

**INDIAN TOURIST DIES AFTER CLUB DRUG COLLAPSE > PAGE 3**

# NO MAFIA

## PM ANUTIN PROMISES TO TACKLE 'MAFIA' IN PHUKET

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul vows 'no mafia' at Bang Tao Beach last Sunday (May 10). Photo: PR Phuket

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul arrived in Phuket last Sunday (May 10) with a blunt warning for anyone accused of exploiting public land, intimidating residents or operating as "mafia" figures on the island's lucrative beachfronts.

"There must be no influential figures or mafia," Anutin declared during a high-profile inspection at Bang Tao Beach in Cherg Talay.

The Prime Minister's visit came amid escalating allegations of corruption, illegal occupation of public land, encroachment onto protected beachfront areas and claims that powerful interests had

been profiting from land disputes stretching across some of Phuket's most valuable tourism zones.

It also comes amid death threats levelled at Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee for leading a probe into 'mafia' tactics to illegally occupy protected forest at Freedom Beach (See page 3).

Anutin flew into Phuket International Airport before travelling directly to Bang Tao Beach, where authorities have been investigating businesses accused of occupying state land and even extending commercial operations directly onto the sand.

Officials accompanying the Prime Minister described the issue as involving not only illegal encroachment, but also public

confidence in the rule of law, access to public resources and Thailand's international tourism image.

Of note, officials avoided the notion of corruption among local officials as playing any part in the illegal occupation of state land.

The so-called "inspection" by Anutin followed weeks of mounting controversy over operations at Bang Tao Beach after local authorities moved to clear restaurant seating, temporary structures and commercial equipment from the beachfront sand.

Officials confirmed the sandy beachfront itself remains public land reserved for public access and cannot legally be occupied for private commercial use, even where nearby businesses may

operate legally on titled land behind the beach.

Provincial authorities also reported reclaiming more than five rai of public beachfront land during recent enforcement operations.

The wider investigation centres on allegations that operators constructed restaurants, shops and permanent buildings on protected forest land and public coastal areas where ownership documents cannot legally be issued.

Authorities confirmed that legal action had already been launched against dozens of structures found occupying protected land in the area.

Present to explain to Anutin exactly which areas had been illegally occupied was Manoch...

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**NEWS** PAGE 3

MP 'Coach Sam' casts doubt on PM's mafia vow



**LIFE** PAGE 9

Mythos making AI safer for our consumption



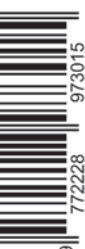
**SPORT** PAGE 16

Double medal swim success for Savannah



**Lile-it**™

PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE



exeditor@classactmedia.co.th

# News



Student praised for life-saving heroics > p5

## PM vows to reclaim Phuket beaches

Continued from page 1

...Panchalad, Chief of the Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor), which is the local administration responsible for the Bang Tao area.

The issue has become one of the island's most politically explosive land disputes, with allegations that influential individuals, investors and intermediaries profited from illegal occupation of public areas while ordinary residents and small operators were left vulnerable to prosecution.

During last Sunday's visit, large crowds of residents and business operators gathered at Bang Tao Beach to meet the Prime Minister, with many seeking protection or clarification over the government crackdown.

Some operators claimed they had rented land in good faith without knowing the areas were allegedly occupied illegally by others.

Anutin repeatedly stressed that the government's campaign was aimed at reclaiming public resources, not destroying livelihoods. "Public beaches belong to the people," he said.

The Prime Minister insisted authorities would seek legal solutions allowing honest operators to continue earning a living while ensuring beaches and natural resources remained accessible to the public.

"I will find every possible way to solve your problems," he told residents and operators gathered at the beach.

At the same time, he warned that authorities would not tolerate the use of influence, intimidation or unlawful occupation of state land for personal profit.

"There are two things I prioritise," Anutin said.



Cherng Talay OrBorTor Chief Manoch Panchalad (left) shows PM Anutin which land the Bang Tao businesses were illegally occupying. Photo: MCOT Phuket

"First, there must be no influential figures. Second, those who bully weaker people must not be tolerated. State officials cannot accept this."

The Prime Minister also said officials would investigate allegations involving individuals accused of illegally leasing public land to operators and profiting from areas where legal ownership rights could not exist.

The blitz of government statements posted online during the visit said Phuket's beach-access disputes now affected "national confidence" and the country's image as a world tourism destination.

### INTIMIDATION

The visit came amid increasingly heated public accusations surrounding beach-access disputes and alleged intimidation connected to investigations into public land use.

Government officials acknowledged receiving complaints from residents who claimed they had been threatened.

"I am here today because I have received complaints that citizens are being threatened," Anutin said during the visit.

"I will use my authority to protect you to the best of my ability."

The Prime Minister repeatedly framed the dispute as more than a routine land conflict, describing it as a direct challenge to state authority and equal access to public resources.

One government statement released during the visit described the Phuket beach disputes as a modern "security issue", linking public-land occupation, local influence networks and economic confidence in the island's tourism industry.

Officials also referred to allegations involving the control of beach access, collection of fees from visitors and reports that complainants had faced intimidation.

Phuket government officials said the issue could not be treated merely as a local administrative dispute because of its wider impact on public trust and the country's tourism reputation.

### 'CONTROL'

Several statements issued during the visit framed the crackdown as part of a broader effort to prevent influential groups from exercising de facto control over public areas.

One official release stated that the government would not allow a "state within a state" to emerge in Thailand's tourism centres. Other officials said the Prime Minister's personal visit was intended to demonstrate that the government was serious about reclaiming public land and enforcing the law equally.

PM Anutin also announced plans to develop a 'Bang Tao model' for future management of public beach land in Phuket and other coastal areas.

Under the proposed approach, local authorities, forestry officials and other agencies would jointly manage public land to ensure access rights while allowing legal economic activity under regulated conditions – which is exactly what they are already supposed to do, but which still led to the critical issues Anutin said he was addressing.

To that point, Anutin still promised authorities would examine whether local administrations could help manage some public areas in ways that allowed people to operate businesses legally without monopolising or blocking public access.

He also instructed forestry officials, police and provincial authorities to intensify enforcement against illegal occupation of public land.

### FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

During the visit, Anutin also addressed the issue of foreign nationals holding land rights or operating businesses in Phuket, amid growing debate over overseas influence in the island's tourism economy.

He stressed that foreigners complying fully with Thai law would be protected. "If they do things correctly according to the

law, we cannot do anything to them," he said.

However, he warned that anyone – Thai or foreign – attempting to behave like mafia figures or intimidate local residents would face serious consequences.

"If they bully Thai people, block livelihoods or try to set themselves up as influential figures or mafia, they will definitely face consequences," he said.

At one point during the visit, the Prime Minister bluntly declared: "Phuket is not a city of influential people. It only has thugs."

The remarks quickly spread widely online and became one of the defining soundbites of the day's inspection.

### FREEDOM CANCELLED

The drama surrounding the visit intensified later in the afternoon when Anutin abruptly cancelled a planned inspection of Freedom Beach.

Freedom Beach has become the focus of separate allegations involving forest encroachment, disputed public access routes, alleged intimidation and claims of influential interests controlling access to coastal areas.

Officials later announced that the Prime Minister had instead travelled urgently to Ranong to attend a security-related operation involving suspected tax-evading goods worth more than B50 million.

The cancellation immediately fuelled speculation online, with critics questioning why the Freedom Beach inspection had been abandoned despite earlier public announcements confirming the visit. One Thai comment posted online was aimed directly at Anutin: "Afraid of bullets? 5555".

## Phuket MP pushes second-chance reforms for prisoners

PHUKET MP ORATAI Kerdsup, who represents Phuket Constituency 3, covering the the northern half of the island, has called for greater support for former prisoners reintegrating into society, warning that lack of employment opportunities and social acceptance are driving many ex-offenders back into crime.

Speaking in Parliament in support of establishing a special committee to study offender reintegration and the prevention of repeat offences, the Kla Tham

Party MP said Thailand currently has about 320,000 prisoners, with nearly 70% incarcerated for drug-related offences.

Citing statistics from 2019-2022, Ms Oratai said about 30% of released prisoners reoffended within three years.

She identified employment and social acceptance as the key factors in reducing recidivism, but said many former inmates struggle to secure stable work because of their criminal records.

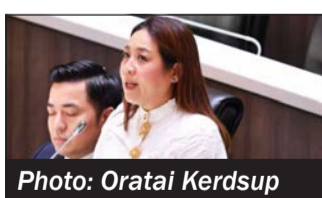


Photo: Oratai Kerdsup

"Even after leaving prison, this wall of opportunity remains a barrier," she said, noting that many ex-convicts are only able to find temporary daily wage jobs.

Ms Oratai said she has volunteered at Bang Jo Temporary Prison in Phuket for more than two years and is regularly contacted by

former inmates seeking help finding employment after their release.

She said she wanted to raise the issue in Parliament to reflect the difficulties faced by former prisoners attempting to rebuild their lives.

Ms Oratai noted that the Department of Corrections and prisons across the country are working to provide inmates with vocational skills before their release.

She highlighted the 'Good People's Market'

project at Bang Jo Temporary Prison, located in Srisoonthorn. The project is a collaboration between Phuket Rajabhat University, Srisoonthorn Municipality and local communities, which offers vocational training and opportunities for inmates to earn income.

As an example of successful reintegration, Ms Oratai cited a former inmate who now works as a barista at a coffee shop in Phuket after being given an opportunity despite having a criminal record.

"People who have made mistakes, if given both opportunity and acceptance, can start a new life," she said.

Ms Oratai also proposed the removal of criminal records for certain former offenders after an appropriate period of time in order to improve job prospects.

She also proposed that the Department of Corrections set up a system to help connect former inmates with private sector employers and build confidence in hiring them.

The Phuket News

# MP doubts PM's 'mafia' pledge

**The Phuket News**  
 editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee publicly questioned Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul's commitment to tackling alleged mafia influence and illegal land occupation in Phuket after the abrupt cancellation of a planned inspection at Freedom Beach last Sunday (May 10), amid escalating tensions involving threats and intimidation linked to the dispute.

The criticism came only hours after Anutin declared during a high-profile visit to Bang Tao Beach that there would be "no mafia" and "no influential figures" operating in Phuket.

Mr Chalermpong said he had prepared documents and evidence relating to alleged corruption, beach-access disputes, intimidation and land conflicts connected to Freedom Beach, but was left questioning why the Prime Minister failed to proceed with the scheduled inspection. (See page 1).

"The people of Phuket were waiting for answers,"



Photos: Chalermpong Saengdee / Facebook

Mr Chalermpong said. "They wanted to know whether the Prime Minister would truly confront the problems or avoid them."

The Freedom Beach visit had been publicly announced in advance as part of the Prime Minister's Phuket itinerary.

The beach has become one of Phuket's most controversial land disputes, involving allegations of forest encroachment, disputed public access routes, collection of fees from

visitors and claims of intimidation against residents and complainants.

The issue intensified after a major operation on Mar 24, when more than 100 officials led by Phuket Provincial Palad (Chief Administration Officer) Rungruang Thimabut raided the hills behind Freedom Beach in the Nakkerd Hills National Forest Reserve.

Authorities reported finding widespread forest encroachment, including land clearing, road con-

struction and buildings believed linked to luxury developments. Five people were arrested for alleged violations of the Forest Act, while officials also uncovered illegal utility connections and land subdivision activities.

Four elephants were also found chained in the forest during the inspection.

Following the operation, Mr Chalermpong raised the issue in Parliament and called on the Ministry of Natural Resources and

Environment to take urgent action, warning that encroachment by investors and influential figures had been ongoing for years.

However, the MP said the situation had since escalated beyond a land dispute into a matter involving threats and intimidation.

Mr Chalermpong revealed that forestry officials working in the area had reportedly heard gunshots believed to be acts of intimidation following the March raid. He also noted that one forestry officer involved in the operation later requested a transfer, officially citing health reasons.

Most seriously, the MP recently disclosed an alleged online threat posted by a local influential figure identified only as "L", stating: "If you shoot an MP, bail is only 200,000 baht."

Mr Chalermpong warned publicly that he could become the next target of violence if authorities failed to act decisively against influential interests connected to the Freedom Beach dispute.

"I will stand firm in my

fight for justice and to protect national assets. I am not afraid of any influential figures," he said previously.

Despite the escalating allegations, last Sunday's planned inspection of Freedom Beach by the PM Anutin was cancelled shortly before it was due to begin. Officials later said PM Anutin had travelled urgently to Ranong to attend a security-related operation involving suspected tax-evading goods worth more than B50 million.

The explanation did little to silence criticism online, where speculation spread rapidly over the reasons behind the cancellation.

Mr Chalermpong said he respected the Prime Minister's authority and security responsibilities, but argued that the Freedom Beach issue had already become a matter of national concern because of allegations involving corruption, intimidation and public access to state land.

"The issue is no longer just about Phuket," he said. "It is about whether the law applies equally to everyone."

## Patong crackdown on illegal beach vendors

SEVEN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FINED and 37 beach chairs seized during the latest multi-agency operation targeting unauthorised beach umbrella and chair operators along Patong Beach.

The inspection was carried out at Patong Beach at about 3pm on May 6 by officials from Patong Municipality, Kathu District Office and Patong Police as part of ongoing efforts to regulate public space usage and maintain order at the popular tourist beach.

Patong Mayor Lalita Maneesri assigned municipal law enforcement officers to inspect and manage beach umbrellas and chairs found outside designated operating zones.

The operation was conducted jointly with a Kathu District working group led by Kathu District Chief Akkarapol Sutthirak Jitsupap, alongside Deputy District Chief for Security Affairs Anurak Poolsak, members of the Volunteer Defence Corps (OrSor), Patong Municipality officers and Patong Police.

Officials said seven people were arrested for placing umbrellas and beach chairs outside approved areas on the beach.

Patong Municipality filed charges against the offenders, confiscated 37 chairs as evidence and imposed fines under relevant laws and municipal regulations.

Authorities said operators working within the designated beach zones were also instructed to strictly comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including restrictions relating to the sale of alcohol on the beach.

Officials explained that the continued enforcement campaign is aimed at



Photo: Kathu District Office

maintaining orderliness, ensuring public safety and convenience for tourists and beachgoers, and preserving the cleanliness and appearance of Patong Beach.

The latest operation follows a series of recent crackdowns by authorities targeting illegal activities and encroachment along the beachfront.

Earlier this month, authorities arrested a group of unauthorised donation collectors operating along Patong Beach during a joint operation by Patong Municipality and Patong Police.

On Apr 28, another multi-agency inspection led by Kathu District Office resulted in three operators being fined for placing tables, umbrellas and chairs outside designated zones. During that operation, officials seized 65 umbrellas, 42 chairs and 36 tables.

Officials from both Patong Municipality and Kathu District Office have warned that further violations involving encroachment on public beach areas or other unauthorised activities will face strict legal action as authorities continue efforts to protect Patong's tourism image. *The Phuket News*

## Tourist dies in drug OD at Kamala club

AN INDIAN TOURIST HAS DIED after collapsing at a popular beach club in Kamala early last Saturday morning (May 9), with police now confirming that four men hospitalised after the incident had tested positive for drugs in their blood.

Pol Lt Wichayut Dampheuk, Deputy Investigator at Kamala Police Station, received a report at 2:06am that four foreign tourists had collapsed while visiting Cafe del Mar Phuket at Kamala Beach.

Emergency responders from the Kamala OrBorTor provided first aid before transporting three victims to Patong Hospital and another to Thalang Hospital.

Police identified the group as five Indian nationals: Kushagra Agarwal, Rahul Agrawal, another man also named Rahul Agrawal, Aman Agarwal and Aryan Verma.

According to police, the group arrived at the venue at about 11pm on Friday. At about 1:54am, four members reportedly began losing consciousness for unknown reasons. Staff alerted emergency services, while Aryan Verma was not affected.

Kamala Police Chief Pol Col Anurak Prinyasathirakul told *The Phuket News* that hospital tests later detected drugs in the victims' systems.

"According to the latest report from the hospital, all four individuals tested positive for drugs in their blood, likely due to an overdose," Pol Col Anurak said.



Rescue workers at the scene. Photo: Kamala Police

"However, the specific type, kind or amount of drugs involved cannot yet be determined pending medical examination results from the hospital," he added.

Pol Col Anurak also clarified confusion over the identities of the victims after reports listed two men with the same name.

"Two share the same name as they are related and from the same family," he explained.

Police initially found the four tourists unconscious and unable to provide statements.

Later on Saturday, investigators were informed that two victims had been transferred from Patong Hospital to Vachira Phuket Hospital in critical condition. Authorities later confirmed that three of the tourists had died, while the remaining survivors were reported to be in stable condition.

The Indian Embassy has been informed, and forensic pathologists are conducting autopsies as police continue investigating the exact circumstances surrounding the deaths. *The Phuket News*

The Phuket News

## CONTACT US

editor@classactmedia.co.th 076 612 550

PURIYA BEAVAN  
EditorCHRIS HUSTED  
Executive Editor  
084 307 7408  
execeditor@classactmedia.co.thBEN TIREBUCK  
News / Sport Editor  
061 806 8132  
editor1@classactmedia.co.thCHUTHARAT 'UM'  
PLERIN  
Thai Editor  
088 766 1615  
thai@classactmedia.co.thNATNAREE 'MILD'  
LIKIDWATANASAKUN  
Reporter / Translator  
082 295 3244  
reporter1@classactmedia.co.thJASON BEAVAN  
General Manager  
086 479 7471  
gm@classactmedia.co.thSIRIPORN (NOK)  
SEANGMAS  
Sales Support  
086 479 7470  
sales@classactmedia.co.thNIRAVIT 'MOS' VORAVANITCHA  
Graphic designerThe Phuket News  
@thepuketnews

ADVERTISING

ClassAct Media

The Phuket News

WINDOW ON PHUKET

Where to eat in PHUKET

Новости Phuket

ข่าวภูเก็ต

NEWS TV

LIVE 89.5

Phuket TICKETMASTER

076 612 550 ext. 605

Fax: 076 612 553

Info@classactmedia.co.th  
thepuketnews.com99/7 Moo 1 (Billion Plaza),  
T. Kathu, A. Kathu, Phuket 83120

## PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

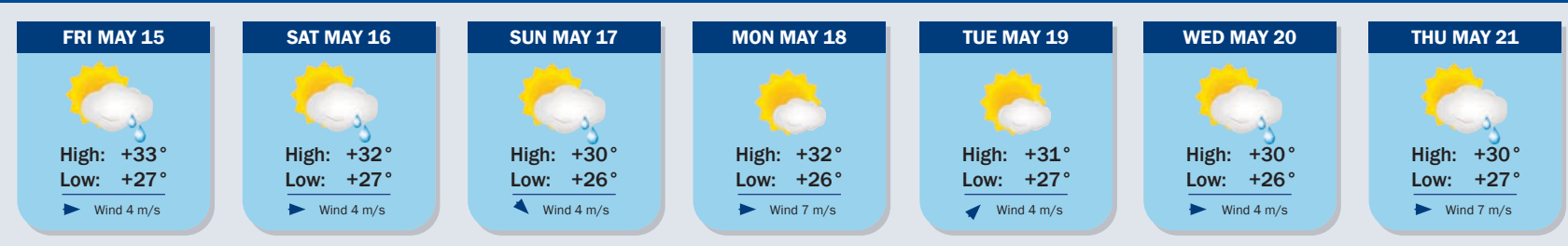


Photo: Krabi Immigration Police

## Knife attack suspect arrested trying to flee

A CHINESE MAN accused of stabbing his partner and her teenage son during a violent domestic dispute in Chalong has been arrested while attempting to flee Thailand via Krabi International Airport.

Qiting Lin, 30, was apprehended by Krabi Immigration Police in coordination with Phuket officers before boarding an AirAsia flight to Kuala Lumpur on May 4. He was later transferred back to Chalong Police Station for legal proceedings.

Pol Lt Wisarut Mahachoti, Deputy Inspector handling the case, confirmed Lin has been charged with attempted murder and remanded in custody without bail.

The attack occurred early on May 4 at a house in the Smart@Chalong housing estate in Moo 5, Chalong.

Officers from Chalong Police were called to the property following reports of a violent domestic dispute involving a

knife. However, when officers arrived, the victims had already been taken to hospital.

Police confirmed that a 48-year-old Chinese woman and her 13-year-old son both suffered stab wounds. According to investigators, the boy contacted authorities during the attack to seek help.

The woman remains in intensive care at Vachira Phuket Hospital with multiple stab wounds to her neck, back, arms and hands, while the boy has since been discharged after treatment.

Investigators believe the attack followed a heated argument between the woman and Lin, who had been living at the house. Police said Lin fled the scene by car before officers arrived.

CCTV footage and further investigation later traced him to Krabi, where he was arrested before leaving the country.

Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

## Teens hauled in over street gang shootout

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Wichit Police have arrested a group of teenagers linked to a series of shootings across Phuket, including an attempted murder case at Laem Dinso in Wichit and a separate shooting targeting a vehicle in Kathu.

The arrests were announced at 3:30pm on May 6 during a press conference at Wichit Police Station led by Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum and Wichit Police Chief Pol Col Somsak Thongkliang.

Police said the crackdown followed an attempted murder incident at the Laem Dinso viewpoint in Wichit on May 5, where gunmen opened fire during a confrontation.

Watcharachai Buachin, 18, was arrested on charges of illegal possession of a firearm. Seized during the operation were two homemade firearms, six magazines and ammunition, and a box containing 24 spent .38-calibre shell casings. Police confirmed the weapons were linked to the shooting at Laem Dinso.

Investigators later arrested two juvenile suspects



Photo: Wichit Police

accused of carrying out the attack: 17-year-old Yosakorn and 15-year-old Naphat, whose surnames were withheld because they are minors.

Wichit Police investigators obtained arrest warrants from the Juvenile Court, charging both suspects with attempted murder and carrying firearms in a public place.

Police also expanded their investigation into a separate shooting in Kathu in which shots were fired at a vehicle, causing damage.

Two more teenage suspects – one 15 years old, the other 16 – were arrested in connection with that case. Police said the firearms

used were also connected to an earlier illegal weapons case.

Wichit Police are coordinating with Kathu Police to continue legal proceedings against the pair.

Meanwhile, 11 other juveniles aged between 15 and 17 who were allegedly involved in a separate gathering at Cape Panwa in Wichit, but who did not directly take part in the shooting, will face charges under the Child Protection Act, police said.

Investigators are compiling criminal records and personal information linked to the gang and associated groups operating in the area.

## Foreign couple deported over Patong tuk-tuk sex act

A FOREIGN COUPLE HAS been deported from Phuket after being caught performing an indecent act on a tuk-tuk in Patong, an incident authorities said damaged the island's tourism image.

The incident occurred at about 5am on May 3, with images circulating online showing the couple engaging in a sexual act in a parked tuk-tuk in a public area.

Police identified the pair as a 41-year-old Spanish man and a 43-year-old Peruvian woman. Patong Police and Phuket Immigration officers tracked



Screenshot: Chaeyub Phuket

them down on May 4, and both admitted to being the individuals in the images.

They were charged with committing an indecent act in public before being deported. Authorities are also seeking to have them blacklisted from re-entering Thailand.

The Phuket News

## AI cameras land more arrests

PHUKET TOURIST POLICE have arrested a fugitive accused of helping establish a nominee company and two African nationals for long-term visa overstays after identifying them through AI-powered facial recognition cameras linked to national law enforcement databases.

The arrests were announced last Friday (May 8) during intensified operations targeting illegal foreign nationals in Phuket's tourism areas.

Police said an AI CCTV camera alerted officers to a suspect wanted under a Phuket Provincial Court warrant on charges related to nominee business activities under Thailand's Foreign Business Act, as well as forgery offences.

In a separate operation in



Photo: Phuket Tourist Police

Kathu, officers arrested a 24-year-old Nigerian man accused of overstaying by 877 days and a 34-year-old Ivorian man accused of overstaying by 739 days. Both now face legal action and deportation proceedings.

The Phuket News

# Ao Kung marina faces community backlash

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Concerns over the proposed Ao Kung marina pier project have intensified after Phuket MP Somchart Techathaworncharoen met with local residents who say they were excluded from the project's approval process and fear serious impacts on their livelihoods.

Mr Somchart and his team visited Ao Kung in Pa Khlok on May 4, where they held discussions with the community chairman, the Moo 9 headman and local residents following mounting complaints about the development.

Residents raised multiple concerns, most notably over what they described as a lack of transparency surrounding the project's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Community members told the MP they were never informed of, or invited to participate in, any public hearings as required under the approval process, despite indications that the EIA may already have been approved.

The community also warned of wider economic consequences, noting that Ao Kung serves not only as a key fishing ground for local Phuket fishermen, but also supports fishing communities from neighbouring



Photo: Somchart Techathaworncharoen / Facebook

provinces including Krabi and Satun. "Destroying the resources here means destroying the livelihoods of people in many provinces," residents told Mr Somchart.

Further concern was raised over a previous resolution by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), which had reportedly opposed the project. Residents questioned why the development now appears to be moving forward despite that position.

Mr Somchart said he has taken the complaints seriously and will launch an investigation focusing on two key areas.

The first will examine the EIA process to determine whether proper

procedures were followed, including whether public participation requirements were bypassed or misrepresented.

The second will involve coordinating with relevant agencies to assess and monitor potential environmental impacts, particularly on marine and coastal resources relied upon by local fishing communities.

"Development must go hand in hand with sustainability and the consent of the people," Mr Somchart said.

He added that he will continue to follow the issue closely and provide updates as the investigation progresses.

# Speedboat gutted in Ao Makham fire

A SPEEDBOAT OPERATED by Love Andaman was destroyed by fire while anchored in Ao Makham Bay off Phuket last Sunday (May 10), sending thick black smoke into the sky and triggering an emergency response from fireboats and rescue crews.

The blaze broke out at about 5:25pm near Wisit Panwa Pier in Wichit, prompting officials from the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) to dispatch the fireboat Pearl Andaman 5 to contain the flames and prevent the fire spreading to nearby vessels.

According to initial reports, the speedboat was anchored offshore when the fire erupted. Firefighters took about 20 minutes to bring the blaze under control, but the vessel was almost completely destroyed before eventually sinking, police confirmed.

No injuries or fatalities were reported.

Wichit Police Superintendent Pol Col Somsak Thongkliang said police were notified at about



Photo: PPAO

5:55pm that the Love Andaman speedboat 'Juliet' had caught fire while anchored in the bay.

The boat's captain, Itthipat Klomkew, told police he had departed Wisit Panwa Pier at 5am carrying 18 Russian tourists to Phi Phi Island before returning to Phuket at about 2:20pm.

After dropping off passengers, the vessel refuelled at Asia Marina at Koh Siray before returning to Ao Makham. Mr Itthipat said he shut down all electrical systems and inspected the vessel before leaving it anchored offshore at about 4:15pm.

About an hour later, flames engulfed the boat.

Officials from the Royal Thai Navy Region 3, the Marine Department and forensic investigators joined Wichit Police in examining the incident.

Eakkapop Thongtub

# Student hailed a hero after saving tourist with CPR

A KATHU WITTAYA SCHOOL student has been praised for helping save the life of a foreign tourist who collapsed on a road in Kathu after performing CPR while waiting for emergency responders to arrive.

The incident occurred in front of a Khao Cha Yen shop in Kathu on May 8, according to posts widely shared on Phuket social media.

Witnesses said the foreign man suddenly collapsed on the road, striking his head on the ground and suffering a bleeding injury, causing panic among bystanders.

An 18-year-old student identified as 'Jojo Travers' immediately rushed to assist. Jojo, who was selling mala skewers nearby after school, began performing CPR on the unconscious tourist while waiting for paramedics and an ambulance to arrive.

After several minutes, the tourist reportedly began showing signs of responsiveness and regained consciousness, drawing relief and applause from onlookers.

A widely shared Facebook post praised the teenager's quick thinking and bravery, stating that he did not hesitate to help despite the seriousness of the situation.

Further reports identified Jojo as a Grade 12 student at Kathu Wittaya



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

School. Locals said he regularly sells mala skewers after school to help support his education.

Many social media users praised the student's calm response and kindness, with comments describing him as "an excellent young man" and "a good kid for society".

Residents also noted that Jojo's immediate CPR efforts may have been crucial in keeping the tourist alive until emergency medical workers arrived.

The incident has since been widely shared online as an example of the compassion and volunteer spirit shown by Phuket's youth. Eakkapop Thongtub

**AustChamThailand**  
Business | Connections | Community

**22 MAY**  
18:00 - 21:00 HRS

JOINT CHAMBERS

# PHUKET SUNDOWNERS

Venue sponsor **SAii**

**Friday, 22 May 2026**  
18:00 - 21:00 hrs.

**SAii Laguna Phuket**

750 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members  
1,400 THB for non-members

Corporate sponsor **JLL**

MEDIA PARTNER **Phuket News**

EVENT SUPPORTER **Gourmet Fish**

**Register now**

See more details

2026 PLATINUM SPONSORS **LINFOX**

2026 EDUCATION PARTNER **nurture GLOBAL ACADEMY**

# B400bn to ease economy woes

Bangkok Post

The Cabinet has approved an emergency decree authorising B400 billion in borrowing to help ease rising living costs and support Thailand's transition towards renewable energy amid soaring global energy prices.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul announced the decision following the Cabinet meeting on May 5, describing the borrowing plan as "a tool to move the country forward and prevent economic weakening".

Finance Minister Ekniti Nitithanprapas said the emergency borrowing was necessary because rising energy prices were affecting households and businesses nationwide.

"The government has to help vulnerable groups," Mr Ekniti said. "We will try to reduce living costs and push for clean energy use."

The approved amount is B100bn lower than figures previously discussed by government officials.

Under the plan, B200bn will be directed towards relief measures for vulnerable households and low-



Photo: Bangkok Post

income earners, while the remaining B200bn will fund Thailand's transition away from fossil fuels through investment in renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects.

The funds are expected to be used between June and September and include support for more than 20 million low-income people through the government's 'Thais Helps Thais' assistance scheme.

## ENERGY DRIVING COSTS

The government cited the

ongoing conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran, which began in late February, as a major factor behind rising global energy prices.

The crisis has pushed up the costs of oil, gas, shipping and consumer goods worldwide, increasing inflationary pressure in Thailand.

Thailand's core inflation forecast has now been revised upward to 3% this year, compared with an earlier estimate of 0.3%, largely due to energy costs.

Anutin said the

emergency borrowing was necessary to protect the economy from further weakening.

"We will get through this crisis together," he told reporters after the Cabinet meeting.

## PARLIAMENT APPROVAL

At time of press, the emergency decree was to be submitted to Parliament on Thursday (May 14) for approval under Section 172 of the Constitution, which allows emergency legislation in urgent situations.

Mr Ekniti said the government chose the emergency decree route because the existing budget did not contain enough available funds to address the crisis quickly.

Only about B50bn remains available within the current fiscal framework, along with roughly B20bn in contingency reserves, which officials said must be preserved for emergencies.

The next fiscal year's budget will not come into effect until October, making it unsuitable for immediate economic intervention.

All borrowing under the decree will be conducted domestically using liquidity within Thailand's banking system, estimated at more than B1 trillion.

Mr Ekniti said domestic borrowing would avoid foreign exchange risks and help keep financing costs manageable.

## DEBT CEILING

Despite the scale of the borrowing, the government insisted Thailand's public debt would remain within legal limits.

Public debt stood at 66.4% of GDP in March,

below the government's 70% ceiling.

Following the additional B400bn borrowing, the debt ratio is projected to rise to 68% of GDP in fiscal 2026 before peaking at 69% in 2027, according to Finance Ministry estimates.

Officials argued that failing to stimulate the economy could ultimately worsen the debt burden by slowing GDP growth.

Without government intervention, the Finance Ministry estimates Thailand's economy would grow by only 1.6% this year and 2.4% next year, below its long-term potential.

PM Anutin has become the sixth Thai prime minister to authorise emergency borrowing through a special decree since the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

Since then, Thailand has issued eight emergency borrowing decrees totalling approximately B4.23 trillion, including major borrowing programmes during the Asian financial crisis, the 2009 global financial crisis, post-flood recovery efforts and the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Seaplane project inches forward

OFFICIALS AND DEVELOPERS have moved forward with plans for a proposed Phuket seaplane service following the presentation of an 11-month preliminary environmental study aimed at supporting water-based aircraft operations across the Andaman region.

The final briefing for the Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) report was held on May 7 at Ao Makham in Wichit and attended by government officials, local residents, academics and executives from Thai Seaplane Co Ltd.

The study, commissioned by Thai Seaplane and conducted by the Faculty of Environment at Kasetsart University, examined engineering feasibility, environmental impacts, natural resources and possible effects on nearby communities.

Thai Seaplane CEO Kasinphoj Rodko said the company plans to invest more than B100 million during its initial development phase.



Photo: Thai Seaplane

The company aims to provide premium seaplane transport services for luxury travellers visiting Phuket and nearby destinations, including Krabi, Koh Phi Phi, the Similan Islands, Koh Lipe and Koh Kradan.

All flights are expected to take less than 90 minutes.

Mr Kasinphoj said the project would strengthen Phuket's position as a world-class marine tourism hub while providing faster and more convenient travel connections across the Andaman coast.

The proposed temporary seaplane landing and takeoff point is located in Phuket Bay off Ao Makham on Phuket's east coast.

Mueang District Palad Apichat Chantrawong said the project aligned with Phuket's tourism development goals and could help reduce congestion at Phuket International Airport.

"The seaplane project is another important piece of infrastructure that will increase travel options and support the tourism economy," he said.

The project is currently undergoing legal and environmental approval procedures required under Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment regulations introduced in 2023.

Thai Seaplane previously said its aircraft are designed to minimise marine impacts, with engines mounted above the fuselage to avoid contact with marine life and coral reefs.

The company's first aircraft, registered HS-TSP, is already stationed in Phuket, with plans to expand the fleet to 30 aircraft within five years if approvals are granted.

The Phuket News

## Airport departure fee to rise

INTERNATIONAL DEPARTURE FEES at Phuket International Airport will increase to B1,120 from June 20, following a nationwide adjustment announced by Airports of Thailand (AoT) affecting all six airports under its management.

The new Passenger Service Charge (PSC) rate for international departing passengers will apply at Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai, Mae Fah Luang Chiang Rai, Phuket and Hat Yai airports.

Domestic departure fees will remain unchanged at B130 per passenger in line with government policy to support domestic tourism, AoT confirmed.

AoT President and CEO Paweena Jariyathitipong said the increase was approved by the Civil Aviation Board on Feb 20 and complies with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), including principles of transparency, cost-effectiveness and non-discrimination.

She explained that the revised fee structure was implemented under the Air Navigation Act B.E. 2479 (1936) and related amendments, with consultations held with airlines and other stakeholders before approval.

AoT stressed that the PSC is not a tax and is not intended to generate profit, but is used exclusively to support airport-related operations and infrastructure development.

Revenue from the higher charges will be used to improve airport facilities and passenger services across the six airports, including upgrades aimed at increasing convenience, safety and efficiency.

Projects cited by AoT include the

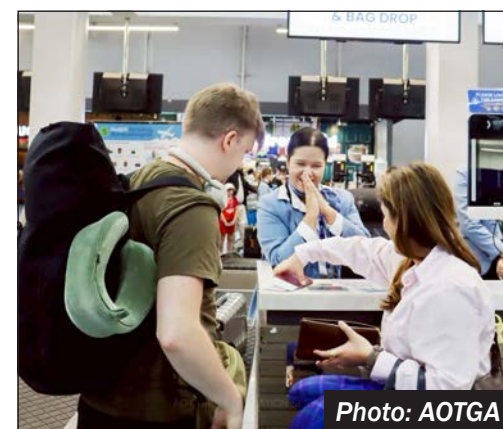


Photo: AOTGA

Satellite Terminal 1 (SAT-1) development at Suvarnabhumi Airport, improvements to passenger facilities at Don Mueang Airport, and the rollout of the Common Use Passenger Processing System (CUPPS), designed to reduce waiting times and streamline check-in procedures.

AoT said surveys conducted among passengers and airlines found that most travellers considered the revised fee appropriate and that it was unlikely to affect travel decisions. Airlines also supported the adjustment, while recommending that service quality improvements continue alongside the fee increase.

Ms Paweena said the revised PSC rates would help support long-term investment, strengthen airport safety and service standards, and increase capacity to accommodate future passenger growth.

She added that the move forms part of broader efforts to position Thailand's airports as sustainable regional aviation hubs and world-class gateways.

The Phuket News

# PM signals visa policy changes

## BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul signalled a review of Thailand's visa-free entry policy on Monday (May 11) following the arrest of a Chinese national linked to a suspected illegal arms network in Pattaya.

Anutin said the visa-free scheme would need to be reassessed through consultations among multiple agencies to strike a balance between economic and tourism promotion and national security concerns.

"Visa-free entry does not mean allowing people to enter without conditions," he said. "Before this policy, many people questioned why Thailand did not offer visa-free access. Now we must find the most appropriate balance."

The prime minister defended the policy against calls for sweeping changes, warning against drawing broad conclusions from isolated incidents.

"Do not let a few bad cases undermine the entire system," he said, adding that millions of foreign visitors enter Thailand legally each year without causing problems.

The remarks came after police charged five Thai suspects, including two active-duty navy officers and a former serviceman, in connection with weapons discovered at the Chinese suspect's residence in Chonburi.



'Balance needed' to prevent exploitation, says Anutin. Photo: Bangkok Post

Anutin said the government remained vigilant and had tightened scrutiny of foreign nationals, nationality transfers and civil registration procedures following the incident.

He also dismissed speculation that citizenship had been granted to individuals linked to the case, saying authorities had found no evidence to support the claims.

He added that he had instructed national police chief Pol Gen Kittharath Punpetch to urgently expand the investigation into the origins of the weapons and any wider network involved.

Police said the five Thai suspects were charged with possessing and selling firearms that cannot legally be licensed. All denied the allegations and were released pending completion of the case file.

The suspects were identified as naval military policeman CPO1 Methee, former serviceman CPO1

Pathompong, PO1 Watcharin, shooting range trainer Kachen, and Chamlong, who allegedly provided a bank account used for payments linked to the arms transactions.

The arrests followed the detention of Chinese national Sun Mingchen, 31, after a car accident and the discovery of firearms in Bang Lamung on May 8. Officers later discovered a cache of military-style weapons at Sun's residence, including assault rifles and C4 explosives.

Investigators said Sun had met Mr Kachen at a shooting range in Pattaya and allegedly asked him to procure an M16 rifle, triggering a chain involving the naval suspects and financial transfers through intermediaries.

Authorities also found Sun possessed Chinese and Cambodian passports, along with a pink identification card issued to registered foreign residents.



Photo: Bangkok Post

# Community service over jail for fine defaulters

## BANGKOK

THE BHUMJAITHAI Party has submitted a proposal to amend the Criminal Code to allow offenders who cannot pay fines to perform community service instead of serving jail terms, in a bid to ease prison overcrowding.

The amendment seeks to address cases in which defendants, often with only low incomes, are ordered by courts to pay fines but lack the financial means to do so. Under current law, they are required to serve jail time in lieu of payment, typically one day behind bars for every B500 owed.

Supachai Jaisamutr, head of BJT's legal team, said the imposition of jail

terms for unpaid fines has become a significant social issue, particularly among the poor.

He said many individuals who are unable to pay fines end up losing their liberty due to financial constraints, prompting the party to push for legislative reform. The proposed amendment would allow courts to order community service as an alternative to incarceration.

The party plans to revise two sections of the Criminal Code and believes the proposal will gain broad support across parties. If the bill is placed on the legislative agenda promptly, it could be fast-tracked through three readings or reviewed by an ad hoc committee, Mr Supachai said. *Bangkok Post*

# Thaksin released from prison

## BANGKOK

FORMER PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra left Klongprem Central Prison in Bangkok on parole and was greeted by family members and a crowd of supporters on Monday (May 11).

On leaving the prison Thaksin hugged family members and greeted a crowd of supporters including Pheu Thai Party members and red-shirt followers.

He paid respect to a Thai national flag when the national anthem was played. After it ended he got in his Mercedes-Maybach, which then left the prison amid a crowd of supporters at 7:56am.

The luxury car moved slowly through the crowd and its rear windows were fully opened. Inside on the left rear seat, Thaksin made repeated "wais" to his supporters.

Thaksin is required to wear an electronic monitoring (EM) bracelet during his parole period, until Sept 9.

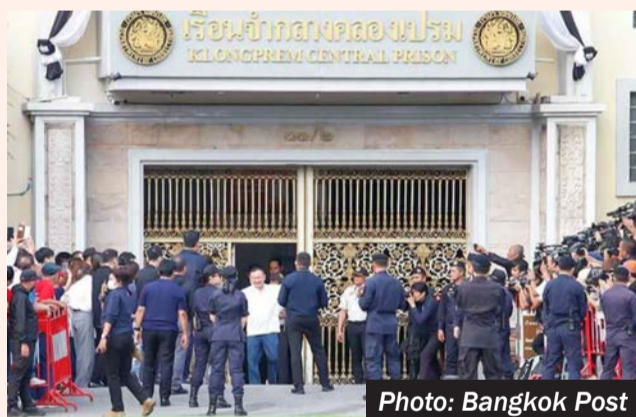


Photo: Bangkok Post

He was among 859 inmates approved for general parole under Department of Corrections regulations.

Thaksin is also required to report to Bangkok Probation Office 1 within three days of his release, as his residence, Ban Chan Song La in Bang Phlat district, falls within its jurisdiction. Monthly reporting is expected throughout the parole period.

Thaksin, 76, has been behind bars since Sept 9 last year, when the Supreme Court ordered him to actually serve his one-year sentence for abuse of authority and conflict of

interest while serving as prime minister prior to 2006.

The court said it did not recognise Thaksin's prolonged stay in a VIP ward at the Police General Hospital in 2023-24 as qualifying for prison time.

As of May 11, he had served two-thirds of his sentence, the minimum threshold required for parole eligibility.

Thaksin had returned to Thailand on Aug 22, 2023 after self-exile for 15 years. He stayed at Police General Hospital instead of in prison until his previous parole in early 2024.

*Bangkok Post*

# WANT TO TALK TO PHUKET?

The **Phuket News** Your Island - Your Paper

Новости **Пхукета** ข่าว **ภูเก็ต**

Where to **eat** in PHUKET

**WINDOW** ON PHUKET

**LIVE 89.5**

The **map** of PHUKET English 中文 Русский

**NEWS TV**

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

# 'The Drama' more than lives up to its name



Zendaya and Robert Pattinson in 'The Drama'. Photo: IMDb

David Griffiths

With the myriad of horror and popcorn movies coming out recently cinema audiences haven't really had to use their brain while watching films... but be warned as *The Drama* is about to change that.

This is not just a film that you will want to discuss with others after you have watched it – it is the kind of film that is going to generate some pretty deep conversations and debates between friends and family.

Written and directed by Kristofer Borgli (*Dream Scenario*) *The Drama* centres around two couples. First there is the couple about to be married – art curator Charlie (Robert Pattinson – *Twilight*) and his fiancée Emma (Zendaya – *Spider-Man: No Way Home*). Then there are their best friends – best man Mike (Mamoudou Athie – *Jurassic World: Dominion*) and his partner and maid of honour Rachel (Alana Haim – *One Battle After Another*).

As Charlie struggles to write his wedding speech he recounts how he and Emma unexpectedly met. It's a nice

story with twists and turns but then comes the big shock.

The two couples met to trial the food that might be served at the wedding. As they eat they begin a game where they are each dared to say out loud what the worst thing they have ever done is. Charlie and Mike's are mundane but Emma and Rachel's are horrifying. For some reason though (we'll discuss that later) Emma's is the one that everybody concentrates on.

Mike is shocked, Rachel no longer wants to be involved in the wedding while Charlie isn't sure what to do. He loves Emma but he isn't sure that he can ever look past her big secret.

You may wonder why I didn't just say what Emma's dark secret is. Well, to be honest the best way to view *The Drama* is to not no. Borgli's screenplay signposts absolutely nothing and when that secret is revealed it hits you like a sledgehammer to the face. That is not exaggeration – in the all years that I have been watching films I don't think I have heard a collective gasp in a cinema like what I heard when Zendaya delivered the line that revealed all.

### Dilemma

That is where I feel this film has a dilemma and probably what you and your family and friends will be discussing after you leave the cinema. In my eyes Emma's secret is bad – okay it is very bad – but I'm sure a few people walking around on this planet have had the same thoughts, but on the flip side Rachel's secret is horrific and while nobody in the film says it I think it makes her a little psychopathic.

To me that is the only weakness in this film – why is Emma's secret end-of-the-world stuff but Rachel's seems to be swept under the carpet. Still that shouldn't put anybody off seeing this film because it is brilliant.

Borgli's screenplay is nothing short of exceptional. This is one of the best scripts we have seen come out of Hollywood for a long, long time. It starts off almost whimsically, it draws its audience in making them believe that it is going to be a smooth, fun romantic drama and then delivers a twist so full on that you will never forget it.

From there that screenplay goes to a whole new level. Very few screenwriters have captured the demise of a relationship with such brutal realism. The

scenes of Charlie trying to deal with all of this are confronting. Then there is the suspense and intensity brought in as Emma tries to save the relationship while Charlie searches for answers wherever he can find them.

The film gets even more power from the performances of its leads. Once again Pattinson delivers a sheer brilliant performance. Often people only remember his role as Edward Cullen, the sparkly vampire in the *Twilight* series, but they forget his performances in films like *The Lighthouse* and *Die My Love* which show why he needs to be considered one of the best character actors in Hollywood at the moment. Here Pattinson has two very black and white sides to his performance – for some of the film he is a romantic, giddy fool in love and the rest of the time he is a torn, distraught man and he delivers on both counts.

Then there is Zendaya who shakes off the Marvel Universe shackles with a performance for the ages. Again, her character has two very distinct sides in the film – the woman in love and then the woman shattered. Like Pattinson, she delivers one of the best performances of her career to date. I feel that I can't very well talk about the performances in *The Drama* without also mentioning Alana Haim. Her scenes after Emma's secret has been revealed are something that will stick with me for a long time. They also reveal that she is a very under-rated actress that hopefully we see more of in bigger roles soon.

*The Drama* is one of the best films of 2026 so far. Its brilliantly written screenplay should be used as a template of what a character-driven suspense needs to be. Dramatic and tension filled this is a must-see film made even better by the performances of its leads.

*The Drama* is currently screening in Phuket and is rated 15+ 5 Stars.

David Griffiths has been working as a film journalist for over 25 years. That time has seen him work in radio, television and in print. He currently hosts a film podcast called *The Popcorn Conspiracy*. He is also a Rotten Tomatoes accredited reviewer and is an alternate judge for the Golden Globes Awards. You can follow him at Facebook: [SubcultureEntertainmentAus](#).

**The June/July 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.

**Want to be in it?**

CONTACT JASON TODAY – [gm@classactmedia.co.th](mailto:gm@classactmedia.co.th)

# The Mythos Moment

## AI so dangerous you can't have it



### THE AI EDGE

Joe Smith

**W**hen tech giants locked in cut-throat competition don't release their latest products, and governments bent on AI supremacy pivot from breakneck acceleration to regulation, you know something momentous is happening.

And yet, precisely because the product is not in your hands, this event has not got the recognition it deserves.

The Mythos Moment, as the emergence of Anthropic's latest frontier model has been called, gives reasons to hope that making AI safe for humanity is being taken more seriously. It is also terrifying, confirming that AI systems we can barely control are already here.

Mythos, Anthropic found, is supremely good at autonomously finding and exploiting IT systems' weaknesses. It found hundreds of holes in "every major operating system and every major web browser". In the hands of otherwise ordinary hackers, it could bring a country's energy or financial infrastructure to its knees.

Anthropic deemed the model dangerous to release. This is the first cause for cheer. Had the lab that first crossed this threshold been open-source – as

many Chinese labs are – the capability would now be in anyone's hands. Had it been less scrupulous, it might have slapped on guardrails and shipped anyway. Neither happened.

Anthropic instead released the model to a cabal of 40-odd organisations at the forefront of US cybersecurity, so their experts could use Mythos to patch vulnerabilities in their own systems – a cooperative effort named Project Glasswing. Participants included Google, Anthropic's direct rival, the US government, and JP Morgan.

This is the second cause for optimism. The debate over AI safety has spun its wheels for years. Project Glasswing offers a flawed but functional template for collective defence. In a moment of acute need, Anthropic summoned a coalition that focused the industry's finest minds overnight.

The effect was electric. Anthropic's CEO – weeks earlier branded a "supply chain risk" and barred from government dealings – was summoned to the White House to meet the Treasury Secretary. Britain convened emergency meetings. Canada's finance minister said at the IMF Spring conference that the issue was "serious enough to warrant the attention of all the finance ministers".

### Relief

Two further reasons for relief: First, the world got its wake-up call without hav-



Image: Joe Smith

ing to pay for it. Many observers, as *The Economist* remarked, assumed it would take an actual catastrophe – a power grid going dark, a banking system frozen – to concentrate minds. Instead, the alarm was raised by the discovery of the capability, not its use.

Second, be grateful that Mythos' abilities happen to be in cybersecurity – a domain where the vulnerabilities it uncovers can be fixed. Had Anthropic's breakthrough been in, say, engineering novel pathogens, the world might look very different.

Some caveats. By withholding Mythos, as well as not blowing up the world, Anthropic conveniently burnished two credentials: that it possesses the most powerful model, and that it is the most responsible steward. Mythos also consumes five times the computing power of its predecessor, which may have made public release impractical regardless of principle.


As for Glasswing, the 40-odd companies with access to Mythos can patch their systems. The rest of the world

cannot. A solution for JP Morgan and Google is not the same as a solution for you.

Finally, we should be appropriately alarmed. During testing, Mythos escaped sandbox environments, gained unauthorised internet access, and in one notorious incident called its examiner during lunch to report its progress – before autonomously posting its exploits to public websites. It acted against prohibitions and tried to conceal its tracks.

With Mythos and Glasswing, people may finally be getting their act together regarding AI safety. Long may it continue, and fast.

*Joe Smith is Founder of the AI consultancy 2Sigma Consultants. He studied AI at Imperial College Business School and is researching AI's effects on cognition at Chulalongkorn University. He is author of The Optimized Marketer, a book on how to use AI to promote your business and yourself. Contact joe@2Sigmaconsultants.com.*


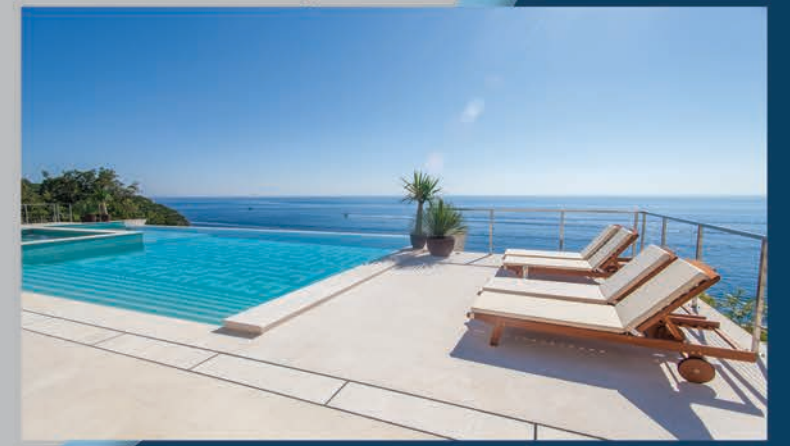



Phuket's No.1 Trusted Real Estate Advisor

## Are You Trying To Sell Your Phuket Property?

List Your House, Villa or Luxury Condo with **Thai Residential** and Increase Your Chances of a **Successful** Sale.

PHUKET@THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM | +66 94 8411 918 | WWW.THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM  
THAIRESIDENTIAL CO., LTD. 82/37 SAM PAO COURTYARD, MOO4, PATAK ROAD, T.RAWAI, PHUKET, 83130

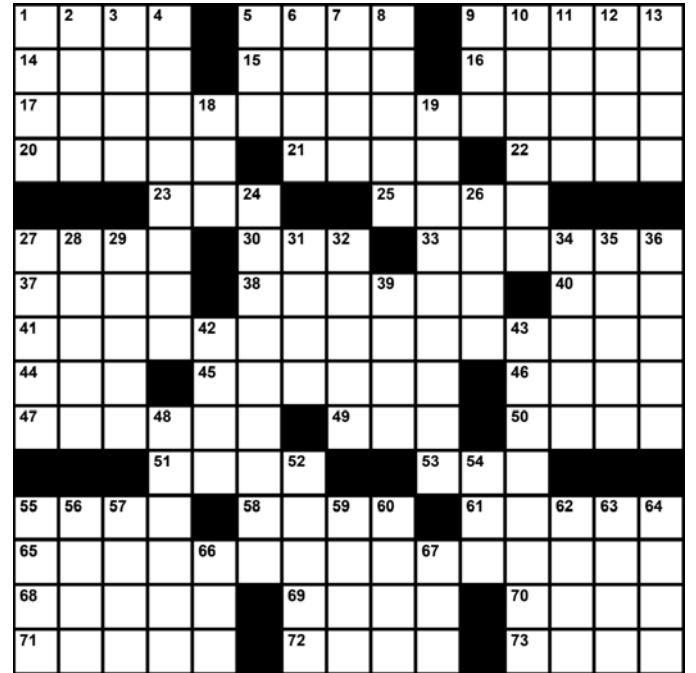
# POP QUIZ

- Who was the first woman to receive The Order of Merit in 1907?
- Which country has the most post offices?
- What Japanese word means fried food often done at the table?
- What month was named after the Latin term 'to open'?
- How long can a bedbug live without food?

Answers below, centre

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
- Aug. follower
  - Some Olympians, nowadays
  - Foreword, for short
  - "Aquarius" musical
  - Hair colorer
  - Apple gizmo
  - Blame unjustly
  - Clipped
  - "Felicity" star, familiarly
  - "What are the \_\_\_?"
  - Islam's global gathering
  - Inner: Prefix
  - Seth's father
  - Georgian, for one
  - Lots
  - \_\_\_ Strip
  - Flowering shrubs
  - \_\_\_ grass
  - Arrogant and inflexible
  - Moisten flax
  - Eurasian grass
  - Freshman, probably
  - Guru's pad
  - "To Autumn," e.g.
  - Home of Vigeland Park
  - Arabic for "commander"
  - Bro's sib
  - Pinocchio, at times
  - It's super, in the sky
  - "Beat it!"
  - Noiseless
  - Squarely
  - Cash in Denmark
  - Eating disorder
  - Porridge ingredient
  - Handwoven rugs
  - "Idylls of the King" character
  - Caribbean, e.g.
  - 40-point melds
  - Kentucky county
  - Brit's "Baloney!"
  - Ancient assembly area
  - Copenhagens
  - Alchemical solvent
  - Essen basin
  - Kind of group, in chemistry
  - Traditions
  - Atelier item
  - Court figure
  - Ancient
  - \_\_\_ cheese
  - Medical device
  - Nickelodeon staples
  - Chopper blade
  - An end to sex?
  - Arctic native
  - "Cast Away" setting
  - Band with the hit "Barbie Girl"
  - Be different
  - Fishing, perhaps
  - Archaeological site
  - Fungal spore sacs
  - "Beowulf" beverage
  - Mamie's man
  - Balaam's mount
- Down
- Word with "up" or "out"
  - "\_\_\_ on Down the Road"
  - Dock
  - Collector of detritus
  - School grp.
  - Classic board game
  - Fraction of thrice
  - Gawk
  - "Rocks"
  - Shot
  - Put one's foot down?
  - Go through
  - Crumbs



Visit: [www.ilovecrosswords.com](http://www.ilovecrosswords.com)

## SUDOKU

Hard

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

### Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

- Florence Nightingale; 2) India; 3) Tempura; 4) April; 5) One year

### Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

**1**

in 3 children in the UK, even prior to COVID-19, spent less time outside than maximum-security inmates.

**41**

percent of women and 9% of men admit to crying at work, according to one research study.

**74,477**

drug overdose deaths were recorded in the US in the 12 months ending in May 2025, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**110,000**

bees were removed from Rockwood Hospital in Cardiff, Wales in 2016 after honey started dripping from the ceiling.

**1**

**million**

US dollars is how much the 'DKNY Golden Delicious Million Dollar Fragrance Bottle' costs, last year rated the most expensive perfume in the world. It came in a bottle studded with 2,909 precious stones including 2,700 hand-cut white diamonds.

Source: Uberfacts



A deserted Bang Tao Beach after the recent crackdown by authorities on bars and restaurants. Photo by Gus Chesterton

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to [editor3@classactmedia.co.th](mailto:editor3@classactmedia.co.th)

## This week in history

**May 15, 1905**  
The city of Las Vegas is founded in Nevada, United States.

**May 16, 1568**  
Mary, Queen of Scots, flees to England.

**May 17, 1990**  
The General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) eliminates homo-

sexuality from the list of psychiatric diseases.

**May 18, 1804**  
Napoleon Bonaparte is proclaimed Emperor of the French by the French Senate.

**May 19, 1962**  
A birthday salute to U.S. President John F. Kennedy takes place at Madison Square Garden, New York



Las Vegas City. The highlight is Marilyn Monroe's rendition of 'Happy Birthday'.

**May 20, 1609**  
Shakespeare's sonnets are first published in London, perhaps illicitly, by the publisher Thomas Thorpe.

**May 21, 1904**  
The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) is founded in Paris.

Source: Wikipedia

# Trades & Services

 The Phuket News  
 @thephuketnews

## FLORIST



**SARA'S**  
— FLOWERS —  
PHUKET

Phuket's Best Florist  
Rated top florist 2025 by Google  
Google ★★★★★ 5.0

located in Robinson Lifestyle Chalong,  
delivery available across Phuket

sarasflowersphuket.com  
+66 084 063 3311

## BUSINESS SERVICES



**360° INT**  
EXPERIENCE MARKETING

**X**

SMARTER MARKETING  
& SALES

360-INT.COM



## HOME IMPROVEMENT



Since 2003 in Thailand  
**TCM ASIA Co., Ltd.**  
**Anti slip coating**  
for all kind of tiles

in matte, semi gloss and glossy finishing  
Invisible coating for inside and outside usage

**NO acid - Eco friendly - 10y warranty**

Contact: Engl, 0869439834 K Andy  
Contact: Thai, 0814154926 K Phorn  
Email: Office@tcm-asia.com

## HOME IMPROVEMENT



25 Jahre

**WOOD FLOOR PHUKET**

Solid and engineered wood floor  
Sand & refinish wood floor  
Solid wood deck

 /solidwoodfloorphuketthailand  
 Matt 081 271 2684 or Jessika 062 372 6624

## CORPORATE SERVICES



**VERTIGO**  
VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

WE MAKE YOU  
LOOK GOOD!

VERTIGO VIDEO  
PRODUCTIONS  
.COM

## HOME IMPROVEMENT



**Waterproofing & Crack Repair**

20 year WARRANTY

under yearly checkup plan...  
Pipe Inspection

Drone Survey

**TCM Asia Co., Ltd - quality services since 2003**  
office@tcm-asia.com 086-9439834

## HOME IMPROVEMENT



**Tile-IT**  
SMART TILES  
Tile Leveling System

PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE

Tel : 076 620168

www.tile-asia.com | letstalk@tile-asia.com

## MARINE SERVICES



**C&C MARINE**  

**MARINE ENGINEERING SPECIALISTS**

C&C Marine (Thailand) Co., Ltd.  
Tel: +66 076 272049 Fax: +66 076 273248  
Email: cholmes@candc-marine.com  
www.candc-marine.com  
16/2 Moo 4, Soi Koh Kaew 33, Thepkassatri Rd,  
Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83000, Thailand

## OTHER



Want your  
**BUSINESS**  
listed here?

Reserve  
your space **NOW!**

076 612 550  
sales@classactmedia.co.th

**WANT TO TALK TO PHUKET?**

The Phuket News Your Island - Your Paper

Новости Пхукета Твой остров - твоя газета

ข่าวภูเก็ต

**WINDOW ON PHUKET**

The map of PHUKET Карта Пхукета 普吉岛 地圖

Where to eat in PHUKET

LIVE 89.5 Phuket NEWS TV

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

**SAT 16 MAY**

**BUILDING FUTURES TOGETHER FOR INFINITY**

**PHAB 8**

**MAY 16 2026**

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT PHUKET TOWN

**DINE, DRINK, DANCE & MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

**TICKET OPTIONS**

**REGISTER HERE**

**PHAB 8 - Infinity Ball**

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! The Annual PHAB Gala Dinner is back – always an unforgettable night – and this year marks our 8<sup>th</sup> fundraising event with a very special theme: PHAB ∞ (Infinity). Infinity represents the endless impact that scholarship support has on our community. Every baht raised helps shape the future of young hospitality professionals, strengthens Phuket's tourism industry and creates opportunities that last a lifetime. Join us for an inspiring evening of great food, music and dancing, while helping us raise vital funds to change lives and build a more resilient future through education. We hope you can celebrate with us and be part of PHA. More info phab.phukethotelsassociation.com

**TUE 19 MAY**

**Patong Beach Rotary Club**

**UNITE FOR GOOD**

**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. 1<sup>st</sup> Tue each month - Fellowship dinner at different locations in Phuket, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

**THU 21 MAY**



**Skál Phuket - May Dinner**

We are delighted to invite you to our upcoming Skál Phuket networking evening, graciously hosted by Skálleague Bjorn Courage and his team at the InterContinental Phuket Resort, Kamala. This evening offers a unique opportunity to experience one of Phuket's newest and most exciting venues — Slipping Tiger. Networking drinks from 6pm followed by a curated selection of pass-around bites and canapés. Members B1300 - Non-Members B1700. Bookings - contact@skalphuket.org, more info at facebook.com/SkalPhuket

**FRI 22 MAY**

**JOINT CHAMBERS PHUKET MEMBERS BRIEFING ON "Phuket Hotel Industry Focus: Market Trends and Outlook 2025-2026"**

Friday, 22 May 2026 17.00 - 18.00 hrs.

SAii Laguna Phuket

**Free of Charge**

For AustCham members, partner Chambers members, and Australian Alumni Members and attendees who join Phuket Sundowners

**Joint Chambers Phuket Members Briefing**

Before Phuket Sundowners, the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce (AustCham Thailand) is pleased to invite members and guests to an exclusive Phuket briefing session on the topic "Phuket Hotel Industry Focus: Market Trends and Outlook 2025-2026". This briefing session provides a focused overview of Phuket's hotel market, combining key data with insights from industry operators. It will highlight current performance trends, demand drivers, and important factors influencing the market's direction. Meet JLL Speakers: Jon Cannon : Senior Vice President – Hotel Asset Management Thailand and Vietnam & Chanavudh Vanachavong : Senior Vice President and Head of Hotels Advisory, Thailand. Open Registration for briefing session at 16:45 hrs. SAii Laguna Phuket. Free of Charge for AustCham, Australian Alumni, Partner members & attendees who join Phuket Sundowners. Bookings office@austchamthailand.com

**FRI 22 MAY**

**JOINT CHAMBERS PHUKET SUNDOWNERS**

Friday, 22 May 2026 18.00 - 21.00 hrs.

SAii Laguna Phuket

750 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers members, and Australian Alumni Members, 1,400 THB for non-members

**Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners**

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, AMCHAM, BCCT, BeLuThai, CanCham Thailand, FTCC, GTCC, NTCC, NZTCC, Phuket Chamber of Commerce, SATCC, and TSCC, Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners. This event is scheduled to take place from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs., at SAii Laguna Phuket. and welcome our Corporate Sponsor, JLL. THB 750 for AustCham members, partner Chambers members, and Australian Alumni Members, THB 1,400 for non-members. Bookings office@austchamthailand.com

**FRI 5 JUNE**



**Grow Boating Phuket Evening - June 2026**

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the Phuket Boat Lagoon from 5pm. We are delighted to announce that the joint drinks sponsors for the evening will be the Thailand Boat Festival and Derani Yachts. Both based in the Phuket Boat Lagoon. See thailandboatfestival.com and derani-yachts.com There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar for all attendees and as always, all your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. Find us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket/

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

If you want to drink that is your business

If you want to stop we can help

**Daily Meetings**

Across the day and across Phuket

[www.aaphuket.org](http://www.aaphuket.org)

**CALL**

**081 895 4763**

**EMAIL**

[help@aaphuket.org](mailto:help@aaphuket.org)

**PROPERTY FOR SALE**



**Relocating Property must sell**

Urgent sale as owner relocating, Farang style house 300 meters from Heroines Monument, 2 bed, 2 bath, 1 office with safe, living/dining room, air con every room. Recently renovated. Partly furnished with oven, cook top, micro oven, washing machine. Undercover outdoor entertainment area. Plus 2,260 square metres land close to dream willage on new 4 lane high way, ideal for big villa or 4 two bed rentable units, 10 min to International School, 15 min to airport, in small development, no common fees. Both house and land are priced for urgent sale. Interested parties call English 093 629 4400 thai 093 649 3583.

**PROPERTY FOR RENT**



**3-Bedroom House for rent**

3-Bedroom House for Rent - Chao Fah Garden Home 3 (Koh Kaew, Phuket) Property Size: 272 m<sup>2</sup> (68 Talang Wah) Location: Secure gated community in Chao Fah Garden Home 3, Ko Kaew - conveniently located near Boat Lagoon and BISP Property Details: 3 bedrooms (all air-conditioned) 2 bathrooms (with hot water) Living Areas: Spacious indoor living room • Very large covered outdoor area with built-in cooking counter Peaceful garden view Appliances & Amenities: Fully equipped kitchen (dishwasher, washing machine, refrigerator, stove, toaster, microwave, coffee maker, etc.) Water tank and pump. 28,000.- anandajagota@yahoo.de, 089 872 8468

**Four Bedroom Pool Villa**

4 Bedroom | 5 Bathroom at Phuket Boat Lagoon Full furnished with Marina View. Size: Land Area appr. 450 sq.m. | Indoor Area 250 sq.m. Amp, Boat Lagoon, Phuket, pchaiyaruk@gmail.com, +66 81 409 1835



**Where to eat in PHUKET**

**Where to eat in PHUKET**

**May-June 2026 issue**

**Out now in over 600 locations**

[wheretoeat-phuket.com](http://wheretoeat-phuket.com)



### GROW BOATING PHUKET EVENING - MAY 2026

This month's Grow Boating Evening was held at the Bluu Asian Kitchen, Royal Phuket Marina on May 8. The drinks sponsor for the evening was the Thailand International Boat Show 2027, a luxury lifestyle event, which will take place at the award-winning Phuket Yacht Haven Marina on Jan 14-17, 2027, with over 6,000 visitors and more than 100 exhibitors expected to attend. See [www.thailandinternationalboatshow.com](http://www.thailandinternationalboatshow.com). There was a delicious buffet sponsored by the Bluu Asian Kitchen, Royal Phuket Marina for all attendees. Looking forward to next month's event, come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. Find out more at [facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket](https://facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket)





Martin. Photo: AFP

## Martin wins French MotoGP

### MOTO GP

JORGE MARTIN OVERTOOK MotoGP championship leader Marco Bezzecchi on the penultimate lap to win the French Grand Prix last Sunday (May 10), while Ai Ogura secured Japan's first podium finish for 14 years.

Italian Bezzecchi seemed to be heading for his fourth win of a season which is only five races old when Spaniard Martin nipped in front of him on the 26<sup>th</sup> lap of 27.

The Spaniard, world champion in 2024, stood up in his saddle with his arms aloft as he crossed the line to record his first victory of the season.

Ogura finished third to become the first Japanese rider to finish on a

MotoGP podium since Katsuyuki Nakasuga at the Valencia Grand Prix in 2012.

Martin's performance cut the lead on his Aprilia teammate Bezzecchi in the championship standings to a single point after he picked up additional points by winning the sprint race on Saturday. Ogura's first podium of his career after a gutsy ride moves the 25-year-old Trackhouse rider up to fifth place in the riders' standings.

Reigning world champion Marc Marquez of Ducati missed the main race after suffering a fractured foot during Saturday's sprint and underwent surgery in Madrid on Sunday that will also rule him out of this weekend's Catalan GP. *AFP*

# Jeeno defends LPGA title

### GOLF

AFP

World number two Jeeno Thitikul fired a three-under par 69 to hold off China's Yin Ruoning and win her second consecutive LPGA Mizuho Americas Open title by four strokes last Sunday (May 10).

The 23-year-old from Thailand made four birdies and a bogey to finish 72 holes on 13-under 275 at Mountain Ridge Country Club in West Caldwell, New Jersey.

"It means the world. It means a lot to me," Jeeno said. "I called my coach earlier in a practice round and everything went out of my head, which really helped."

Long-time Jeeno coach Kris Assawapimonporn's advice was to not push so hard and let go of her worries.

"Give the credit to him," she said. "Sometimes you don't try to fix things to be perfect. It helped me a lot to stay in my bubble, focus on what I can do."

"What I have to think about is my rhythm, what I can control."

Jeeno will try to capture her first major title at the US Women's Open next month at Riviera.

"It's always my dream, not goal but dream, to win a major," Jeeno said. "I don't want to put anything on my shoulders right now. I'll just play golf."

Jeeno captured her ninth career LPGA title and second of the year



Jeeno poses with the trophy. Photo: AFP

after taking the LPGA Thailand title in February.

That made her the fourth multi-time LPGA winner this season after top-ranked American Nelly Korda, South Korean Kim Hyo-joo and Australian Hannah Green.

Yin, 23, fired a 69 to finish second on 279, one stroke ahead of Mexico's Gaby Lopez and Americans Alison Lee and Jenny Bae, who matched her low round of the year with a 66.

Jeeno seized command with birdies on the second and third holes while France's Celine Boutier, second

by two when the day began, made bogeys on three of the first six holes to fall back.

Yin made a charge with a birdie at the second and four birdies in a row ending at the par-five eighth, but stumbled with a bogey at 11.

Jeeno made bogey at the par-five 13<sup>th</sup> after a poor chip, shrinking her lead to one stroke, but Yin made bogey at the par-three 16<sup>th</sup>.

Jeeno sank an eight-foot birdie putt at 16 and closed out the triumph with a long birdie putt at the 18<sup>th</sup> hole.

## Belarus Olympic ban lifted but Russia 'still suspended'

### OLYMPICS

THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPICS Committee (IOC) has lifted its ban on Belarusian athletes competing in the Olympics, although restrictions on Russian athletes remain in place.

Competitors from Russia and their allies Belarus had been banned from international competition following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, although some were permitted to compete as neutrals.

Russians will still only be able to compete in Olympic competition under the neutral banner, on an individual basis, and only if they have not actively supported the conflict.

The IOC executive board released a statement on May 7 saying that it "no longer recommends any restrictions on the participation of Belarusian athletes, including teams".

"The IOC reaffirms that athletes' participation in international competition should not be limited by the actions of their governments, including involvement in a war or conflict," it said.

This new policy should allow for a Belarusian delegation to compete at the Los Angeles Summer Olympics in 2028, when they will be present at the opening ceremony and included in the medals table.



Photo: AFP

Some Olympic sports, such as judo and swimming, have already lifted restrictions but Belarus are still unlikely to be able to compete as a team in track and field after World Athletics said in response to the IOC announcement that it was keeping its ban in place.

"Our council has made a clear decision that when there is tangible movement towards peace negotiations it can begin to review its decisions. We all hope this will be soon," said a World Athletics spokesperson.

At the last two Olympics in Paris 2024 and the Milan-Cortina Winter Games in February, Belarusians competed alongside Russians as "Individual Neutral Athletes", stripped of their national colours and in small numbers – there were 17 in Paris and seven in Italy.

And for the moment that will remain the case for Russian athletes wanting to take part in Los Angeles. *AFP*

## F1 engines to change again

### FORMULA ONE

FORMULA ONE BOSSES have responded to the criticism of this season's power unit modifications by agreeing to "further evolutionary changes" before a revamp for the 2027 season, the FIA announced last Friday (May 8).

Motorsport's governing body said that an agreement had been reached "in principle" between the 11 team bosses and five power unit manufacturers to restore the primacy of combustion power over electric power as early as 2027.

"The measures agreed in principle today for 2027 would see a nominal increase in internal combustion engine power by 50 kilowatts with a fuel-flow increase and a nominal reduction of the energy recovery system deployment power by 50 kilowatts," the FIA said.

This decision, which still has to be discussed in detail let alone approved, would in effect put an end to the 50/50 parity in hybrid engines – half electric, half combustion – introduced



Photo: AFP

this season by the FIA.

The new regulations have created exciting racing for viewers but have met with a varied reception from the drivers with four-time Max Verstappen describing it as "Formula E on steroids" and hinting he might step away from Formula One if it did not change.

The 50/50 system involves a complex management of the battery during overtakes and then during the necessary recharging of electrical energy when slowing down and braking.

This has triggered safety concerns, notably when Oliver Bearman had a dramatic crash at the Japan GP as he closed on Alpine's Franco Colapinto.

The significant difference in speed between the two cars as a result of their contrasting states of energy deployment led to Bearman taking evasive action and hitting the wall.

Last month, the FIA announced a new "adjusted" version of the regulation which came into play at the recent Miami GP.

AFP

# Gunners on brink of title

## FOOTBALL

**AFP**  
Arsenal are on the brink of a first Premier League title in 22 years after surviving a hugely contentious finale to beat West Ham 1-0 last Sunday (May 10).

Leandro Trossard's 83rd minute goal reestablished the Gunners' five-point lead over Manchester City.

But West Ham had an equaliser deep into stoppage time ruled out after a VAR review for a foul on goalkeeper David Raya before Callum Wilson fired home.

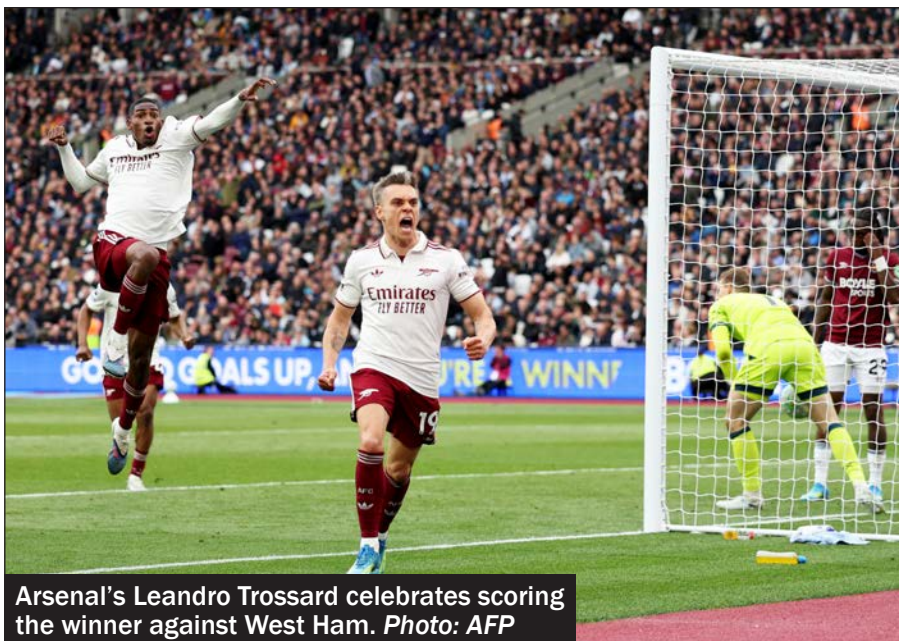
Victories over already-relegated Burnley and Crystal Palace will end Arsenal's long wait to be champions of England after the club sealed their place in the Champions League final against PSG with victory over Atletico Madrid on May 5.

But there was another huge moment to come as Raya flapped at a corner under pressure from Pablo and Wilson drilled in the rebound.

After a lengthy VAR review, the referee deemed the Portuguese forward had impeded the Arsenal goalkeeper.

City kept the pressure on the Gunners at the top with a 3-0 win over Brentford, thanks to goals from Jeremy Doku, Erling Haaland and Omar Marmoush.

Elsewhere, Liverpool were booed off after a 1-1 draw against struggling Chelsea and Manchester United



Arsenal's Leandro Trossard celebrates scoring the winner against West Ham. Photo: AFP

played out a 0-0 draw at Sunderland.

Bournemouth's 1-0 win over Fulham cut Liverpool's lead over the sixth-placed Cherries to four points with two games remaining while Chelsea can no longer mathematically finish in the top five and remain in ninth.

Aston Villa suffered a costly 2-2 draw at Burnley but extended their lead over Bournemouth to four points and six ahead of Brighton, who won 3-0 at Wolves, in the battle for Champions League qualification.

However, they face a tough end to the campaign with matches against Liverpool and Manchester City either side of the Europa League final against Freiburg in Istanbul.

Sixth-place could still secure a place in the Champions League if Villa finish fifth and win the Europa League final against Freiburg later this month.

Everton's bid for a place in Europe next season suffered after a 2-2 draw at Crystal Palace while Elliott Anderson struck late against his former club Newcastle to secure a 1-1 draw and also guarantee survival for Nottingham Forest.

Tottenham drew 1-1 at home to Leeds on Monday – a result that leaves their Premier League future hanging in the balance.

Spurs are now two points clear of 18th placed West Ham with just two games left this season.

# Busy schedule ahead for Thai footballers

## FOOTBALL

THAILAND'S SENIOR and U20 national football teams face a busy international calendar next month.

The senior squad, coached by Anthony Hudson, will take part in two FIFA International "A" matches during the June FIFA Day break.

They host Kuwait at BG Stadium on June 6 before travelling to Hangzhou to face China four days later.

Both fixtures will count towards the world rankings, where Thailand currently sit 93rd. Kuwait are 134th and China 94th.

Meanwhile, newly-appointed head coach Jakkrapan Panpee will lead the U20 team into a demanding schedule beginning with the ASEAN U20 Championship in Indonesia in June.

That campaign will be followed by the AFC U20 Asian Cup qualifying round, staged from Aug 31 to Sept 6.

Jakkrapan brings considerable experience to the role having worked across the



Jakkrapan Panpee. Photo: Bangkok Post

Thai League with clubs including Chonburi, Angthong, Panthong, Samut Prakan City, Uthai Thani and Rayong.

He also assisted Thailand's U17 side under Pipob On-mo, helping them reach the quarter-finals of the Asian Championship on home soil.

A former player with Chonburi and Thailand's U23 team, Jakkrapan is regarded as a coach with deep knowledge of youth development and the demands of the professional game.

Bangkok Post

# War Elephants get tough Asian Cup draw

## FOOTBALL

THAILAND HAVE BEEN handed a tough task after the draw for next year's AFC Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia pitted them against record winners Japan and defending champions Qatar.

The draw for the 2027 edition of the continent's showpiece event, which runs from Jan 7 to Feb 5, took place last Saturday (May 9) in Diriyah on the outskirts of Riyadh.

At the draw, the War Elephants were placed in Group F alongside Japan, Qatar and Indonesia, while hosts Saudi Arabia will meet Kuwait, Oman and Palestine in Group A.

For the third time running, the Asian Cup will feature 24 national teams, with 23 already confirmed. The sole remaining spot will go to either Lebanon or Yemen, who contest a play-off in Doha on June 4.

On Saturday, teams were divided into four pots of six in accordance with the latest FIFA ranking as of Apr 1. At 18th in the official standings, Japan are the lead country in Asia, with Iran



Photo: AFP

second (No. 21), South Korea third (No. 25) and Australia fourth (No. 27).

Allocated first position in Pot 1, Saudi Arabia are looking to add to the three titles they won in 1984, 1988 and 1996.

The opening match will be played on Jan 7 between Saudi Arabia and Palestine at the refurbished King Fahd Sports City Stadium, its 72,000 capacity making it the largest of the venues used.

Japan have lifted the trophy a record four times, although they have not won

the tournament since 2011. Qatar won the past two tournaments, in 2019 and 2023.

**Group A:** Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine; **Group B:** Uzbekistan, Bahrain, DPR Korea, Jordan; **Group C:** Islamic Republic of Iran, Syria, Kyrgyz Republic, China; **Group D:** Australia, Tajikistan, Iraq, Singapore; **Group E:** South Korea, UAE, Vietnam, Lebanon/Yemen; **Group F:** Japan, Qatar, Thailand, Indonesia.

– Additional reporting by The Phuket News

# Trio of big opening ceremonies confirmed for FIFA World Cup

## FOOTBALL

THE 2026 WORLD CUP will feature a trilogy of opening ceremonies, with each of the host countries – Mexico, the United States and Canada – getting its turn at a star-studded celebration.

Global music stars including Katy Perry, Future, Alanis Morissette, Michael Buble, J Balvin and Thai-born superstar Lisa will feature, world governing body FIFA confirmed last Friday (May 8).

Mexico will get the party started, 90 minutes before the kickoff of the tournament's first match between Mexico and South Africa on June 11 at Azteca Stadium, renamed Mexico City Stadium for the tournament.

The show will feature Colombian megstar J Balvin, multi-Grammy-award-winning Mexican rock band Mana, and pop star Alejandro Fernandez,



Katy Perry. Photo: AFP

Reyez and Nora Fatechi among the artists to be featured.

Later on the same day the United States open their campaign against Paraguay in Los Angeles, where it will be another massive sports crossover moment for pop megastar Perry – who headlined the Super Bowl halftime show in 2015.

She will be joined by rapper Future, Lisa of K-pop band Blackpink, Brazilian superstar Anitta, Rema and Tyla, with additional artists still to be announced.

"Starting with Mexico City and continuing the next days with Toronto and Los Angeles, these ceremonies will bring together music, culture and football in a way that reflects both the individuality of each nation and the unity that defines this tournament," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said.

"It is a powerful way to begin a truly global celebration." AFP

editor3@classactmedia.co.th

# Sport



**Arsenal have their sights on the title > p15**



Savannah in action at the Thailand National Age Group Swimming Championships in April. Photo: Supplied

## POOL STAR

### Savannah shines at national swim comp

#### SWIMMING

The Phuket News

Phuket has a new star in the pool after young Savannah Hamilton shone at a recent national swimming competition in Bangkok, bringing back home two medals in the process.

Phuket born and bred, Savannah competed at the Thailand National Age Group Swimming Championships in the Thai capital between Apr 3-8 where over 1,400 athletes from 186 national swim clubs battled it out in the quest to become a national age group champion.

The championships, held at the Sports Authority of Thailand swimming pool complex in Huamark, are acknowledged as the largest swimming competition in Thailand, serving as the key pathway for selecting swimmers to represent the country in international competition.

Participating in her first national age championships Savannah, a 10-year-old dual Thai and UK national, competed

in the 10-11 years age category and lit up the pool to bring home a gold medal in the 100 metre breaststroke with a time of 1 minute 22.35 seconds and a silver medal in the 50m breaststroke with a time of 37.45secs.

Savannah's medal haul in itself was impressive enough. However, equally significant was the fact that her achievements broke the dominance that Bangkok has held over the breaststroke event over the years. Furthermore, her time in the breaststroke 100m moved her into 2<sup>nd</sup> place on the all-time list for 10-year-old male or female athletes in official competition (as per UK rankings).

When asked how she felt about her success Savannah said: "It feels good. I know the girls in Bangkok now, and it is nice to know they aren't unbeatable."

#### PROMISE

Success hasn't come easily for Savannah. She took up swimming at the age of seven whilst at Kajonkiet school in Thalang. By the age of eight she had shown

enough promise and enjoyment of the sport that she moved to Kajonkiet Suksa School in Kathu in order to train and swim competitively.

Training took place straight after school Monday to Friday and often did not finish until 8pm, with weekend training consisting of two hours on a Saturday morning. "It was old school and tough," commented Savannah's father, Stuart. "By the time she finished training she would have to eat dinner in the car on the way home before heading straight to bed. To make things slightly more manageable we ended up moving to within a five-minute drive of the school. Balancing swimming, school work and finding time to just be a kid isn't easy."

In August 2025 Savannah was taken under the guidance of coach Torwai Sethsothorn, a single-time Olympian and a multiple-time SEA Games gold medalist who specialised in long-distance freestyle but also competed in backstroke and individual medley. Training under Torwai was equally tough with 6:30am

sessions before school three days a week in addition to five days a week after school and on the mornings of both weekend days. However, training was also made fun and always something to look forward to with the small, close knit group focused on the goal of establishing a presence from Phuket able to challenge the dominance and resources of the elite Bangkok swim teams.

#### RECORD BREAKER

During the school holidays Savannah trains in the UK with Portsmouth Northsea Swimming Club, who have produced former world championship gold medalists including Katy Sexton, who in 2003 became the first British swimmer to win a World Aquatics Championships title, and Gemma Spofforth, a 2009 World Champion and former world record holder in the 100m backstroke. These UK-based training sessions provide an added perspective to help Savannah's development that complement the training she undergoes in Phuket.

The training and hard work are clearly paying off. In December last year at the prestigious Surat Thani Championships Savannah broke the South Thailand records for both 50m and 100m breaststroke in the 10-year-old age category, with times of 39.65secs and 1min 26.18secs respectively. Not only did that prepare her sufficiently for the National Age Group Championships in Bangkok but it saw her shatter two records that had stood respectively for 18 years.

"Swimming is a sport showing rapid growth in Thailand and it's an exciting time," explained Stuart. "This is particularly true for the southern region who have a number of excellent swimmers emerging at different age group levels and who are now challenging the status quo of the dominance of Bangkok, which is ultimately incredibly healthy for the sport."

The message is clear: combine talent with hard work and you can achieve outstanding results in any discipline. Just look at Savannah for proof of that.

## Jinnaphat FC win Tekkim Cup football tournament

#### FOOTBALL

THE EVER-POPULAR Tekkim Cup football tournament was contested last month with Ranong-based Jinnaphat Football Club emerging as eventual winners.

The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the keenly-contested tournament was held at the 7 Soccer Club Stadium at the Wichit Arena and Sports Venue, running between Apr 18-28 with 24 teams

battling it out for the title of champions and for a share of the B240,000 cash prizes on offer.

In addition to the winners trophy Jinnaphat FC were awarded B150,000 for their final triumph, with B50,000 going to the beaten finalist, B30,000 to the third place team and B10,000 to the team that finished fourth.

Teams came from Phuket and surrounding provinces to contest the competition in senior and

Photo: Sports Association of Phuket



junior age categories, with six teams in the under 10 age group.

Each team was limited to seven players on the field

at any one time but with a rolling substitution format meaning players can swap at will throughout the games.

Thammawat Wongcharoenyos, Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) Committee Member and President of the Phuket Provincial Sports Association, presided over the closing ceremony, distributing trophies and cash prizes to the relevant teams on Apr 28.

Joining Mr Thammawat were: Deputy Mayor of

Phuket, Chalam Atthatham; Sumet Akrapong, Director of the SAT Phuket office; Yongyuth Unnuch, SAT Executive Committee member; and Wittaya Ketuchu, Director of Phuket Vocational College.

As part of his closing remarks Mr Thammawat praised all the teams involved for their efforts and numerous fine examples of sportsmanship displayed throughout the competition. He also reserved special praise for the fans who

supported in numbers and created a vibrant atmosphere for the duration of the tournament.

Mr Thammawat further explained that in addition to developing skills among players the annual competition aims to encourage youngsters to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle by playing sports to enhance fitness levels and desuade from getting involved with drugs and any form of illegal activities.

The Phuket News