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DIGGING IN



Photo: Supplied

RESIDENTS PUSH PROBE INTO LAYAN EIA BREACHES

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A group of residents in the Cherg Talay area have formally called on authorities to investigate what they say are repeated violations of environmental laws and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) measures by several major development projects.

The call comes after months of alleged breaches, capped by a minor landslide at one of the sites on Oct 31, which residents say highlights the dangers of hillside

construction near their land.

The Layan Residents Group (LRG), representing estates including Lotus Gardens and Ocean Breeze, says the Sun Hills Layan Phuket and The Friends Condominium developments have ignored mandatory EIA measures and failed to comply with environmental laws.

“Since July, we have warned Sun Hills and authorities about the vertical earth cutting along our boundary wall, up to 15-20 metres deep, just metres from our estate road,” a spokesperson for LRG said.

The group says developers failed to provide required 10-day notices for piling and other disruptive works, ignored community engagement and did not conduct pre-construction surveys of nearby homes, roads or infrastructure.

“These lapses have exposed neighbouring estates to noise, vibration, runoff and structural risks,” LRG said. “No communication, consultation, or impact-management measures mandated under the approved EIA have been carried out. This is an illegal breach of mandatory conditions.”

The complaint also targets Ayana Heights, Layan Verde and Layan Green Park, which LRG say have similarly failed to comply with EIA measures, zoning rules and other regulations. Local residents have also reported ongoing dust, noise, drainage problems and other issues.

ONEP

The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) confirmed to *The Phuket News* that developers including Ayana Phuket Co, Layan Best View Co and Sun Hills Co Ltd...

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Phuket driver wins Toyota Kazoo race



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News



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Layan projects face EIA pressure

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...have been investigated for breaches of environmental laws – and have been notified to correct any violations.

ONEP Secretary General Bannaruk Sermthong said that residents had repeatedly raised concerns about drainage failures, traffic impacts, overdevelopment and EIA breaches.

Developers often provided “evasive, inaccurate or irrelevant” responses and sometimes refused to take responsibility, Mr Bannaruk, formerly the Deputy Director-General of the Royal Forest Department, said.

“Despite ongoing complaints, construction has continued,” he continued. “Some projects apply selective measures while claiming full compliance.”

ONEP had also flagged allegations that developers submitted inaccurate or conflicting EIA data, including topographical maps, contour lines, drainage designs, land modifications and hillside cutting near boundaries, Mr Bannaruk explained.

“Following these reports, ONEP formally ordered Cherng Talay OrBorTor to investigate, enforce compliance, and monitor the projects,” he added.

GOING LOCAL

Aphichat Deekongsang, Director of Cherng Talay OrBorTor’s Engineering Division, assured *The Phuket News* that the



Photo: Supplied

agency is following ONEP’s order while remaining neutral in disputes between old and new developers.

His office had conducted site inspections in accordance with the order from ONEP, Mr Aphichat said.

He emphasised four principles guiding OrBorTor inspections:

1. Evidence-based enforcement: verify work using laws, science, and on-site inspection.
2. Reject hearsay: allegations must be personally inspected.
3. Listen to both sides: decisions are not based solely on complaints from existing operators.
4. Document verification: legal easements, drainage rights, and official records are checked before action.

However, Mr Aphichat cast blame back at the Layan Residents Group for any disruptions they may have caused when their developments were being built.

“They built their projects years ago when there were fewer developments. Now new projects are doing the same work, and they are feeling the impacts they never experienced before,” he said.

Mr Aphichat noted that the ongoing slew of disputes between the residents’ group and the developers in question now included lawsuits over construction clearance and suspected land fraud where previous landowners allegedly blocked drainage easements after selling land to new developers.

“The allegations of land fraud are still under investigation and remain unconfirmed, as the situation is more complex than it appears,” Mr Apichat said.

“Despite these conflicts, some impacts like noise, dust, and truck traffic are real, but damages are not as severe as claimed,” he added.

“Following our inspections, the new projects are ready to comply immediately with our recommendations,” Mr Apichat concluded.

LANDSLIDE

A minor landslide at the Sun Hills site on Oct 31 destroyed boundary trees, soil and fencing. LRG warned that the vertical cutting near estate roads posed risks to nearby villas

and required structural engineers’ assessment.

The landslide, however, fell right along the boundary line to property under development, and even saw some earth from adjacent plot collapse to the excavation site below.

Yet Mr Aphichat again assured that the incident was minor.

“A small soil break caused a tree to fall. There were no injuries or fatalities, and property damage was minimal,” Mr Aphichat said.

“The project has taken responsibility and compensated for damages. Police inspected the site, and the developer has carried out remedial work,” he added.

Even after the landslide, construction was not ordered to halt, Mr Apichat confirmed.

“Construction suspensions are rare and only imposed for repeated, significant violations, usually seven to 30 days. Minor incidents trigger immediate corrective measures rather than full stoppages,” he said.

FIGHT ON

The Layan Residents Group said they remain concerned about ongoing breaches and the cumulative impact of multiple developments.

“The repeated non-compliance shows a pattern. Residents continue to face noise, dust, drainage problems, and safety risks,” another spokesperson said. “Authorities must enforce

the EIA and hold developers accountable.”

ONEP officials agreed, emphasising full transparency, strict adherence to EIA conditions, and corrective measures, yet the issues remain, the spokesperson added.

Yet Mr Aphichat maintains that Cherng Talay OrBorTor is honouring its commitment to weekly inspections. “All recommendations are tracked, and developers must resolve issues promptly,” he said.

“Like a police officer issuing a ticket for a minor violation, we do not impose severe penalties unless there is deliberate consideration for the law or repeated failure to comply,” he said.

Residents said they will continue monitoring developments and filing complaints if problems persist.

“The minor landslide shows that the risks are real. We want our community protected, and projects must follow the law,” the Layan Residents group said.

Meanwhile, ONEP Secretary General Mr Bannaruk warned that significant breaches could lead to project suspension or legal action, while developers pledged to comply fully with mitigation measures.

To this, Mr Aphichat assured that inspections will continue, and all projects under investigation must submit evidence of EIA compliance, drainage plans, noise and dust mitigation and land-use approvals.

Phuket drenched as flooding continues, rainfall hits records

RAINFALL RECORDED IN Phuket has already surpassed both last year’s total and the province’s 30-year annual average, with the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) reporting 2,590.9 millimetres of rain between Jan 1 and Nov 19, 2025.

The figure is significantly higher than Phuket’s long-term annual average of 2,195.3mm, confirming what officials describe as an unusually wet year. It has also exceeded the total rainfall recorded in 2024,

which stood at 2,396.2mm.

According to the TMD’s monthly breakdown, October and November this year saw particularly heavy rainfall.

October delivered 508.2mm, far above the 30-year monthly average of 336mm. Last year, the island recorded 320.1mm in October.

This month, Phuket has already recorded 191.9mm in just the first 19 days, surpassing the historical monthly norm of 174.8mm and well above the 54.3mm logged in November last year.



Soi Khoktanode in Karon late last week. Photo: Karon Municipality

Several earlier months also recorded substantial increases.

May marked the start of the monsoon, with 492mm of rain –

more than double the long-term average of 236.9mm. Last year May saw only 203.1mm.

June registered 402.8mm, well above the long-term average of 249.4mm and the 203.1mm recorded last year.

The mid-rainy season proved comparatively dry. July recorded just 127.4mm, below the 30-year average of 240.1mm and below last year’s unusually wet July, which saw 344mm.

August this year saw 293.8mm of rainfall, compared with the 30-year average of

308.6mm and last year’s 424.4mm, while September this year logged 237.7mm, compared with the long-term average of 349.7mm and the exceptionally heavy 644.4mm last year, which triggered landslides across the island, including the deadly landslide in Kata.

With more than a month still to go before year-end, officials say Phuket’s total rainfall for 2025 is likely to exceed 2,700mm, marking one of the wettest years in recent records.

The Phuket News

Question raised over jet-ski permit blitz

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Phuket MP Thitikan Thiti-pruethikul has urged newly appointed Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsittithaworn to review more than 300 jet-ski permits approved in the final days before former Governor Sophon Suwannarat and a senior Marine Department official retired.

In a post online, MP Thitikan did not name the Marine Department official he believes was involved and has not responded to requests for clarification. Natchapon Pranit has served as Chief of the Phuket Marine Office throughout Mr Sophon's term and remains in the role.

Mr Sophon retired on Sept 30 but continues to play an active role in Phuket, including serving as Honorary Advisor to the Phuket Chamber of Commerce. His successor, Saransak Srikruanetra, served just 42 days, making him the shortest-serving Phuket Governor. New Governor Nirat, formerly Director-General of the Department of Provincial Administration, officially began duties on Nov 17.

MP Thitikan said the 300 fast-tracked permits were all for operators on Phuket's east coast, where officers have spent years



Photo: CIB / file

arresting and fining operators for illegal jet-ski activity. Despite repeated enforcement, many operators continued operating after paying penalties.

The sudden approvals have alarmed fishermen and residents in Pa Klok, Ao Por, Ao Kung, Bang Rong and Laem Sai, who have long complained about dangerous driving, noise and environmental impacts. Conservationists fear increased jet-ski traffic could threaten endangered dugongs and damage seagrass habitats.

Concerns intensified after a dugong was found dead off Naka Yai Island on Jan 9. A Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) post-mortem found multiple fractures consistent with a high-impact collision from a boat or jet ski. The dugong died from acute internal bleeding, the report said.

MP Thitikan said he will formally request that Governor Nirat review the approvals and adopt measures to protect communities and marine ecosystems.

Beach chair 'creep' nipped in Patong

SEVEN BEACH CHAIR operators were charged for illegally placing chairs and umbrellas outside the designated service zones on Patong Beach last week as Patong Municipality ramped up its efforts to curtail beach chair 'creeps'.

Seven operators were charged following an inspection last week by Patong Municipality, Kathu District Office and Patong Police officers.

Patong Council President Weerawit Krueasombat explained, "While Patong Beach already has clearly authorised service zones approved by the province, more operators have recently begun setting up outside boundaries."

"We found seven operators placing chairs and items outside the permitted zones. If we don't enforce the rules now, the entire beach will eventually become a free-for-all," he said.

He stressed that the policy must be strict: beach chairs, umbrellas and similar items are allowed only in areas officially designated by the province.



Photo: Patong Municipality

"If there is no enforcement, everyone will believe they can use the beach however they want, and it will become harder to control later," he added.

"Patong Municipality has prepared to establish a permanent checkpoint directly along the beachfront to ensure ongoing inspections and immediate penalties," Mr Weerawit said.

"A large amount of equipment was confiscated during yesterday's operation, all connected to the seven new offenders," he noted.

The inspection was led by Deputy Mayors Awut Nuchet and Prasan Prateep Na-Thalang, joined by Kathu District Deputy Chief Sikrin Anilbon and Lt Col Montree Mukwat of Patong Police. *The Phuket News*

Police deny accusations of 'pay-for-placement' graft

REGION 8 POLICE HAVE DENIED allegations circulating online that senior officers demanded payments in exchange for favourable postings, insisting that the current transfer round is being carried out strictly in accordance with police law and national regulations.

The clarification was issued on Nov 17 by Pol Maj Gen Saranu Chamnanrat, Deputy Commander of Region 8 Police, after posts on the Facebook pages 'Friends of the Police' and 'Phra Chan Lai Kratai V5' claimed officers from Deputy Commander to Inspector were being pressured to 'pay to stay' or pay for new positions. One post alleged officers were being asked for a 'rental price' to remain in their current roles.

The claims spread quickly, coinciding with the nationwide transfer and appointment process, due to be finalised by Nov 28 and effective Dec 1.

Pol Maj Gen Saranu confirmed that Region 8 Commander Pol Lt Gen Sittichai Lokanpai and his deputies were called to Royal Thai Police Headquarters in Bangkok for a fact-finding meeting chaired by National Police Chief Pol Gen Kittirat Phanphet. At the meeting, Region 8 leaders "clearly confirmed" the reports were false, he said.

Pol Gen Kittirat reiterated that all appointments must follow the National Police Act 2022 and 2024 National Police Commission regulations, with zero tolerance for bribery. Any credible evidence



of wrongdoing will prompt decisive action, Pol Maj Gen Saranu said.

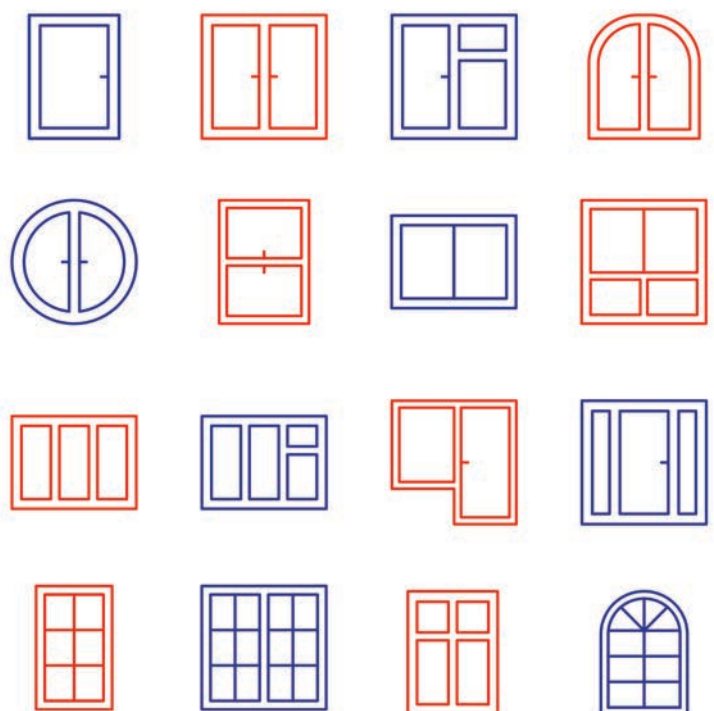
Region 8 officials stressed that the transfer process is handled by committees at every level, supported by documented evidence for each candidate. They also rejected claims that "8 kilograms of money" – slang for large cash sums – was being requested for senior posts.

Members of the public with concrete information about attempted extortion were urged to contact Region 8 Police headquarters in Mai Khao or call 096-3382484 or 076-338380.

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee also called for transparency, saying the public "deserves the best service" and is watching closely. *The Phuket News*



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The Phuket News

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

FRI NOVEMBER 28



High: +36°
Low: +29°

Wind 11 m/s

SAT NOVEMBER 29



High: +36°
Low: +28°

Wind 11 m/s

SUN NOVEMBER 30



High: +35°
Low: +28°

Wind 11 m/s

MON DECEMBER 1



High: +35°
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE DECEMBER 2



High: +35°
Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

WED DECEMBER 3



High: +37°
Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

THU DECEMBER 4



High: +36°
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

American man charged for sex with minors

AN AMERICAN MAN has been indicted on seven federal child-sex charges in the US after travelling to Phuket to abuse minors.

A federal grand jury in North Dakota found sufficient evidence to charge Sean D. Snyder with multiple counts linked to offences committed during trips to Phuket involving two underage victims, reports North Dakota news KFYZ TV.

According to the indictment, Snyder repeatedly travelled to Phuket to engage in illicit sexual conduct, said the report.

Four of the charges relate to one victim, alleged to have occurred between 2018 and late November 2024.

Two further charges involve a second victim between 2023 and mid-August this year.

The grand jury also charged Snyder with possessing a smartphone containing an image and video of child sexual abuse material.



Image: KMOT-TV

The charges filed against Snyder currently stand as: Travel with Intent to Engage in Illicit Sexual Conduct (3 counts); Engaging in Illicit Sexual Conduct in Foreign Places (3 counts); and Possession of Materials Containing Child Pornography (1 count).

At time of press Snyder was being held without bond at the Burleigh-Morton Detention Center in North Dakota. He was scheduled for an initial court appearance and arraignment in US District Court.

Local US news outlet KMOT reported that prosecutors had not yet released further details on the investigation. The US Attorney's Office for North Dakota was expected to provide updates as the case progresses, the local news report said.

The Phuket News

Police bust nationwide COD scam in Thalang

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Police have arrested a woman accused of selling a database of customer names and addresses that was later used to send thousands of fraudulent cash-on-delivery (COD) parcels across the country.

The arrest of Wanasanan Nunkam, 30, was announced on Nov 19 at Phuket City Police Station by Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Pol Col Kittipong Klaikaew and Phuket City Police Superintendent Pol Col Chatri Chukaew. Officers described her as a "former employee" of a well-known transport company.

Ms Wanasanan was wanted under a Phuket Provincial Court warrant issued on Nov 18 on charges of supporting and defrauding the public, and illegally collecting and selling personal data for the purpose of committing technology-related crimes.

Investigators allege she sold the customer list to Khanapha 'Muk' Mengsan, 31, from Palian District in Trang, who used the data to



Photos: Phuket City Police

mass-send unsolicited COD parcels containing cheap or illegal products.

Ms Khanapha was arrested on Nov 16, with officers seizing more than 20,000 items and finding over 100,000 names stored on her laptop. A financial check found her account received about B80,000 a day from the deliveries.

Police tracked Ms Wanasanan to a house in Soi Phet Ladda 2 in Thepkasattri, Thalang, and arrested her at about 8pm on Nov 18. She reportedly

confessed to the charges during questioning.

Many seized products were illegal or unregistered cosmetics, prompting the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office to join the investigation. Ms Khanapha faces additional charges under the Cosmetics Act, carrying fines and up to one month in jail.

Police said the case remains under investigation as officers work to identify victims and determine whether others were involved.

Bodies recovered from bridge plunge

TWO BODIES HAVE BEEN recovered after a pickup truck crashed through a barrier on the Sarasin Bridge, joining Phuket with the mainland, and plunged into the water below early on Nov 18.

Rescue teams launched a search after a black Toyota Vigo was reported to have smashed through the railing on the Phang Nga side shortly after 3am.

Rescue teams located the vehicle on the seabed with strong currents hindering initial recovery efforts.

Divers first confirmed the death of the male driver, Tripat Rattanaphong, 49, from Surat Thani. Mr Tripat was found strapped into the driver's seat holding a carved wooden Kuan Yin image.

A woman's body was found also trapped inside the submerged vehicle.



Photo: Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation

Relatives told officers that Mr Tripat had left home with his girlfriend but did not say where they were going. Shortly before midnight, the woman sent a message that appeared to be a farewell, they said.

Witness fisherman Nattawut Wongnui said he saw the pickup accelerate before slamming into the barrier. CCTV footage showed the driver moving a cement barrier moments before the crash, prompting police to consider whether the plunge was intentional. *The Phuket News*

Austrian arrested at airport

AN AUSTRIAN NATIONAL was arrested at Phuket International Airport after officers discovered he had overstayed his visa by 578 days and was travelling on forged immigration stamps.

The 41-year-old man was taken into custody at about 5:20pm on Nov 15 in the international departures hall by officers from the Phuket Airport Immigration investigation team working alongside departure-processing staff. Phuket Airport Immigration noted in a brief report posted on Nov 18.

Immigration officers confirmed the man was found to be using a forged stamp or visa label and had remained in the country well beyond the permitted period.

Photos posted with the announcement showed immigration stamps in his passport indicating that the man had allegedly travelled to and from Laos.

The man, not named in the



Photo: Phuket Airport Immigration

Airport Immigration report, was subsequently transferred to Sakhu Police Station for further legal action. The man, not named in the Airport Immigration report, was subsequently transferred to Sakhu Police Station for further legal action for the offense of "using a forged seal, stamp, or visa stamp, and any alien staying in the Kingdom without permission or whose permission has expired or been revoked (578 days)."

The Phuket News

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Villa Rentals: The Missing Piece in Phuket's Tourism - Tax

ADVERTORIAL

Phuket's rise as a world-class tourism destination has brought significant changes to its accommodation landscape. Among the most notable is the rapid growth of villa and condo rentals, where private villas and condos are offered for stays with privacy and high-end experiences. Many homeowners now convert their properties into rental assets, creating a lucrative opportunity but unaware of their tax obligations.

LEGAL AND TAX OBLIGATIONS: A MISUNDERSTOOD REALITY

A widespread misconception among individual villa owners is that their rental assets are exempt from commercial regulation. The Hotel Act B.E. 2478 (1935) defines the provision of daily accommodation as operating a hotel business. This requires registration, licensing, and compliance with regulatory standards.

Even if the assets are not registered for operating as a hotel business, the short-term rentals derived are



subject to tax. If annual income exceeds the statutory threshold of B1.8 million, operators (individual/company) should register for Value Added Tax (VAT), if the income is subject to VAT rules. Once registered for VAT the registrant must meet

the necessary compliance requirements which includes issuance of proper tax invoices, filing of monthly tax returns, and so on.

Rental income is further subject to Personal Income Tax as assessable income under Section 40(5), or

Section 40 (8) depending on the nature of renting activity, or Corporate Income Tax for a company. Properties used for commercial rental are also liable for Land and Building Tax at commercial rates.

Many owners still treat rental income as informal

and remain outside the tax system. This results in lost government revenue and creates unfair competition for licensed hotels that comply with regulatory and operational requirements.

DATA DRIVEN ENFORCEMENT: A NEW CHAPTER FOR COMPLIANCE

The authorities are investigating this matter, and several owners have been assessed for tax payments with substantial fines and penalties. The era of operating unnoticed is coming to an end. The Revenue Department has intensified its enforcement efforts through the use of digital tools and advanced data analytics. Current audits focus on three key areas:

1. Data matching and financial trails: Authorities cross-check bank transfers, financial transactions, and hotel registration data to identify unregistered operators.

2. Digital footprints from platforms: Revenue and booking records from platforms allows to compare actual earnings with tax filings.

3. Withholding Tax Records: Rentals managed through agents or companies are subject to mandatory Withholding Tax, set at 5 percent for residents and 15 percent for non-residents, providing additional verifiable data available with the Revenue Department.

LOCAL IMPACT AND THE PATH FORWARD

Proper tax compliance is critical for all parties involved. With millions of visitors arriving each year, bringing villa rentals into the formal tax system is increasingly important for sustainable growth.

As stricter audits and advanced technological tools take hold, the risks of non-compliance are higher than ever. Villa owners should maintain accurate records, declare income transparently, and fulfill all tax obligations. Doing so is not only a legal requirement but also an important contribution to Phuket's long-term stability and fairness within its tourism economy.

For more information, contact: infophuket@bdo.th

Phuket to host Global Wellness Summit

THAILAND HAS SECURED THE right to host the Global Wellness Summit 2026 (GWS 2026), with Phuket confirmed as the venue for what is considered the world's most influential health-economy conference.

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) announced the decision last Friday (Nov 21), marking a major strategic win for Thailand as the government pushes to expand its reach in the fast-growing global wellness economy, valued at more than B5.6 trillion.

According to the government, the November 2026 summit is expected to bring at least 600 experts, investors and industry leaders from more than 30 countries.

Direct revenue is projected to exceed B300 million, with an overall economic impact estimated at more than 15 times that amount, driven by increased investment opportunities in advanced medical care, health innovation and high-quality service industries.

Officials attributed the win largely to the efforts of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), which led Thailand's international bid.

TCEB worked on shaping the country's global positioning, negotiating with international partners, and presenting Phuket as a strong candidate city under a long-term strategy to establish Thailand as a leader in the regional wellness economy, said an official report of the announcement.



TCEB's approach included analysing Phuket's development potential, building a brand identity for the province as a 'Wellness City', and coordinating strategies across public and private sectors. Government officials noted that this synergy played a key role in convincing the GWI selection committee.

Hosting GWS 2026 also aligns with the government's 'White Economy' and 'Silver Economy' policies, which focus on strengthening health-focused industries and services for ageing populations, said the report.

The event is expected to accelerate Phuket's transition from a world-class tourism destination into a global wellness capital, the report noted.

Bhumikitti Ruktaengam, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Advisor to the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, noted, "Hosting the Global Wellness Summit is a major step in strengthening the wellness and medical service ecosystem, helping us provide high-quality services to everyone. This is an important national strategy to raise global awareness of Thailand's service standards and health innovation."

The Phuket News

Thailand urged to create independent tourism board

THAILAND MUST ADOPT A BOLD approach to product development and establish a dedicated tourism board to attract investment and maintain its leadership in global tourism, says Kevin Clayton, chief brand officer for Thailand with Galaxy Entertainment Group.

Mr Clayton said Thailand is renowned for its hospitality, culture, cuisine and natural attractions. Building on these strengths, the country should define the position it wants to hold in the future tourism landscape, he said.

Across Asia-Pacific, tourism is expected to be one of the fastest-growing sectors, driven by expanding middle classes in China and India.

Tourism already plays a vital role in Thailand's economy, accounting for roughly one-quarter of direct and indirect employment.

However, in recent years the industry faced headwinds such as intensified competition from other Asian destinations and declining travel sentiment due to crime and scam-related concerns.

Foreign arrivals are projected to reach only 33 million this year, well below the nearly 40mn recorded in 2019.

While the number of arrivals will eventually return to pre-pandemic levels, Mr Clayton urged the government to set ambitious targets of 45mn visitors by 2030 and 60mn by 2035.

Moreover, global tourism trends are shifting towards man-made attractions, such as theme parks and integrated resorts, intensifying fierce competition.

Vietnam is rapidly developing its cities



for tourism, while Singapore reinvented itself two decades ago with Marina Bay Sands, Resorts World Sentosa and Gardens by the Bay.

"There is a place for man-made attractions in Thailand," said Mr Clayton. "They should complement what makes Thailand unique."

He said Bangkok and other destinations need new attractions to draw larger international crowds, particularly high-value visitors. These could include live entertainment or even gaming facilities, though the latter would require sensitive national discussions, said Mr Clayton.

He stressed that tourism should be treated as a commercial business.

Mr Clayton proposed creating an independent tourism board to evaluate new products, services, infrastructure and technology development.

Thailand needs billions of dollars in investment from third parties or the private sector, which should be supported by a tourism board composed of key stakeholders such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand, airline executives and tourism associations.

The board should be independent, yet backed by the government, he said.

Bangkok Post

Heavy flooding forces Hat Yai evacuations

HAT YAI

Bangkok Post

Authorities in Songkhla ordered a mass evacuation of Hat Yai municipality on Monday (Nov 24), as the situation in the flood-hit city continued to deteriorate, with water levels reaching almost three metres in several areas.

Songkhla governor Rattasart Chidchu issued an urgent directive instructing residents in 25 communities of the Hat Yai district – especially those living in low-lying areas downtown – to evacuate by 4pm on Monday.

However, the evacuation order triggered widespread criticism online, with netizens taking aim at a lack of preparedness on the part of the local administration. Many questioned how vulnerable individuals, such as children, the sick and the elderly, could comply with the order, especially since access to many neighbour-



Flooding in Hat Yai remains at critical levels. Photo: Bangkok Post

hoods in the evacuation zone has been cut off by the rising water.

“Evacuate how, exactly? And with what vehicles? How are we supposed to get out when the water is over our heads – are we expected to swim?” said a netizen on Facebook.

“Hat Yai is like a basin – water is pouring in from every direction. More rain is coming. There’s nowhere for the water to drain. What do they expect us to do, swim out like fish?”

Floodwaters in Hat Yai rose dramatically on Monday in the wake of intense rainfall over the South where flooding was made worse by the large

volume of runoff from Sadao district.

Mr Rattasart said the city saw over twice the volume of water usually seen during floods, which happen at the end of the year, adding the situation in some areas was worse than what was observed during the severe floods in 2000.

He urged residents in high-risk areas to move their valuables to higher ground and travel to the nearest evacuation centre immediately, strictly following instructions from authorities.

In light of the evacuation order, local agencies began setting up more shelters to accommodate affected residents, while soldiers

joined rescue workers on flat-bottomed boats to help evacuate those stranded in flood-hit areas.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said he has instructed all relevant agencies in the affected areas to implement urgent relief measures to fully support households which are affected by the floods.

He added that ongoing efforts to assist victims have so far kept the situation under control.

However, the continuously rising water levels could potentially pose challenges, especially since more rain has been forecast across the region, he said.

According to the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, floods were reported in 10 southern provinces: Surat Thani, Krabi, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Trang, Phatthalung, Satun, Songkhla, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. In total, 719,858 households across 92 districts have been affected by the floods, it said.

Government seeks US help on peace deal

BANGKOK

THAILAND HAS URGED the United States to help pressure Cambodia to comply with the Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord signed on Oct 26 on the sidelines of the 47th ASEAN Summit in Malaysia.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Nikorndej Balankura said on Nov 19 that following a telephone conversation between Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and US President Donald Trump on Nov 14, Anutin sent another letter dated Nov 18 expressing concern over Cambodia’s alleged violations of the accord.

Anutin specifically urged Cambodia not to obstruct Thailand’s demining operations, epained Mr Nikorndej.

While calling on Cambodia to honour the Peace Accord, Mr Nikorndej reiterated Thailand’s position that security issues between the two countries should be kept separate from trade negotiations between Thailand and the US.

However, he said that



Nikorndej Balankura. Photo: Bangkok Post

although the issues should not be formally linked, Thailand would still like Washington to encourage Cambodia to follow the agreement.

Meanwhile, the House committee studying the possible cancellation of the 2000 and 2001 memorandums of understanding (MoUs 43-44) between Thailand and Cambodia is seeking a 30-day extension to complete its work, citing insufficient time to gather all documents.

Saritpong Kiewkong, a Bhumjaithai Party MP for Krabi and committee chairman, said the panel’s mandate ends on Wednesday (Dec 3).

Bangkok Post

Prison officials linked to Chinese VIP inmate scandal

BANGKOK

ABOUT 20 OFFICIALS ARE FACING investigation for arranging special privileges for Chinese inmates at the Bangkok Remand Prison, according to the head of the Department of Corrections.

Pol Lt Col Prawut Wongsinin made the announcement following an inspection visit to the prison in Chatuchak district with Justice Minister Rutthaporn Naowarat last Saturday (Nov 22).

The minister said that he had received information about misconduct by prison staff a month after his appointment as the corrections chief on Oct 1 and reported it to his seniors. The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) would be put in charge of the case, he added.

After nearly three weeks of gathering evidence, it was confirmed that about 20 officials, both senior and junior, were complicit in violating regulations.

Among other findings, investigators discovered evidence of Chinese women entering the prison, ostensibly to provide sexual services.

A raid conducted on Nov 16 found two women in their early twenties in the prison, one alone with a Chinese inmate in a secret room and another waiting upstairs.

It took authorities a while to get into



Pol Lt Col Prawut. Photo: Bangkok Post

the room as it was secured by two locked doors. The women were found dressed up and both denied engaging in sex work when questioned.

However, authorities found condoms, lingerie, stained tissues, traces of fluids on a sofa, tobacco and alcohol.

Pol Lt Col Prawut said CCTV video examined during the investigation indicated that Chinese women had visited every Sunday. Some recordings had been deleted.

The recent raid also uncovered mobile phones, lighters, portable air-conditioning units, a refrigerator and a microwave oven.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul vowed tough action against any and all officials involved in awarding special privileges to Chinese inmates.

Several Chinese inmates have been transferred from the prison to a more suitable facility. More than 10 others remain on their original ward, but if further misconduct is uncovered, additional transfers would be made, Pol Lt Col Prawut said. Bangkok Post

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WHATSAPP

Staying Healthy During the Holidays

WELLTHWISE

Libby Heath

December is the month we collectively pretend calories, bedtime and moderation are myths. The parties multiply, the desserts call your name and self-control quietly packs its bags until January. But thriving through the chaos – not just surviving it – is entirely possible. You do not need a detox, a miracle cleanse or a monk-like routine. You simply need to maintain a steady routine and stay mindful, so you can recognise when you're slipping and get back on course.

Alcohol dominates most holiday celebrations and your liver bears the workload. The truth? The healthiest choice is none at all – but if you are going to toast, do it wisely. Eat before you drink; protein, healthy fat and fibre slow absorption so alcohol enters your bloodstream more slowly.

Hydrate like a professional – alcohol is a diuretic that drains electrolytes like sodium, potassium and magnesium. Replenish them with mineral water, coconut water, or a low-sugar electrolyte mix. And pace yourself. Your liver clears only about one drink per hour. Those who sip slowly and alternate with water enjoy the night – and the morning after – far more.

Alcohol is not the only culprit behind dehydration. In tropical climates, fluid loss can creep up quietly – accelerated by caffeine, perspiration and constant exposure to air conditioning. Thirst is a late signal; by the time you feel it, your body's electrolyte balance is already compromised. Fatigue, irritability and that hazy “holiday brain fog” often come from simple fluid loss rather than too much merrymaking, so plan ahead to stay hydrated.



Overindulgence

Sleep is usually the first casualty of overindulgence, but it is also the foundation of recovery. Late nights, sugar, alcohol and screen glare can throw your body clock into disarray. While alcohol may help you fall asleep faster, it fragments deep sleep and suppresses REM – the stage when your brain repairs and consolidates memory. The single most powerful way to stabilise your rhythm is simple: wake up at the same time every day, regardless of bedtime. Consistent wake times reinforce your circadian clock, which governs hormones, energy and mood. Within 30 minutes of getting up, step into sunlight; natural light shuts down melatonin and jump-starts metabolism far more effectively than caffeine. If you must nap, keep it under 30 minutes – long enough to recharge, not long enough to confuse your system.

Exercise is the antidote to indulgence, stress and sluggishness. It does not have to be heroic; it just has to happen. Aim for about 30 minutes of movement most days; any movement counts and it does not have to happen all at once – think exercise “snacks”. A brief but brisk walk, a few push-ups while your coffee brews, or dancing at a party all qualify. The goal is momentum, not martyrdom. Moving your body boosts dopamine – the neurotransmitter that sharpens focus, improves motivation, and curbs impulsive behaviour –

while helping rebalance appetite hormones. When those hormones drift out of sync, hunger and satisfaction signals get scrambled and suddenly a tray of cookies looks like survival food. Deliberate activity restores balance, steadies appetite and makes healthy choices feel effortless instead of forced. If possible, move early in the day; morning workouts also help lock your sleep cycle back into rhythm.

Stay steady

Then there is stress – the uninvited guest at many holiday gatherings. Travel delays, crowded schedules and obligatory cheer can send cortisol soaring. Managing it does not require a yoga retreat; it requires small, deliberate resets. Breathe deeply for two minutes – five seconds in, five out. Step outside, admire nature, or just notice where you are. The brain cannot panic and observe at the same time. And laugh often. Humour is the ultimate stressbuster. Even brief moments of journaling or quiet reflection before bed can help train your nervous system to surf the chaos rather than drown in it.

Perfection is overrated. The point is not to be saintly – it is to stay steady. One missed workout or extra dessert means nothing if the overall rhythm is sound. Prioritise sleep most nights, hydrate daily, move regularly and deliberately and surround yourself with people who bring you joy. When you do indulge, enjoy it fully. Regret spikes cortisol faster than sugar ever could. Enjoyment is not the enemy of health – when it is deliberate, it is therapeutic.

Surviving the season is not luck – it is a skill. And like any skill, it gets stronger with practice.

Libby Heath recently became the first Mayo Clinic certified wellness coach in Asia. She shares her insights and advice through her column 'Wellthwise' here in The Phuket News. Please note that if you have a condition that requires medical treatment, consult your doctor. Contact Libby at: BeWellthwise@gmail.com.

The January/February 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 about your F & B outlet

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Dissociation from nature and how to reconnect

Photo: Josh O'Neill

Josh O'Neill

Phuket is one of the most beautiful islands in the world, yet every day its beauty faces a momentous challenge... litter. We see it on the roadside, on our beaches, outside shops and piled up right next to the bin. It doesn't come from bad people, it comes from habits. From disconnection. From when we forget that what we drop doesn't disappear, it just becomes someone else's problem.

This kind of disconnection is called dissociation. In conservation psychology, it means we stop seeing ourselves as part of nature. We think the environment is "out there," separate from us. When that happens, we stop feeling responsible for small actions, such as where we put our trash or how we treat the people who clean it up.

In Phuket, those "people who clean it up" are our heroes. The garbage collectors who work in the heat, humidity, and rain, keeping our communities clean, often go unnoticed. Their work is hard, physical and essential. Without them, Phuket would drown in its own waste in just a few days. Yet how often do we smile at them, say thank you, or make their job a little easier?

Then there are the community recyclers. Our heroes on three-wheeled motorcycles, known locally as saleng, slowly moving through our neighbourhoods.

You've seen them. They stop at bins, open plastic bags and sort through waste for recyclables – plastic bottles, cans, metal. Typically working quietly to earn a living while also reducing what ends up in landfill. They are part of Phuket's invisible environmental team.

Leaving half-filled cups or bags with liquids inside adds unnecessary weight to garbage trucks and creates mess when it leaks. Emptying out liquids before throwing away your container helps more than most people think. It reduces "liquid to landfill", which means less pollution and fewer smells. It's such a small action, but it demonstrates regard.

Respectful

We can also separate recyclables – plastic bottles, cans, glass. Even if we can't recycle everything ourselves, separating them makes it easier for community recyclers to collect and reuse materials. It's a respectful act that saves time, reduces landfill and Ocean Bound Plastics (OBP).

Tying up garbage bags properly also helps. It keeps dogs, cats, and rodents out and makes handling cleaner and safer for our collectors. For the people who lift hundreds of bags a day, this simple act can make a big difference.

And finally, the bin itself. Many people place bags beside the bin instead of inside it, sometimes because it's convenient, sometimes because it looks dirty or

full. But a bag beside the bin often becomes litter. The wind, animals and rain spread it across the street.

Phuket's future depends not just on big projects or government action, but on small human choices made by thousands of people each day. Tourists can help by being more aware. Locals can lead by example. Businesses can remind staff and guests about proper disposal. Everyone can contribute something.

Litter is not just about waste, it's about connection. It's about seeing the link between what we do and what happens next. When we respect our garbage collectors and recyclers, when we handle our waste with care, we send a message: we care about this island, its people, and its future.

Phuket's beauty has always been its strongest asset. Keeping it beautiful doesn't require perfection, just participation. A small change in habit, multiplied by thousands, can make a lasting difference. Every bottle emptied, every bag tied, every act of respect – it all adds up to a cleaner, kinder Phuket.

Josh O'Neill, a Certified Green Project Manager, GPM-b, with a Diploma in Conservation Psychology and an environmental advocate who leverages his extensive experience in community engagement and environmental awareness to highlight Phuket's environmental issues and sustainable initiatives. Phone / WhatsApp 099-998-9274 or support@thelitterclub.org.

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POP QUIZ

1. Ageusia is the loss of which sense?
2. Which Irish political party's name translates as 'we ourselves'?
3. What calculating aid was invented by William Oughtred in 1662?
4. In which Elvis Presley film did he play a double role?
5. What were the first false teeth made from?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

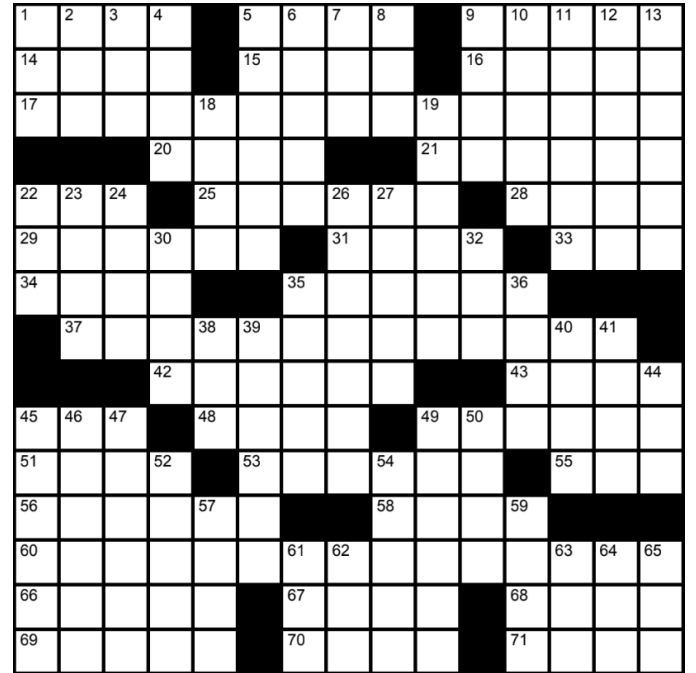
Across

1. Start for house or book
5. Beef
9. Palm trees
14. Perfect
15. ___ of Court
16. Superior to
17. It features all-business class seating
20. Fill beyond full
21. Obtain through intimidation
22. Cutting tool
25. Country
28. ___ issue
29. Flu symptom
31. Expression of pride?
33. Part of an E-mail address
34. Pari-mutuel
35. Lurch, for one
37. It still uses seaplanes
42. Pilfers
43. Sacred Hindu writings
45. ___ borer
48. "Murphy Brown" bar owner
49. Transpire
51. Mother of Helios
53. Sour

55. It may bring down the house
56. Promo
58. Bad day for Caesar
60. Moscow-based cargo shipper
66. G-rated
67. Bring home
68. Opposite of hinder
69. Destiny
70. ___ football
71. Jamie Lee's dad

Down

1. Law man?
2. Polynesian paste
3. ___ table
4. Intelligence
5. Evergreen shrub
6. Initial contributions
7. Part of a cell nucleus
8. Pressure meas.
9. Mineral residue
10. Parting words
11. Type of ligament
12. Cook too long
13. Sonnet section
18. Sandwich man?
19. Carmaker's woe
22. Take effect
23. Sailing vessel
24. Penne alternative
26. Earth nut
27. Greek letters
30. Contact, e.g.
32. Stephen of "V for Vendetta"
35. Kind of acid
36. Invitation letters
38. Econ. statistic
39. "The English Patient" setting
40. Set aside
41. Gulf of ___, off the coast of Yemen
44. Certain colonist
45. Charge
46. Aussie lassie
47. Auditor
49. Out of sight
50. Tennis whiz
52. Indian state
54. Miss America topper
57. "Empedocles on ___" (Matthew Arnold poem)
59. Kind of team
61. Whistler, at times
62. Actor Mineo
63. Blood-typing letters
64. Liking
65. Wilbur's home



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

5

US dollars is all some cybercriminals ask for in order to carry out a DDoS (Denial-of-service) attack on a computer system.

95

percent of avocados eaten in the US are Hass avocados, and they are all descendants of one mother tree in Southern California.

92,000

kilos of cocaine was produced in Colombia in 1992 alone, according to UN estimates.

160,000

US dollars was the average annual salary of store managers at 'In-N-Out' burger franchises in 2018.

2.3 million

parts are used to make a Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW



Patong sunset from 50 Pi Rd. Photo by Roy Falconer

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

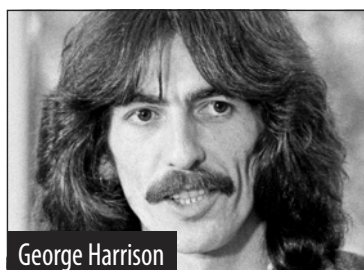
This week in history

Nov 28, 1814

The Times of London becomes the first newspaper to be produced on a steam-powered printing press, built by the German team of Koenig & Bauer.

Nov 29, 2001

George Harrison, lead guitarist of the Beatles, dies in Beverly Hills, California at the age of 58.



George Harrison

Nov 30, 1947

Civil War in Mandatory Palestine begins, leading up

to the creation of the State of Israel and the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

Dec 1, 1941

Emperor Hirohito of Japan gives his tacit approval to the decision of the imperial council to initiate war against the United States.

Dec 2, 1993

Colombian drug lord Pablo

Escobar is shot and killed by police in Medellín.

Dec 3, 1979

Iranian Revolution: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini becomes the first Supreme Leader of Iran.

Dec 4, 1623

50 Christians are executed in Edo, Japan, during the Great Martyrdom of Edo.

Source: *Wikipedia*

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FRI

28
NOV



EABC x Phuket Rendezvous 2025

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

SAT

29
NOV



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

TUE

2
DEC



Rotary Club of Patong Beach

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

FRI

5
DEC

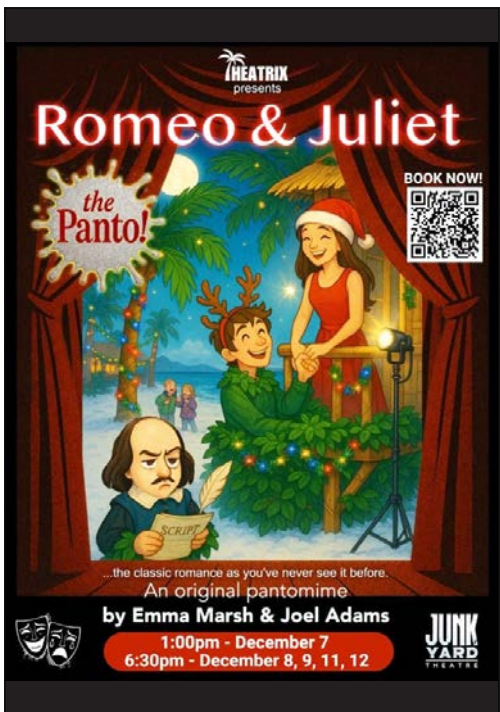


Grow Boating Phuket Evening - Dec 2025

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the Phuket Boat Lagoon from 5pm. Our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Paul Poole (South East Asia) Co., Ltd. an independent marketing consultancy based in Bangkok, Thailand specializing in commercial sponsorship. For more details see www.paulpoole.co.th There will be a delicious selection of canapes served and sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar for all attendees. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee Find out more - facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket

SUN

7
DEC



Romeo & Juliet - The Panto

OH NO IT ISN'T! Get Ready to Shout, Sing, and Cheer! Forget the tragedy! Theatrix proudly presents Romeo and Juliet: The Panto, which takes Shakespeare's classic star-crossed lovers and transforms their tale into a hilarious, loud, and incredibly interactive family comedy. Expect dazzling songs, slapstick routines, terrible jokes, and plenty of opportunities to cheer for the heroes and boo the villains! This is Phuket's must-see holiday show for all ages. WHERE: Junkyard Theatre (Bypass Road - next to IKEA) DATES & TIMES: Sunday, Dec. 7th. (Matinee) - 1:00pm Monday 8th - 6:30pm Tuesday 9th - 6:30pm Thursday 11th - 6:30pm Friday 12th - 6:30pm TICKETS: Book Now! <https://www.junkyardtheatre.com/copy-of-shows> (Select the date and reserve now) All Ages: 850.00 THB Ages 2 and under enter FREE! Get in Early for Phuket's biggest, funniest family night out!

THU

11
DEC



Skål Phuket December Dinner

Join us for our final Skål dinner of the year as we come together to celebrate the festive season in true Phuket style. This special evening will be hosted by Julian Lowry at the iconic Le Méridien Phuket Beach Resort, set on its own private cove between Karon and Patong. The evening begins with networking drinks at 6pm followed by dinner from 7:30pm. Members B1200 - Non-Members B1600. Bookings - contact@skalphuket.org

SUN

14
DEC



Living in Phuket 2025

Living in Phuket 2025, an event to help make life easier for expats, is returning to the Marriott Courtyard Phuket Town. This annual free event focuses on introducing people to social and voluntary opportunities, lifestyle, travel and hospitality services, education, networking and more. From 10 till 6pm, Find out more at livinginphuket.org

WED

24
DEC



Christmas Beach Market

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

THU

25
DEC



Italian Christmas Feast

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

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November-December 2025 issue

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Thai driver Tسانapol grabs Formula 2 seat

MOTORSPORTS

THAILAND'S RISING star driver Tسانapol Inthraphuvasak will compete in Formula 2 next season after signing with ART Grand Prix, the French team confirmed on Nov 18.

The 20-year-old will make his debut in Formula 2 after a strong 2025 campaign in FIA Formula 3, where he finished seventh in the drivers' standings, claiming three victories and two top-five finishes.

"I'm very proud to finally announce that I will be joining ART Grand Prix for my rookie season in Formula 2," Tسانapol told art-grandprix.com.

"The team has proven itself over the years with great successes, so I'm confident it's the right environment for me to take this next step. I'm excited to start this new chapter and to work with everyone in the team ahead of the season," he added.

ART Grand Prix Team Principal Sebastien Philippe said: "Tسانapol delivered a solid season in FIA F3, with



Tسانapol. Photo: Bangkok Post

three wins and some strong performances. He now has the opportunity to take the next step in Formula 2, and we look forward to seeing how he adapts to this new challenge."

Tسانapol's promotion completes a full representation of Thai drivers across the FIA hierarchy at all three levels of FIA single-seat racing, a significant milestone for Thai motorsport.

It was confirmed last month that Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi will drive for DAMS Lucas Oil in the 2026 Formula 3 season, while Alex Albon currently holds eighth position in the Formula 1 Drivers Championship.

Bangkok Post

Verstappen wins big in Vegas

FORMULA ONE

AFP

Current world champion Max Verstappen produced a masterful drive to win the Las Vegas Grand Prix last Saturday (Nov 22) and his title hopes were boosted further with the McLarens of championship leader Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri both being disqualified.

Norris finished the race in second with Piastri fourth but the skid blocks on both cars were found after the race to be less than the minimum depth.

The disqualifications mean that with two race weekends remaining in Qatar and Abu Dhabi, four-time defending champion Verstappen is now level on points with Piastri in the title race, just 24 points behind Norris.

His chances of a fifth successive title, however, will depend on another spectacular slip-up from Norris or his McLaren team.

"It's frustrating to lose so many points," said Norris in a McLaren statement.

"As a team, we're always pushing to find as much performance as we can, and we clearly didn't get that balance right today.

"Nothing I can do will change that now, instead full focus switches to Qatar."

McLaren's team principal Andrea Stella said the problem had been caused by "unexpected, high levels of porpoising" which had led to



Max Verstappen celebrates with the trophy. Photo: AFP

"excessive contact" with the ground.

"We apologise to Lando and Oscar for the loss of points today, at a critical time in their championship campaigns after two strong performances from them all weekend," said Stella.

With a maximum of 58 points available in the final two grands prix, Norris just needs to score two more points than each of his rivals next weekend in Qatar, which includes a sprint, to secure his first title.

'COMFORTABLE'

Verstappen dominated in Vegas from the moment he pounced on a slip by pole-sitter Norris on the first turn of Sin City's street circuit to grab the lead.

Thereafter he controlled the race to claim the 69th Grand Prix win of his career, finishing more than 20 seconds

clear. The Dutchman said Red Bull's tyre strategy had laid the foundation for the win.

Mercedes' George Russell finished third on the track but was upgraded to second with his teammate Kimi Antonelli, who finished in fifth, moving up to third.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finished fourth ahead of Carlos Sainz, with Isack Hadjar in sixth.

Nico Hulkenberg came in seventh ahead of Lewis Hamilton, with Esteban Ocon and Oliver Bearman rounding out the top ten.

Piastri, who began in fifth place on the grid, had been desperately looking to make up ground in Vegas after surrendering a 34-point advantage in the drivers championship since his victory at the Dutch Grand Prix in August.

Cambodia to compete in 21 SEA Games sports

SEA GAMES

CAMBODIA HAS CONFIRMED it will send athletes to compete in 21 sports at the 33rd Southeast (SEA) Games in Thailand next month.

Uncertainty surrounds Cambodia's participation in the biennial tournament because of ongoing political border conflicts with Thailand.

However the National Olympic Committee of Cambodia (NOCC) has now confirmed the participation of a 333-member delegation, including athletes, coaches and officials.

Cambodia will field athletes in athletics, aquatics, equestrian, gymnastics, judo, kun bokator, taekwondo, triathlon, volleyball, football, wrestling, pencak silat, kickboxing, petanque, sepak takraw, jet-ski, karate, ju-jitsu, wushu, table tennis and esports, according to a report in the *Phnom Penh Post* on Nov 22.

Two sports federations – the Cambodian Billiards Federation and the Khmer Boxing Federation – have announced they will not participate in the Games, the report added.



Photo: Bangkok Post

The Cambodian Billiards Federation said security concerns prompted its decision.

Vath Chamroeun, the NOCC secretary-general, said the decision to send teams in 21 sports to the SEA Games was made in line with regulations and with government approval.

He added that Thailand, as host nation, together with its Olympic Committee, has ensured the safety of the Cambodian delegation.

The 2025 SEA Games will take place in Bangkok, Chonburi and Songkhla from Dec 9-20. The football competition will start early, with the opening match taking place on Dec 3.

Bangkok Post

Torch relay signals start of SEA, ASEAN Para Games

SEA GAMES

AN OFFICIAL CEREMONY to present the Royal Flame ahead of a multi-city torch relay signalling the start of the upcoming Southeast Asian (SEA) Games and the ASEAN Para Games was held in Bangkok on Nov 16.

Following the ceremony at the Huamark Indoor Stadium, over seen by the Minister of Tourism and Sports, Atthakorn Sirilathayakorn, the first torch was ignited and the relay conducted through the streets of the capital, which will be one of the host cities for the 33rd edition of the SEA Games tournament from Dec 6-20.

Similar ceremonies were conducted simultaneously on Sunday in Chonburi and Songkhla, the two other SEA Games venues, and Nakhon Ratchasima, which is the host province for the 13th ASEAN Para Games next year.

Bangkok Governor Chadchart Sittipunt was the first carrier of the torch for the Bangkok relay, which began at the Huamark Indoor Stadium before following a designated route through the streets of the capital.

In true relay style, the torch was then passed onto a total of



Photo: Ministry of Tourism and Sports Facebook

73 other bearers along the route, which included athletes, government officials and sponsors, before concluding back at the Huamark Indoor Stadium at 8pm.

Additionally, there were over 1,000 runners who took part in a 3km Fun Run as part of the festivities, to provide support to the main event.

The Bangkok ceremony was attended by various diplomats from ASEAN member countries, in addition to several Thai dignitaries, including: Noraphol Tantimontri, Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Sports; Wanida Pansaard, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports; Dr Kongsak Yodmanee, Governor of the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT);

Preecha Lalun, Deputy Governor of the SAT for Sports Excellence and Sports Science; as well as selected executives, athletes and media.

In his opening speech Mr Atthakorn expressed sincere gratitude to His Majesty The King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua "for graciously bestowing the Royal Flame which will bring good fortune and morale to the organisers and all athletes".

"The Royal Flame symbolises the purity of the Games and reflects His Majesty's commitment to promoting national sports and today's invitation ceremony and torch relay are an occasion for us to share in passing on this flame of friendship," explained Mr Atthakorn.

The relay was an opportunity for Thailand to showcase its sporting prowess and the friendship of the Thai people, Mr Atthakorn added.

The official opening ceremony for the SEA Games will be held on Dec 9 at Rajamangala National Stadium in Bangkok, while the ASEAN Para Games will be held from Jan 20-26, 2026. For more information, visit the Facebook Fanpage: SEA GAMES Thailand 2025. *The Phuket News*

Liverpool felled by Forest

FOOTBALL

AFP

Troubled Liverpool's woeful season hit a new low with a shocking 3-0 home defeat against Nottingham Forest last Saturday (Nov 22).

The spluttering champions fell behind in the 33rd minute when Murillo's fierce strike punished their failure to deal with Elliot Anderson's corner before further goals from Nicolo Savona and Morgan Gibbs-White sealed the impressive win for Sean Dyche's side.

Beaten by Forest at Anfield for a second successive season, Liverpool have lost eight of their last 11 games in all competitions, including six of their last seven in the top flight. It is also the first time Liverpool have lost consecutive league games by a three-goal margin since 1965.

Once again Liverpool were devoid of inspiration and energy in another lethargic display that left them languishing in 12th place.



Nottingham Forest's Murillo celebrates scoring against Liverpool. Photo: AFP

"Another big disappointment," said Liverpool manager Arne Slot.

"If things go well or things go bad, it's my responsibility. We are in a very bad spell."

On Sunday a brilliant hat-trick from Eberechi Eze helped Arsenal to a 4-1 north London derby demolition over Tottenham that extended their lead at the top of the table to six points.

Leandro Trossard put the

Gunners ahead before Eze's treble and Arteta's side were too strong for timid Tottenham despite Richarlison's incredible long-range goal reducing the deficit.

Eze's treble was only the fourth north London derby hat-trick after Ted Drake, Terry Dyson and Alan Sunderland in what was his best performance since his £60 million (B2.5 billion) move from Crystal Palace over the summer.

The win also meant that

Arsenal – unbeaten in the last seven north London derbies – have lost just once in 33 home meetings with their bitter rivals from the other end of the Seven Sisters Road.

CONTENTIOUS

Chelsea, meanwhile, moved up to second place with a 2-0 win at Burnley thanks to Pedro Neto's diving header just before the interval and a Enzo Fernandez strike in the closing stages.

Enzo Maresca's side have won eight of their last 10 matches in all competitions, making it a memorable 50th Premier League game in charge for the Italian.

Elsewhere, Newcastle United dented Manchester City's title challenge as Harvey Barnes' brace sealed a 2-1 victory at St James' Park.

Barnes bagged Newcastle's contentious second goal with a fierce volley, which was allowed to stand after a lengthy VAR check for a potential offside against Bruno Guimaraes, whose header had cannoned back off the bar.

Incensed City manager Pep Guardiola stormed onto the pitch at full-time to confront referee Sam Barrott, but later insisted "everything is fine" when asked about the incident.

City's fourth league defeat this season leaves them in third place, seven points behind leaders Arsenal.

MADNESS

Aston Villa moved into fourth spot after a Morgan

Rogers double was enough to secure a 2-1 win at Leeds United, while new Wolves manager Rob Edwards suffered a 2-0 debut defeat against fifth-placed Crystal Palace at Molineux.

Raul Jimenez's 84th minute goal gave Fulham a 1-0 victory against Sunderland at Craven Cottage, West Ham blew a two-goal lead in their 2-2 draw at Bournemouth and Brighton came from behind to defeat Brentford 2-1 with Danny Welbeck once again on the score-sheet.

Everton beat Manchester United 1-0 at Old Trafford on Monday despite an astonishing moment of madness when the Toffee's Idrissa Gueye was sent off for slapping teammate Michael Keane.

The home crowd anticipated waves of attack but United failed to take advantage, proving toothless against David Moyes' battling team.

The win saw Everton leapfrog local rivals Liverpool into 11th place, while United sit once place ahead in 10th.

Springboks continue imperious form



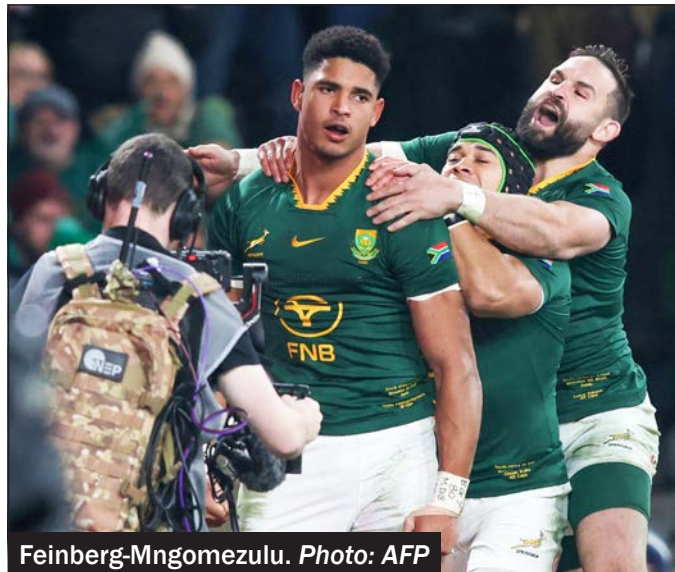
THE GLOBAL RUGBY COACH

IRELAND AGAINST SOUTH Africa in Dublin last Saturday (Nov 22) was a titanic struggle, with the latter emerging 24-13 winners.

The Springboks' win illustrated their depth and quality of players, which seems to improve on an almost weekly basis. My prediction is that Sasha Feinberg-Mngomezulu will be the player of the 2027 World Cup in Australia. He glides across the grasslands like a cheetah chasing prey and will dominate the world's number 10s, much like Dan Carter did for the All Blacks.

Also congratulations goes to Malcolm Marx, the South African hooker, named World Player of the Year shortly after the Ireland game.

Ireland gave their all but it still wasn't enough and coach, Andy Farrell has a significant problem with a lack of discipline. Playing the Springboks with 15 is tough but with 13 or 14, it is near impossible.



Feinberg-Mngomezulu. Photo: AFP

The much-maligned New Zealand coach Scott Robertson made several changes for this clash with Wales, and the expected scoreline was reached in the final quarter (26-52). A stadium full of pride is all Wales had to offer. The ghosts of yesteryear shake their heads. Where is the talent, the class, the improvisers, the brilliance? The pathway looks bare of emerging talent.

Australia fell to a 48-33 defeat in Paris and, while the jury is still out, they need to start winning soon. Paris is a fortress and France have a wealth of

emerging young talent so their future looks bright.

A much-changed England team faced the dangerous Argentinians and managed a 27-23 win. England has a squad of depth and some quality, but uncertainty remains. The back row lacks balance. The midfield is uncertain. Who are the best wingers? I hope they run the ball more. Kicking is an option, but it should not be used at the expense of creative decision-making or seizing opportunities.

Elsewhere, Scotland team beat Tonga 56-0 and Italy beat Chile 34-19.

Australia win Ashes opener in style

CRICKET

SKIPPER STEVE SMITH warned that a confident Australia were primed to ram home their advantage after stunning England in the first Ashes Test last Saturday (Nov 22), calling the team effort "outstanding".

The remarkable eight-wicket victory inside a rapid-fire two days at Perth Stadium puts them in good stead heading to the day-night clash in Brisbane on Dec 4, a venue where England have won just twice since World War II.

"We want to win every game," Smith said on making the most of their ascendancy when the great rivals next meet. "But you know, they're a good side. They've played good cricket for a long time, and we know that."

"We know the style of play that they have, they're going to have their moments where they come off, players are going to score quickly and get



Travis Head. Photo: AFP

away from us at times."

The victory in Perth seemed unlikely when Australia were skittled for 132 in their first innings by England's cartel of pace bowlers.

But some sensational bowling from Mitchell Starc, Scott Boland and debutant Brendan Doggett thrust the hosts back into the match and gave them a

target of 205 to chase.

That was reached easily with Travis Head slamming a quickfire match-winning 123, blasting England's express quicks to all parts of the ground.

"I think there's a lot of belief in that change room," said stand-in captain Smith, calling the team "outstanding". AFP

Sport

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**Eze treble as
Gunners beat
Spurs > p15**



A triumphant Kittisak holds the trophy aloft after winning the season-ending Toyota Gazoo Thailand 2025 race in Chiang Mai on Nov 17. Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

MOTORSPORTS

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A local racing driver with a true passion for motorsports pushed his peddle to the metal to secure victory at the season finale of the Thailand Toyota Gazoo 2025 Racing tournament in Chiang Mai recently.

Racing in the Hilux Revo One Make Race category over 20 laps on Nov 17, Phuket native Kittisak 'Ou' Seangsalak emerged victorious with a final time of 26 minutes and 31 seconds to claim the winner's trophy and end the season in style.

Driving a Toyota BKC x Voltronic model designed by his own company 'House Of Cars' in collaboration with the Vangang Garage team in the GD Super Power 2,400cc engine class, Kittisak also recorded the fastest lap with a time of 1m 18 secs.

His dazzling drive saw him take the chequered flag ahead of second-placed Thibodin Santhadkha of Trane Lubricants Nexster Racing (26m 39secs) and

third-placed Naruchit Kiatmanee of TD SP Auto Racing (26m 55secs).

The result at the 700th Anniversary Chiang Mai Stadium was the perfect end to the season for 45-year-old Kittisak, who also recorded second place finishes in both the Chonburi and Phuket legs of the national tour championship earlier this year.

HIGH-OCTANE

The Chiang Mai event was the culmination of a five-race season which started in Buriram in June before taking in Chonburi in July, Phuket in August, and Buriram again in October.

The Phuket event on the weekend of Aug 16-17 took place on the streets of Saphan Hin and drew a large crowd of motorsports enthusiasts who savoured the high-octane track action and the array of live entertainment features around the race. Phuket Governor at the time, Sophon Suwannarat, estimated the weekend's festivities generated more than B80 million for the local economy.

The opening ceremony of the 18th annual Chiang Mai race was

held on Nov 16, overseen by Natthorn Srinivet, Assistant Managing Director of Toyota Motor Thailand Co Ltd, and Wiraphong Ritrod, Deputy Governor of Chiang Mai Province, in addition to selected guests from local government and the private sector, spectators and the media.

Following the opening remarks from Mr Natthorn and Mr Wiraphong the Thai national anthem was played to allow all present to express condolences and gratitude to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother, who passed away on Oct 24.

In addition to the Hilux Revo One Make Race won by Kittisak, other categories included the Toyota Yaris One Make Race, the Toyota Yaris ATIV Lady One Make Race and the Toyota Corolla Altis GR Sport One Make Race.

The event also showcased Toyota's latest Hilux Travo and bZ4X models, while highlighting the company's commitment to carbon neutrality, with the ATIV and Yaris Carbon Neutral Fuel models participating.

Once the racing was concluded there was a GR

Performance and GR Triple Drift show featuring "drifting performances" by professional drivers including Pae and Pond, Drive to Drift, and Pete Thongchua. Wikipedia describes drifting as "a driving technique where the driver purposely oversteers, with loss of traction, while maintaining control and driving the car through the entirety of a corner or a turn."

A mini-concert including artists such as Ally, Zani, Pop Pongkool, and Oat Pramote, then took place while a range of booths selling customised merchandise and authentic souvenirs from the Toyota Gazoo Racing collection were on offer for race fanatics to snap up.

The organisers confirmed that the Toyota Gazoo Racing Thailand tour will return in 2026 and prove a new challenge that is bigger and more exciting than ever before, with dates and locations to be confirmed shortly.

INTEGRITY

This will no doubt be music to Kittisak's ears as he turns his attention to next season and strives to secure even more

silverware for his trophy cabinet.

Growing up in Phuket, Kittisak first found his racing legs at the age of nine as he rode his tricycle throughout local streets and from which he delivered cooking gas canisters to customers for his family's business.

Years later he established a mobile phone business, which he ran successfully for 20 years before turning his attention to his true love of motorsports. He set up a second-hand car trading dealership called 'House of Cars' which quickly became a respected and established business, with several outlets across the island thanks to Kittisak's commitment to integrity and the highest levels of customer service.

Dealing with cars on a daily basis also allowed Kittisak the opportunity to learn the finer aspects of the motorsports craft at close quarters as he set about building his own supercar that could eventually compete in official competitions.

Ten years later and the speedster hasn't looked back as he continues to burn rubber on the track, receive plaudits and take home trophies.

Jeeno defends LPGA title, wins player of the year award

GOLF

WORLD NUMBER ONE Jeeno Thitikul captured her second consecutive season-ending LPGA Tour Championship last Sunday (Nov 23), holding off Thai compatriot Pajaree Ananarukarn for the US\$4 million (B130mn) richest prize in women's golf.

Jeeno fired a four-under-par 68 to finish 72 holes at Tiburon Golf Club in Naples, Florida, on 26-under 262 and

defeat Pajaree by four strokes.

Jeeno began with a six-stroke lead, saw it shrink to only two but recovered to win the \$11mn event and secure the LPGA Player of the Year award and take Vare Trophy for season low scoring average by breaking the record low mark of 68.70 set by Annika Sorenstam in 2002.

"I love this golf course," Jeeno said. "Playing here in the last tournament of the year gives me really good energy."



Jeeno. Photo: AFP

The only other player to win back-to-back Tour Championship titles was

South Korean Ko Jin-young in 2020 and 2021.

The triumph was the seventh of Jeeno's LPGA career and her tour-best third title of the year after the Mizuho Americas Open in May and last month's Shanghai event.

Jeeno's four runner-up finishes and 14 top-10 efforts also led the LPGA this year.

"Definitely means a lot," Jeeno said of the scoring record. "Back then I was just 6 years old, a really

young kid, had no idea what an LPGA was, had no idea what a world number one looked like.

"But as I'm stopping here today on the LPGA Tour, I know I'm playing the hardest golf but also I'm inspiring the next generation. It's part of our job as well."

The 22-year-old made a birdie-bogey start but added a birdie at the par-five sixth hole. Pajaree, the last qualifier into the field of 60, charged into the hunt by

making birdies on the first three holes and then the sixth and seventh.

Jeeno began the back nine with a birdie to stretch her lead, which grew to five strokes after Pajaree made bogey at the par-three 12th and Jeeno birdied the 13th to reach 25-under.

Pajaree birdied the par-three 16th and par-five 17th before a closing par to shoot 66 while Jeeno birdied the 18th from eight feet to complete the triumph.

AFP