

**TICON** **TPARK**

18 INDUSTRIAL ESTATES / PARKS

32 LOCATIONS MILLION TOTAL 4 SQ M

WAREHOUSES FOR RENT

FACTORIES FOR RENT

0-2679-6565 www.ticon.co.th

# Bangkok Post

EIA APPROVED

**HI-TECH KABIN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

Only IEAT Industrial Estate in Kabinburi  
Unlimited water supply

Tel. 0-2651-5575

Website: www.hitechkabin.co.th  
E-mail: info@hitechkabin.co.th

Read more news at [bangkokpost.com](http://bangkokpost.com)

THE NEWSPAPER YOU CAN TRUST

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2015 + 30 BAH

## NRSA sets 20-month reform goal

Reconciliation panel to mull amnesty plan

MANOP THIP-O-SOD

The National Reform Steering Assembly (NRSA) has unveiled a new "1-1-18" timeframe for its work on reform and is set to establish a committee to foster reconciliation.

NRSA deputy chairman Alongkorn Ponlaboot said that starting today the NRSA will spend a month drawing up regulations governing its meetings, and will also set up 11 committees to pursue reform initiated by the now-defunct National Reform Council (NRC).

The next month would be spent prioritising 37 reform proposals of the now-defunct NRC.

The last 18 months will be used to finalise action plans for reform, which will then be presented for cabinet consideration, Mr Alongkorn said.

The NRSA has replaced the NRC, which was dissolved on Sept 6.

The NRSA's 1-1-18 timeframe fits in with the government's "6-4-6-4" roadmap, which outlines the number of months Thailand needs to work toward elections.

After six months of charter drafting, four months are needed to prepare a public referendum, another six months to draft the new constitution's organic laws and the last four months for election preparations.

Mr Alongkorn said the 200-member steering assembly will meet tomorrow to gather members' opinions on ways to bring about national reconciliation.

The views will be forwarded to a joint meeting on Oct 28 of the "five rivers of power" — the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), the cabinet, the National Legislative Assembly, the

Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC), and the NRSA.

Mr Alongkorn said NRSA chairman Thinnaphan Nakhata and two of his deputies agreed it was necessary to set up a committee to foster reconciliation, which would be based on a report prepared by a NRC panel chaired by Anek Laothammat.

The report studied approaches to promoting unity and covered all aspects of seeking reconciliation, including providing compensation to affected parties, an amnesty and a truth-seeking process.

Mr Alongkorn admitted the NRSA's members, who come from opposing political parties and groups, may find it hard to accommodate their different views.

However, he was confident they will work well together as they share the same goal of achieving reconciliation.

The chairman wants the NRSA to be a symbol of unity, and the starting point of the process itself.

He insisted there would be no quotas reserved for the posts of chairman and deputy chairmen of NRSA committees handling the reform proposals by the NRC.

A screening committee will be set up to

Alongkorn said. Gen Ekkachai Srivilas, director of the King Prajadhipok's Institute's Office of Peace and Governance, agreed with the NRSA proposal to set up the reconciliation committee.

He said the report included diverse views from all stakeholders and should serve as a model to achieve reconciliation.

Gen Ekkachai added the proposed reconciliation committee should comprise members from all walks of life, and the committee should not be included in the new constitution.

Former Democrat Party MP Atthawit Suwanphakdi yesterday called on the NRSA to clarify how it planned to achieve reconciliation.

He also warned the steering assembly must not pursue national unity through granting an amnesty, particularly to those convicted in corruption cases.

Muan Maha Prachachon for Reforms Foundation secretary Akanat Promphan yesterday said the NRSA's primary role was to complete reform successfully.

It should avoid mixing reform with reconciliation, which would affect the reform process and cause public confusion.

The NRSA should let the NCPO handle reconciliation issues instead, Mr Akanat said.

Suriyasai Katasila, deputy dean of Rangsit University's Social Innovation College, yesterday said the joint meeting of the "five rivers" must prioritise efforts to achieve reform.

Some reform tasks were urgent and could be implemented swiftly through cabinet resolutions, while others must await legislation to support them, he said.

"Right now, we have only seen the government's 6-4-6-4 formula or the NRSA's latest 1-1-18 one, which are only timeframes. If details on reforms are not yet firmed up or prioritised, reforms cannot get off the ground," Mr Suriyasai said.

"In the end, we'll get only a constitution. The next government will take up reforms and we cannot expect much from it."



A tiger celebration

Worshippers help carry a tiger statue to join a procession of deities from the Chao Phor Sua (Tiger God) shrine near City Hall in Bangkok to mark the Chinese shrine's annual celebration of the Vegetarian Festival. WICHAN CHAROENKIATPAKUL

### SPECIAL REPORT

## Arpat uproar points to censorship flaws

Filmmakers frustrated as content in other media, such as TV and print, does not require state approval before release, writes Kong Rithdee

The hullabaloo around the Thai film *Arpat*, which features a misbehaving young monk, is the latest example of problems caused by what some people in the film industry perceive as flaws in the Film and Video Act 2008.

Some of the controversial aspects of the law, which was passed by the coup-appointed National Legislative Assembly, include the composition of the censor committees, and the measure that allows a film to be banned for national security reasons.

Also criticised were a conservative interpretation of the rules, and most importantly strict state control over film, compared to lighter regulation of other cheaper and more accessible media such as television and print.

The Film and Video Act 2008 replaced the old film law of 1930, which had been used before Thailand became a constitutional monarchy. It allowed the police to head the censor board, leading to much-criticised practices such as image blurring and arbitrary cutting.

The new act was passed after a campaign by film professionals following an internationally publicised incident in which the censor board ordered Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul to cut

four scenes from his film *Syndromes and a Century*.

The scenes show a monk playing the guitar, a monk playing with a radio-control toy, a group of doctors drinking whiskey, and a shot of a doctor's crotch.

But many filmmakers believe the new law, which introduced the rating system, still poses many problems.

"The law says the rating committee consists of four government officials and three representatives from the private sector, but what happens is that these three 'private representatives' are often those who are close to the bureaucrats, and they have to be approved by the bureaucrats first," said Manit Sriwanichpoom, whose film *Shakespeare Must Die* was banned in 2012. "That means the state still controls the thinking and the judgement."

The first film banned under the new film law was *Insect in the Backyard* in 2010. It tells the story of a transgender father and his two children, one of them a male prostitute.

According to Kajornsak Putthanupap, who chaired the committee that banned the film *Arpat* (which changed its name from *Arbat* to pacify censors), there are six rotating committees taking turns to watch films and give a rating.

He said *Arpat* was initially banned because it might "create unnecessary conflicts in society if the committee had let it pass".

But for filmmakers, such thinking is unfair treatment to film, given the fact that content in other media, such as magazines or television, does not require state approval before its release.

They also argue that going to the movies is a much more expensive and less accessible activity than watching television or surfing the web.

"Some committees rely purely on their imagination that if a film has been released, such and such a bad thing would happen," said Pantham Thongsang, a film producer who has campaigned for a fairer film law for the past 10 years. "It's like you forbid someone from leaving the house because you imagine he might go out and kill someone."

While Mr Kajornsak insists he only performed his duty by banning *Arpat*, film professionals have long objected to Section 29 in the act that allows banning of a film on ground that it "may disrupt national security".

The filmmakers argue it is unnecessary because the rating system alone should provide a fair measure of control, and

there are other laws where the jurisdiction already covers any possible legal breaches.

Mr Pantham cited the anti-obscenity law, which can be used to prosecute in relation to pornographic materials, or the anti-defamation law which can take action against libellous content, and argued there was no need to show prejudice against a film by demanding pre-release scrutiny.

"Banning a film is like handing out a death sentence before a crime is even committed," he said.

Mr Manit added: "The initial draft of the film law did away with the ban, but the Council of State, which favoured conservative thinking, put it back in."

"It shows the state does not respect the freedom of the citizens. The law implies that we're not intellectually equipped to make a judgement by ourselves."

There are other finer points that demonstrate the delicate balance between artistic freedom and state control, such as taste, experience and interpretation, Mr Pantham said.

"In the case of *Arpat*, the committee thought it could destroy Buddhism. But for others, the film may be interpreted as a promotion of the religion," he said. "The audience should have the right to judge it by themselves."

THAILAND 2015 Discover Thailand

**NAGA FIREBALLS IN NONG KHAI**

24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Amphoe Mueang Nong Khai Province

www.tourismthailand.org 1672 Contact Center

PATEK PHILIPPE GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

Patek Philippe Boutique at TKI

Siam Paragon • Main Floor Room M37 • Bangkok  
Tel: (662) 129 4884

Annual Calendar Ref. 5205G

# Bees keep hungry jumbos at bay

Fencing scheme with a sting helps protect farmers' crops, writes Apinya Wipatayotin in Loei

**B**eehives are helping to protect farms in Phu Luang Wildlife Sanctuary in Loei's Phu Rua district by keeping wild elephants away from rice crops, bringing relief to locals who have attempted to fend off elephant incursions for years with little success.

The project is being implemented by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, which reports a 74% success rate, better than that for the alternatives such as electric fences.

Jirachai Arkajag, chief of Phu Luang Wildlife Research Station, said he came across the beehive-fence idea on the internet last year.

He said Kenya has put up beehive fences around farms to prevent intrusions by wild elephants for several years. The fences worked there, so he decided to try out the idea here.

"The key message of the beehive fence project is it can prevent crop losses and help farmers save money. We can't ask them to help protect the elephants if their stomachs are empty," he said.

Referring to one seven-rai demonstration site, he said 25 beehive boxes are hung with ropes between fence poles which surround a protected area.

Each box contains around 20,000 bees and the boxes automatically open if elephants try to break the rope to get to the crops.

The beehive fence delights the paddy field owner, Pimpa Kammanit, 70, who has spent over a decade trying to protect his rice farms from wild elephants, with little success.

Previous measures such as setting off fire crackers and putting up an electric fence had failed to prevent the elephants from destroying his crops.

Mr Pimpa said his yields once fell to as little as 10% as the elephants ate the rest.

However, after the department invited him to join the beehive fence project, erected over a demonstration site, his fortunes started to improve.

Mr Pimpa said elephants have stayed away since the beehive boxes were erected at his farm in July.

As a bonus, he is selling honey produced

by the bees as a sideline venture.

According to a Phu Luang Wildlife Sanctuary study, confrontations between villagers and the wild elephants go back to 1998, as habitats for the elephants started to decline.

The study found 50 elephants were living in the area in 1998.

That has grown to 97 elephants today, spread over the sanctuary's 987-square kilometre area, which is also home to up to 58 villages.

Between January to September, elephants were reported to have made 46 incursions to farmland to eat paddy fields, cassava and maize crops.

The department has introduced beehive fencing to six areas in the district, and reports a 74% success rate in stopping elephants' intrusions.

Although the cost of the investment is high at 3,500 baht a box, a spin-off benefit is 50 beehive boxes can produce 300 kilograms of honey which sells for 150-500 baht per kilogramme.

The farmers can collect the honey every three weeks, said Mr Jirachai.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn paid a visit to the Phu Rua National Park in February to learn about the project.

Meanwhile, Chainarong Doodderm, chief of Phu Luang Wildlife Sanctuary, said livestock kept by local farmers is pushing elephants out of the forest.

He said over 3,000 cows and buffaloes compete with elephants for food and water.

Forest officials have been working with farmers to limit livestock in the forest zone.

While they want to keep elephants away from farmers' crops, they are also trying to preserve their habitats in the sanctuary.

Adisorn Nuchdamrong, the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation department's deputy chief, said staff want to reduce conflicts between locals and elephants, especially in the forests spanning five provinces in the eastern part of Thailand that are home to 300 wild elephants.

The department plans to introduce the beehive fence project to the forest complex to prevent elephant intrusions and increase incomes for locals selling honey.



## Paying homage

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn pays homage to the statue of the late Supreme Patriarch at the Phaholpolpayuhasena Hospital in Kanchanaburi. The princess headed a three-day tour of the province for members of the Prince Mahidol Award Committee from the Prince Mahidol Award Foundation. PIYARACH CHONGCHAROEN

# Locals re-tested near mine

## Govt panel reviews healthcheck results

POST REPORTERS

Experts have carried out a new health check on villagers living near a controversial gold mine to re-examine their exposure to heavy metals, after a previous study found hundreds of them had high levels of toxic substances in their blood.

Among the affected villagers are 70 children who had tested positive for harmful levels of the substances, mainly arsenic and manganese. This finding prompted the government to investigate the health problem, which villagers blame on Akara Resources Plc's mining activities on the order of Phichit, Phitsanulok

and Phetchabun provinces in northern Thailand.

Experts had to examine the health of residents in the area a second time to make sure a government panel looking into the problem had "a correct and precise result" from the tests, said Smith Tungkhasamit, lecturer of Rangsit University's College of Social Innovation.

The panel, which is made up of state officials, soldiers, scholars and representatives of villagers and the company, is gathering information from the three provinces to address the problem.

"We expect to know the results in the next one or two months," Mr Smith said yesterday.

In November last year, his university and the Central Institute of Forensic Science collected blood samples from 730 villagers who live near the gold mine in Phichit, and found more than half of them

had high levels of arsenic and manganese in their blood.

The results sparked worry among residents and when the experts conducted the latest check-up over the weekend, a large crowd of villagers, queued up for testing.

More than 250 villagers turned up on the first day of health tests. The experts estimated that number would have risen to 600 at the end of their check-up period in tambon Thai Dong in Phetchabun's Wang Pong yesterday.

Mali Suwan, a resident in tambon Khao Chet Luk in Phichit's Thap Khlo district, yesterday took her family members including her two-year-old son for the check-up. Her son had been earlier found to have high levels of manganese in his body.

Mr Smith said children with high levels of manganese and arsenic in their system need immediate treatment to prevent a

serious impact on their growth and their risk of suffering from cancer and the neurological disease, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

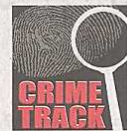
Ms Mali said her family did not know where the heavy metal exposure came from but geographically "my house is just about 300 metres away from the gold mine", she said.

Akara has insisted it correctly followed mining regulations and never discharged any toxic substances into the environment.

The company, a 48%-owned subsidiary of Australia-based Kingsgate Consolidated Ltd, owns the Chatree mining complex in the three provinces.

A source from Akara said yesterday the company had not been informed about blood tests for villagers living nearby the gold mining site in Phichit province, which was considered to be breaching the agreement of the panel.

# Cops seize hundreds of guns



Week-long crackdown in nine Central provinces also turns up 100 bombs, and 264 suspects on warrants, writes Wassayos Ngamkham

**T**he seizure of 382 guns, 100 bombs and a huge haul of illicit drugs in Central region provinces surrounding Bangkok during a week-long crime suppression drive has shocked police.

Police said they had sharpened their focus on ways to tackle illegal weapons in particular, which they say are fuelling a surge of crimes in the area that could also spill over into the capital.

Police said violent crimes were frequent, especially in Samut Prakan and Ayutthaya, two of the nine central provinces where police launched their seven-day operation to crack down on crime from Oct 6 to Oct 12.

The large number of firearms was fuelling the crimes which often involve youngsters, teen gangs and drugs.

Provincial Police Region 1 chief Chaiwat Ketworachai, who led the operation, said he could not believe police were able to uncover so many weapons, and in an area so close to Bangkok.

"Weapons can fuel other crimes," he said. "That's why we need an urgent change to our crime prevention approach."

The 382 guns, mostly unregistered, were confiscated when officers from the Provincial Police Region 1 raided target areas under their supervision in Samut Prakan, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Ayutthaya, Ang Thong, Saraburi, Singburi, Lop Buri and Chai Nat provinces.

They also seized more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition and 100 bombs, along with illegal drugs including 200,000 speed pills and more than 3,000 grammes of crystal

methamphetamine, the officers said.

In more good news for their anti-crime sweep, police also arrested 264 suspects who were accused of being involved in a range of crimes from robberies to murder.

The most recent high-profile crime occurred in Pathum Thani in May this year when a football player of Rangsit University was shot dead by attackers who allegedly mistook him for a man they had a brawl with.

"Murders and other assaults frequently occur because offenders, mostly teenagers, carry guns in public," Pol Lt Gen Chaiwat said.

One case that involved the weapons was in Samut Prakan's Muang district where a 19-year-old man was wounded by a group of young robbers on Oct 11.

The attack happened in the early hours as Warawut Thammawat was walking along Soi Witthayu Kanbin in tambon Bang Pu.

He was surrounded by five teenagers riding three motorcycles.

The group demanded money and when Mr Warawut said that he did not have any, one pulled out a knife and slashed his arm.

They made off with 60 baht, police said. Police arrested the gang the same day.

Checking the suspects' criminal records, the officers found they had been involved in a similar robbery in front of Samut Prakan Technical College.

Local villagers also complained the gang

was so aggressive they extorted money from foreign workers in the province.

The suspects were accused of threatening to injure the victims and then taking their money or property, police said.

Other cases have also caused grave concerns in Samut Prakan.

Another gang of motorcycle riders robbed people of their mobile phones, golden necklaces and Buddhist amulets, police said.

The officers eventually arrested five young suspects, three males and two females, after a raid on their hideout in Chachoengsao.

An investigation into the suspects' behaviour found they used motorcycles to snatch assets from pedestrians.

Their targets were mostly women who wore necklaces and carried bags.

The stolen valuables were later sold at gold and mobile phone shops in Chachoengsao, the officers said.

Other robberies also occurred in Ayutthaya, which has more than 2,000 factories, and is a transit point of drugs destined for Bangkok, Pol Lt Gen Chaiwat said.

There are a large number of vocational students in this province.

In some cases, they were also believed to use guns to threaten victims, Pol Lt Gen Chaiwat said.

Contact Crime Track: crimetrack@bangkokpost.co.th



Chaiwat: Seeking innovative methods

THE 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# OCEAN MARINA PATTAYA BOAT SHOW

26-29 NOVEMBER 2015

AT OCEAN MARINA YACHT CLUB, PATTAYA

EXPERIENCE OCEAN EMERALD BY NORMAN FOSTER

OCEANMARINAPATTAYABOATSHOW.COM

YACHTS | BOATS | LUXURY CARS | PROPERTIES | JEWELLERY | LUXURY TOYS | FASHION | BEVERAGES | HOTELS | RECREATIONS

## WELFARE

# Activists urge ID card help for homeless

PENCHAN CHAROENSUTHIPAN

The government should relax the rules on identity card applications to allow homeless people to regain access to state services, says the Issarachon Foundation.

A non-governmental organisation campaigning for better quality of life for the homeless, the foundation says many of the homeless people it meets lack ID cards.

Without these cards, the homeless are unable to receive medical welfare and other essential services to help them get back on their feet, said Nathi Sonwari, the foundation's secretary-general.

Many homeless people have reasons preventing them from returning to their families and home towns, yet returning to their home town is necessary if they are to apply for new cards.

If the the Department of Provincial Administration, which issues cards nationwide, could relax the rules and simplify the application process, homeless people could regain their cards and access to essential services, Mr Nathi said.

For example, officials could verify applicants' identities by just checking their personal information, photos and fingerprints in a computer database and reissue them

with new cards, he suggested.

Mr Nathi said this would strengthen the government's efforts to help homeless people.

The foundation praised the government's success in helping the homeless, particularly after the National Legislative Assembly late last year passed legislation for the protection of homeless people.

Mr Nathi also applauded the state's creation of *Ban Mit Mai Tri*, or friendly homes, as homeless shelters in many provinces.

But he said the government must make sure the shelters become real homes rather than detention centres for the homeless.