

# 'Old dog' Chavalit reflects on glory days



Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and Tourism and Sports Minister Korbkam Wattanavrangkul. The sports minister is faring better than Gen Prayut in a new poll. BANGKOK POST PHOTO

## Thai Pulse

What's hot in Thai newspapers and social media

Compiled by VEERA PRATEEPCHAIKUL and SRIWIPA SIRIPUNYAWIT

**Former** prime minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh is sad and delusional, says *Thai Post* columnist Plew See-ngern, referring to his weekend press conference where he spoke grandly of a new force in Thai politics.

Plew See-ngern, however, admits he has sympathy for Gen Chavalit who, like him, is an old man.

But the retired general, like many retired government officials who used to be powerful and widely recognised, cannot accept the reality he is now a "nobody" and treated like an old dog dumped at a temple.

Many of these retirees will suffer from depression, Alzheimer's disease or bipolar disorder, said the writer. However, he said intoxication with power is a more serious ailment than

cancer because cancer merely takes away one's life. Intoxication with power, by contrast, may kill an entire society.

This intoxication with power disease infects the state bureaucracy and religion, he said, as he asked readers not to take Gen Chavalit seriously.

He likened him to a piece of prism that has several aspects and is used to extract light.

"Looking at one face of the prism, you can see the various contributions the retired general has made to the country during the past 30-40 years and you will feel sorry for him today because he is finished like a scorpion whose poisonous tail is broken," said the columnist.

During his press conference, Gen Chavalit boasted about his creation of a "third force" which he claimed comprises five groups,

namely 21 tribes of highlanders, the Thai Mai group of ex-communist insurgents, poor people, southerners, and defectors, coming to 21 million people altogether.

This "third force", he claimed, has been scattering about and infiltrating Thai society for the past three years.

Gen Chavalit also told the media he badly needs to see Privy Council president Prem Tinsulanonda, but dares not ask to see him "because people say he does not want to see politicians, even though I am not a politician now".

If Gen Chavalit really has 21 million supporters under his control, he should have taken the country or seceded from the country or he might have been executed three years ago, said Plew See-ngern.

Gen Chavalit is an old soldier who is no longer employed by fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra and that explains why he fantasises about a "third force" to relive his past glory which is non-existent today.

The writer said both Gen Chavalit and Thaksin share a common trait — that is both are firmly intoxicated with power they no longer have. But the only difference between the two men is Gen Chavalit is broke and Thaksin is rich and can use his wealth to buy him favour



**Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyudh seeks a political comeback, unveiling news of a "third force".** BANGKOK POST PHOTO

and support even from the Americans and the American media. He referred to Thaksin's appearance in New York for a speech last week during which the former prime minister was surrounded by US bodyguards and was driven by a US chauffeur.

So do not pay too much attention or give credibility to the foreign media, Plew See-ngern suggested.

## Govt fails the test, says poll

**Prime** Minister Prayut Chan-ocha's government has failed two important tests during its 18 months in office, says *Thai Rath* columnist Mae Look Chan, citing the latest Bangkok Poll of Bangkok University.

The poll surveyed about 60 economists on their assessment of the government's economic performance.

The writer said this was the first poll in 18 months that has the prime minister scoring fewer points than one of his deputies, one of his ministers and tying with another.

The poll showed Gen Prayut scored 6.21 against Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak's 6.51 points, Tourism and Sports Minister Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul's 6.52 points and Finance Minister Apisak Tantivorawong's 6.21 points.

The poll also showed the government failed the test for its overall economic performance, where it scores 4.96 points out of 10; and in social justice and economic equality, where it gets 4.79 points.

Mae Look Chan said he was also surprised to see former deputy prime minister MR Pridiyathorn Devakula come out to criticise the government's economic policies.

He said the government's stimulus packages



ชื่นชมชาวระโนด ลูกชาวเลตัวจริง เมื่อช่วยกันปล่อยลูกฉลามวาฬ คืนสู่ท้องทะเลไทย หลังติดอวนชาวประมง!!!

**Fishermen in Ranot district of Songkhla who saved a baby whale shark have received praise on social media.** FB: THON THAMRONGNAWA-SAWAT/HIT-ZA WEBPAGE

มอบกระดิ่งประทาน"องค์ภาฯ"ให้หญิงพลเมืองคืนน้ำคำคลุมตัวสาวคลิป์ไว้

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Wanna Veao-suwan shows a tiny bell bestowed on her by HRH Princess Bajrakitiyabha.  
KHAOSOD ONLINE

are mistakes as they should be implemented when the economy is recovering, not declining.

## Praise for dignity deed

**Wanna** Veao-suwan, the woman who helped a bipolar woman who went berserk and danced naked in a street last week, has received a reward, a tiny bell, and citation from HRH Princess Bajrakitiyabha for her good deed.

Khaosod Online said Kosolawat Intuchanyong, deputy director of the Office for Activities and Projects under the Royal Patronage of Princess Bajrakitiyabha, said the bell is a symbol of the Princess's work with the office.

Mrs Wanna was cited because while others just stood by and took video clips of the naked woman, Mrs Wanna tried to protect her dignity by using large pieces of cloth to cover her up. She was also telling people to stop taking

pictures and clips of the mental patient.

The incident happened on March 7 when the woman rammed her Ford Fiesta into a taxi in front of Soi Lat Phrao Wanghin in Bangkok's Lat Phrao district. This caused another two vehicles to hit the taxi. The woman, who is in her 30s and had no clothes on, climbed out of the passenger window and began dancing in the road.

She was eventually taken to a hospital when police found out from relatives she suffers from bipolar disorder. She has been receiving treatment at a hospital in Surat Thani province.

Mr Kosolawat, whose office is under the Supreme Attorney-General's Office at the Ministry of Justice, said though Mrs Wanna had little formal education and could not read, she was the one who acted to help the woman.

He commended her for being a good person who did not stand and watch a woman's rights being violated and persisted in trying to do the right thing even though the patient kept pushing her away.

Mr Kosolawat told Mrs Wanna when they met: "I am giving you the bell from Princess Bajrakitiyabha and the *Khon Dee Ti Rao Yok Yong* T-shirt [good person whom we praise]...

to give you encouragement and commend you for your beautiful heart that wants to look after society and help others."

He said the Princess also plans to give her a citation on a later occasion and called on everyone who has seen the clip to heed the example of Mrs Wanna who had the presence of mind to do the right thing.

## Baby shark saga moves

**Netizens** are full of praise for fishermen in Ranot district of Songkhla province who saved a baby whale shark that was caught in a fishing net.

As seen on Facebook, a group of Ranot fishermen freed the shark from a net on a beach and released it back into the sea. The story went viral after Thon Thamrongnawasawat, deputy dean of the Fisheries Faculty at Kasetsart University, posted it on his Facebook page.

He thanked the fishermen on behalf of everyone who loves the sea, saying: "Many ask me when whale sharks will become a protected species. I can only say with some difficulty, would this not depend on the Natural Resources Ministry?"

"But for now we can help them like the people of Ranot showed us. They are real people of the sea who love the sea. Thank you the people of Ranot on behalf of everyone who loves the sea."

Facebook fan Asasamak Pitak Muang, from Hat Yai, commented: "Thank you, Ranot people, for helping release the baby whale shark caught in a fishing net and saving it from certain death."

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