

SHRINES READY FOR VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL > PAGE 3

LAST RESORT



A motorbike makes its way down the narrow Soi Pasak 6 in Bang Tao, where plans are afoot to build a seven-storey hotel. Photo: The Phuket News

LOCAL RESIDENTS FIGHT TO STAVE OFF SEVEN-STORY HOTEL IN QUIET STREET

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Residents in Bang Tao, Chong Talay, are waiting with bated breath to learn whether or not a seven-story hotel will be built on their small street, with direct impact on the quiet neighbourhood and affecting property prices of high-end villas in the area.

The hotel, planned to be built on Soi Pasak 6 amid an area that

so far remains a purely residential neighbourhood of only houses, is being promoted as the Nebu Resort Bangtao under the Nebu World brand by Bangkok-based Azure Rich Group.

The resort is promoted as opening in 2024.

However, obtaining an exact definition of what has been approved to be built remains obscured by silence. Even the local residents who will be directly affected do not know. Nebu World has yet to respond to

a request for comment; as has the Azure Rich Group, which includes two Australians as key figures. The current status of the project remains shrouded in mystery, with many of the details of the project changing at nearly every turn.

The hotel is currently being promoted by Nebu World as an 89-unit 'mixed-use' building on a 1,400sqm site (one rai). That definition does not concur with what residents were told when they first learned about

the project in 2020. At that time the project was to be 112 rooms in a seven-storey building.

Residents have not been informed of any further progress on the project. Before enquiries by *The Phuket News*, Azure Rich described the project as, "105 rooms, 10 storey (2 basement and 8 above-ground) 4+ star Mixed-use Accommodation building (Hotel licensed) on 1260 sqm of land, with 4 Star quality and facilities, at 3 Star prices." That information has now...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NEWS PAGE 3

Patong Police ordered to nab Bangla dealer



LIFE PAGE 8

Creating a more sustainable future for Phuket



SPORT PAGE 16

Celest just one more fight away from her dreams



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News



New mosque rises near airport > p4

Hotel plans afoot for quiet street

Continued from page 1

...been removed from their website.

Local residents first became aware of the project in July 2020 when they were informed of the results of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) conducted by Phuket Environmental Services Co. Many of the residents said they never received the feedback questionnaire, compulsory under EIA requirements.

One neighbour whose registered company address is 10 metres from the project site never received a copy. One couple said that the questionnaire that was presented by two Thai ladies who knocked on their door was in Thai language only. The two Thai ladies “helped” them by filling in the very comprehensive questionnaire for them.

Regardless, the residents were told that only 30% of local residents who completed the questionnaire objected to the project. The band of residents *The Phuket News* spoke to disagrees. They have launched a petition which has signatures from “nearly all” residents in the area who will be directly affected by the project, they say.

ASSURANCES

During ongoing talks in response to the complaints, first voiced in 2020, Mark Tanner, at the time representing Australia-based property consultants Green Arc, responded to many of the grievances raised, including that the new electricity and water supply to the hotel will be specially fitted in order to not affect local residents, waste would be properly disposed of, changes to the design would be made to ensure privacy of residents living in adjacent villas, trees



An artist's impression of the completed Nebu Resort Bangtao. Photo: Nebu World

would be planted to maintain a green atmosphere and so on.

Regarding any damage to existing homes in the area by the intensive construction the hotel would require, Mr Tanner wrote, “Pre construction we would conduct a dilapidation report on villas close to the hotel site, to ensure that if any damage occurred during construction our building team would repair and take responsibility for this. Our building team will also provide evidence of its insurance.”

Regarding noise during construction, which was projected in the EIA to take one year, Mr Tanner noted in writing, “If the construction makes the residents nearby the project suffer from the noise caused by the construction that exceeds the standard, the affected person can notify the project at any time. And if the sound that is produced makes it impossible to live and it is necessary to temporarily relocate, the project is willing to compensate such damages to the affected person.

“And in the event that the

two parties cannot find an agreement, the Coordinating Committee for solving problems from the project development need to negotiate for solution. The committee consists of the affected person/s, the project owner, and the mediator who is the local authority (in this case, it is Choeng Thale Tambon Administrative Organization). In addition, the project also provides construction insurance. If any damage occurs, the project will have corrective measurement,” he added, marking the involvement of for Cherng Talay OrBorTor President at the time, MaAnn Samran.

Yet the size of the resort remained an issue. “We have been advised we are fully compliant for an approval but should look to modify some aspects of the design where we can commercially (lowering the height and increasing the setbacks and so reducing our room count below 100 keys is not possible commercially for us with our 3-4 star hotel model) to show respect to the

complaints,” Mr Tanner wrote.

STREET WISE

Not recognised was the critical issue of the width of the street, Pasak 6, which for most of its length is only 3.5 metres wide, leaving vehicles no room to pass when any large vehicles are trundling along during construction. Any buses travelling to and from the resort would create the same issue. The street is so narrow that even vans and taxis accessing the resort would create frequent headaches.

The response was only “Traffic is up the Soi fronting the site, not the same soi as to SG”, with SG meaning the high-end villa estate Sujika Gardens located behind the resort.

Residents were told that the street could be made one-way to allow traffic flow, but that would mean constant traffic streaming past the high-end homes through the quiet neighbourhood in Pasak Soi 4.

It would also require that the street itself be extended by clearing trees and paving a

new road so that Pasak 6 could join the other back streets. The road is currently a dead end into a green area with trees.

“We understand there will be disruption during the construction process, but unfortunately that is the nature of urban development everywhere. On completing the project we see substantial real benefits for the Sujika owners, including life style,” Mr Tanner wrote.

Of note, Mr Tanner has since confirmed to *The Phuket News* that he is no longer involved with the Nebu Resort Bangtao. Instead, he is now involved with the Nebu Residence Jomtien project.

TALKED OUT

The ongoing talks resulted in a formal meeting on Feb 23, 2021 between the developer, the residents and the EIA consultancy at the offices of the Phuket office of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), the relevant agency tasked with approving or denying EIAs for construction projects.

The meeting left the issues unresolved, with Phuket MNRE Chief Watthanaphong Suksai, commenting in conclusion, “The committee has seriously paid attention to the complaints. However, there were different dimensions of disagreement, which the committee must thoroughly consider. I hope the project can be developed and nearby neighbours can live with the minimum impacts as well.”

However, at the meeting Mr MaAnn made his position clear. “Everyone has equal rights, so please keep the law as a priority. If you sue the project, the project has the right to sue you as well. Therefore, we must live together with a good understanding,” he said,

noted the official minutes of the meeting.

“The consulting company has already informed that the Soi Pasak 6 road is narrow. However, there are many alleyways that can go through, which will reduce traffic problems. But I think there will be noise issue,” he added

“If there is any additional concerns, please clearly state in complaint letter. Otherwise, when the construction is permitted [sic], it may occur another problem which results in continuously complaints,” Mr MaAnn noted.

IN THE DARK

An official at Cherng Talay OrBorTor told *The Phuket News*, on condition of anonymity, that so far a building permit for the project had not been issued.

However, *The Phuket News* was also told this week through a well-respected, and well-connected, developer that he had been informed that the project had been issued a building permit, and that the EIA had been approved.

The residents have been told nothing.

However, the developer was also told that if the residents conducted another poll and garnered enough support against the project, the EIA would be revoked and the project would go back to the planning stage.

The residents are hoping.

As one resident noted in airing his grievances, “Phuket has plenty of possibilities for such a project with much greater potential for success. We suggest you explore those other options, and we join Sujika residents and those living in the community, in the strongest possible objection to your proposed Nebu Resort and Hotel.”

Kathu road safety campaign launched

A CAMPAIGN PROMOTING road safety was launched in Kathu last Saturday (Sept 17) as officials strive to raise awareness and encourage good discipline to prevent unnecessary accidents, injury and loss of life.

The “Kathu District Model” is being led by

Siwat Waringkul, Kathu District Chief, in collaboration with heads of government agencies, subdistrict chiefs (Kamnan), village headmen (Phu Yai Baan), government officials, local council members and members of the local government.

Prominent posters remind-

ing and encouraging road users to practice safe driving will be present along road sides in Kamala, Patong and Kathu.

The campaign places particular emphasis on motorbike drivers, urging them to respect traffic rules and to ensure they wear a helmet

each time they travel.

Officials said the campaign is important as it can help promote safer road conditions which in turn will protect each other and reduce the loss of life and property to ultimately improve the quality of life in the designated districts. *The Phuket News*



Photo: PR Phuket

Bangla troublemaker nabbed

Patong Police ordered to investigate, arrest known drug dealer

The Phuket News
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A man arrested for intimidating foreign tourists with a gun loaded with blanks on Bangla Rd in Patong earlier this year has been arrested again, this time for selling marijuana and the opioid painkiller Tramadol.

Phuket Provincial Police announced through a statement issued late last Sunday (Sept 18) that a man, who the statement named only as "Mr Kittipong", had been arrested after police found him in possession of dried marijuana, hand-rolled marijuana cigarettes and 10 tablets of Tramadol.

The statement claimed it was in response to a post online at 11:30pm last Saturday highlighting lack of action against 'Mr Kittipong'.

Police were not ignoring the issue, the statement assured.

However, the statement also came some 10 hours after CCTV footage showing Mr Kittipong on Bangla Rd was posted online by the Phuket



Image: Hot Jung Facebook via Phuket Info Center

Info Center, which operates under the Phuket Governor's office.

The statement noted that the incident was brought to the attention of Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong, who in turn ordered Patong Police Chief Col Sujin Nilabadee to

investigate the claims.

The report did not report when Mr Kittipong was arrested. The statement also did not recognise any of the other claims made in the initial post online last Saturday, also shared by the Phuket Info Center, specifically saying that the man was openly selling

cocaine on Bangla Rd.

Police also did not report any action taken against foreign tourists or any other people found to have brought drugs from Mr Kittipong.

The statement did not even confirm the charges brought against Mr Kittipong for possession of or selling drugs.

Also of note, the statement was not issued under the name of Patong Police Chief Col Sujin. Instead, it was issued by the "Phuket Provincial Police Spokesperson Team" and posted initially by Phuket Provincial Police, and then shared publicly by Patong Police Station.

"The investigative team brought the suspect along with the items to the investigating officer for further legal proceedings," the statement read.

"In such a case, the actions of the accused may affect the image of tourism of the country and there are also criminal penalties under the law. Therefore, [we] would like to publicize it to our brothers and sisters if they find clues or such behaviours, please notify the police or relevant agencies so that they can investigate, arrest and prosecute decisively."

The statement highlighted that Mr Kittipong had a history of drug arrests in his home province Nakhon Si Thammarat. According to police, Mr Kittipong had been arrested three times

previously on drug offences.

While focussing on Mr Kittipong's drug offence record, the statement did not make any mention that Mr Kittipong – Kittipong 'Bank' Chanthawong, a 25-year-old native of Nakhon Si Thammarat – had been arrested by Patong Police in April for intimidating foreign tourists with a gun loaded with blanks.

In that incident, Mr Kittipong was brought in "for questioning" only after the incident was reported by foreign tourists.

Patong Police never confirmed what legal action was taken against Mr Kittipong for that infraction.

The post online on Saturday, posted on the 'Hot Jung' facebook page, gained wide readership online, accusing Patong Police of knowing about such behaviours in busy tourist areas, but chose to ignore it and take no action.

One comment under the post online noted, "Dare or not?"

Additional reporting by
Eakkapop Thongtub

Phuket shrines ready for Veg Fest

CHINESE SHRINES BEGAN THEIR preparations for the annual Phuket Vegetarian Festival last Friday (Sept 16) with mass cleaning of the temples, their altars and their surrounds

Teams of workers from Phuket City Municipality joined by volunteers began scrubbing forecourts at the main shrines taking part in the festival, including Pud Jor and Jui Tui shrines in the heart of Phuket Town.

The festival this year will be held under the same COVID-19 prevention measures as last year.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong held a press conference last Friday to ensure that all shrine administrators were aware of the restrictions temples must abide by.

The mass cleaning at the shrines will continue through to Monday (Sept 26), when the nine-day festival will formally begin.

Never included in the official schedule of events is the traditional raising of the Go Teng poles at participating shrines, with the long poles pointing towards the heavens so that the Nine Emperor Gods can climb down to Earth for the nine-day festival.

The Phuket office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT Phuket) has released the official programme for this year's festival, complete with route maps of the popular street processions.

Highlighted by the programme are the 'fire walking' purification ceremonies to be held Sept 30-Oct 4 and the 'bridge crossing' ceremonies to be held Oct 3-4.

The street processions will begin on Sept



Mass cleaning of the shrines began last week as the island prepares for the annual Vegetarian Festival. Photo: PR Phuket

27 with devotees from the Koor Su Gong Naka Shrine in Wichit taking to the streets.

Street processions will be held at participating shrines across the island every day through to Oct 4.

All streets and main roads along the procession routes will be closed to traffic while the procession is taking place. Traffic may be halted temporarily, the road reduced to one lane or redirected altogether while processions proceed.

On the final night of the festival on Oct 4 all participating shrines will make their way through the streets of Phuket, especially Thalang Rd and Phuket Rd, leading to Saphan Hin, where the final rites ceremonies will be held.

The festival will conclude with the traditional ceremony of lowering the Go Teng poles at the shrines at sunset the following day, Oct 5. *The Phuket News*



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Wind 11 m/s

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High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

MON SEPTEMBER 26



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE SEPTEMBER 27



High: +32°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

WED SEPTEMBER 28



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

THU SEPTEMBER 29



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

New mosque rises near airport

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Komol Dumlak, Chairman of the Phuket Islamic Committee, has called on people to not criticise the construction of the project now branded as the 'Phuket Central Mosque', and has denied claims that the mosque is being built using government funds.

Through a report by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket) on Sept 15, while still using the police rank of Sub-lieutenant as his formal honorific title despite not having served as a police officer for decades, Mr Komol said, "It is a place where everyone benefits together, without discrimination."

Mr Komol said that the project, under construction next to Thalang Technical College on the main road leading to the airport, is situated on nine rai and two ngan of land provided by the Royal Forestry Department.

In total there will be eight to nine buildings at the site, he said.

Of the main buildings, one will be the 'Phuket Central Mosque'. The others will include an Islamic Ethics Training Center and a Phuket Islamic Affairs Administration Center.

"There will also be Phuket Provincial Foundation School to help the poor and the underprivileged who have no place to study or any



The Phuket Central Mosque under construction near the airport. Photo: PR Phuket

way to pay expensive tuition fees," Mr Komol said.

"Students will come together at this centre whether they are Thai, Buddhist or Christian. This centre will be a centre where both Thai and English [languages] can be learned and all classes can come and study here where we will take care of the poor and the underprivileged," he continued.

Construction of the main mosque is about 70% complete, fully funded by donations of more than B2.3 million, Mr Komol said.

So far more than B20mn has been spent on construction of the entire complex, Mr Komol added.

In total, donations of B40mn are needed to complete the complex, he said.

"Many more decorations need to be

done, with around B20mn still needed to complete the project," he added.

"The mosque will become the face of our Phuket province. We can build the central mosque here and then people can pray, whether they are taxi drivers at the airport or foreign guests, as they all will have to pass along this road," Mr Komol said.

"Therefore, we are all welcome to come together and donate to the mosque because the Central Mosque is now accepting donations," he added.

Mr Komol called on people "to understand that the budget for building the Central Mosque is not a budget from the government".

"Not even one baht, we collect from the people," he said.

"Do not create conflict. Also tell people who create conflict to stop doing it because we are in Thailand.

We love Thailand too. We love all Thai brothers and sisters. We are in the same nation," he said.

Regarding the Islamic Ethics Training Center, Mr Komol said that one rai had been "donated" to the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) for the centre to be built.

"It will be a centre for training and displaying various products, and used to perform important ceremonies of the nation and important ceremonies of the King with a capacity of approximately 1,000 people," he said.

"It will be a three-storey building of the PPAO, but the Office of the Phuket Islamic Committee is the one who requested it.

"The PPAO gave the budget for construction. This is part of the budget was approved by PPAO President Rewat Arerob and Vice President Thiwat Seedokbub, and all members of the PPAO," he said.

Not noted in the report was that the budget provided by the PPAO totalled B56mn – even more than the B40mn Mr Komol said was required to build the entire complex.

Also not noted in the report was that the Anti-Fake News Center in its investigation of fake news claims that the project was to cost B250mn, had confirmed that the land provided by the Royal Forestry Department for the project covered more than 19 rai, not nine rai as claimed by Mr Komol.

Man robs store with sword

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED A man who robbed a small neighbourhood groceries shop in Wichit twice on the same night, first with a knife, then again with a sword.

Wichit Police were called to the shop, in Ao Nam Bor, Moo 7, Wichit, at around 1:20am on Sept 12.

Officers were told that a man with long hair who concealed his face entered the shop and threatened the staffer with a knife.

The staffer handed over all the money in the cash drawer, totalling B400, and the robber fled on a motorbike.

Later, around 4:40am, the same man returned to the store, this time brandishing a sword one metre long. He again threatened the staffer and this time made off with a further B500.

Wichit Police with assistance from Phuket Provincial Police managed to track down the man, who they identified only as "Mr Nikorn", 31. Police withheld the man's family name.

A warrant for Nikorn's arrest



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

was issued and officers moved in and arrested him at about 4:15pm that same day, police reported.

Nikom was taken to Wichit Police Station to face charges "committing robbery at nighttime by using a vehicle".

According to police, Nikorn robbed the shop the first time because he was unhappy with the person who worked there. Apparently they had a disagreement earlier.

The shop staffer was not particularly compliant when he robbed the shop the first time, so he returned to rob it a second time, this time with a more threatening weapon, police said.

When the staffer saw the sword, the staffer fled, leaving Nikorn to help himself to the cash drawer, police reported. Eakkapop Thongtub

Monkey trouble at new resort in Chalong

A BRAND-NEW BOUTIQUE resort in Chalong is having trouble with local monkeys disturbing its guests.

Pongchat Choueorm, Chief of the Nature and Wildlife Education Centre at the Khao Phra Thaew Non-Hunting Area in Thalang, and fellow wildlife officers inspected the Noku Phuket resort in Soi Sai Nam Yen, Chalong, on Sept 13.

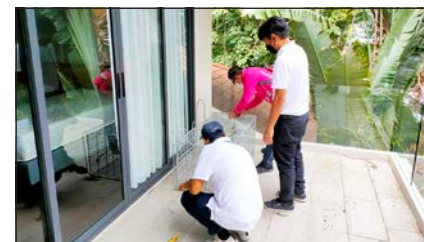
Management of the new resort, which has 91 villas and lofts, explained the issues they were having with local macaques on the resort grounds and their attempts to enter the guests' accommodation.

Mr Pongchat said that his office laid out some ground rules that guests must follow.

"They absolutely must not give the monkeys any food," he said.

"Do not leave food waste outside the room while waiting for it to be collected as that only attracts wild animals to come down to eat the food scraps," he added.

"Also, we ask for the cooperation of employees to help inspect the grounds to make sure leftover food and scraps collected remain



Wildlife officers set up a trap in the hope of catching one of the intruding monkeys. Photo: Khao Phra Thaew Non-Hunting Area

well kept away inside the hotel," Mr Pongchat said.

The hotel management immediately notified its staff of the rules, and will inform its guests to be aware of the monkeys, he said.

While at the resort, the officers inspected the garbage collection facilities on site to ensure they did not invite other wild animals to come to dine for free.

Officers set up some traps in the hope of snaring some of the intruders.

"These rules will be used as a guideline for hotels in or near hilly areas or near mangrove forests to prevent attracting wildlife into their resort areas," Mr Pongchat said.

Chutharat Plerin

Building walls in communities

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

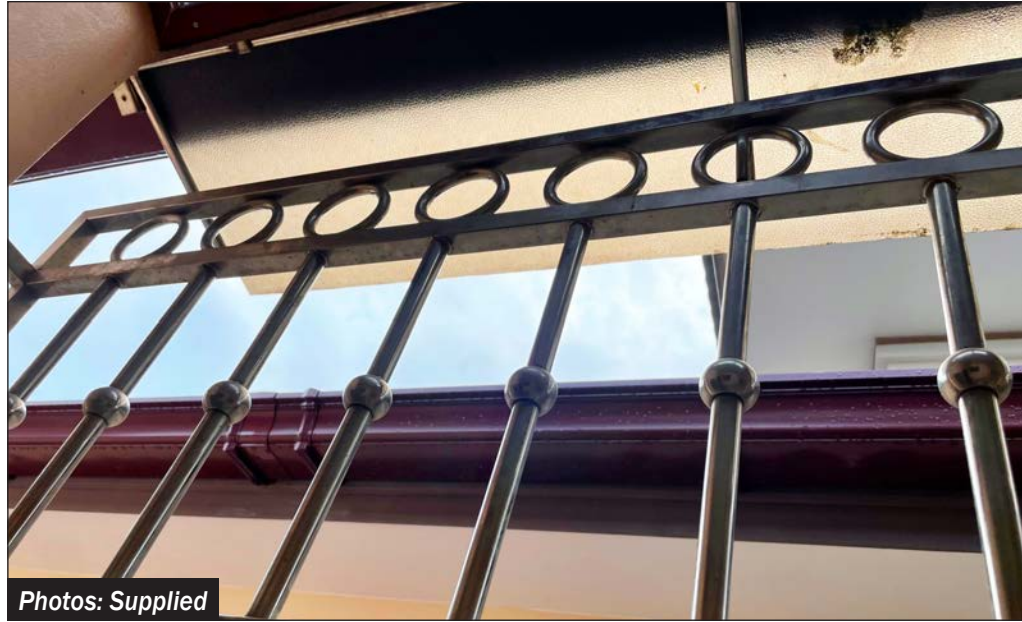
A Phuket expat has raised the issue of the lack of protection against neighbours' building imposing walls along boundaries with adjacent properties after a wall standing 3.2 metres tall was built right beside his house, blocking even sunlight from shining into his son's room.

Roberto Manco, a resident at the Sinsuk Thani housing estate in Srisoonthorn, said the issue began last year, when his neighbour first started sizing up where the wall was to be built.

Attempts to negotiate for the wall to be shorter to allow some sunlight into his 10-year-old son's room proved fruitless, often deteriorating into arguments and even threats.

Roberto asked for the wall height to be built just 50cm shorter to allow some sunlight and breeze into his son's room. The neighbour refused to compromise.

"The bulwark in question has removed all visibility and daylight from me, I no longer see anything, not even the sky, there is no more breeze and



Photos: Supplied



the voices and noises of the neighboring house are amplified with an uncomfortable echo. It is more like a prison," Roberto said.

The Sinsuk Thani housing estate management group has done nothing to prevent or regulate the construction of the wall.

The wall stands on his neighbour's property, but breaches the construction guidelines set out by the housing estate management group mandating that structures must be at least two metres from the boundary line.

Roberto, an Italian-Swiss who has lived in Thailand for 16 years, and not new to antics by people ignoring rules, attempted to hire three lawyers to resolve the issue.

"The first wrote a letter of protest to Srisoonthorn Municipality and opened a case, but despite several appointments he never managed to speak to any head at the municipality. After about a month he gave up the case and told me it wasn't his specialty," Roberto explained.

Of note, during the first lawyer's attempts it was discovered that the municipality

issued a building permit for the wall two months after its construction began.

"The second, a specialist in these problems, listened to the exposition of my problem and told me at the time that he would contact me. Several days passed, and despite my insistence he made me understand that he was not interested in it," Roberto continued.

The lawyer requested "an exorbitant figure in advance", Roberto said. "Despite my agreement of 50% right away and the balance at the end of the case, the lawyer never

responded."

The third and last law firm Mr Roberto contacted met with him to discuss the case. After 15 days of not hearing back from the firm, Mr Roberto contacted them only to be told they were "too busy" to take up the case, but then gave "a really exaggerated fee" to continue with it.

"All this discouraged me from continuing with the law firm," he said.

What was confirmed during the process was that the legal minimum distance between separately standing dwell-

ings in Thailand is just 50cm, Roberto said.

Any other construction conditions required within housing estates is up to the housing estate management authority to enforce its own rules.

The offending wall stands 1.2m from the boundary line, but not 2m from Roberto's house.

"I would like to publicly reveal my story, that of a building abuse that is forcing my family to live in very disadvantaged conditions, and for which I cannot get justice," Roberto said.

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IMT-GT keeps trade flowing

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith chaired the conclusion of the 28th Indonesia–Malaysia–Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) Ministerial Meeting in Phuket last Friday (Sept 16), praising the three countries involved for paving the way for economic development in the region.

The event, at Saii Laguna Phuket, began on Sept 13 with talks held between the participating nations throughout the week.

Joining the event last Friday were Indonesian Minister of Industry Agus Gumiwang Kartasasmita and Dato Sri Mustapa Bin Mohamed, Minister to the Malaysian Prime Minister's Office.

Also present were Ahmed M Saeed, Vice President of the Asian Development Bank; Chze Cheen Lim, Director of the ASEAN Connectivity Division at the ASEAN Secretariat Office; and Danucha Pichayanan, Secretary-General of the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDB) in Thailand.

Mr Arkhom praised the progress made during the international economic conference “to develop a sharp edge network to connect seamlessly, improve rules to support each other, take into account environmental



Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith praised the IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting in Phuket a success. Photo: PR Phuket

sustainability and upgrading the potential of workers, which is an important factor in the development of the sub-region”.

The Finance Minister highlighted six main takeaways from the week-long conference.

Under the Physical Connectivity Projects (PCPs), 36 projects with a total value of over US\$57 billion (approximately B2.1 trillion) were agreed to, including construction of a road linking the Sadao and Bukit Kayuhitam with a customs checkpoint; construction of the second Kolok River Bridge (Su-ngai Kolok-Rantao Panyang) and a new bridge between Tak Bai and Bangalan Kubo; and improving the motorway

from Hat Yai to Sadao.

Other projects discussed included Phuket Airport Development Phase 2 and the construction of the double-track railway from Hat Yai to Padang Besar.

The three countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on rubber industry cooperation. For decades, Thailand has been the world's biggest producer of rubber, growing 35% of the world's natural rubber supply in 2019. Malaysia and Indonesia are both also vital producers of rubber on the global market.

The MoU was to jointly formulate policies and strategic directions in driving the tyre industry, to strengthen the value chain of the

rubber industry and to strengthen the capacity of the rubber production among the three countries.

“Thailand's interests in holding this meeting are to facilitate private investors to invest in the rubber, palm oil and halal food industries. The Memorandum of Understanding on the Rubber City Project and the Rubber Industry Cooperation in the IMT-GT sub-region will result in facilitating business operations, and distribution of income to rubber farmers,” Mr Arkhom noted.

The IMT-GT event last week also saw India become the first country outside the tripartite to join the IMT-GT Development Partnership. The three countries will jointly formulate an action plan with India on key goals based on specialised knowledge.

“The MoU also aims to expand cooperation with the Asian Development Bank, the ASEAN Secretariat and other development partners to create strong economic growth of the sub-region together,” Mr Arkhom said.

The three IMT-GT program ministers also approved a five-year implementation plan for 2022-2026.

“This will be under Vision 2036, which will be the framework for the development of the IMT-GT sub-region with a focus on energy and food security, digital transformation development of special economic zones, industrial development, cooperation with development partners and all

sectors, sustainable tourism driven by the private sector, and balanced growth while reducing inequality and developing more efficient operating mechanisms,” Mr Arkhom explained.

TOURISM

“The results of the IMT-GT Business Council have supported the Instructor Training Program to elevate community tourism into the digital economy,” Mr Arkhom said.

“This is a project that benefits SME tourism entrepreneurs by using digital technology as a management aid, and will strengthen SME entrepreneurs to turn around the tourism business sector,” he said.

BEST OF THREE

Mr Arkhom called for three major developments to be driven forward to help develop the economy, as follows:

1. Accelerating the development and extension of projects to support unified tourism;
2. Focusing on the production of high-value agricultural and processed agricultural products such as rubber and palm oil; and
3. Developing a halal certification system to be accepted by the world market.

Indonesia will host the 29th IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting, IMT-GT Roadmap and other related meetings in 2023.

Commerce Office launches cheap goods fair

THE PHUKET COMMERCE Office has launched a series of mobile markets offering household necessities at cheap prices to help people cope with the impact of high inflation on essential consumables.

The mobile market series, branded as the ‘Lot 20’ markets, were launched at the Phuket Commerce Office in Phuket Town on Sept 16. “This will help alleviate the burden of living expenses for the people of Phuket in a situation where the price of goods has increased,” said Phuket Provincial Palad (Chief Administrative Officer) Somprat Prabsonkram at the event.

The ‘Lot 20’ markets were the Phuket version of a nationwide campaign launched by the Commerce Department, explained Phuket Commerce Chief Woranit Aphirattjirawong.

The markets will be set up at six locations each day, but will move to different locations throughout the 60 days of the campaign, until Nov 12, Ms Woranit said.

The markets will be open from 9am to 5pm, she added.



Photo: Phuket CCommerce Office

The first six locations where the markets were set up on Sept 14-16 in front of the Phuket Provincial Commercial Office in Phuket Town and at the Sapam School in Koh Kaew; in front of Kathu Municipality and in front of Kamala Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor); at the Phu Yai baan's house in Moo 4 Baan Don Tambon Thepkasattri and in front of Mukarram Mosque in Cherng Talay.

“More than 80 consumer products will be sold to the public at cheap prices, including fresh produce, dry

food, condiments, body wash products, laundry products and other necessities,” Ms Woranit said.

“Most people have come to buy pork, fresh chicken, eggs, vegetable oil and rice because they are much cheaper than at the markets, and most of them are smiling and happy that there is a project to help alleviate the burden of rising costs during this period,” she added.

“Those who are interested can follow the points of sale on the Phuket Provincial Commercial Office Facebook page,” she said. *The Phuket News*

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Scrap plastic import ban to be done in phases

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government is planning to ban plastic scrap imports in 2025, a move that will be carried out in phases over the next three years, Natural Resources and Environment Minister Varawut Silpa-archa said on Monday (Sept 19).

He recently chaired a meeting of a sub-committee on plastic and electronic waste management, saying the panel looked into the production capacity of plastic scrap-related factories, reports the *Bangkok Post*.

Members also listened to suggestions by stakeholders about the ban on the import of plastic scrap for raw materials in the industrial sector.

The ban has been discussed since 2020, and it's now time to make it real, he said.

He said the panel agreed that 14 plants located in free-trade zones would be able to import plastic scrap until 2024 in two phases.

The first phase is to start next year to limit the amount of imported plastic scrap based on actual production capacities.

However, companies will still be allowed to fully import the scrap they need.

The second phase will start in 2024, when only 50% of imports are allowed, Mr Varawut said, adding a total ban will



'Thailand must not be a dump site for plastic waste,' says the National Resources and Environment Minister. Photo: AFP

start in 2025.

For plants outside of the free-trade zone, plans to import plastic scraps must be approved by the panel.

They will not allowed to import plastic scraps in 2025, he said. It is unclear what effect the ban will have on industry.

"Thailand must not be a dump site for plastic waste," he said. "By the end of the next three years, we will not allow any import of plastic scraps from around the world.

"We need to protect our country," he added. "This is a significant step to make our country clean from plastic waste."

He said the Department of Pollution

Control will draft a 2023–2027 plastic waste management plan, focusing on four key areas, including removing plastic waste from landfills for recycling by 2027, he said.

The minister also said the country produces 24.98 million tonnes of household waste per year, and only 32% is properly managed.

The ministry aims to reduce plastic waste yearly via a campaign to curb single-use plastic bags in department stores and convenience stores nationwide.

The campaign has managed to reduce plastic bag usage by 43%, or 150,000 tonnes, during the last two years, he said.

Death sentence for poisoning her children

BANGKOK

A WOMAN WAS HAND- ed the death penalty last Thursday (Sept 15) for poisoning her two children, including one count of murder, and posting images of them looking sick online to solicit donations.

The Criminal Court sentenced Nattawan Rakkunjet to death after her indictment was recommended by prosecutors.

The court was told Nattawan adopted one of the children, a girl then aged 4, in April 2015 who she constantly fed food to laced with mildly corrosive liquid. Over time the girl became gravely ill and vomited blood caused by damage to her gastrointestinal tract. She was often admitted to hospital and died on Aug 12, 2019.

Nattawan also gave poisoned meals to her own son beginning when he was 2 years old in September 2017 until May 2020. He too developed a critical illness.

She took photos of the sick children and posted



Nattawan arrested at her home. Photo: Bangkok Post

them on her Facebook account to draw online donations, which she received in large quantities.

Nattawan was arrested on May 18, 2020.

She was charged and found guilty of human trafficking for using children to solicit donations, murder and attempted murder, committing fraud and putting fraudulent information into a computer system.

She confessed on account of the overwhelming evidence against her and for that reason her confession was not considered grounds for a reduced sentence.

The court also ordered her to return B42,000 worth of donations she received while the mobile phones she bought with the donations were confiscated.

Bangkok Post

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Preparing Phuket for climate change



SUSTAINABLY YOURS

Palmer Owyong

As temperatures break records in the UK and fires break records, while scorching the European countryside of Portugal, France and Spain, Phuket has had to contend with worsening annual floods. While climate change may be inevitable, there are things that Phuket can do to better prepare itself, to limit damage to infrastructure, reduce the potential for loss of life, and protect homes and businesses.

According to United Nations Development Programme, local governments are responsible for more than 70% of climate change reduction measures and up to 90% of climate change adaptation measures. According to the United Nations Environmental Programme, 75% of CO2 emissions come from cities, with transportation, buildings and food being the largest emitters. So, the government and local communities should do what they can to lessen the impact of climate change wherever it is possible and adapt to it when it isn't. Here are a few possible solutions.

Things the Government Can Do Transportation

While the debate about taxi mafias and electric buses vs. light rail rages on in



Dedicated bicycle lanes could go a long way to help alleviate Phuket's traffic woes. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub / file

Phuket, a partial solution to reducing the congested streets of the island is seldom talked about. That is improving the walkability and bikeability in the most trafficked areas of the island, such as Phuket Town and Patong.

Many major cities such as Paris, Madrid, Ottawa, Seattle and Melbourne are already doing this by turning their densely packed downtown areas into so-called 15-minute cities in which cars are banned or limited and all essential services are strategically placed within walking or biking distance, which is easy to do because of the close proximity of the shops and restaurants.

Studies show that when downtown

areas limit vehicle traffic, businesses in those areas generally thrive as do property values, while pedestrian deaths go down, and the air gets cleaner resulting in a lower incidence of asthma, heart attacks and cancers, which also reduces the burden on the healthcare system.

A recent report from the Centre for London shows that reduced traffic neighbourhoods are one of the easiest ways to save money, improve health and make cities quieter, and let's face it the quality of life on Phuket would be immensely improved if we had less traffic.

Flood Mitigation

Phuket's annual floods are getting worse, which is leading to millions of baht in property damage. However, there are ways to mitigate flooding and lessen the damage.

One strategy that China is using is redesigning its metropolitan areas into sponge cities that restore floodplains and wetlands and create retention ponds, sunken parks and water-permeable parking lots. Not only does this reduce flooding, but it also cleans the air and water and creates habitats for wildlife and pollinators to live, while giving people access to nature, which can improve mental and physical health.

Phuket can imitate the success of sponge cities by replacing grass lawns in parks with trees and native species of plants that have deep root systems and can increase the soil's capacity to store water, reduce runoff and, consequently, flooding. It can also build rain gardens, plant more trees, create pocket parks (mini parks) and put up rainwater collection systems. Rainwater collection alone has been shown to reduce flood costs by up to 30%. Combining these solutions with better drainage in the areas that are most likely to flood, can reduce the damage to roads, buildings, businesses and homes while saving millions of baht and preventing unnecessary deaths.

Food Security

Maintaining the food supply chain is something else we need to be concerned about on Phuket. One solution is turning our lawns into gardens. In the United States lawns are the single largest irrigated crop using tens of thousands of litres of water annually, while not producing any food. They are also a desert for biodiversity, which means our pollinators don't have a home.

A study from Virginia Tech found

that lawn chemicals contaminate our water supply, and pollute our drinking water. Other studies have found that these pesticides can lead to an increased risk of cancer for you, your pets and the local wildlife, and can increase the risk of childhood leukemia by almost seven times.

So replacing some of the lawns around government buildings and in parks and turning them into edible gardens, while also promoting rooftop gardens and vertical farms, is a way that we can reduce the threat of supply chain issues while, also decreasing our use of fertilisers and pesticides and increasing biodiversity, all of which can lead to greater environmental resilience and macroeconomic stability.

Keeping Cool

Globally we've seen an average increase in temperature of about 1°C since the 1950s. Finding ways to stay cool without using greenhouse gas producing air conditioning is important. While planting trees, growing rooftop gardens and creating more green spaces will play a crucial part in keeping Phuket cool, there are additional measures that we can take to stave off the so-called urban heat effect, which comes from concrete buildings and black tar roads absorbing and radiating solar energy.

For example, we can paint building rooftops white, which can reduce the temperature inside by up to 30% compared to the outside. Likewise, we can coat roads in solar reflective paint, which can reduce ambient temperatures by up to 12°C. Buildings can be covered with living walls made of moss or plants, awnings and canopies can be erected to provide more shade and inexpensive terracotta and bamboo water passive cooling systems, which use evaporation to cool the ambient temperature by between 5-10°C, can be placed in public areas where people are most vulnerable.

Although these changes won't take place overnight, they need to happen over the next five years. Climate change is already affecting Phuket and the longer we wait to deal with it, the worse it will become.

In next week's article, we will look at personal changes that you can make in your lifestyle to help stave off the worst effects of climate change.

Palmer Owyong is an environmental activist working with the Kamala Green Club and the Global Sustainability Hub.

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'Goodbye, honey – and thanks for the house!'

A look at the law on gifts in Thailand

LEGAL MATTERS

By Dr Paul Crosio
Partner, Silk Legal

Whether to give expensive cars or mansions to a Thai 'friend' is a dilemma typically brought up over beers and in online forums. Regardless of whether the giver is a blue-collar worker or a millionaire, gifting can sometimes lead to interesting stories where they give away more than they imagined.

This is a prickly topic as doing an internet search yields very little guidance. Perhaps you're wondering whether you were simply used as a cash cow.

Let's look at situations where you can get your gift back after your relationship turns sour or if you find that you have been swindled.

Lending money: a word of caution

Always document the loan. A verbal contract may be enforceable but tends to be hard to prove during conflicting recollection, particularly if the receiver gathers 'witnesses' to verify their position. Doing so also benefits the receiver as the loan is guaranteed even if the giver reconsiders or passes away.

Write down the loan terms and be sure to include key conditions such as the amount, interest rate (not over 5%

per year), and repayment date. If preferable, you can ask them to write what they think the terms are in Thai and have them translated later. Once you're both on the same page, you should both sign the paper.

If unsure about the repayment date, you can say that the term is extendable at the lender's discretion.

Thailand's laws on gifts

A gift is any property or money that is voluntarily given to another person with no expectations. This is different from marriage where matrimonial property is typically divided equally between spouses. A gift made during marriage, such as a dowry, is not revocable for ingratitude.

Under Section 531, you can claim back a gift if:

- the recipient committed a serious criminal offence against the giver;
- the recipient seriously defamed or insulted the giver, or
- the receiver refused to assist the giver in need despite being able to do so.

According to Section 533, a claim must be made within six months from the time the giver became aware of ingratitude. However, Section 535 states that some gifts are not revocable for ingratitude, particularly remuneration, encumbered gifts, gifts made under moral obligation, and gifts during marriage.

Revoking a gift

Theft, fraud, or assault can be consid-



Photo: yanalya / freepik

ered reasonable grounds for revoking gifts. Elder abuse or neglect are also reasonable grounds. Both these situations are extremes and not commonly seen.

To revoke a gift due to ingratitude, you would need to prove that you were seriously defamed or insulted. Serious means not trivial or minor.

An insult is a violation of another's honour through an offensive expression or action, while defamation is the act of spreading disreputable information about the giver to others. In one successful revocation, the receiver called their father (the giver) a "despicable dog". Surely, you can imagine other incidents like this.

Arguably, parading multiple partners to common friends during a relationship could be considered an "insult", while even more provocative statements such as the giver being a drunkard or bankrupt may be considered defamation and a cause for revoking a gift.

How Thailand taxes gifts

Gift taxes can be defined as taxation on the transfer of property, and taxpayers can opt to pay 5% gift tax on properties worth more than B10 million or B20mn. Both individuals, even non-Thai citizens, and juristic persons are subject to the gift tax.

There are, however, exemptions to the gift tax, particularly gifts worth less than B20mn given by a spouse or family member, or gifts worth less than B10mn from others.

As always, if you feel you have the need to revoke an ill-advised gift due to the reasons mentioned above, quickly contact us to guide you through this matter. Remember: the clock is ticking.

For more information about gifts, contact Silk Legal at info@silklegal.com or by using the contact form on their website.

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POP QUIZ

1. What percent of Netflix users personally pay for their subscription?
2. What is meant by the term "hustings"?
3. In his childhood, the Dalai Lama was afraid of which insect?
4. Women were allowed to compete in the (modern) Olympics for the first time in which year?
5. How much does it cost players to get out of jail in Monopoly?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

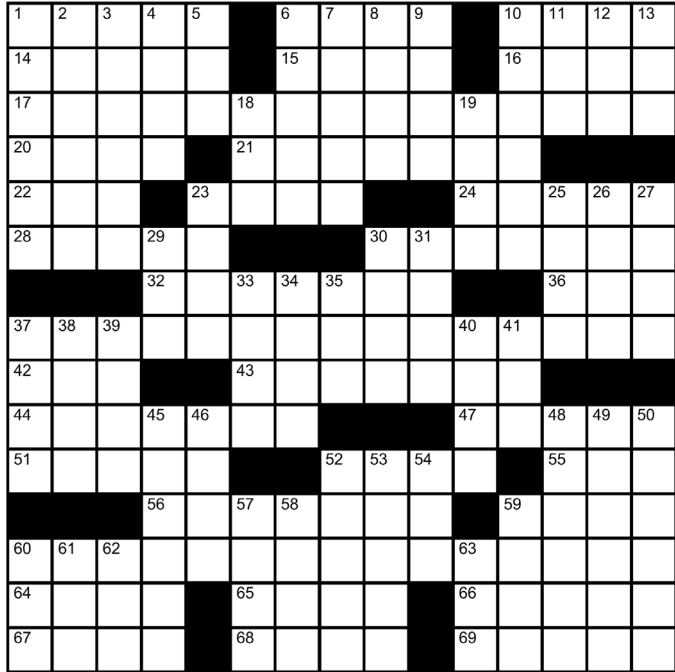
9				1			3	5
		1		3				
	3				6			8
							4	
		7	5		4	9		
	1							
4			1				2	
				6		3		
7	8			2				6

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
1. Approval
 6. Clink
 10. Shoot
 14. Escalator feature
 15. River in Italy
 16. Yawl call
 17. Aging devil dog?
 20. Debut of March 3, 1923
 21. It can be criminal
 22. King topper
 23. Kind of job
 24. "Forget it!"
 28. Hawaiian island
 30. Garden-variety
 32. Ancient Roman coins
 36. ___ in (eat)
 37. Took a break to work on furniture?
 42. Theater sound
 43. Some art
 44. Baton wielder
 47. Orbital point
 51. Absolute
 52. Dateless
 55. Grp. concerned with defense
 56. IRS employee
 59. Dish cooked in a pot
 60. Pay-as-you-go
- Down
1. Pertaining to Ohio, e.g.
 2. It's used to treat bruises
 3. Servant
 4. Circular
 5. Anomalous
 6. Biblical Assyrian king
 7. Saw
 8. Tranquil scene
 9. Weak
 10. Tailor
 11. Key letter
 12. Long stretch
 13. River in Wales
 18. African grazer
 19. Teen spots
 23. Bank holding
 25. Dry riverbed
 26. Opposed to, in dialect
 27. Safecracker
 29. Bustle
 30. "___ it the truth!"
 31. II x IV
 33. Literary adverb
 34. Big top?
 35. Earth Summit site
 37. Schools of thought
 38. Literally, "king"
 39. Butter
 40. Destroy disk data
 41. Accident
 45. Medium meeting?
 46. Align
 48. Zen enlightenment
 49. Spain and Portugal
 50. Tom of fiction
 52. Brown ermine
 53. They may have abs of stone
 54. Elbow's site
 57. Time to act
 58. Like some rumors
 59. Have the lead
 60. Signal
 61. Hart Trophy winner, 1970-72
 62. "Rocky ___"
 63. Global financial overseer

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) About 63%; 2) A meeting at which candidates in an election address potential voters; 3) Caterpillar; 4) 1900; 5) 50 (about \$1.800 in genuine currency)



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

to two percent of the total global population has naturally red hair (70-140 million people).

40

minutes is how long a cockroach can hold its breath for. It can survive underwater for 30 minutes.

2,617

is how many times the average smartphone user touches their phone in a day.

600,000

lives would be saved every year if everyone washed their hands properly with soap.

37

million

years ago, penguins in Antarctica were 2.13 metres tall (7ft) and weighed 110kg (242lbs).

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Yanui sunset. Photo by Mark Musto

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

This week in history

September 23, 1980

Bob Marley plays what would be the last concert of his life in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

September 24, 2014

The Mars Orbiter Mission makes India the first Asian nation to reach Mars orbit, and the first nation in the world to do so in its first attempt.

September 25, 1926

The international Convention to Suppress the Slave Trade and Slavery is first signed.

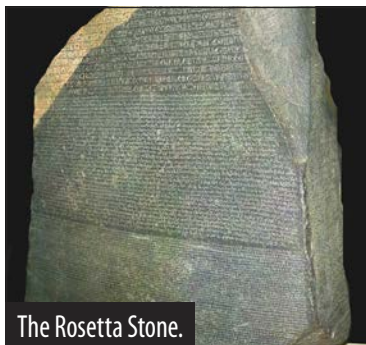
Ninety-nine countries, but not Thailand, have since signed, ratified or otherwise committed to the Convention.

September 26, 1580

Privateer, naval officer and explorer Sir Francis Drake finishes his circumnavigation of the Earth. He becomes the second person, and the first Englishman, to achieve this.

September 27, 1822

Jean-François Champollion announces that he has deciphered the Rosetta Stone.



The Rosetta Stone.

September 28, 1928

Alexander Fleming notices a

bacteria-killing mold growing in his laboratory, discovering what later became known as penicillin.

September 29, 2006

A Boeing 737 and an Embraer 600 collide in mid-air, killing 154 people and triggering a Brazilian aviation crisis. On the same day in 1940, two Avro Ansons collide in mid-air in Australia, remain locked together, then land safely.

Source: Wikipedia

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The **map of PHUKET** English 中文 Русский

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25 SEP



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MON

26 SEP



Monday BBQ Night

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

TUE

27 SEP



Rotary Club - Weekly Meeting

Come join Rotary Club of Patong Beach's Tuesday dinner meeting at Four points by Sheraton Patong. September's speaker lineup: Sep 06 - Dinner Out - The 9th Degree, Boat Lagoon, Sep 13 - Dr. Kaniitta Chatamma – Managing back pain, Sep 20 - Who am I? Vanessa Temple & Sep 27 - Saweang Kaola (Jack) - SOS food bank in Phuket. Email club Sec. Hans at info@rotarypatong.org to register.

WED

28 SEP



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

FRI

7 OCT



Grow Boating Evening

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the

Phuket Boat Lagoon from 5pm on Friday the 7th of October. We are delighted to announce that our drinks sponsor for the evening will be BASCO Boating a global community for leisure boating where Buyers, Advancers, Sellers, Content seekers and Operators congregate to Connect, Advise and Trade with one another. See <https://www.bascoboating.com/> There will be a delicious finger food buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro for all attendees and if you are still hungry then there will be burgers for just 100 baht. As always, all your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to growboatingphuket@gmail.com Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/growboatingphuket Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See www.thepuketnews.com

THU

20 OCT



Joint Chambers Phuket Sun-downers hosted by AustCham

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC), Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), Phuket Chamber of Commerce and Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, invite you to join us for Phuket Sun-downers at Saii Laguna Phuket from 18:00hrs. B500 for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members, B900 for non-members. Includes cocktail-style food, and free-flow adult beverages and soft drinks. Bookings - austchamthailand.com, office@austchamthailand.com



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Game, set and match for Federer

TENNIS

AFP

Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer has announced his retirement from the sport after admitting his battles with a knee problem had forced him to call time on his historic career.

"The Laver Cup next week in London will be my final ATP event," he said in a statement posted on social media last Thursday (Sept 15).

The Laver Cup runs from today (Sept 23) until Sunday in London.

The 41-year-old winner of 20 Grand Slam titles has been out of action since a quarter-final loss at Wimbledon in 2021, after which he underwent his third knee surgery in 18 months.

"The last 24 years on tour have been an incredible adventure," he wrote.

"While it sometimes feels like it went by in 24 hours it has also been so deep and magical that it seems as if I have already lived a lifetime."

Federer has struggled with the knee problem for the past three years that has restricted him to only three of the 11 Grand Slams staged since the start of 2020 and he said that his body had effectively told him it was time to bring the curtain down.

"I've worked hard to return to full competitive form," he wrote.



Federer bows out from the sport having won 20 Grand Slam titles in his career. Photo: AFP

"But I also know my body's capacities and limits, and its message to me lately has been clear.

"I am 41 years old. I have played more than 1,500 matches over 24 years.

"Tennis has treated me more generously than I ever would have dreamt, and now I must recognize when it is time to end my competitive career."

The Laver Cup team event in London will also give Federer a final chance to play competitively as part of the "Big Four", who dominated

tennis over the past two decades.

Rafael Nadal, who holds the record for Grand Slam titles with 22; Novak Djokovic, who has won 21 Grand Slam crowns; and two-time Wimbledon champion Andy Murray will all play together as part of Team Europe.

'SAD DAY FOR THE SPORT'
Tributes poured in once Federer made the announcement.

"Your career has set the tone for what it means to achieve excellence and lead with integrity and poise.

It's an honour to know you on and off court," Novak Djokovic wrote on Instagram.

Rafael Nadal wrote on social media: "Dear Roger, my friend and rival, I wish this day would never have come. It's been a pleasure but also an honour and privilege to share all these years with you, living so many amazing moments on and off the court."

Murray commented, "It's a sad, sad day for the sport. Unbelievable career, the longevity that he's had. The way that he played the game,

conducted himself and all of those things, I think all of the players respected him for that."

Teenager Carlos Alcaraz, who won the US Open on Sept 11 to become the youngest ever world number one, paid tribute to Federer as well with a broken heart emoji on Twitter. "Thank you for everything you have done for our sport," Alcaraz said.

Federer paid tribute to them too. "I was lucky enough to play so many epic matches that I will never forget," he said.

"We battled fairly, with passion and intensity, and I always tried my best to respect the history of the game.

"I feel extremely grateful. We pushed each other, and together we took tennis to new levels."

Federer had said back in July he hoped to play one more Wimbledon. He departs with regrets but added that he had lived a life that many would envy.

"This is a bittersweet decision because I will miss everything the tour has given me," he said.

"But, at the same time, there is so much to celebrate. I consider myself one of the most fortunate people on Earth.

"I was given a special talent to play tennis and I did it at a level that I never imagined for much longer than I ever thought possible."



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Cricket returns to ACG in style

CRICKET

Continued from page 16

Following the innings break, Phuket openers Jag-sir Brar and Seemant Raju made quick in-roads, each picking up a wicket in their first over.

Opening batsman Sheikh 0 (3) and number three Ganesh 0 (2) were both caught to leave the Panthers in a hole with just 4 runs on the board in the second over, Stuart Hamilton and Sadarangani respectively taking the catches.

Merv joined Divian at number four as the two tried to weather the storm from the opening bowlers but when Merv 7 (19) was contentiously adjudged LBW from the bowling of Raju with the score at just 3-21 after 5.4 overs, the target of 188 appeared out of reach.

The match then proceeded to evolve into an increasingly jovial affair with the odd 'refreshment' finding its way onto the field of play as the match continued.

Divian 37 (42), Pravin 15 (20), Prakash 14 (15), Dumin



Phuket XI captain Curt Livermore displays his newly acquired power game. Photo: Jintana Flowers

11* (10) and Kumaraendran 10* (8) added respectability to the scorecard as the Panthers eventually fell 67 runs short of the target finishing at 121/7 from their 20 overs.

Raju, Phuket's 2021/22 leading wicket taker, was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3/10 from 4 overs.

Following the match, the teams shared kind words and a few gifts as cricket was declared the winner.

Phuket captain Livermore was interestingly named "Match of the Man", Divian was honored for his efforts with the bat and Sheikh was showered with adulation for his efforts and performance as the oldest player of the twenty something strong

touring party.

The Panthers very generously donated many drinks and food to the evening and even covered the ground rental fees for what seemed to be a very enjoyable day out for all involved as Phuket Cricket made a successful and much anticipated return to the ACG.

A special mention to Michael Bell who made his debut for Phuket and picked up his first wicket in the process.

There will be a local friendly match this Sunday (Sept 25). If you would like to get involved, please contact Phuket Cricket on Facebook.

Michael Flowers

Gunners continue to fire

FOOTBALL

AFP

Arsenal moved back to the top of the Premier League as goals from William Saliba, Gabriel Jesus and Fabio Vieira put the gloss on a dominant performance to beat Brentford 3-0 last Sunday (Sept 18).

Despite injuries to captain Martin Odegaard and Oleksandr Zinchenko, the Gunners showed no sign of weakness at a ground where they were beaten 2-0 last season to move back one point above Manchester City and Tottenham at the top of the table.

"We have a different mentality this season," said Arsenal midfielder Granit Xhaka. "We are training like we play and have class with the players that can make a difference."

It took just 15 minutes more for Arsenal to make the breakthrough when Saliba flicked Bukayo Saka's corner in off the far post.

Jesus also used his head to score his fourth goal in seven Premier League games since joining from Manchester City as he powered home another enticing delivery from Xhaka before Vieira made his mark with a sumptuous strike from outside the box four minutes into the second half.

"We lost to the number one in the Premier League," said Brentford boss Thomas Frank. "I think they'll compete for the title."

On Saturday Manchester City needed



Arsenal's Fabio Vieira (left) celebrates his spectacular goal in the 3-0 win at Brentford last Sunday (Sept 18). Photo: AFP

just 56 seconds to take the lead against Wolves at Molineux as Jack Grealish finally enjoyed a day to remember after a difficult time since joining City from Aston Villa last year.

Erling Haaland doubled City's advantage with his 14th goal in 10 games in all competitions following a £51 million (B2.1 billion) move from Borussia Dortmund that already appears a bargain.

Wolves lost any chance of a fightback when Nathan Collins was sent off for an ugly stomach-high foul on Grealish in the first half before Phil Foden capped the champions' stroll in the Midlands.

In north London, South Korean star Son Heung-min responded to being dropped by hitting an incredible second-half 13-minute hat-trick as Spurs demolished Leicester City 6-2.

Son came off the bench to score Spurs' last three goals, including a pair of brilliant long-range finishes, in an emphatic victory.

It was the ideal response from Son after he had been axed by boss Antonio Conte for failing to score in his previous eight appearances.

"My finishing has been poor this season. I've also been a little bit unlucky. I knew goals were coming and I wasn't worried," Son said after unbeaten Tottenham's fifth win from seven league games.

Elsewhere, Everton beat West Ham 1-0, Aston Villa overcame Southampton 1-0, Newcastle drew 1-1 with Bournemouth and Fulham won the battle of the newly promoted teams 3-2 against Nottingham Forest.



Record breaker: Ethan Nwaneri. Photo: AFP

Nwaneri youngest ever Premier League player

FOOTBALL

ETHAN NWANERI MADE Premier League history last Sunday (Sept 18) as the Arsenal midfielder became the youngest ever player in the English top flight at 15 years and 181 days.

Nwaneri came off the bench late on as the Gunners returned to the top of the table with a 3-0 win at Brentford.

He broke the record previously held by Liverpool's Harvey Elliott when he appeared for Fulham aged 16 years and 30 days in 2019. Nwaneri also set a new landmark for the youngest Arsenal player in any competition that was previously held by Cesc Fabregas.

Nwaneri had been expected to spend the season with Arsenal Under-18s but

he was quickly promoted to the Under-21s following his impressive performances.

Injuries to captain Martin Odegaard and Oleksandr Zinchenko had left Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta short of midfield options.

"We are pretty short and opportunities come when issues arise," said Arteta. "We have the opportunities to bring young players on. When I met him [Nwaneri], when I look at him, I had that feeling. I really liked what I saw."

"It sends a strong message about who we are as a club. That we want to give opportunities when there is talent, when there is personality and when there are players who love what they do so much and when they have no fear. The doors are open to explore where they can go." AFP

Wounded Australia write to World Rugby over refereeing concerns

RUGBY

RUGBY AUSTRALIA HAS WRITTEN to the sport's governing body about "overbearing officials", after the Wallabies were denied victory against New Zealand by a controversial refereeing decision.

French referee Mathieu Raynal sparked uproar after reversing a penalty awarded to the hosts in the dying seconds of their Rugby Championship clash against the All Blacks in Melbourne last Thursday (Sept 18).

He penalised Bernard Foley for time-wasting as the fly-half was about to kick the ball into touch in the 80th minute with the Wallabies leading 37-34.

The All Blacks were instead awarded a scrum five metres out and Jordie Barrett crossed in the corner for a 39-37 win to deny Australia the Bledisloe Cup and all but end their Rugby Championship hopes.

Veteran Foley insisted he did not deliberately waste time, saying it was so loud he couldn't hear what Raynal was saying. Australia coach Dave Rennie said he had "never seen a call like that, at any level".

Rugby Australia said their letter to World Rugby was not specifically about the Raynal decision, but more generally "the state of the game today and the overbearing nature of rules and officials".

"It's not unusual, we've been lobbying World Rugby for some time on this," a spokesman added.



Australia's coach Dave Rennie (right) and his players are left dejected after the loss. Photo: AFP

They are not alone in their frustrations. England coach Eddie Jones railed against what he perceived to be over-the-top officiating during their tour of Australia this year.

Jones said he was fed up with laws that have seen games become stop-start affairs, which he fears will ruin next year's World Cup in France.

"The referees, the players, the coaches need to get together and say, 'This is the game we want, this is the game the people want to see,'" he said.

World Rugby has lowered the threshold for yellow and red cards, taking a cautious approach to improve player safety under a framework designed to protect the head, but it has slowed down the action.

While Rennie and Australian fans were fuming with Raynal's decision, All Blacks coach Ian Foster insisted it was "very clear cut". AFP

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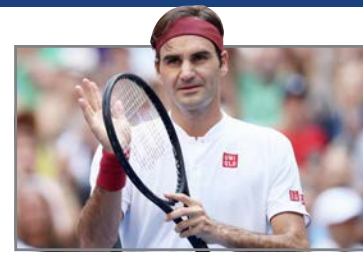
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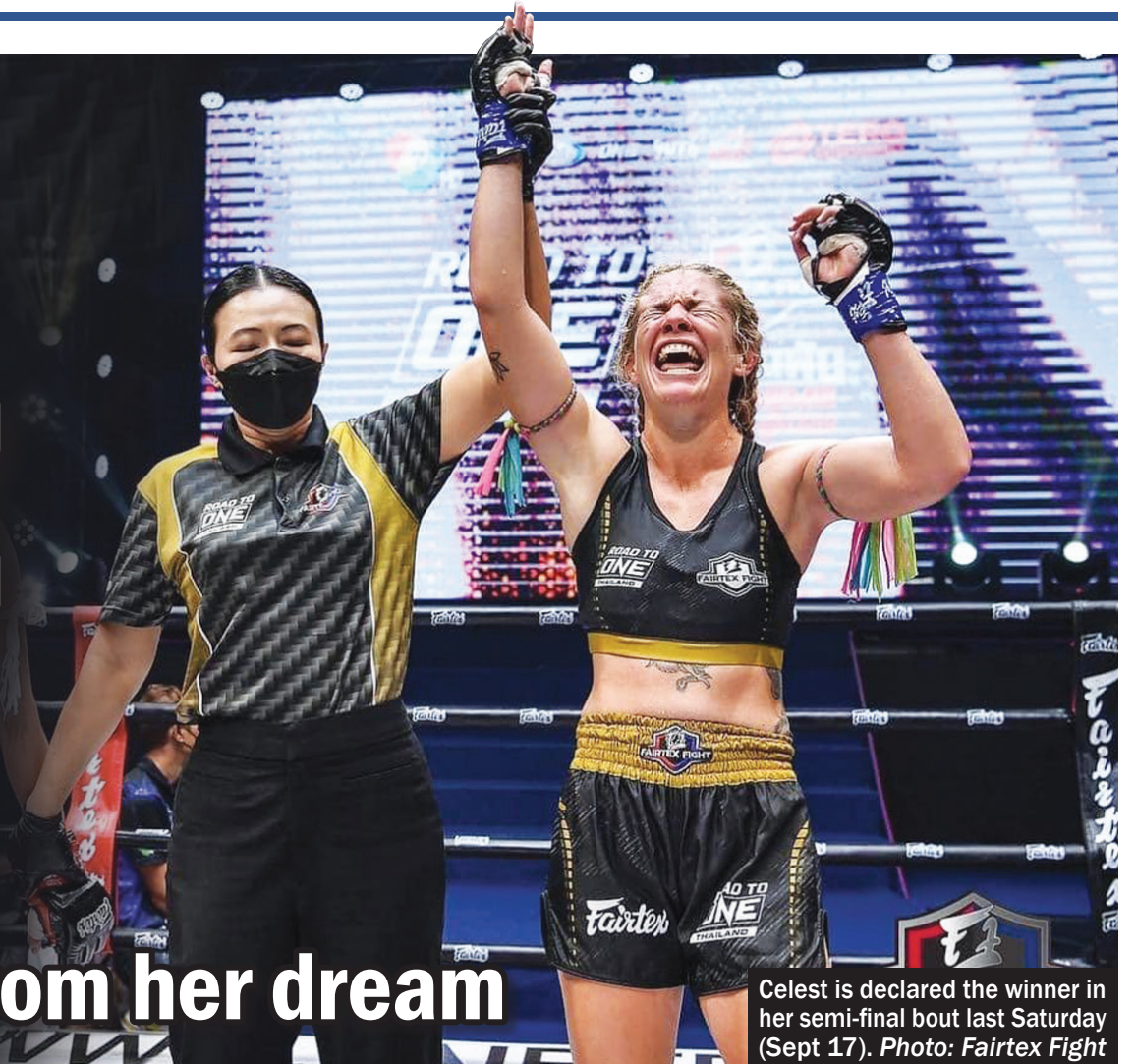
Sport



Federer calls it a day on his career > p14

ONE MORE STEP

Celest one fight away from her dream



Celest is declared the winner in her semi-final bout last Saturday (Sept 17). Photo: Fairtex Fight

MUAY THAI

Ben Tirebuck
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket-based fighter Celest Muriel Hansen took a huge stride towards realising her dream of securing a professional contract in the sport as she won her Fairtex Fight Road to ONE women's atomweight semi-final last Saturday (Sept 17).

The 28-year-old Australian beat Thai fighter Duangdaonoi Looksaikongdin in a hard fought three-round 52.2kg bout at Lumpinee Stadium in Bangkok. Duangdaonoi controlled the distance in the first round but Celeste stepped up her game in the second round and

had the better of proceedings by the final round, eventually emerging as the winner on a points decision.

The victory means Celest, who trains at Phuket Singha Muaythai Gym in Chalong, advances to the final at Lumpinee Stadium on Oct 29 where she will meet Thai fighter Lomanee, who won her semi-final last Saturday against compatriot Gamlaipetch Petchyindee.

Should Celest win the final fight against Lomanee, she will secure a professional six-fight contract worth US\$100,000 (B3.7 million) with Asia powerhouse sports property ONE Championship.

"I felt amazing after the fight, over the moon," an elated Celest told *The Phuket News*

shortly after her semi-final triumph.

"I want to be a ONE Championship athlete more than anything in the world and then go on to become a ONE Championship world champion," she added.

"While I am delighted right now with the win I am also fully aware that there is still one big step to go before I can realise my dream and that is the final fight against Lomanee on October 29. She is a tough fighter and it will be a big challenge but I will train harder than I ever have before to ensure I am fully prepared to give myself the best possible chance of winning.

"I'm just so grateful to have the opportunity and to

be going into the final fight," Celest added.

"I'd like to thank Fairtex Fight for this amazing opportunity which can allow people's dreams to come true. You guys are an amazing promotion so thank you to everyone who is involved.

"Also a huge thank you to my coach Kru Pat, Nantaporn Opor Nutcharas and Kru Nart from Phuket Singha Muaythai Gym for taking such good care of me, for training me so very hard and making me a better, stronger fighter every day – I appreciate you very much and thank you for believing in me."

TRAILBLAZER

The Oct 29 final fight will be the culmination of a three-fight

series as part of the Fairtex Fight Road to ONE competition. Celest won her first fight at Lumpinee Stadium on Aug 13 against Phetsinin Sor Phuangthong in style, knocking her opponent to the ground twice before delivering a devastating TKO in round 2.

Celest clearly feels comfortable fighting at Lumpinee Stadium, a venue previously off limits to women. Indeed, she made history at the famed stadium by becoming the first ever female to set foot in its ring when she fought Kullanat Ornok there on Nov 13 last year after the authorities reversed their policy on women fighters.

"When I said I wanted to be the first woman to fight at Lumpinee Stadium people

laughed at me and said that was never going to happen," she said. It did and she changed a lot of people's opinions and attitudes in the process.

"I hope by the end of my career I have helped change the sport for women for the better so that no one has to go through the challenges I have faced – being told women can't fight, having limited opportunities and so on," she says. "It would be nice for the next generation not to have to contend with all that."

A trailblazer, Celest is focused, determined, driven and talented with the next step on her journey well and truly in her sights. Oct 29th is her date with destiny and, make no mistake, she is ready.

Cricket the winner as Phuket XI host touring Kajang Panthers

CRICKET

AFTER ALMOST A THREE-month break from cricket action at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG), the Phuket XI came together again to host the touring Kajang Panthers of Malaysia for the first match of the new 2022/23 season last Saturday (Sept 17).

After winning the toss, the touring Panthers led by captain Merv elected to field first with Phuket captain Curt Livermore sending in the experienced opening pair of James Chataway and Anthony Van Blerk.

Captain Merv and Satchi, the



Photo: Jintana Flowers

oldest member and coach of the Panthers side, got the touring team off to an excellent start finding significant lateral movement with

the new ball.

Merv was able to dismiss both Chataway 4 (5), bowled, and Van Blerk 11 (19), run out, to set the

Phuket XI back at 2-22 after 4.4 overs.

Following the dismissals of the openers, Joe Ninan and Craig Morgan formed a dominant partnership of 81 runs in quick time to boost Phuket's score to 103 before Krishna snuck through Ninan's 43 (29) defences in the 12th over.

Morgan 32 (17), lost his wicket with just 1 further run added when Ganesh held on in the deep again from the bowling of Krishna.

Rishi Sadarangani 0 (3) who was 'not at the races' all day long came in at number six to join the newly arrived Ashan Fonseka but lasted just 3 deliveries as he was bowled by Dumin.

With 3 wickets falling in 8 balls

for just 2 runs, Phuket needed their captain Livermore to support Fonseka 35* (22) and guide Phuket to a challenging first innings total.

Livermore 43* (25) did more than just support Fonseka (and his desire for different bats), however, as he flexed his newly acquired power game, producing his most destructive innings to date which included two sixes over the bowler's head to arouse the excitement of the onlookers in the clubhouse.

The Phuket XI finished with an above par score of 188 and were a happy bunch at the interval.

Krishna was the best of the Kajang bowlers with figures of 2/33 from 4 overs.

Continued on page 14