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AUG in high gear as the end nears



Laos beat Thailand to win their first ever Taekwondo gold medal.



(Above) Thailand's women's team beat Malaysia for the gold medal win.

Thailand leads strongly in golf



Leading on the first day, Mohammed Noor Hakimi Che Ya dropped down the leaderboard after falling to 11 over par on the second day.

Golf continued at Maejo Golf Club with Thailand leading in play for both men and women's singles after three days of play.

Aunchisa Utama of Thailand is on top of the leaderboard after leading the women for the second day running Malaysian Mohammed Noor Hakimi Che Ya, who led strongly on the first day of play dropped down the board to number 8. Thailand's Woraphon Numar of Thailand took over the lead on the second day with 5 over par and continued to lead yesterday.

Story by Warunyoo Sonnoi
Photo by Romtham Srisukho

The 15th AUG continues to roll along like a juggernaut as more and more events saw medal rounds yesterday. Athletes kicked up their games a notch as the end draws near with just two more days of sports and today seeing the final rounds in nearly all remaining sports except football which holds its medal rounds on the 23rd. So keep your schedule on hand and keep your eye on the ball!

Indonesia played Thailand in one of the most exciting Sepak Takraw matches of the Games so far.



Women's beach volleyball saw Thailand beat Malaysia to go on to an all-Thailand gold medal round.

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Laos National University Vice President plans for the future

Prof. Dr. Somsri Gnophanxay, Vice President of the National University of Lao PDR spoke to AUG Sports Today and said the he has come to Thailand's games to study their preparations and organization in order to get Laos ready for the 16th AUG in the next two years.

He noted that they need to develop the University's human resources in Physical Education. Laos has been developing their sports programs for more than 35 years. In 2009 Laos hosted the 25th South East Asian Games or SEA Games and they had organized the games quite well and earned Laos the admiration of the international community for their planning, style and sports techniques in the games. This experience is our strength for the next AUG.

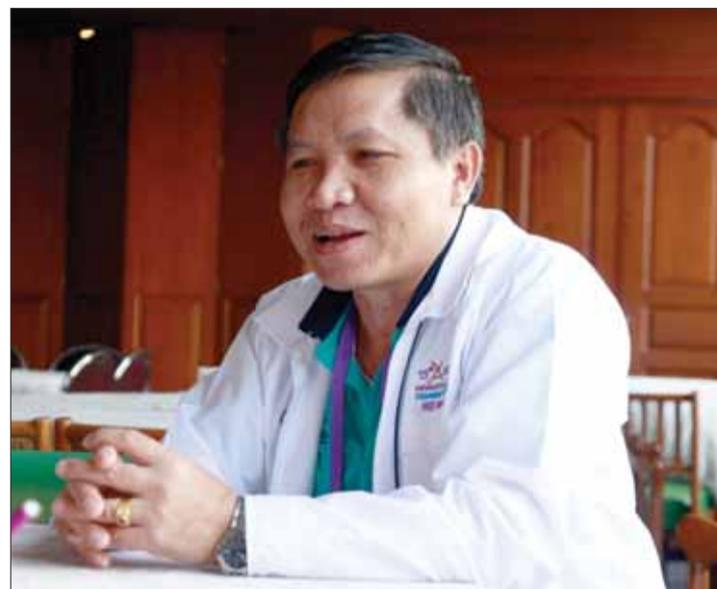
They have been preparing the infrastructure and stadiums from the SEA Games last year and this will help us to host the next games. By working together with the Thai Education Ministry and the Committee on Sports Cooperation Laos will be able to present the next games efficiently.

The National University proposed hosting the games to the government and the office of the Prime Minister, and the proposal was agreed upon, and will be held January 2012.

Laos sent him to Thailand to observe the games and the Closing Ceremony and to take back the flag of the hosting country at the end of the games to be taken back to Vientiane for display at the next Games.

In terms of the number of sports in competition, the number of athletes and the budget the AUG will be smaller than the SEA Games but the University feels it's important to develop sports in schools and to promote it from primary school on up and that by hosting the Games Lao youth will be inspired to take up more sports.

The Vice President commented that Thailand has had experience hosting the big events and that he wants to learn from that to improve the 16th AUG and so Laos



Prof. Dr. Somsri Gnophanxay, Vice President of the National University of Lao PDR discusses Laos hosting the next AUG in 2012.

has sent administrators and observers to study the strengths and weaknesses of the games so as to make the event run more smoothly in Laos.

He added that Laos doesn't have high expectations for medals in these games but that the first step is to send their athletes to improve themselves. He noted that he expected the AUG will improve tourism to the country and that the city will be beautified for the event. Temples and buildings will be spruced up as Vientiane is rich in cultural history.

He added that outside of Vientiane there is much natural beauty, especially Vang Vieng which is a popular tourist destination in Laos. Further travels can take the visitors to the former capital of Luang Prabang to visit the ancient city, with its unspoiled nature and beautiful views.

He concluded asking for all athletes to continue the friendships they have made at these Games, and that the Games are not about winning or losing but a learning experience and a lesson on how to improve oneself.

He focused on the unity and friendship theme of these Games, "The motto expresses the ASEAN community are in one family and one world so we should tighten

the relationships and friendships for the future of our countries and to understand each other better."

He concluded by saying that "When these Games are finished we will join hands together, sing together and create closer friendships with strength and harmony. This world is different from that of wars and enemies, sports makes friends."

He said he was quite confident about the ASEAN Integration in 2015 among the 11 nations of ASEAN and that the world is changing in terms of social environment and that ASEAN must adjust itself to cooperate and be modern or "we will lose."

Story by Wipapan Na-nan,
Chusawat Tunvanich

Photos by Kritdanun Phromkuntha



What's cooking!

Today is action packed as we head into the final days of the ASEAN University Games seeing 12 sports awarding 52 gold medals.

Maejo University will see **Track and Field** gear up for action with 11 medals up for grabs beginning at 2 p.m. while **Swimming** starts at 3 p.m. and will be handing out 10 gold medals at the end of the day. **Sepak Takraw** also starts at 3 p.m. and will see one gold medal to the winners in what is sure to be an exciting event. **Men's Vol-**

leyball action starts at 4 p.m. and also sees 1 gold medal up for grabs.

Chiang Mai University also sees a very busy day with the action starting at 10 a.m. and again at 2 p.m. when **Table Tennis** competes for 4 gold medals. **Badminton** also sees competition start at 10 a.m. where 5 gold medals will be up for grabs. **Beach Volleyball** goes for the gold at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

North Chiang Mai University sees action start at 3 p.m. when

Taekwondo fighters vie for 6 gold medals.

The 700 Years Sports Complex sees **Tennis** start at 10 a.m., **Futsal** for 1 gold medal at 3 p.m. and **Basketball** for 2 gold medals at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Payap University is hosting the **Pencak Silat** matches all day, starting at 9 a.m. and running all day as 13 golds are awarded at 10 p.m.

There is only one preliminary round today, in **Golf**, at the Maejo Golf Club and Resort at 11 a.m.

Track and Field had an action packed day on Monday

Due to the high number of track and field events held on Monday, December 20 with a total of 17 in all with 12 gold medals awarded, a one day delay was necessary in order to get full coverage of the events in the newspaper.

The first gold medal of the day was for the discus throw and was won by Rewadee Sooksawat of Thailand with a throw of 42.01 meters. The women's 10,000 meters was won by Miss. Triyaningsih of Singapore in 35:30:80 minutes to earn the gold. The gold medal winner said "The weather was hot when we began at 11 o'clock, but I'm glad it went well."

The afternoon's competitions were crowded and loud with sport fans cheering on their teams for the remaining 10 gold medals.

Starting at 2.30 p.m. Maria Natalia Londa of Indonesia took the gold in the Women's Triple Jump-women, recording a jump of 13.38 meters. Agustina Bawele won the gold medal in the Women's 100 m Hurdles, adding an additional gold medal to



Jamrat Rittidet added to Thailand's gold tally with his win in the 100 meter Hurdles.



Agustina Bawele earned a gold for her time of 14.29 seconds in the Women's 100m Hurdles.

Indonesia's growing collection with a time of 14.29 seconds.

The next event saw Jamrat Rittidet of Thailand win the gold in the 100 m Men's Hurdles with a time of 13.88 seconds and Malaysia took the gold in Men's

Shot Put when Adi Aliffudin Hussin recorded 16.26 meters.

Next up saw Tassaporn Wannakit of Thailand win the gold for the Women's 200m, recording a win in 24.25 seconds while the Men's 200 m gold also

went to the hosts, with Wattana Deewong winning in 21.92 seconds.

Pramote Pumurai of Thailand took the gold for his 2.06 m high jump and Ganthimathi Kumarasamy of Malaysia won

the gold in the Women's 800 m with her time of 2.13 minutes while Mohd Jironi Riduan of Malaysia took the gold in the Men's 800 m with a time of 1:52:29 minutes.

The final event was the 3,000 m Steeplechase for men where Sanchai Namket of Thailand won the gold with his time of 9:25:70.

Hosts Thailand took the most gold medals on Monday with 6 medals awarded and an additional 4 silver medals. Indonesia added to their tally with 3 gold medals, 2 silver and 2 bronze while Malaysia took home 3 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronze. Vietnam won 2 silver, Singapore 1 silver and 3 bronze while the Philippines and Laos earned 1 silver each.

Story by Jiratti Buranasin
Photo by Sulakana Tiannoi,
Atitaya Karnjanatarn, Jiratti Buranasin



Zakaria Malik of Indonesia lands during the long jump competition.



Jenjira Pummak of Thailand took the silver in the Women's Triple Jump.



Rewadee Sooksawat of Thailand took home the gold in the discus throw with a throw of 42.01 meters.



Jesson Ramon of the Philippines prepares for his shot put throw, the win was recorded by Malaysian.



Sanchai Namket ran the Steeplechase in 9:25:70 to take home another gold for Thailand.

Footballers move on to the final rounds



Laos beat Vietnam to move onto the final round to play Thailand.

Montfort College hosted yesterday's match between Cambodia in Group A and Singapore in Group B, Singapore beat Cambodia 2 goals to 1 and will move on to play Malaysia on December 23.

The first half of the match saw both teams play hard and kept the game scoreless until Singapore received a free kick in the penalty area and scored the first and only goal of the first half.

Singapore gained the upper hand in the second half, scoring their second goal in the 73rd minute but Cambodia managed a goal at the 84th minute but couldn't pull off another one in time to save the game so that Singapore won the game 2-1.

Princes Royal College hosted the semi final match between Thailand and Myanmar in the afternoon with Thailand producing the first goal in the 10th minute and the second 8 minutes later. The scoring continued to the cheers of the crowd when Thailand produced a third goal in

the 34th minute. The second half continued with yet another score in the 48th minute, leaving Thailand to take the match 4-0.

Dr. JuttaTingsabhat, the National football team coach, said it was a good game for the team, they played well together, "We aim to defend our championship in the next match and we will the next match, which will be the final round to win the gold medal."

Laos met Vietnam in the second match with Laos producing the first goal in the 24th minute. Vietnam equalized the score in the 49th minute of the second half but Laos scored the victory goal in the 58th minute with a penalty kick allowing Laos to win the game 2-1.

Myanmar will play Vietnam at Maejo University on December 23 for the bronze at 10 a.m. while Laos will play Thailand for the gold medal at 2 p.m.

Story by Supawan Unokdaeng, Supakran Ruangdate, Paranut Anui
Photo by Saran Dolpipatpong, Anirut Uawithya

Record breaking day in the pool



Kevin Yeap Soon Choy of Malaysia took the gold in the Men's 400 m freestyle.

Yesterday morning saw qualifiers take to the pool for the preliminary rounds for both Men and Women's in the Butterfly 50 m, Backstroke 100 m, Freestyle 400 m relay, and Backstroke 200 m and the Men competing also in the Freestyle 400 m.

Feelings ran high as excited spectators cheered on their favorites in the early rounds. Chui Lai Kwan of Singapore moved on in the Backstroke 100 m after a very close race with Thailand's Parichat Srinorakutr, the Philippines and Thailand also saw other qualifiers move on to the final rounds in the afternoon.

The pool at Maejo University saw 10 gold medals up for grabs and several records ultimately broken. Indonesia and Malaysia topped the list with 4 gold medals each. Indonesian Mochamad Idham Dasuki took the gold in the men's 200 m breaststroke with a University Games record breaking time of 02:20.03. Indonesian Glenn Victor Susanto also broke the record in the Men's 50 m butterfly with a time of 00:24.65 and

took a second gold in the Men's 100 m backstroke. The Men's 4x 100 m Freestyle relay saw Indonesia take their 4th gold in another record breaking event, with a time of 03:33.82.

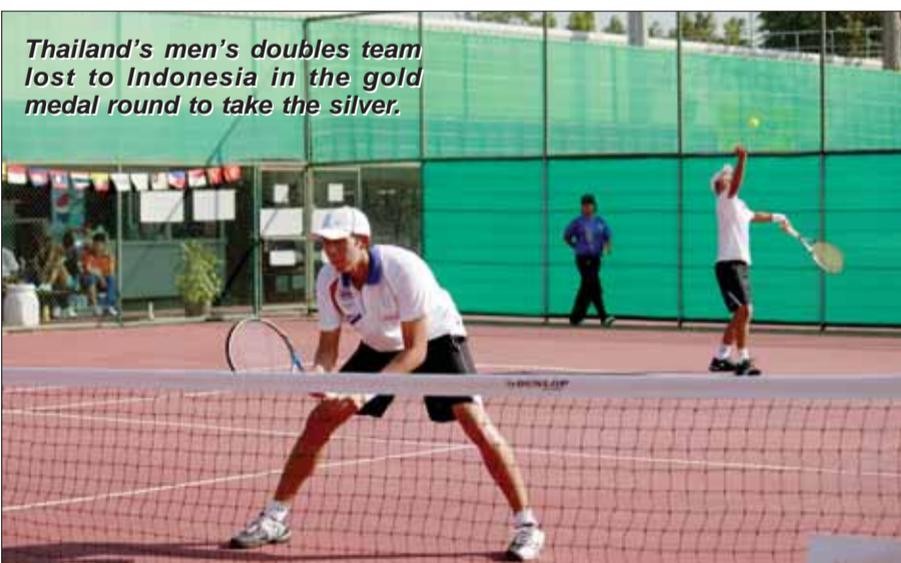
Malaysian swimmers took the gold in the Women's 400 m freestyle with Khoo Cai Lin winning and their second gold in the Men's 400 m freestyle when Kevin Yeap Soon Choy from Malaysia won, the Women's 4 x 100 m freestyle relay also saw the Malaysians turn in a record breaking win with a time of 04:02.11.

One more gold went to host Thailand when Natnaa Prommuenwai won the Women's 50 m butterfly and Denjyle Cordero of the Philippines took the new record in the Women's 200 m breaststroke with a time of 02:40.82.

The pool saw 7 records broken from the last games hosted in Malaysia in 2008.

Story by Sathinee Chirakal, Wirongrorn Thongprakob
Photo by Wongsakorn Nakngoen

Tennis gold medal rounds continue



Thailand's men's doubles team lost to Indonesia in the gold medal round to take the silver.

Hosts Thailand took two gold medals out of the three up for grabs in yesterday's gold medal rounds amid the hot weather and bright sunshine.

Men's Doubles for the semi-final round saw Indonesians Adiya Harry Sosongko and Sunu Wahyu Trijatri beat Thailand in two sets 6:3, 6:3, entering into the final round against Thai doubles team Gittiboon Prahmanee and Peerakiat Siriluethaiwattana. In a hard fought match, the Indonesians took the gold medal in three sets, 6-7(5), 6-2, 10-3.

The women's doubles saw the Thai team, Chiraya Sriphom and Suchanun Viratprasert take the gold medal against Singapore in two sets, 6:1, 6:0.

The mixed doubles was up next with Thailand's

Nudnida Luangnam and Warut Korkiatthaworn winning the gold from Indonesia in two sets, 7-5, 6-0.

Men's singles saw Thailand's Peerakiat Siriluethaiwattana beat Indonesia in the semi-final round to move on to the final round to play Sunu Wahyu Trijatri of Indonesia. The women's singles is an all-Thai event where Achiraya Sriphom will meet Nudnida Luangnam.

The final for men's and women's singles will be today at 10 a.m. at the 700 Years Sports Complex.

Story by Chutimon Saowapha
Photo by Isra Hongkam

Women's volleyball gold goes to Thailand



The Thai women's volleyball team (in blue) took the gold medal yesterday against Malaysia.

Yesterday saw the Women's Volleyball final match between Thailand and Malaysia at 4 p.m. at Maejo University Gymnasium. Thailand beat Malaysia handily with the first set seeing Malaysia fall to Thailand

25:12, the second set Thailand again won easily 25:10 and the third set clinched the gold for the home team at 25:13.

Story by Parinda Thanapalin
Photos by Atitaya Kanjanatharn

Semi-finals in Women's Beach volleyball brings an All Thailand final



Indonesian men's Team 2 beat Laos Team 1 in two sets.

Chiang Mai University hosted the Beach Volleyball competitions yesterday with the women of Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia playing in the afternoon semi-final rounds.

The morning started with the men taking to the sand when Malaysia Team 1 took on Thailand Team 2. Malaysia beat Thailand 2-0. Timor Leste and Lao 2 started at 11 a.m. with Timor Leste beating Laos in two sets. The afternoon saw Group B, Thailand Team 1 take on Singapore with Thailand winning easily over Singapore in 2 sets.

The last match for the men yesterday saw Indonesia Team 2 win over Laos Team 1 in two sets.

The Women's Beach Volleyball semi-finals took place in the afternoon and saw Vietnam take on Thailand Team 2, losing in two straight sets, pushing Thailand into the final round today. Thailand Team 1 was in the other semi-final match against Indonesia and won handily in two sets, forcing an all Thailand gold medal match today.

Story by Nuttaporn Inkeaw
Photo by Rangsiman Sittipong

Pencak silat fighters take to the mat



Vietnam in the blue beat the Thai fighter yesterday.

Pencak Silat saw 11 matches at Payap University yesterday with the men fighting, and Vietnam winning against Laos 5-0, the next match saw Vietnam in a neck to neck match with Indonesia but Vietnam remained victorious 3-2. Indonesia fought off Malaysia in the next match to win easily 5-0. Next up saw Vietnam beat Thailand 3-2. Laos took on Indonesia in the next match which Indonesia won easily 5-0.

Indonesia beat Malaysia easily 5-0. Laos Team 2 fought Thailand with Laos winning easily 5-0. The next match saw Thailand win on a technical knockout against

Vietnam. Vietnam beat Malaysia easily 5-0 and the next match saw them beat Timor Leste also 5-0. The final match saw Thailand beat Indonesia easily 5-0.

Tunggal single men saw Nguyen Traclinh of Vietnam taking the gold, the Tunggal single women's gold also went to Vietnam Nguyen Thi Thanh Mo. The men's doubles, or Ganda, went to Malaysia. The Women's team gold, or Regu went to Vietnam.

Story by Kanokwan Chantorn, Sawaraj Mahawansu
Photos by Kanokrut Sasiroj

Sepak Takraw battles rages on



Indonesia blocks Lao to win the game.

Thailand and Indonesia continued to battle it out on the Sepak Takraw court yesterday as the team competition raged on.

The first match saw the Indonesians and the Thais scoring quickly in the first set, Thailand dominated the second set to take the game two straight sets. Indonesians continued their streak to win the next game 2-1. The next game was a hard fight for both teams but the Thais managed to pull ahead of the Indonesians to take the game 2-1.

The next match was between Malaysia and Laos with Laos beating Malaysia with Laos dominating the set. Set two Malaysia fought back forcing the match to a very exciting third set with each side

scoring but finally Malaysia overcame the Lao team. The next Malaysian team took on Laos with Malaysia winning easily in 2 sets.

The afternoon saw more team matches with Indonesia taking on Thailand. The first match saw Thailand beating Indonesia 2-1. The next game saw Indonesia take the game 2-1 against Thailand and the last match of the afternoon saw a close fought match with Thailand winning 2-1.

Team play continued in the evening with Thailand playing Malaysia with Thailand taking 2 games to Malaysia's 1.

Story by Pattamaporn Jiemwongsa,
Muanfon Chaiponbal
Photo by Kobkan Sampao

Laos takes first gold in Taekwondo

Lao PDR won its first gold in Taekwondo yesterday at the North Chiang Mai University gymnasium while Vietnam took 3 gold medals in the second day of taekwondo. Vietnamese fighters were in top form in the Women's welterweight class, 62-67kg when Nguyen Thi Duong took the gold beating Indonesia 6-1.

Vietnam took another gold in the heavy weight male category weighing not more than 87 kg when Ding Quang Toan beat the host country 6-4, he also took the gold in the Welterweight category 9-6 with Thailand. The welter weight male category, 74-80 kg saw Laos win their first gold medal when Sawatvilay Phimmasone beat Thailand in a close fought match with Nuttapong Limvattana taking the first round 2-1, the second round was equalized and the Lao fighter finally won 7-6 winning the gold.

Story by Mr.Kant Kamonrat
Photo by Mr.Jaturavit Decha



In a close fought match Sawatvilay Phimmasone takes Laos' first gold in Taekwondo.

Faces of the Games



Savalith Sengsath – Sepak Takraw Laos, team manager and secretary of Laos National Sepak Takraw Federation (left) emphasized that the point of playing sports is to play with heart and to have fun with it, more than just focus on the result which brings about pressure.

Southisone Thonemanyvong – Sepak Takraw Laos team representative (right) talked about the uncertainty of the game which led to the team's loss. "Each person had tried their best in the game. It can be said that Thailand is one of the strongest teams."



Piyarat Tunthapthai – Volleyball Thailand said after the game on December 20th that they got less time for practice because each member also had to play as a part of other team in other leagues. For semi-final round which Thailand will see Laos, Thai player are not be careless.



Master Sergeant Pravet Indra – Sepak Takraw coach Thailand said that he felt relieved for Thailand to win the championship on this program on Monday because the Thai team had lost to Malaysia in the previous game. He encouraged his player with just these few words, "Do your best in every game!" He also left the message for youth who love playing sports that "You must play every game with your heart, not with the expectation of benefit."



Linda Weni Fanetri – Badminton Indonesia said she really enjoyed her day off, said she felt comfortable and a bit sleepy since Wednesday when she won. She spent her day off at the Chiang Mai Zoo, "The baby panda- Lhin Ping was very cute but she was sleeping, so I saw only her mother eating bamboo alone." Tomorrow (Tuesday 21st) she will compete with Thailand in the semifinal round "I am focused on the match and I expect a gold medal for sure."



Tavorn Kamutsri – Track and Field Manager Thailand, said "In athletics, we expected 15 gold medals. That is our goal and today, we achieved it. For the next days, if we get some more gold medals, it will count as profit. We hope that we will get medals from 3 or 4 more programs. Our expectation is Thailand, the host country, to gain the most gold medals. We want everyone to fight for a goal. And what's more important are the friendship and experience."



Supanon Sukhasvasti Na Ayudhaya, or TeeTo - Long Jump Thailand said that his hometown is Chiang Mai, so he is quite familiar with the weather and the environment. He has his own tactic for practice. In this tournament, he is satisfied with his own record because he did as well as he did in the Asian Games. His message to everybody "Do your best for yourselves and your country."



Chanida Julrattanamanee – Badminton Thailand said "This tournament is quite good and ready with the facilities, especially the hotel and the working team. The thing that should be improved is the transportation. There are not enough buses to carry the players to the stadium and that gives us all less time to warm up." Tomorrow she will meet the second seed from Indonesia, she is sure she can take the gold medal. "I am satisfied with my performance today, even though I lost in the women's double match."

Panida Rattanajan – 400 M Hurdles Thailand, studying in the Faculty of Humanities at Bangkok University, said that hot weather is not a barrier for her in practicing because it helps to make body movement easier whereas the cold weather is more difficult for her in warming up. She has been well supported by her University and she is very satisfied with the competition.



Pencak Silat explained

Thanwa Benjawan, track and field manager and sub-committee member of Pencak Silat explained Pencak Silat to AUG Sports Today saying that the word "Pencak" means self-protection and "Silat" means arts and it belonged to Muslim and Malay in South East Asia such as Malaysia, Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and also the South of Thailand. He noted that this kind of sport differs from the other martial arts such as Karatedo. There are 4 types of Pencak Silat, first is the battle which 2 sides have to fight with hands, knees, and feet to other allowed parts of body to specified positions or until one player falls to win points. In addition, Pencak Silat is divided into 10 classes; from 50kg and increasing 5kg in each class. The other three kinds of Pencak Silat are a kind of dancing which is divided into single; Seni Tunggal, double; Seni Ganda and team; Seni Tegu. Furthermore, it is already in competition in the SEA Games and this time Asian University Game with 7 countries: Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Malaysia and Brunei competing. Mr. Thanwa also said something to the readers who are interested in Pencak Silat that it is a high class martial art which provides safety and he hopes that Thai people will be interested in learning Pencak Silat as it also brings the culture of those countries that have had success in it.

Story by Wipapan Nan, Kritdanun Phromkuntha, Chusawat Tunvanich



Story By Krittikana Kanchaiya, Kansinee Sitthichottipong, Ratchanok Laopraneechon Napat Channual, Jaruwat Phuaphan, Kanokwan Chantorn

Photo By Atittaya Kanchanatharn, Natee Thaowiboon, Ratchanok Laopraneechon, Nuttapor Panya, Sulukkna Tiennoi, Kanokwan Chantorn

Chiang Mai Red Cross & Winter Fair

Miss Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai will be holding its annual Red Cross & Winter Fair soon, usually starting the last week of December and held for a couple of weeks, the Fair is held behind the Provincial Hall. An extremely popular event for locals, it runs more along the lines of State Fairs in the United States or fetes in the United Kingdom.

Boasting a multitude of games, rides, shows, popular bands, contests, food stalls, shopping and the highlight is, of course, the pinnacle of beauty contests for the many beautiful girls that populate Chiang Mai; Miss Chiang Mai. Miss Chiang Mai is chosen at the Fair and the winner will move on to represent Chiang Mai in the national Miss

Thailand contest. The current Miss Thailand, Kritchakorn Hormboonyasak, was a former Miss Chiang Mai. The current Miss Thailand World is also a Chiang Mai lass, proving that the renowned beauty of Chiang Mai's many lovely ladies is no myth.

Beauty contests first started in Thailand in 1934, gathered steam in 1965 when Apasara Hongsakul won Thailand's first Miss Universe crown in 1965 and then peaked with the win of Pornthip Narkhirunkanok in 1988. Every local festival has a beauty pageant, with Miss Lamyai, Miss Bo Sang and Miss Chiang Mai, and often serve as a jumping off point for local beauties to move into national contests to vie for one of the three coveted titles; Miss Thailand, Miss Thailand World



Chiang Mai's last Lanna princess, Dr. Chao Duangduen Na Chiangmai (left) is presented an award by Miss Thailand Kritchakorn Hormboonyasak and President of the Provincial Administration Organization Boonlert Buranupakorn.

and Miss Thailand Universe, and, of course, the international titles, Miss World and Miss Universe being the ultimate goal.

And while not so many girls aspire to these roles as they did shortly after Pornthip's big win, beauty contests are still big business in Thailand with the ladyboys and even the men joining in. The Miss Tiffany contest for katoeys (transgender) showcases some outstandingly beautiful katoeys that out-feminine most women.

Contests and contestants have changed, with a focus on public service, education, personality and intelligence rather than the early years where all that mattered was a beautiful face. The 58th annual Miss Chiang Mai contest is scheduled for January 6, 2011 and has representatives from the 8 Northern Provinces; Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Lampang, Lamphun, Mae Hong Son, Phrae, Phayao, and Nan.

The Winter Fair is, of course, more than just pretty faces, its

also a venue for various NGO's, ethnic groups, consulates, and others to showcase their causes and wares. Farmers bring their products as well to offer direct to the market.

This is truly a local fair, with attractions for everyone, old and young, big and small and is where you will find local Thai people living their daily lives and having a day out in the fashion that they have done since the Fair started and first held in 1933.

By Shana Kongmun



Former Miss Chiang Mai Kritchakorn Hormboonyasak has made Chiang Mai proud by winning the Miss Thailand crown.



Khao soi is the famous curried noodle dish of Chiang Mai, and while you can find it at the Fair, its available all over Chiang Mai and worth a try.



Snacks are the order of the day for every festive event in Thailand and these little cream filled sweets are absolutely delicious!

15th SEAN UNIVERSITY GAMES 2010 MEDAL STANDINGS

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Thailand	32	38	30	100
2	Indonesia	32	32	28	92
3	Malaysia	31	23	26	80
4	Vietnam	16	10	8	34
5	Philippines	2	3	16	21
6	Laos	1	5	16	22
7	Singapore	1	4	16	21
8	Brunei Darussalam	0	0	3	3
9	Timor-Leste	0	0	1	1
10	Myanmar	0	0	1	1
11	Cambodia	0	0	0	0
		115	115	145	375

As of December 21, 2010 20:00 hr



Chiang Rai, gateway to the Golden Triangle



A replica of the famous Buddha image that was taken to Bangkok from Chiang Rai.

While Chiang Rai's nickname is Gateway to the Golden Triangle, it seems a bit hard on the city to just ignore its attractions and head out for trekking and whatever people do that are athletically inclined.

Chiang Rai was founded in 1262 by King Mengrai, the Thai Lu-Lao ruler who moved the capital from Ngoen Yang (located near Chiang Saen) to Chiang Rai, which he named after himself. He expanded South, eventually moving the capital to Chiang Mai, which he also founded, around 1296.

Chiang Rai's most revered Wat is Wat Phra Kaew where, legend has it, lightning struck the temple's chedi, which fell apart to reveal the Phra Kaew Morakot or the Emerald Buddha which now resides in Wat Phra Kaew inside the Grand Palace in Bangkok. A replica was carved out of Canadian jade in 1990, and is an approximate replica of the

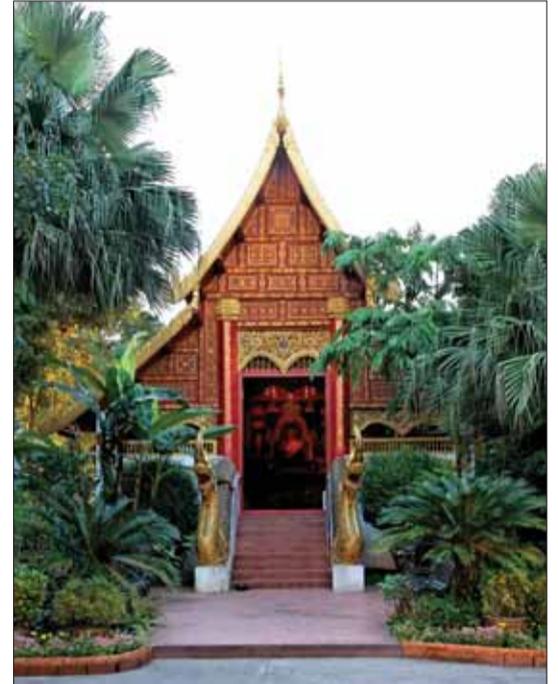
famous Buddha image.

Chiang Rai also offers the sister temple to Chiang Mai's Wat Phra Singh which houses its own replica of the Phra Singh Buddha of Chiang Mai. More interesting are the contemporary doors built by a well known artist which represent the four elements.

Chiang Rai is home to the Hilltribe Museum and Education Center as well as a private museum called Up Kham, it houses the belongings of former Northern Thai nobility, from textiles to the golden bowl, named Oup Kham, that is the museum's centerpiece.

Finally, of course, is the ubiquitous trekking, but that can be covered another time. For now, enjoy the home of the original capital of the North and the start of King Mengrai's march towards a unified Lanna Kingdom.

By Shana Kongmun, Chiang Mai Mail



Wat Phra Singh in Chiang Rai has beautiful modern doors at the temple.

A gem of a Temple: Wat Umong



Just outside the moat, is a gem of a place to visit. It's a Temple, but no ordinary Temple. It's a temple set within a forest, which has winding trails leading to interesting places and objects, and a beautiful lake. The temple is Wat Umong.

Wat Umong was built approximately 700 years ago, and has maze like tunnels, earning it its name "Umong", meaning tunnel. The place is dotted with placards of wise proverbs in English and Thai. Many of which will have you nodding your head in agreement, and some of which may cause you to smirk. There are paintings and relics, and several books on Buddhism available to

buy in English and Thai. Even if you are not Buddhist, some titles may catch your attention. There are also informal Dhamma discussions ("Monk Chat"). However, for me, Wat Umong is a place to go and clear my head by its beautiful lake. Usually I will go buy a bag of fish food from the vender next to the lake, then head to the water to watch the giant cat fish gobble up the pellets. They come in a flurry, causing water to foam and fly up. I try to spy a terrapin (or is it a turtle?..or tortoise?..to this day I haven't yet fathomed that one out, but there are many of whatever it is!). Whilst sitting, I'm serenaded by the sound of wooing pigeons. The "coo coo"

is quite calming. Sometimes I watch them play the game of "catch me if you can", as the hen dives from tree branch to tree branch, in an attempt to escape the amorous intentions of the cock. It's blissfully peaceful and relaxing. The only thing to remember if you do decide to go along, is of course to dress respectfully.

Wat Umong is roughly 2km off Suthep Road. Look for the "Mi Casa" sign, and take the same soi. "Monk Chat" is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 1pm and 3pm, and on Sundays between 3pm and 5pm.

By Jane Doh

Photos by Passakorn Chairat

