai duo Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Supissara Paewsampran in the semi-finals.

In the women's doubles final, Malaysia's Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan defeated Japan's Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi 21-7, 21-9.

The victory ended a run of three consecutive final losses for the Malaysians.

Bangkok Post

ONE big deal for Irvine

MMA

Bangkok Post

Stephen Irvine's ONE Championship dream finally became reality at ONE Friday Fights 128 last Friday (Oct 10) in Bangkok.

The 25-year-old Scot secured a US\$100,000 (B3.2 million) contract with ONE after a spectacular first-round head-kick knockout of Rambong in their 130lbs Muay Thai main event at Lumpinee Stadium.

It was Irvine's fifth straight win under the ONE banner – and his fourth finish overall – extending his record to seven victories from eight fights since debuting in June 2023.

Under the tutelage of coach JP Gallacher, alongside ONE featherweight contender Nico Carrillo, Irvine had been chasing a full-time contract for more than two years. When commentator Mitch Chilson told him in the ring that chairman and CEO Chatri Sityodtong had finally granted it, the wave of emotion was clear.

Before that, Chilson had handed Irvine a B350,000 performance bonus – but the real prize came moments later.

"Thank you so much, Chatri," he said. "I get carried away when I'm here and forget to show how grateful I am. Not just for these bonuses and opportunities, but for keeping my dream alive. For years I was thinking,



Irvine celebrates after being awarded his ONE Championship contract. Photo: Bangkok Post

"What am I doing?" I wasn't going to make a lot of money doing Muay Thai – but ONE Championship made that possible."

Gallacher and Carrillo jumped over the ropes to celebrate with their man after Rambong was dropped cold 14 seconds before the end of the first round.

"It's something I've done all my career," Irvine said of the technique. "Now that I'm in the small gloves, I'd kind of forgotten about it – but I went back to my roots. We were working on it all camp, and of course Nico Carrillo called the killer shot as he always does."

The knockout marks the latest milestone for the Scottish trio, who have continued to make waves in

ONE's Muay Thai ranks. Carrillo fell short of winning the interim bantamweight belt earlier this year but has moved up a division and now looks set to chase gold again in 2026.

"It's a massive weight off my shoulders," said Gallacher, a childhood friend of Carrillo's and Irvine's. "It's just been me, Nico and Stevie for a long time now since we were young kids."

"Seeing it all pay off after all those years pushing them both to quit their jobs and pursue this full time on the promise we would make this work and we would get to the big league... To sit back and see it become reality that both of them are now signed to ONE, I really can't describe the feeling of relief."

NBA returns to China

NBA

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (NBA) commissioner Adam Silver has declared there was "tremendous interest" as the league returned to China six years after being frozen out of the country.

Star players and NBA executives travelled to Macau last week for two pre-season games, the first in China after an acrimonious split in 2019 over a team official's tweet in support of Hong Kong pro-democracy protests.

"We are experiencing as great enthusiasm for the game as we ever have in China," Silver said on Oct 9.

Asked if sell-out games between the Brooklyn Nets and the Phoenix Suns on Oct 10 and Oct 12 respectively could pave the way for more events and locations in future in China, Silver said: "Absolutely. There's tremendous interest in the NBA throughout China, so it's wonderful to be back here."

The matches took place at an arena owned by the Las Vegas Sands conglomerate with fan events featuring celebrities such as four-time NBA champion Shaquille O'Neal.

Four-time NBA All-Star Devin Booker said ahead of an open practice session: "We have a big fan base out here in China."

"Basketball without borders is super



The NBA trophy on display in Macau. Photo: AFP

important, being here on their homeland and letting them see us play in person," added the Suns guard.

The NBA last played in Macau in 2007, just as the region surpassed Las Vegas as the world's casino capital by gaming revenue.

Nearly two decades later, the wealthy former Portuguese colony is under orders from Beijing to diversify its economy, with local officials eager to tout non-gaming events such as sports matches and concerts.

Sands president and COO Patrick Dumont said the two matches will have "tremendous positive impact for Macau's reputation as a global destination for leisure and business tourism."

Joe Tsai, the billionaire co-founder and chairman of Alibaba, is the owner of the Brooklyn Nets and his company were named as the official cloud computing and AI partner of NBA China on Oct 10.

AFP

Thailand wins gold as IWF records fall

WEIGHTLIFTING

THAILAND'S WEERAPHON WICHUMA stunned the weightlifting world on Oct 8 by claiming gold in the men's 71kg category at the IWF World Championships in Forder, Norway, on a day that saw an extraordinary 16 world records shattered.

The men's 71kg final delivered one of the most thrilling sessions in recent memory, with the top four lifters all breaking world records. Wichuma's final lift of 194kg secured a total of 346kg, edging out Japan's Masanori Miyamoto by a single kilogram and sealing Thailand's sensational victory.

The session's intensity peaked as four lifters vied for the podium in the final lifts. Miyamoto briefly took the lead with 193kg, only to be overtaken by Wichuma's 194kg. Turkey's Yusuf Fehmi Genc gambled on 192kg, which gave him a fleeting second place before he was pushed down to fourth.

Ri Won Ju of North Korea nearly stole the show despite injuring his knee. He returned to lift 195kg



Weeraphon Wichuma. Photo: Bangkok Post

but lost balance at the top, turning a potential gold into fifth place. His courage drew admiration from the crowd.

HISTORIC

In the women's 63kg, North Korea's Ri Suk dominated with four world records, finishing 17kg ahead of Canada's Olympic medallist Maude Charron. Ri's total of 253kg included new marks in snatch, clean and jerk, and total, though she still trails the historic 262kg set by China's Deng Wei in 2016.

Charron, 32, broke her own mental barrier by lifting 133kg in clean and jerk, her best ever. "It must be the Norwegian air," the Canadian joked, praising the host city where she had previously trained and competed.

Colombia's Yenny Sinisterra and the Philippines' Elreen Ando both finished with 231kg, but Sinisterra took bronze by virtue of lifting it first. Americans Sophia Shaft and Katie Estep followed closely in fifth and sixth.

Bangkok Post

European football hits the road

FOOTBALL

AFP

European football governing body UEFA said on Oct 6 it had “reluctantly” approved the staging of a Spanish La Liga and an Italian Serie A match in the United States and Australia respectively, despite fan protests.

“While it is regrettable to have to let these two games go ahead, this decision is exceptional and shall not be seen as setting a precedent,” UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said in a statement.

UEFA made its ruling after Spain’s La Liga agreed to move a game scheduled for late December between champions Barcelona and Villarreal to Miami, Florida.

Italy’s Serie A also decided to stage the encounter between AC Milan and Como on Feb 8 in Perth, Australia, to avoid a clash with the Winter Olympics opening ceremony at Milan’s San Siro stadium.

But that sparked protests from European supporters groups who branded the moves “absurd, unaffordable, and environmentally irresponsible”.

In its statement, UEFA said that it had “reiterated its clear opposition to domestic league matches being played outside their home country”.

But despite “the widespread lack of support that had already been raised by fans, other leagues, clubs, players



Barcelona will face Villarreal in Miami in December. Photo: AFP

and European institutions”, UEFA said that it had found no clear regulatory framework in FIFA’s statutes that would allow it to oppose the moves.

“The UEFA Executive Committee has reluctantly taken the decision to approve, on an exceptional basis, the two requests referred to it,” European football’s governing body said in its statement.

NFL, NBA PRECEDENT

While the idea of relocating European football matches to other continents seems shocking to many, other sports – particularly US ones – have been doing something similar for many years.

The NFL has held games in London since 2007 while it also expanded to Mexico, Germany, Brazil and Ireland. Another is slated for Madrid in November while Melbourne will play host to a game in 2026.

The NBA, which has relocated regular-season matches since 1990 to Japan and since 2013 to Europe, has already scheduled six games in Berlin, London, Manchester and Paris over the next three seasons.

It is not unheard of in football to host matches abroad, but until now those had only ever been glorified friendlies.

The Spanish and Italian Super Cups are already held in Saudi Arabia, after previous editions in China, Morocco, Qatar and Libya, as governing bodies seek to cash in on the global reach of the beautiful game.

Football’s world governing body FIFA shifted its hitherto opposition to relocating matches, with a ‘working group’ launched in May to revise their rules.

That opened the door to UEFA granting La Liga and Serie A the permission to branch out.

‘Madam Pang’ elected chair of FIFA’s Development Committee

FOOTBALL

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION of Thailand (FAT) president Nualphan Lam-sam, known as ‘Madam Pang’, has been appointed chair of the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) Development Committee, the first woman to hold the position.

The announcement was made by FIFA on Oct 7, the Football Association of Thailand said in a post on its FA Thailand Facebook page the following day.

Ms Nualphan confirmed her appointment via her Facebook account, adding that her term runs from 2025 to 2029.

The Development Committee is one of FIFA’s key standing committees, reporting directly to FIFA president Gianni Infantino and the FIFA Council. The committee plays a pivotal role in overseeing the global development initiatives of the organisation across all 211 member associations.

The committee is tasked with formulating and proposing strategic develop-



Nualphan Lamsam with FIFA president Gianni Infantino. Photo: FA Thailand Facebook

ment plans, conducting regular reviews of these strategies and analysing the support provided to member associations, confederations, and regional bodies worldwide.

In addition to her role at the FAT Ms Nualphan also serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Muang Thai Insurance. She is a member of the Democrat Party and was its assistant secretary-general from 2006 to 2016.

In another notable appointment, Lertsak Pattana-chaikul, FAT executive committee member of the was made a member of FIFA’s Member Associations Committee on the same day as Ms Nualphan’s appointment.

Bangkok Post

War Elephants on the march again

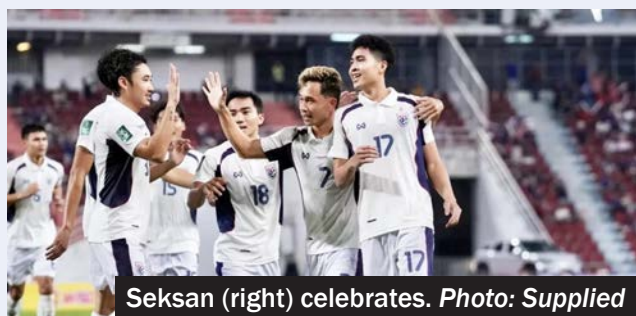
FOOTBALL

THAILAND CLAIMED a vital three points in their AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 qualifying campaign with a 2-0 win over Taiwan on Oct 9 at the Rajamangala National Stadium in Bangkok.

The victory in the third group match came courtesy of goals from substitute Seksan Ratre and captain Chanathip Songkrasin, lifting the War Elephants back on track after a mixed start to the qualifiers.

Ranked 101st in the FIFA world rankings, Thailand were strong favourites against 173rd placed Taiwan and, urged on by a lively home crowd, they pressed forward from the opening whistle and dictated the tempo throughout.

The hosts dominated possession with Jaroensak Wonggorn trying his luck from distance in the 31st minute, only to see his strike fly over the bar. Coach Masatada Ishii



Seksan (right) celebrates. Photo: Supplied

responded by introducing Seksan to add energy in midfield – a move that would soon prove decisive.

Six minutes into the second half, Supachok Sarachat delivered a pinpoint cross into the area and Seksan timed his run perfectly, rising to head past Huang and put Thailand 1-0 up.

The second goal arrived in the 77th minute after a defensive lapse in the Taiwanese backline. Saringkan Promsupa reacted quickest to a loose ball, nodding it into the path of Chanathip, who calmly slotted home to seal the result.

The win takes Thailand to six points from three matches, while

Taiwan remain bottom of the group with three defeats.

At time of press, the two teams were due to play the reverse fixture in at Taipei Municipal Stadium in Taiwan on Tuesday (Oct 14).

Ishii has called up Santiparb Channgom and Songwut Kraikruan to replace Jonathan Khemdee and Jaroensak, who pulled out due to injuries after the first game.

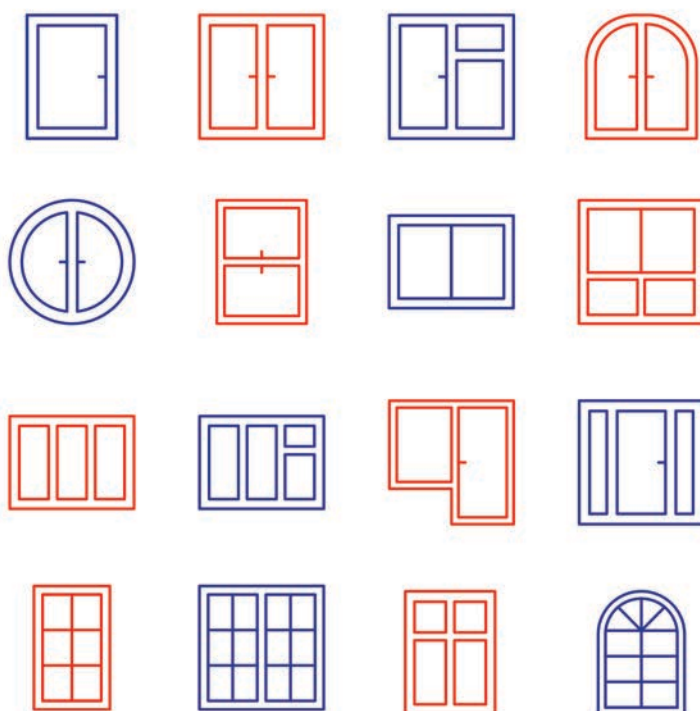
Thailand began their campaign with a 1-0 win over Sri Lanka before falling 1-3 to Turkmenistan.

Sri Lanka are also on six points in the group while Turkmenistan have three points.

Bangkok Post



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Cold feet for Kunlavut in Arctic > p14

HOT SHOT

Jeeno in TIME 100 most influential list

Atthaya Thitikul's star continues to rise after being named in the TIME 100 Next 2025 list. Photo:



GOLF

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Atthaya Thitikul's star continues to rise with the Thai golfer making headlines away from the course after being named in the TIME 100 Next 2025 list.

The world number one-ranked female golfer, affectionately known as Jeeno, was included in the "Phenoms" category by TIME magazine as one of the 100 most influential people of the year, it was announced on Oct 1.

The TIME 100 Next list was first launched six years ago and is designed to highlight the world's most influential rising stars in all industries.

A native of Ratchaburi, 22-year-old Jeeno burst onto the scene when she became the youngest golfer ever to win a professional golf tournament at age 14 years, 4 months and 19

days after winning the Ladies European Thailand Championship as an amateur in July 2017.

She was the number one ranked women's amateur golfer in the world for a total of 12 weeks, rising to the top on two occasions, the first time in June 2019.

MAIDEN WIN

Jeeno's maiden win on the LPGA Tour came at the JTBC Classic in Carlsbad, California, in March, 2022. Later that year, while still only aged 19, she earned two further wins on the professional LPGA Tour and four wins on the Ladies European Tour.

This success saw her rise to become the number one-ranked golfer in the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings in Oct 2022, while also being named the 2022 LPGA Tour Louise Suggs Rookie of the Year. The following year saw her win the 2023 Vare Trophy for the LPGA tour's lowest scoring average throughout the entire season.

In November last year Jeeno won the CME Group Tour Championship in Florida, the season-ending event of the LPGA Tour, earning a prize of US\$4 million (B131mn) in the process, the largest paycheck in the history of women's golf. This took her overall winnings for 2024 on the LPGA tour to \$6,059,309, eclipsing the previous record of \$4,364,994 set by Lorena Ochoa during the 2007 season. This achievement also saw Jeeno lead the 2024 LPGA money list overall.

Continuing her fine form this year, in February Jeeno won the PIF Saudi Ladies International in Saudi Arabia as part of the 2025 Ladies European Tour, the Mizuho Americas Open in the United States in May on the LPGA tour, and almost won her first major at the Amandie Evian Championship in France, losing in a playoff to Grace Kim. This run of form saw Jeeno overtake Nelly Korda to return to the

number one position of the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings in August.

Most recently Jeeno won the Buick LPGA Shanghai title last Sunday (Oct 12), becoming the first player to win multiple times on the LPGA Tour in 2025 in the process.

'CONSISTENT'

Speaking in the TIME article, former world number one Lydia Ko showered extensive praise to her close friend's achievements and ability. New Zealander Ko, who was included in TIME's Top 100 Most Influential People on her 17th birthday back in 2014, said: "Jeeno is an impressive young golfer in every respect who inspires me and many others to continually improve."

"Most professional golfers are really good at one thing. For some, it's their long game or iron shot, for others, it's putting or chipping. But for Jeeno Thitikul, it's everything. She's really good

at all parts of the game, all throughout the bag," added Ko.

"She's so consistent that even on her off days, she's not that far off at all. She has a strong mental game too, and always plays with a very calm, cool, and collected demeanor. Since we've both been on tour with the LPGA, I've gotten to know Jeeno better, and I see how hard she works. It feels like only a matter of time until she wins a major title."

"As a teen phenom turned top-ranked golfer, Jeeno is incredibly impressive all around. She motivates me to be a better player, and I feel lucky to be able to play alongside her."

Jeeno's record of being the youngest ever female winner on the professional tour was beaten by local golfing sensation Louise Landgraf in April 2023 when she triumphed at the Terre Blanche Ladies Open, part of the Ladies European Tour Access Series, at the age of 14 years, 2 months and 18 days.

Petchnumnoi: The driving force behind Phuket's Muay Thai legacy

MUAY THAI

FOR MORE THAN THREE decades, Somnuek Phatburee – better known by his fight name Petchnumnoi – has been at the heart of Phuket's thriving Muay Thai scene. A native of Phatthalung, he moved to Phuket over 30 years ago and has since become one of the most respected Muay Thai promoters in the country.

A former fighter himself, Petchnumnoi competed for 18 years before stepping into the role of promoter. With more than 20 years of experience in the field, his career has spanned the

provincial level, the world-famous Lumpini Stadium in Bangkok, and international events in France and Malaysia. Today, he is best known as the driving force behind Patong Boxing Stadium, Phuket's iconic Muay Thai venue.

Every Thursday and Sunday night, the stadium comes alive under his direction. The fight cards feature a mix of local Thai talent and international fighters, often pitting up-and-coming prospects against former champions. For many foreign athletes, it's a rare opportunity to compete in Thailand – the birthplace of Muay Thai – against

some of the sport's most decorated names. The events are also broadcast live on YouTube under the banner of the Patong Combat League, drawing tens of thousands of viewers from around the globe.

In Patong, the promotion is hard to miss. Pickup trucks with booming speakers and posters featuring fighters crisscross the streets daily, with athletes hitting pads on the back to build excitement for the evening's bouts. Inside the stadium, fans are treated to high-energy matches that frequently end in spectacular knockouts. Fighters range from young children carrying the torch of tradition to seasoned veterans in

their forties, showcasing the sport's wide appeal and inclusivity.

For Petchnumnoi, Muay Thai is more than just a business. It is a cultural mission. "Muay Thai is not just a sport, it is part of Thailand's history and identity," he has often said. His dedication has helped preserve that tradition while also expanding its global reach, contributing to Muay Thai's rise as one of the world's most popular combat sports.

What sets him apart is his visible passion. At every event, Petchnumnoi can be seen ringside, eyes fixed on the action, immersed in every strike, clinch, and knockout. His presence is a



Petchnumnoi. Photo: Supplied

testament to a lifelong devotion to the sport and to the fighters – Thai and international alike – who carry it forward.

Thanks to promoters like Petchnumnoi, Muay Thai continues to thrive both in its homeland and far beyond, bridging cultures, generations, and nations through the spirit of Thailand's national treasure. Poria Mermand