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DOG'S LIFE

STRAY DOG SHELTER STRETCHED BEYOND LIMITS AS FUNDING FALLS SHORT

Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

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Phuket's government-run stray dog shelter is struggling under the weight of more than 1,000 dogs as officials warn that chronic underfunding, rising operating costs, water shortages and limited space are pushing the facility to breaking point.

The warning comes despite Phuket provincial officials budgeting more than B5 million a year for stray dog management.

Figures presented at a Phuket Stray Dog Shelter meeting with Vice Governor Teeraphong Chuaychoo last month showed the province has allocated a proposed budget of B5,001,230 for fiscal 2027 to care for 1,004 dogs. However, Phuket Provincial

Livestock Chief Suthat Niyomthai admitted the real cost of operating the shelter is significantly higher.

"Actually, it's not enough," Mr Suthat told *The Phuket News*. "To properly manage the shelter, we probably need around B7-8 million per year."

Statistics presented to the committee also showed the shelter population has remained consistently above 1,000 dogs for months, with officials reporting an average of 20-30 new dogs arriving each month from municipalities across Phuket.

Records showed the shelter population rose from 1,103 dogs in October last year to 1,101 in November, 1,102 in December, 1,077 in January, before slightly dropping to 1,054 in February and climbing again to 1,051 in March and 1,056 in April.

The data also showed Wichit Municipality, Ratsada Municipality and Chalong Municipality were among the areas sending the highest numbers of dogs to the shelter.

During the same six-month period, 55 dogs died at the shelter, 53 were adopted, and 69 were transferred out for medical treatment, with 38 later returned to the shelter after recovery.

Officials said the figures reflected the constant pressure on the overcrowded facility, as new dogs continue to arrive faster than the shelter can reduce the population through adoption and sterilisation programmes.

The shelter, located on Thepkrasattri Rd in Mai Khao, south of Phuket International Airport, currently houses 1,056 dogs across 14 enclosures on just four rai of land.

"The entire operation is run by only nine staff members – one manager and eight workers.

That means each person is taking care of more than 100 dogs," Mr Suthat said.

The facility accepts stray, abandoned and aggressive dogs from across Phuket, including animals removed from beaches, tourist areas and residential communities after complaints from residents or tourists.

Under the current system, municipalities and local administrative organisations are required to certify and financially support dogs originating from their jurisdictions at a rate of B13 per dog per day.

If all 18 local authorities contributed fully, including the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), the shelter...

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Dog shelter in need of help

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...would receive roughly B5 million annually.

"But last year we only received 52%," Mr Suthat said. "Some local authorities pay 100%, some pay only 50%, and the rest has to come from donations.

"The main expense is food," he added. "The shelter uses approximately 300 kilogrammes of dog food daily – around 15 sacks, or 9,000-9,300kg, per month costing nearly B700 each.

"We are really asking for help with food donations," Mr Suthat said.

The shortages become most severe between October and December each year while waiting for new government budget approvals.

"Sometimes we have to reduce the amount of food by half," he admitted.

SHELTER STRESS

The shelter is also grappling with worsening infrastructure problems. Water shortages mean staff cannot clean all kennels simultaneously, forcing them to rotate cleaning schedules using well water after mains water supplies proved insufficient.

"We ask local authorities to bring water, but it runs out within a day because we need huge amounts for cleaning, drinking water and helping the dogs cope with the heat," Mr Suthat explained.

At the same time, the facility is rapidly running out of space to dispose of animal carcasses and waste.

The shelter can only use the land within its fenced compound, while surrounding land belongs to the Treasury Department and remains unavailable despite repeated requests for expansion from the central government.

"When animals die, we bury them and use lime for disinfection, but eventually the pits fill up," Mr Suthat said. "We don't know where future disposal will go."

Despite the operational strain, officials insist the shelter is managing disease outbreaks more effectively following last year's canine distemper crisis, which forced temporary suspension of dog intake.

Mr Suthat said all incoming dogs are quarantined for 21 days, vaccinated against rabies, distemper and other diseases, and sterilised before entering the main population.

"Currently, there are no distemper problems inside the centre," he said. "But outbreaks remain a risk from stray dogs outside that have never been vaccinated."

SOI DOG

The government shelter receives ongoing support from the renowned Soi Dog Foundation, whose veterinarians visit weekly and assist with severe medical cases. However, the Soi Dog Foundation is also under financial strain.

Phuket's largest animal welfare NGO, the Soi Dog Foundation says rising costs and increasing emergency rescues continue to place



Photo: Natnaree Likidwatanasakun

heavy pressure on private-sector animal welfare operations despite years of sterilisation campaigns.

In 2025 alone, the foundation treated 24,125 dogs and cats, handled 17,593 emergency rescue calls and performed 24,239 surgeries.

The foundation currently houses 1,428 shelter animals while operating 21 mobile sterilisation units across Thailand.

A representative from Soi Dog said inflation, rising food prices, medication costs and fuel prices have significantly increased the cost of care.

"Even though we have campaigned for free sterilisation and vaccination for more than 20 years, we still see dogs and cats abandoned in communities and temples almost every day," she said.

The foundation noted that Phuket's stray dog situation has improved significantly compared with previous years because of long-running sterilisation and vaccination programmes coordinated between municipalities, the government shelter and Soi Dog.

However, the organisation warned that cats are becoming an increasing concern.

"One female cat can become pregnant five times a year," the representative said. "Within two years, one cat can produce up to 100 kittens."

The foundation also confirmed canine distemper remains an ongoing threat across Phuket and neighbouring provinces.

Last year alone, Soi Dog treated more than 180 dogs infected with distemper, many of which had never been vaccinated.

"Outbreaks still occur every one to two years," the foundation warned.

Soi Dog continues to urge pet owners to sterilise animals and avoid abandoning pets when relocating or leaving Thailand.

DOG DUMPING

Provincial Livestock Chief Mr Suthat said many of the dogs arriving at the government shelter were not born on the streets, but were once owned pets abandoned after owners moved away, returned overseas or could no longer care for them.

He said some cases involved large-scale abandonment after breeding operations or informal "farms" shut down, leaving animals behind without proper care.

Recent cases included more than a dozen abandoned cats and several husky dogs left at properties after owners vacated the premises, adding further pressure on already overstretched rescue systems.

"We would rather people bring animals to us properly than dump them in communities, beaches or empty houses," Mr Suthat said.

He stressed that every dog entering the shelter is sterilised unless it arrives pregnant or is medically unfit for surgery at the time.

"There are no puppies being bred inside the shelter," he said. "If dogs arrive pregnant, we allow them to give birth first before sterilising them. Most puppies born here are later adopted."

Mr Suthat said sterilisation remained one of the most important long-term solutions to Phuket's stray animal problem, alongside responsible ownership and adoption.

"We are trying to reduce the population, not increase it," he said.

Mr Suthat warned that uncontrolled breeding, abandonment and the popularity of buying pedigree animals continue driving the stray population despite years of sterilisation campaigns.

"Many people buy dogs

or cats when they are cute, but later abandon them when they become difficult, aggressive, sick or expensive to care for," Mr Suthat said.

Foreigners are permitted to adopt dogs from the shelter but must provide passport identification and photographs proving they have suitable living conditions.

The shelter has also tightened adoption screening after previous cases in which adopted dogs were later released back into communities.

"Now we have to inspect more carefully," Mr Suthat said.

The shelter does not officially accept cats, though abandoned cats are frequently left there regardless.

Officials confirmed discussions are underway involving private-sector support for a dedicated cat shelter in Patong.

Meanwhile, volunteers continue helping socialise aggressive dogs and walk animals to improve adoption prospects.

"If we had more budget, we would like a veterinary hospital and permanent veterinarians here," Mr Suthat said.

For now, Mr Suthat says the most urgent needs remain food donations, cleaning supplies, hoses, leashes and foster homes.

"The biggest problem now is no longer disease," Mr Suthat said. "It's the growing number of animals and the resources needed to care for them."

Suchart orders faster action on Sirinat land grab cases

MORE THAN 28 LAND encroachment cases within Sirinat National Park are being accelerated as part of a renewed crackdown on illegal occupation of state land, while officials also push ahead with plans to transform the park into a 'Green & Digital Park'.

The directive came during a visit by Natural Resources and Environment Minister Suchart Chomklin, who continued his inspection tour of Phuket on Monday (June 8) with a meeting at Sirinat National Park headquarters.

Accompanied by senior ministry officials and executives from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Mr Suchart reviewed progress on long-running encroachment cases and instructed authorities to expedite legal proceedings while ensuring investigations are supported by strong evidence.

Officials reported that more than 28 cases remain under investigation, while more than 10 have already received final court judgments. Efforts are also under-

way to revoke illegally issued land title documents and return the land to state ownership.

Mr Suchart stressed that evidence must be gathered carefully to prevent legal loopholes and ensure decisive action against those occupying protected land.

"We must establish a clear standard that national park land, beaches and natural resources do not belong to any individual, but to the entire nation," he said. "Anyone attempting to claim them as their own must face the full legal consequences."

Sirinat National Park covers more than 56,250 rai of land and marine areas in Thalang district. Park officials outlined ongoing efforts to combat encroachment, regulate tourism and implement environmental initiatives, including a Zero Waste programme aimed at reducing waste and increasing recycling.

The minister outlined three priorities: accelerating all encroachment cases, preventing new illegal occupation of state land and ensuring transparency among officials.



Photo: PR Phuket

The meeting also reviewed wider encroachment issues across Phuket, with officials reporting 115 cases involving national park land between 2012 and 2025. Demolition work at Freedom Beach and Nui Beach is expected to begin in July. *The Phuket News*

Fire destroys workers' camp

Eakkapop Thongtub

More than 350 workers were displaced after a major fire tore through a workers' camp in Srisoonthorn last week, one of several fires reported across Phuket during the first week of June.

The largest blaze broke out shortly before midnight on June 4 at a workers' dormitory operated by NDCM, under the Christiani & Nielsen Co Ltd group, in Moo 4, Srisoonthorn, opposite the Bang Jo Water Treatment Plant.

Thalang Police, firefighters and rescue personnel from Srisoonthorn Municipality, Cherg Talay Municipality and Cherg Talay OrBorTor rushed to the scene after receiving reports of flames engulfing the camp.

Witnesses reported seeing thick black smoke billowing into the night sky while explosions could be heard intermittently as the fire spread rapidly through the corrugated iron-roofed buildings.

More than 300 workers and residents, including

Thai and Myanmar nationals, fled the area as emergency crews battled the blaze with nine fire engines, water tankers and heavy machinery.

The fire was eventually brought under control at about 3am on June 5 after nearly three hours of firefighting operations.

A subsequent inspection by the Phuket Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office (PDPMO) found that the camp consisted of six two-storey buildings containing 268 rooms and housing approximately 350 workers. Officials reported that almost the entire camp, covering about half an acre, had been destroyed.

Three Myanmar nationals were injured in the fire. Two women received treatment and were later discharged from hospital, while a man who suffered burns to his arms and legs remained under medical observation. No fatalities were reported.

On June 5, Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn ordered provincial officials to inspect the site



and coordinate assistance for those affected. The inspection was led by Phuket PDPMO chief Warat Surawadee and included Thalang Police Superintendent Pol Col Nikorn Chuthong, municipal officials and representatives of the construction company.

Authorities later visited a temporary shelter established at Wat Cherg Talay, where displaced workers had been relocated. The construction company provided food, drinking

water and essential supplies through a field kitchen set up at the temple.

Officials said around 150-200 workers would be moved to a backup accommodation camp in Soi Layan 1/1, with the remaining workers staying temporarily at Wat Cherg Talay until alternative housing arrangements were completed.

Investigators initially suspect an electrical fault may have caused the fire, though forensic officers are continuing their examina-

tion of the scene and a detailed damage assessment remains underway.

OTHER FIRES

The Srisoonthorn fire followed several other incidents reported across Phuket earlier in the week.

In Wichit, five people were injured after a fire tore through a rented house in Soi Muang Thong 4 shortly after midnight on June 2.

The blaze prompted a large emergency response involving firefighters, water trucks, a patrol vehicle and an ambulance from Wichit Municipality's Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Unit.

Firefighters battled the flames for about one hour and 20 minutes before bringing the situation under control.

All five injured people were transported to Vachira Phuket Hospital for treatment. Authorities have not disclosed the extent of their injuries, while the cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Patong also experienced two separate fire incidents on June 3, both occurring

during periods of heavy rain and strong winds.

The first was reported at Karnda Massage on Phra Metta Rd at about 7:40am. Residents told police they heard an explosion from an electrical transformer inside the five-storey building before smoke spread through the structure.

Firefighters quickly contained the blaze and no injuries were reported. Damage was limited to furniture and other minor property inside the building.

Later that afternoon, firefighters responded to a fire at LPK Hotel & Restaurant in Soi Bangla. Witnesses reported hearing an explosion from a fuse box inside the building, which was undergoing renovations, before smoke filled the premises.

The fire was extinguished before it could spread further. No injuries were reported and damage was largely confined to the building's electrical system.

Police have requested forensic examinations of both Patong fire scenes as investigations continue into the exact causes of the incidents.

Officials probe Rawai beachfront project

PHUKET OFFICIALS HAVE ORDERED an urgent land survey and environmental investigation into a controversial beachfront development in Rawai following complaints from local residents and the Rawai sea gypsy community over alleged encroachment on public access routes and possible environmental impacts.

The decision was made during a multi-agency meeting chaired by Phuket Vice Governor Adul Chuthong at Phuket Provincial Hall on June 2.

Representatives from the Phuket Provincial Land Office, Phuket Provincial Natural Resources and Environment Office (MNRE Phuket), Rawai Municipality, Phuket Regional Marine Office, Chalong Police, the Thai Mai community and Phuket MP for Constituency 2 Chalermpong Saengdee attended the meeting.

The dispute centres on a large real estate and hotel development in Moo 2, Rawai, where residents have raised concerns over shoreline construction, blocked traditional access routes and possible encroachment on public waterways.

The Phuket Provincial Land Office said the land title was originally issued in 1968, but a new survey is required because some original boundary markers can no longer be clearly identified.

Rawai Municipality reported that after discovering excavation work along the beachfront, it filed a complaint with Chalong Police on May 11 and later ordered construction suspended on May 25 pending investigations into land boundaries and related legal issues.

Vice Governor Adul said authorities had



Photo: PR Phuket

already exercised their powers by halting construction while investigations continue.

MP Chalermpong called for strict legal action if violations are found, including possible demolition of illegal structures, while stressing the need to balance development with environmental protection and community interests.

MNRE Phuket informed the meeting that the reinforced concrete structure under construction may require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Municipal officials added that the structure appears similar to a coastal protection barrier, raising further environmental concerns.

Vice Governor Adul instructed agencies to expedite a formal land survey, scheduled for June 18, and ordered a detailed review of environmental impacts and legal compliance.

Community representatives maintain that the area has long been used as a public access route, fishing area and site of cultural significance. Authorities said any violations uncovered will be dealt with transparently and in accordance with the law. *The Phuket News*

Housing project blamed for Srisoonthorn flooding

RESIDENTS IN MOO 5, Srisoonthorn, have blamed runoff from a major housing development for worsening flooding in their community and on Thepkrasattri Rd during heavy rain earlier this month.

Local residents said continuous rainfall on June 2 caused water levels to rise rapidly, with runoff from a housing project being developed by Supalai behind Wat Srisoonthorn (Wat Baan Lipon) flowing into nearby residential areas.

According to residents, rainwater from the construction site drains quickly into the community whenever there is heavy rain, causing flooding around homes and creating hardship for local families.

They also claim that large volumes of water spill onto Thepkrasattri Rd, where it combines with floodwater accumulating near the Thai Wat-



Screenshot: Supplied

sadu Thalang branch, worsening flooding on one of Phuket's main roads and disrupting traffic during downpours.

Residents have called on authorities to inspect the project's drainage system and require measures to prevent further impacts from the construction site. They are also seeking long-term solutions to recurring flooding problems during the rainy season.

In response to the complaints, Srisoonthorn Mayor Chalermphon Kerdap assigned municipal officials to inspect the area and investigate reports of water and mud flowing from the development site.

Following the inspection, officials instructed the developer to clear

debris that had been scattered from the project. The municipality also dispatched workers to clean public areas and improve safety for road users.

The complaints come as Phuket continues to experience significant rainfall at the start of the southwest monsoon season.

According to the Southern Meteorological Center (West Coast), Phuket has recorded 96.2 millimetres of rainfall so far this month. Total rainfall for 2026 has reached 713.4mm, including 464.9mm recorded in May alone.

Heavy rainfall has caused repeated flooding in several parts of Phuket in recent weeks, particularly in low-lying areas and locations where drainage systems struggle to cope with large volumes of runoff during intense storms.

The Phuket News

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Wind 4 m/s

SUN JUNE 14

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Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

MON JUNE 15

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Wind 14 m/s

TUE JUNE 16

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Wind 11 m/s

WED JUNE 17

High: +29°
Low: +26°

Wind 11 m/s

THU JUNE 18

High: +29°
Low: +26°

Wind 11 m/s

Russian woman arrested for running illegal beauty clinic

A 45-YEAR-OLD RUSSIAN woman has been arrested for allegedly operating an illegal beauty clinic from a luxury villa in Thalang and providing cosmetic injection treatments without the required licences.

The operation, dubbed 'Moscow Devil Filler', was carried out by officers from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB), the Crime Suppression Division (CSD) and the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office.

The suspect, identified by police only as 'Ms Kristine', was arrested during a raid on a villa in Thepkasattri under a search warrant issued by the Phuket Provincial Court.

During the search, officers found a client on a treatment bed in a downstairs bedroom apparently undergoing a cosmetic procedure.

Officers seized medicines, medical supplies and equipment used in aesthetic treatments, including collagen injections, botulinum toxin products, hyaluronic acid fillers, syringes and needles. In total, 130 items across 32 categories were confiscated, with an



Photo: CIB

estimated value of more than B600,000.

Investigators said the suspect was unable to produce documentation authorising the operation of a medical facility or a licence to practise medicine in Thailand.

Police reported that she admitted the villa was not licensed as a medical facility and that she did not hold a Thai medical licence. Officials also alleged some products had been brought into Thailand from Russia without proper authorisation.

She was taken to Thalang Police Station and faces multiple charges related to operating an unlicensed clinic and selling unauthorised medicines and medical devices.

The Phuket News

Drinking session ends with fatal sword attack

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A 48-year-old man died after a drinking session escalated into a violent confrontation that ended in a sword attack outside a house on Patak Rd in Karon in the early hours of June 4.

Karon Police were notified of the incident at about 2:30am after reports of a seriously injured man lying outside a house on Patak Rd.

Officers arrived to find local resident Sorachai Prateep Na Thalang, 48, known as 'Ae', suffering from multiple slash wounds and lying in a pool of blood. Rescue workers provided first aid before rushing him to Chalong Hospital, where he later died. His body was subsequently transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital for a post-mortem examination.

The suspect, Suphakit Thaweeras, 37, remained at the scene and surrendered to police. He allegedly admitted attacking Sorachai with a sword and handed the weapon over to investigators.

According to Pol Lt Col Charas Lempapan, the investigating officer at Karon Police Station, the incident stemmed from an



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

earlier dispute during a drinking session at a restaurant near Rawai Beach.

Police said Sorachai had joined friends at the restaurant after being invited by Kritsada Mukthiep, 38. Suphakit later arrived and joined the group.

An altercation reportedly broke out near the restaurant's restroom, where Sorachai allegedly grabbed Suphakit by the neck. Following the dispute, Suphakit returned home.

Police said Sorachai and another friend later went to Suphakit's house in Karon to continue discussing the disagreement. The confrontation escalated into an

argument and alleged assault outside the home despite efforts by family members to calm the situation.

Investigators said Suphakit retreated inside but was followed by Sorachai. He then allegedly armed himself with a sword and chased the group from the property, attacking them.

Sorachai sustained fatal injuries during the attack. A neighbour, Praphat Saobai, 37, who reportedly tried to intervene, suffered a wound to his right heel.

Suphakit was taken into custody and initially charged with causing bodily harm resulting in death. The case remains under investigation.

Saudi man caught with ketamine

A SAUDI ARABIAN MAN was arrested at Phuket International Airport after officers allegedly found ketamine capsules concealed in his underwear as he prepared to board an international flight.

The 28-year-old suspect, identified only as 'Safi', was detained at the airport's international departures terminal in Mai Khao at about 8pm on June 3.

Police said the suspect had checked in and passed through Immigration when a body scan triggered an alarm, leading to a more detailed search.

Officers allegedly discovered 63 capsules containing about 32



Photo: Sakhu Police

grams of ketamine hidden inside a cloth bag in his underwear. Two iPhones were also seized.

Safi was handed over to investigators at Sakhu Police Station and charged with attempting to export a Category 2 narcotic without permission, possession of a Category 2 narcotic, and Customs Act offences.

Police said the investigation is continuing. *Eakkapop Thongtub*

Tuk-tuk driver claims drugged, robbed by 'coffee' woman

A PATONG TUK-TUK DRIVER claims he was drugged by an unidentified woman before valuables worth more than B300,000 were stolen while he was unconscious.

Patong Police were notified at 5:47am on June 5 after 53-year-old driver Somnuk Chanagkul was found unconscious and taken to Patong Hospital.

Mr Somnuk told police he had picked up a Thai woman at about 9pm the previous evening and driven her to Karon to help film a video. After returning to the Kalim area, the woman offered him a cup of coffee, saying she wanted him to sample it as she planned to open a coffee business.



Photo: Patong Police

After drinking the coffee, Mr Somnuk said he became drowsy and fell asleep.

When he woke, he discovered that a gold necklace valued at more than B300,000 and his mobile phone were missing.

Police noted that Mr Somnuk appeared disoriented when giving his statement. Officers said the investigation was continuing.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Pride parade draws thousands

The Phuket News

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Thousands of people lined the streets of Patong last Sunday (June 7) as Phuket Pride Parade 2026 filled the resort town with rainbow flags, colourful costumes and messages of equality in what organisers described as the largest Pride parade ever held on the island.

The parade, one of the flagship events of Phuket Pride Festival 2026, began at 5pm from the area in front of Duangjitt Resort & Spa on Ratchapranukroh Rd before making its way along Patong Beach and through Bangla Rd, drawing large crowds of residents, tourists and LGBTQIAN+ supporters from Thailand and abroad.

Organised by the Andaman Power Phuket Association in partnership with Patong Municipality and a broad network of public and private-sector organisations, this year's festival was held under the theme 'Be Loud, Be Proud, Be You'.

Patong Mayor Lalita Maneesri joined municipal



Photo: Patong Municipality

officials, community leaders and representatives from government agencies in the procession. Also attending were Anekchai Ruan-gratanakorn, adviser to the Minister of Social Development and Human Security, Phuket MPs Orathai Kerdsut and Chalermpong Saengdee, and Andaman Power Phuket Association President Supakorn Suwan.

According to organisers, more than 40 parade contingents joined the procession, making it the largest Phuket Pride parade to date.

The parade concluded at Jungceylon shopping centre, where the official Phuket

Pride Festival 2026 ceremony was held at Arena Bay. The evening featured performances by Simon Cabaret Phuket, Cruise Club Phuket and artists from The Voice Pride Thailand, alongside entertainment promoting understanding, acceptance and equal rights for LGBTQIAN+ communities.

Officials said the festival reflects Phuket's commitment to creating an inclusive society while strengthening the island's reputation as a welcoming international destination for visitors of all backgrounds, cultures and identities.

Organisers also highlighted the significance of

2026 as Phuket prepares to host the InterPride General Meeting and World Conference later this year, an international gathering expected to bring LGBTQIAN+ advocates and organisations from around the world to the island.

The parade followed a week of Pride-related activities, including the Phuket Unfiltered Pride Talk forum held in Patong on June 4.

The forum brought together government officials, business leaders, community representatives and LGBTQIAN+ advocates to discuss diversity, equality and the creation of safe spaces across Phuket.

The event was designed to provide a platform for young people, workers and local residents to contribute ideas for future policies aimed at improving well-being and fostering greater inclusion under the concept of a 'City of All-Inclusion'.

Discussions focused on creative city development, the MICE industry and ways to improve quality of life for Phuket residents while strengthening the island's reputation as a welcoming destination for people of all backgrounds.

WE ARE ONE

Pride celebrations continue later this month with Phuket City Pride 2026, scheduled for June 27 in Phuket Old Town under the theme 'We Are One – Rak Kan Pen Nueng' ('We Are One').

The event is being organised by Phuket City Municipality in partnership with Andaman Charoen Co Ltd, Team Phuket (Phuket City Pride), Old Town community groups and private-sector partners.

Phuket Town Mayor Suppachoke La-ongphet said the event aims to reinforce Phuket's status as

an international tourist destination that welcomes diversity and promotes equal rights for all.

The highlight will be a Pride parade featuring more than 25 floats and over 2,000 participants. The procession will begin at Queen Sirikit Park (Dragon Square) at 5pm and proceed through Phuket Old Town to the Charter Bank intersection.

Organisers said more than 30 celebrities and entertainers are expected to join the parade, including Jennifer Kim, Kai Varayuth Milintachinda, Rasamee Khae Fa Kueanlon and Hay Apaporn Nakhonsawan.

Additional activities will include a Pride Paint art competition, dance challenges, the Miss Phuket City Pride 2026 contest and a mini-concert headlined by Hay Apaporn on Phang Nga Rd.

Organisers said the June 27 event is intended not only as a celebration of the LGBTQIAN+ community but also as a festival for all residents and visitors, promoting acceptance, inclusion and the message that Phuket is a city that welcomes everyone.

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Policy expert backs Phuket SEZ

The Phuket News
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One of Thailand's leading policy and economic thinkers has thrown his support behind plans to establish a Phuket Special Economic Zone (PVN-SEZ), arguing that the island has the potential to become a regional hub for innovation, investment and human capital development.

Professor Dr Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, President of the Institute for Nation-Building and a senior scholar affiliated with Harvard University, presented the vision during a seminar held at the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) offices on June 4.

The event, titled 'Phuket Special Economic Zone (PVN-SEZ) or Pilicon Valley for Nation-Building', was organised by the Institute for Nation-Building to promote discussion on transforming Phuket into a future special economic zone capable of driving sustainable economic growth.

PPAO President Rewat Areerob attended the seminar alongside Phuket Provincial Public Relations Officer Wimol Nukaeo, representatives from government agencies, business organisations, educational institutions and local residents.



Photo: PR Phuket

Dr Kriengsak, affectionately called 'Dr Dan' by the Thai media, outlined a concept he described as 'Pilicon Valley for Nation-Building', a development model aimed at positioning Phuket as a centre for innovation, technology, investment and talent development in Southeast Asia.

He said the proposal would build on Phuket's existing strengths, including its internationally recognised tourism industry, developed infrastructure and global transport connections.

According to Dr Kriengsak, the creation of a special economic zone would help increase Phuket's competitiveness, attract high-quality investment and generate new economic opportunities while improving residents' quality of life.

"Developing Phuket into a

'Pilicon Valley' is not only about creating a new economic centre, but also about laying the foundations for an innovation-driven economy, attracting international investment and quality personnel, and creating sustainable economic opportunities," he said.

He added that the long-term goal was for Phuket to become both a national and international centre for economic innovation, helping drive Thailand's future economic development.

Dr Kriengsak is one of Thailand's best-known public policy commentators and academics. He holds bachelor's and doctoral degrees in economics from Monash University in Australia, a Master of Public Administration degree from Harvard Kennedy School, a

master's degree from Cambridge Judge Business School at the University of Cambridge, and completed postdoctoral studies at the University of Oxford.

Speaking at the seminar, Supat Pongpreecha, a participant in the fifth Advanced Management for Nation-Building programme, said the initiative seeks to create a model for economic development that balances growth with the preservation of Thai cultural identity.

"The objective is to raise Phuket's potential as an important mechanism for national development while maintaining cultural values for future generations," he said.

Organisers described the PVN-SEZ concept as a strategy for creating sustainable economic growth and enhancing Phuket's role as a key contributor to Thailand's long-term economic future.

The proposal comes as Phuket continues to explore ways to diversify its economy beyond tourism and strengthen its position as one of Thailand's leading international destinations for investment and innovation.

However, the proposal also comes amid continuing debate over Phuket's future governance and economic development model.

Earlier this year, the Bhumjaithai Party pledged to pursue Special Economic Zone status for Phuket as part of its platform in campaigning for the Feb 8 national election, arguing that the island should be allowed to retain a greater share of locally generated revenue to address infrastructure, environmental and public service challenges.

Yet, despite the high-profile promise, no draft legislation, policy framework or implementation timeline has yet been made public, prompting criticism from opposition MPs who have questioned whether the proposal will advance beyond campaign rhetoric.

Debate has also emerged over whether Phuket's long-term challenges would be better addressed through Special Economic Zone status or broader decentralisation reforms that would grant local authorities greater administrative and budgetary powers.

Dr Kriengsak's 'Pilicon Valley' vision adds a new dimension to the discussion, focusing on Phuket's potential to become a regional centre for innovation, technology, investment and human capital development while serving as a model for future economic growth in Thailand.

Phuket on show at IMEX Frankfurt

THE PHUKET PROVINCIAL Administrative Organisation (PPAO) joined local tourism industry representatives in Germany last month to promote Phuket as a leading destination for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE), as the island prepares to host several major international events in 2026.

A delegation led by PPAO officials attended IMEX Frankfurt 2026, described as the world's largest MICE trade exhibition, held in Frankfurt from May 19-21.

The Phuket delegation included PPAO Finance Division Director Malee Taweepongsak, Transportation Affairs Division Director Darunee Chansin, and PPAO councillors Aphinan Wongna and Setthasak Buason. They were joined by representatives of the Phuket Tourist Association and 11 Phuket tourism businesses.

According to organisers, the event provided an opportunity to strengthen Phuket's position in the global MICE market and showcase the island's readiness to host large-scale international events.

Officials noted that Phuket has experienced continued growth as a MICE destination and is set to host three major international events next year: the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) conference, InterPride 2026 and the Global Wellness Summit (GWS) 2026.



Photo: Phuket Tourist Association

The PPAO said participation in IMEX Frankfurt was aimed at reinforcing Phuket's brand as a destination with developed transport infrastructure, internationally recognised service standards and a commitment to sustainable tourism development.

The promotion campaign was also aligned with the launch of Thailand's new 'MaxiMICE Thailand' branding initiative by the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB).

The initiative is built around three strategic pillars: convenience, highlighting infrastructure readiness, transport connectivity and smart event solutions; experience, focused on culture, creativity and Thai hospitality; and impact, promoting Thailand as a sustainable destination that delivers positive outcomes for business, society and the environment.

Officials said the MICE sector remains a high-value tourism market, with delegates typically spending significantly more than leisure travellers, making it an important segment for Phuket's tourism development strategy.

The Phuket News

Russian condo transfers surge by 33%

RUSSIA WAS THE ONLY nationality among the top five foreign buyers by both unit transfers and transfer value to record growth in Thailand's condominium market during the first quarter of 2026, with Phuket posting the highest transaction value.

According to the Real Estate Information Center (REIC), condominium transfers to Russians rose 33% year-on-year to 383 units worth B1.66 billion, up 69% in value from the same period last year.

The increase made Russians the second-largest foreign buyer group by both transfer volume and value, overtaking Myanmar, which held that position in the first quarter of 2025.

Chinese buyers, though remaining the largest foreign group in both periods, posted the sharpest decline. Transfers dropped 39% to 906 units worth B3.5bn, down 43% in value year-on-year.

Myanmar fell to third place in the first quarter of 2026, with condominium transfers declining 36% to 279 units and their value falling 39% to B968 million.



Photo: Bangkok Post

Taiwan, which ranked fourth in both periods, also recorded a significant contraction, with transfers falling 31% to 136 units worth B688mn, down 24% in value.

The US remained in fifth place, with 138 transferred units worth B685mn, representing declines of 6% in volume and 16.5% in value.

Phuket recorded the highest condominium transfer value for Russian buyers, totalling B1.06bn from 156 units, accounting for 64% of their total transfer value nationwide and indicating strong demand for high-priced units.

Russian buyers also represented 44% of the total foreign condominium transfer value in Phuket, which amounted to B2.43bn from

420 units in the first quarter.

Russians also tend to buy condominiums by following existing communities. They previously concentrated in Jomtien, where large Russian communities and Russian-speaking agents actively marketed condominium projects to them, said Surachet Kongcheep, head of research at property consultancy Cushman & Wakefield Thailand.

Mr Surachet said domestic issues in Russia had also encouraged overseas investment, while difficulties in transferring funds due to Russian banks being excluded from the SWIFT international payment system now appeared to have eased for both developers and buyers.

Bangkok Post

Thaksin receives royal pardon

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra was granted royal pardon in celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's 4th cycle birthday anniversary on June 3.

Justice Minister Pol Lt Gen Rutthapon Naowarat confirmed the former premier would be released from his sentence immediately.

"Under the law, he is released at once because he has less than one year of his sentence remaining, in accordance with Section 8," he said, referring to Section 8 of the 2026 Royal Decree on Royal Pardons.

Mr Rutthapon also confirmed Thaksin's electronic tag would also be removed immediately.

Thaksin was, prior to the announcement, on a four-month probationary parole that began on May 11 and was scheduled to complete his sentence on Sept 9, 2026. During that period, he was required to report to his probation officer once a month.

The royal pardon immediately terminates his probation period, meaning he is no longer required to report to probation authorities and does not have to wait until Sept 9 for his sentence to expire.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul congratulated Thaksin on his receiving a royal pardon, but declined to comment further to reporters.



Thaksin Shinawatra greets supporters after being released on parole from Klong Prem Central Prison on May 11. Photo: Pattarapong Chatpattarasill

Thaksin's daughter Pintongtha Shinawatra Kunakornwong said the family was deeply grateful and delighted by the news, speaking through tears.

"I am happy for my father, for our family, and for all the other families whose loved ones have also received a royal pardon," she said.

She had spoken with her younger sister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, a former prime minister, and they shared the same sense of relief and joy.

"A period of time has passed and things have been relatively calm recently, but we are very happy about this. We feel deeply honoured and grateful for the freedom that has been granted," Ms Pintongta said.

Thaksin, 76, was sent to prison on

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 his prolonged stay in a VIP ward at the Police General Hospital between 2023 and 2024 as qualifying for prison time. It said it considered as illegitimate the transfer of Thaksin from the Bangkok Remand Prison shortly after his arrival there to the Police General Hospital after he complained of chest pain.

The Supreme Court on Aug 22, 2023 ordered Thaksin to serve the year's imprisonment to which he was sentenced two years earlier.

B14bn spent in week one of co-payment scheme

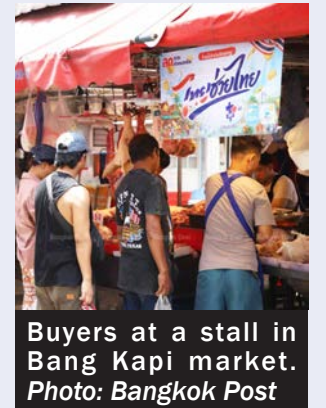
BANGKOK

ABOUT B14 BILLION was spent in the first week of the government's Thais Help Thais Plus co-payment scheme, according to a government spokeswoman.

Deputy spokeswoman Lalida Persvivatana said last Sunday (June 7) that 26.04 million people registered for the scheme which began on June 1 and 21.85mn, 84%, had already benefitted from it.

As of 5pm last Saturday, those 21.85mn members had paid B5.89bn for goods purchased under the 40-60% co-payment scheme, and the government paid the balance, B8.20bn.

Ms Lalida said 997,573 vendors had registered and were participating, of which 866,459 had also taken part in an earlier co-payment scheme and 131,114 were new participants. Another 3,613 vendors' applica-



Buyers at a stall in Bang Kapi market. Photo: Bangkok Post

tions were still being processed and 112,817 others had yet to accept the terms and conditions.

To date 925,033 shops had processed purchases under the scheme.

As of 11pm last Friday, 142,610 people had already used up their B1,000 subsidy for this month. The government plans the co-payment scheme to last four months. It covers spending on consumer products and commuter fares.

The co-payment scheme will also cover expenditure on food deliveries from June 15, Ms Lalida said.

Bangkok Post

Scam victims sue Meta, Apple, Line and banks

BANGKOK

THE THAILAND CONSUMERS Council confirmed on Monday (June 8) it is representing 10 scam victims suing internet platform operators Meta, Apple, Line and banks for B230 million in total damages.

Lawyer Nannapatsorn Techapanyapipat said the complaints targeted Meta Platforms Inc which owns Facebook, Line, Apple and banks.

The victims were lured with scam advertisements on Facebook, invited to join investment scam groups on Line and transferred money to scam gangs through the systems of banks.

Ms Nannapatsorn said her clients had wanted to learn about the securities exchange and searched for relevant information in Facebook. The platform then presented investment scam pages which showed the pictures of well-known investment gurus.

The victims then were invited to join Line groups where they were "educated" about stock trading and watched trainers' clips.



A scam victim at court. Photo: Bangkok Post

Afterwards the victims were lured into trading securities through apps that they had to download from the Apple Store. Then they were scammed.

Saree Aongsomwang, secretary-general of the Thailand Consumers Council, said the overseas parent companies controlled content on their platforms, received revenue shares and made profit from content. Therefore, the legal action targeted the mother companies, not their Thailand-based branches which had only supportive responsibilities.

Ms Saree said the banks that handled transactions for scam networks should have noticed the illicit business

activity and prevented the victims transferring money to scammers.

The demanded restitution totals B230mn and the action now initiated will help protect other innocent people, she said.

One of the complainants told reporters she lost B165mn to one of the investment scams. She had been lured by people on Facebook and Line into downloading an investment app from the Apple Store.

She had previously filed complaints with government organisations, but they had not been heeded.

The Civil Court will convene a meeting of the parties concerned on Aug 3.

Bangkok Post

Brit in doctor's death case faces nominee business charges

KOH PHA-NGAN

A BRITISH MOTORCYCLIST charged in the death of a prominent doctor on Koh Pha-ngan will also face charges of running a tour boat business through a Thai nominee.

The suspect, Duncan Wilcock, 51, has already been charged with reckless driving causing serious injury, fleeing the scene of an accident, driving without a valid licence, operating an unregistered vehicle without compulsory insurance, drug use and driving under the influence of alcohol causing serious injury.

The charges have now been upgraded to reckless driving causing death.

The victim, Assoc Prof Dr Theerasak Kawamatawong, 53, was pronounced dead at Ramathibodhi Hospital last Sunday (June 7).

The doctor had suffered severe brain trauma after allegedly being struck by Wilcock's motorcycle on the night of May 23.

Police expanded their investigation to Wilcock's business activities and allege he set up a nominee structure to illegally operate a tour boat business, acting as a shareholder in Reef Charter Co Ltd. The company had one managing director, identified as Jamnong Rungruang, who later admitted he was merely a boat driver occasionally hired by Wilcock.



Koh Pha-ngan police take Wilcock into custody. Photo: Bangkok Post

Although company records showed two shareholders, Mr Wilcock (49%) and Mr Jamnong (51%), Mr Jamnong allegedly said he had not actually invested in the business.

Four additional nominee-related charges against Mr Wilcock include submitting false information to authorities, operating a tourism business restricted to Thai nationals, allowing a Thai national to assist in a prohibited foreign business, and operating a business without proper permission.

According to police investigators, the suspect confessed to all charges during questioning.

Further investigation revealed that Ameena Accounting Phangan Co Ltd was involved in establishing the nominee structure. The accounting firm was reportedly part of a broader network previously targeted in a crackdown on foreign nominee businesses on May 23.

Bangkok Post

When Not to Use AI



THE AI EDGE

Joe Smith

A friend asked if I could help him use AI to save time and cut costs at his Phuket business. I didn't take the job, and the reasons why might save you time and money too.

This small business provided villa maintenance. It had two non-technical managers but many labourers. The main headache: 150-odd site reports emailed to clients at every month's end. Details sat in a spreadsheet; the emails were handwritten.

Other pain points: social media and website enquiries, and the inspection calendar.

What prompted him to ask was hearing friends rave about using AI to automate whole swathes of their businesses while they hit the surf.

I asked Claude how we could help. "Don't use AI" was its surprising response. Don't try to fully automate these processes, it continued – that won't be worth the setup and monitoring costs. All these problems are amenable to sub-AI solutions.

The scheduling problem, Claude thought, was crying out for a shared Google Calendar. A chatbot for social media enquiries would be a sledgehammer for a business this size and would still need human oversight. The

monthly reporting issue could be handled by existing off-the shelf software like SafetyCulture that would read inspectors' site notes and insert them into a report template and mail scheduler.

These responses underlined the truth that AI is still not intuitive or smart enough for you to simply say, for example, "this is my business, deal with social media enquiries".

It will get that smart, though, and soon. Here's how AI catches up: two years ago I was using Gemini for legal research and wanted to search my emails for relevant documents. I'd exhausted keywords and was trying to build a knowledge base from my Gmail archive with a bespoke LLM I could query in natural language. It could absolutely be done, but had already taken weeks and was above my technical pay grade – frustrating and time-consuming.

AI chops

Then one day I woke up and presto, Google had integrated Gemini into Gmail. It did exactly what I wanted, with no further effort from me.

My friend's business problems will likewise be non-issues one day. What he should do in the meantime – this is my tuppence worth, not Claude's – is make sure he is competent enough with AI so, on that day, he is ready.

This happens by using AI in daily life. And my friend's monthly report headache is an ideal problem to develop his AI chops. Far better that he use AI



Image: Joe Smith

to find a non-AI solution than me because of course he knows his business better, and will benefit more from the process.

I suggested he get the \$20-a-month (B650) paid for version of Gemini. The paid-for versions of the top models are streets ahead of the free ones. Crucially, they better remember your past conversations, so you can really build on your interactions with it.

Claude is actually a better model currently than Gemini, but Gemini integrates seamlessly with other free apps my friend might use, like Gmail, Drive, Docs and Calendar.

He should have a frank dialogue with Gemini about his problem. He should say, "I'm going to ask for your help to improve monthly reporting at

my company. I'm new to AI so you'll also need to tell me how I should instruct you." My friend would then explain his business and his problem as best he can, and ask, "what further information do you need from me to give me the best responses?"

Non-AI solutions are still optimal for many business problems, but do use AI to find out what they are.

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.

The July/August 2026 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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Decision Fatigue: Why Your Brain Quits Before You Do

WELLTHWISE

Libby Heath

Before your feet hit the floor in the morning, many of us have already made a surprising number of decisions. Should I get up? Should I press snooze? Am I working out, or am I suddenly very committed to “recovery”? Most of these choices seem harmless. But over time, their steady accumulation can quietly erode patience, clarity and mental energy. This is known as decision fatigue: the decline in judgment quality that can happen after constant choice-making, especially when those selections involve uncertainty, complexity or emotional weight.

As demands rise, the brain starts conserving effort. Instead of carefully weighing options, we rely on shortcuts, default to familiar routines, avoid choosing, or simply do what feels easiest; taking the path of least resistance.

The principle is well supported: repeated mental demands, stress and competing options can impair executive function, increase fatigue and reduce decision quality.

Your prefrontal cortex – the part of the brain involved in planning, judgment, and self-control – likes thoughtful deliberation. It does not enjoy being treated like an all-day customer service hotline.

This kind of mental depletion rarely arrives dramatically. More often, it comes in like the tide – slowly, steadily, until clear thinking is operating in shallower water.

Think of bubble wrap. Imagine waking up each morning with a fresh sheet. With every decision – no matter how mundane – a bubble pops. Some days, you still have plenty of bubbles left. Other days, they go so quickly it sounds like a fireworks display.

Visualise navigating congested roads in Phuket or weaving through chaos on Interstate-95. Your brain is



Photo: Supplied

constantly assessing, adjusting, anticipating, braking, merging and quietly jockeying for position.

Pop. Pop. Pop.

Mental overload

Years ago, when I worked in sales across a large territory, I often spent seven or eight hours driving busy highways. By the time I made it home I was exhausted – not from lifting anything heavier than a briefcase, but from making hundreds of small decisions. When asked something as simple as what I wanted to eat, I often had no answer.

I eventually learned to say, “All my bubbles have popped.”

That became shorthand for something kind and practical: I was mentally spent, and it was time for someone else to take over.

Suppose you are dealing with persistent knee pain. You begin sensibly: rest, perhaps physical therapy. But the pain continues. What next? Imaging? A specialist? Then come online opinions, conflicting advice, cost, scheduling and uncertainty. What began as thoughtful analysis can quietly harden into paralysis.

Mental overload rarely arrives with drama. More often, it appears as a quiet internal shrug: I will deal with it next week.

Travel creates a different kind of strain. After a long-haul flight, immigration lines, baggage problems, transport logistics, unfamiliar currency and poor sleep, even simple choices can start to deteriorate. That may mean overpaying for convenience, skipping something important, or making impulsive food or spending

decisions because the brain is trying to conserve effort.

Decision fatigue does not discriminate. We are all vulnerable. When the brain is asked to process too much for too long, clarity begins to fray.

So, what helps?

The goal is not eliminating decisions. It is preserving energy for the important ones. Routinise ordinary choices. Eating a few reliable breakfasts, checking email at set times, scheduling follow-ups before leaving the clinic, or using the same packing checklist all reduce friction. Steve Jobs had the black turtleneck. You do not need that level of commitment.

Timing matters. Executive function declines when we are tired, stressed, hungry or overloaded. If possible, make major health, financial, or emotionally heavy decisions when mentally fresh – not at 9pm after comparing flight schedules, reconciling bank statements, or trying to get your Wi-Fi printer to cooperate.

Less is often better. Narrowing options reduces overwhelm and improves follow-through. Compare a few hotel options rather than 17. Research one health issue at a time. Abundance can be useful. Excess can be exhausting.

Checklists help for the same reason. Aviation and healthcare rely on them: they reduce mental clutter and avoid preventable mistakes. Anyone who has forgotten a passport, charger, or prescription refill already understands this.

Make room for recovery. Brief walks, food, sleep, hydration and short pauses help restore attention. Your brain deserves an intermission.

That is the real goal: protecting your mental clarity for the decisions that matter most. And now, if you will excuse me, it is time for my nap.

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



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POP QUIZ

1. What type of animal is a Samoyed?
2. In which country did draughts (checkers) originate?
3. Which drink did Bach enjoy so much he wrote a cantata for it?
4. What is Erse?
5. On oometer measures what?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

1. Paperlike cloth
6. Apple variety
10. Window part
14. Owning land
15. Carbon compound
16. Arch type
17. Head starts
20. Military cap
21. Channel
22. Anxiety
23. Defunct ruler
25. Hit ground
27. Dust remover
30. "You betcha!"
32. Has a mortgage
36. Frenzied
38. Bauxite, e.g.
39. Gingrich
40. Head starts
44. Case
45. Do exist
46. The "N" of U.N.C.F.
47. Microprocessor type
48. Calculator grid
51. Precognition (abbr.)
52. Wounded ____
54. "____ my word!"

56. Pond buildup

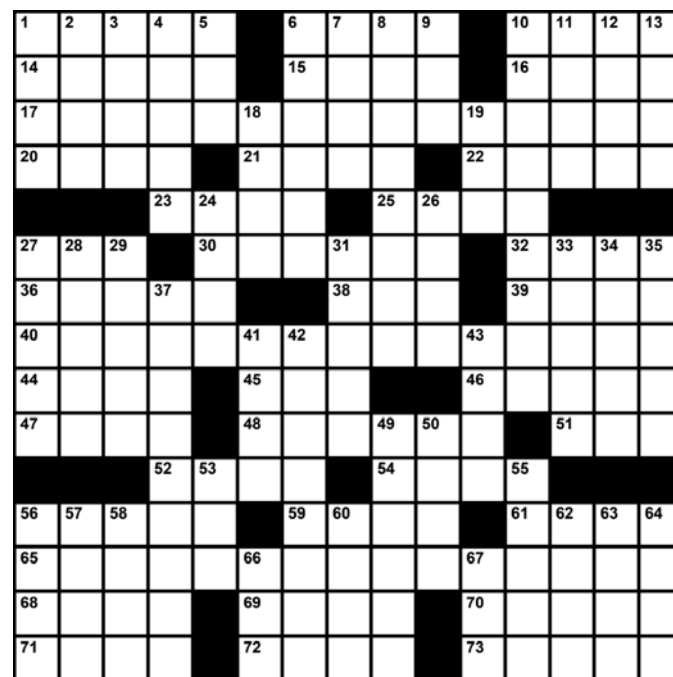
59. 1987 Costner role
61. Greek letter
65. Head starts
68. Flu symptoms
69. Bog
70. Fred of hockey
71. Form
72. Aspersions
73. Itsy-bitsy bits

Down

1. Approach
2. Feel pity
3. Strengthen, with "up"
4. European gull
5. Obstacle to learning
6. Actor Depardieu
7. Soon, to a bard
8. Mooning
9. A pint, maybe
10. Metaphysical poet
11. All excited
12. Ryan and Tilly
13. One-up
18. Flair
19. Amscrayed
24. "The Open Window" writer
26. Blown away
27. More crude
28. Cremona artisan
29. Masters
31. Bunk
33. Shoe type
34. Cream vessels
35. Razor sharpener
37. "My Little ____"
41. Camp sight
42. Dowel
43. Annul
49. Narc's target
50. "Spirit" rock band
53. Colo. neighbor
55. Dusk to dawn
56. First fellow?
57. Child's building brick
58. Showy trinket
60. Almond
62. Sundae topper, perhaps
63. Course
64. Stirs
66. Dash lengths
67. Group w. troops

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Dog; 2) Egypt; 3) Coffee; 4) Irish Gaelic language; 5) Birds Eggs



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

WAS	ATHENA	AXES
HUE	CRAVES	NEXT
ORE	CAVEAT	INTO
MAKE	OVER	THE MOON
GLEN	EVENLY	
PLURAL	GONE	
AIR	ED	SART
RAISE	THE	BARM
ARCS	OILS	ERODE
SUMS	DAISES	
UNCIAL	SEPT	
TURN	COAT	OF PAINT
TREK	UVULAE	NAY
ESSE	SENECA	FAR
RETD	ERASER	ONO

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

3

Academy Awards were won by Sylvester the Cat, more than any other Looney Toons character.

54

years is how long a person can eat out at a different restaurant every night in New York City and not eat at the same place twice.

100

lightning strikes happen around the world every second

80,000

miles of steel wire is how long the two main cables on the Golden Gate Bridge are when unraveled – long enough to circle the equator three times.

1.81 trillion

kilograms of TNT exploding releases the equivalent amount of energy to that released by a magnitude 9 earthquake.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Touching down in Phuket at Mai Khao Beach. Photo by Gus Chesterton

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

This week in history

June 12, 1665

Thomas Willett is appointed the first mayor of New York City.

June 13, 2005

The jury acquits pop singer Michael Jackson of his charges for allegedly sexually molesting a child in 1993.

June 14, 1158

The city of Munich is found-

ed by Henry the Lion on the banks of the river Isar.

June 15, 1977

After the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975, the first democratic elections take place in Spain.

June 16, 1824

A meeting at Old Slaughter's coffee house in London leads to the formation of what is now the Royal



O. J. Simpson

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

June 17, 1994

Following a televised low-

speed highway chase, O. J. Simpson is arrested for the murders of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend Ronald Goldman.

June 18, 618

Li Yuan becomes Emperor Gaozu of Tang, initiating three centuries of Tang dynasty rule over China.

Source: Wikipedia

Trades & Services

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TUE

16 JUNE

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. 1st Tue each month - Fellowship dinner at different locations in Phuket, 3rd Tue each month - dinner meeting at Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong. Join us! if you are passionate about making a difference. More info - www.facebook.com/RCoPB

THU

25 JUNE



Skål Phuket - June Dinner

Join our June host, Emmanuel and his team, for a casual beach chic evening on the beach at Tann's Beach Cub in Karon, enjoying one of the best sunset views on the island with networking drinks and pass around tapas bites. Unlike our usual seated dinners, this event embraces a relaxed cocktail-style format, encouraging members and guests to mingle freely, reconnect with friends, and build new business relationships throughout the evening. Members B1300 - Non-Members B1700. Bookings - contact@skalphuket.org, more info at facebook.com/SkalPhuket

SAT

27 JUNE



Canada Day Phuket Celebration

Celebrate Canada Day in Kamala! Join the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Thailand – Southern Branch for a fun, family-friendly Canada Day celebration at Devil's Bar in Kamala. We'll kick things off at 5:00 PM with kids' activities, followed by a live band from 7:00 PM. Enjoy a relaxed evening of community, music, good company, and a buffet featuring a few Canadian treats. Buffet: 200 THB for adults and 100 THB for kids. All Canadians, friends of Canada, and Canadians for a day are welcome – so bring the family, wear a little red and white, and come celebrate with us! Please click through to register for the kids' activities so we can plan accordingly.

FRI

3 JULY



Grow Boating Phuket Evening - July 2026

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Phuket Evening at the Bluu Asian Kitchen & Bar at the Royal Phuket Marina from 5pm. Sponsorship for drinks is available for just 12,000 baht and includes a generous promotional package from our media sponsors The Phuket News and Phuket Live Radio - Live 89.5. Send us a message or email growboatingphuket@gmail.com for more details. There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by Bluu Asian Kitchen & 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. If you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket

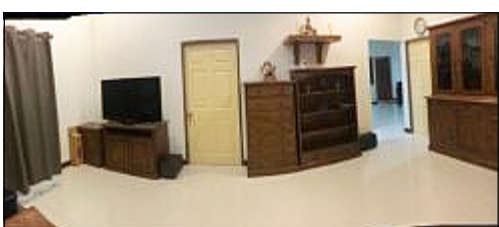
PROPERTY FOR SALE



Relocating Property must sell

Urgent sale as owner relocating, Farang style house 300 metres 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 highway, 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.

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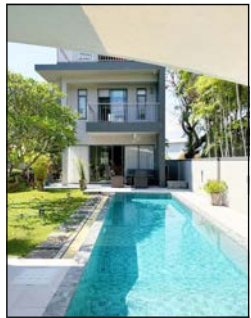
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GROW BOATING PHUKET EVENING - JUNE 2026

The Grow Boating Phuket Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the Phuket Boat Lagoon was held on June 5. Special thanks to the joint drinks sponsors for the evening, the Thailand Boat Festival and Derani Yachts. Both are based at Phuket Boat Lagoon, See ThailandBoatFestival.com and Derani-Yachts.com. Not only did they provide drinks they also treated the huge crowd to burgers and roasted suckling pig, all of which didn't last long. As always delicious canapés were sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar. Come and join in the fun next month, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. Find out more on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GrowBoatingPhuket





Photo: PR Phuket

Pride as Patong hosts Beach Volleyball comp

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

PATONG PLAYED HOST to a major beach volleyball competition on May 31 as part of this year's Phuket Pride celebrations.

The 2026 Beach Volleyball Open was held at a temporary court constructed near the Bangla Police Box at Patong Beach, which saw a crowd of enthusiastic fans cheering on a range of competing teams.

Patong Mayor Lalita Maneesri oversaw the closing ceremony for the event, where prizes and trophies were awarded to winning the teams.

The 2026 Beach Volleyball Open was one of the main activities under the Phuket Pride 2026 event in Patong, a collaboration between

Patong Municipality, the Andaman Power Association Phuket, and related partners.

This year, Phuket is stepping onto the world stage as the host city for the InterPride World Conference 2026, reflecting its readiness as a diverse, open, and friendly city. This initiative aims to elevate Patong's image as an LGBT+ destination and drive soft power and the creative economy based on equality and diversity.

In addition to promoting exercise and good health the event fostered unity, understanding and coexistence based on respect for diversity, a vital force in driving Patong towards becoming a sustainable international tourist destination, organisers said.

The Phuket News

Cool Kimi wins in Monaco

FORMULA ONE

AFP

Teenage sensation Kimi Antonelli continued his record-breaking drive to glory last Sunday (June 7) when he became the youngest winner of the Monaco Grand Prix and the first Italian to win five consecutive races since 1952.

In an extended, stoppage-strewn race, the 19-year-old led from start to finish to claim a nerveless triumph for Mercedes that lifted him 66 points clear of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton of Ferrari in the drivers' championship.

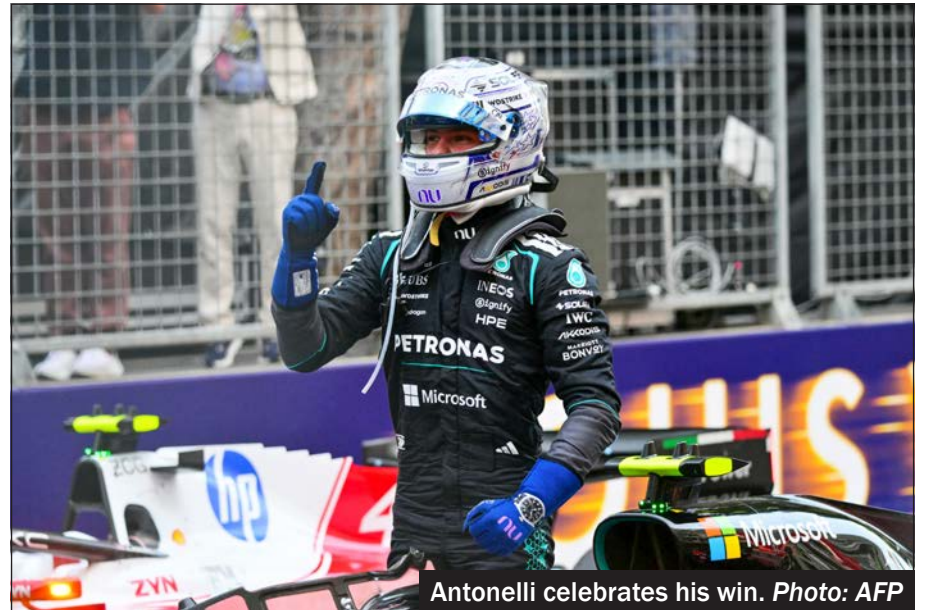
Hamilton, the previous holder of the youngest winner record in the principality, finished second with Isack Hadjar third for Red Bull after battling a threatened power failure all race long.

"That's too many wins now, buddy," Hamilton, 41, joked with Antonelli in the drivers' cool-down room. His own career-best run of five wins in a record total of 105 had been equalled by the Italian in his first sequence following his maiden victory in China.

For Antonelli, it was more spectacular confirmation of a prodigious talent and momentum that has catapulted him to stardom this year.

"It's been an incredible weekend and an incredible race," he said.

"It's one of those days when we had incredible pace. It was just



Antonelli celebrates his win. Photo: AFP

coming all so naturally. The car was feeling incredible and was just giving me the confidence to push. It was a very enjoyable day.

"We're going to keep pushing and keep raising the bar and try to keep performing like this."

The nerveless Italian was unfazed by the stoppages, including a standing re-start with eight laps remaining.

"To be fair, I wasn't super keen on re-starting," he said.

"Once I got away, I knew I would make it into the first corner and from that point on I enjoyed the last few laps."

Oscar Piastri finished fourth for McLaren ahead of Racing Bulls' Liam Lawson and Arvid Lindblad.

Sergio Perez initially finished 10th,

which would have earned the new Cadillac team their first point.

However, he dropped down to last place after being handed a 10-second penalty for a starting box infringement.

Seven drivers were penalised unexpectedly for speeding in the pit lane and had five-second penalties that affected the final result.

It was a career-best for both Racing Bulls drivers as Hamilton equalled Ayrton Senna's record total of eight Monaco podiums.

Four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull suffered an engine failure at the start and retired, as did world champion Lando Norris when his McLaren had battery problems.

Penguins clinch league title

CRICKET

Continued from page 16

As play resumed Myburgh removed run-scoring rival Ashton in just the second over of the innings. Any thoughts of an easy victory for the Penguins were swiftly quashed however, as Ben Simpson (37) and Andrew McMillan (28) punished some ordinary fielding as the pair found the boundary with regularity. With almost half the runs required already scored, Langston capitalised on a mix-up in the middle when running out Cherng Talay skipper Mcmillan in the 9th over to provide the much-needed breakthrough.

Spurred on by the arrival of stalwart Anthony Van Blerk, the Penguins' fortunes continued to improve as Brar cleaned up Cam (6) in the 10th over before Langston struck twice the very next over to reduce the Tsunamis to 90/5, still 64 runs short of the target.

Just a handful of runs were added before Langston continued his match-defining spell with a double wicket- maiden in the 12th over. Victor (13) added some much-needed resistance before a smart Sajal Gaur run-out brought his side within one wicket of victory.

With the run-rate required still a manageable 5 runs per-over, Burges (12*) and Josh Linthorne (12) looked to



Photo: Supplied

edge their side closer to victory with a solid 25-run stand before Myburgh removed the latter in the 23rd over, thus sealing both the match and league honours for his side.

In the post game presentations Langston was clear man-of-the-match for his decisive spell of 4-29 from 5 overs.

The league's best bowler award went to Burges for his combined 10 wicket-haul over the course of the league whilst Brar and KCC's Imtiyaz Mushtaq both finished on 8 wickets apiece.

Myburgh claimed a well-earned double in both leading run scorer and league MVP awards in marginally edging out Ashton in both categories.

With the current pitch being replaced by a brand-new concrete astro wicket, no cricket will be played at ACG until the highly anticipated Hua Hin sixes which takes place for a whole week starting on the June 29. *Curt Livermore*

Team Hollywood wins Samui Regatta

SAILING

RAY ROBERTS' *TEAM Hollywood* won the final race of the 23rd Samui Regatta on May 30, as two-time Sydney-to-Hobart winner *Alive* played bridesmaid again on corrected time, despite taking line honours in every race.

Team Hollywood had actually clinched the regatta before the final day, but the last day's win – factoring in the drop race – meant they officially claimed seven races.

The final race saw a two-lap windward-leeward designed to decide third place, with *Iolanthe 3* starting the day leading *Aftershock* by one point. After one lap, *Iolanthe 3* led by just over a minute, but a wind shift on the final leg allowed *Aftershock* to pull away and win by just over five minutes on corrected time. With the two boats finishing tied on points and matching in second-, third-, and fourth-place finishes as well as DNFs, the final race positions served as the tiebreaker. As a result,



Team Hollywood celebrate. Photo: Supplied

Aftershock secured third place.

The regatta's closing party and awards ceremony was held at The Fair House Beach Resort & Hotel, where overall prizes were presented by Admiral Chatchai Thongsard, Vice President of the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand.

During the closing ceremony, the dates for 2027 were announced as May 22-29th May, with the Nora Group and The Fair House both confirming their support for the future event and promised an earlier start with promotion to develop participation.

This year's Regatta ran from May 24-30. Keelboats raced in the IRC Open class, maintaining the event's reputation as a prestigious regional sailing fixture. Centred at Nora Beach Resort and Spa, the event offered participants and spectators an ideal backdrop.

The Samui Regatta Committee organises the event each year in collaboration with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand under the Royal Patronage, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, the Tourism Association of Koh Samui, the Surat Thani Province, and Regatta Asia.

The Phuket News

Five World Cup stars to watch

FOOTBALL

AFP

As the 2026 World Cup kicked off yesterday (June 11), we look at five of the stars expected to shine in the first-ever 48-team finals spread across the United States, Mexico and Canada.

KYLIAN MBAPPE (FRANCE)

Mbappe could become the all-time top goalscorer in World Cup history over the next few weeks, but will cross the Atlantic after a troubled time at Real Madrid.

The 27-year-old is yet to win a major trophy in two seasons at the Spanish giants despite his prolific goalscoring record.

A change of scenery on the international stage could be just what he needs as he aims to write more history on the global stage.

He took the tournament by storm as a teenager in France's 2018 World Cup win. He plundered another eight goals, including a hat-trick in the final, as Les Bleus missed out on



From left: Mbappe, Haaland, Vinicius, Kane and Lamal. Photos: AFP

penalties to Argentina four years ago.

He needs just four more to match Miroslav Klose's record of 16 World Cup goals.

ERLING HAALAND (NORWAY)

Haaland finally gets his first taste of a major international tournament after ending Norway's 28-year wait to reach the World Cup.

The Manchester City striker struck 16 times in eight games during Norway's flawless qualifying campaign that included two thrashings of Italy, taking his tally to a remarkable 55

goals in 49 international appearances.

Haaland is the poster boy for a golden generation of Norwegian players, including Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard, that have been tipped as dark horses.

But Norway have been handed a tough draw alongside France and African champions Senegal in Group I.

VINICIUS JUNIOR (BRAZIL)

Neymar's return to the Brazil squad has caught the imagination, but it is Vinicius' performance that will

likely determine whether Carlo Ancelotti's men end up with a sixth star on the famous yellow jersey.

He and Mbappe have had to share the spotlight in Madrid, but the World Cup gives Vinicius the chance to become a national hero in Brazil and win the Ballon d'Or he craves.

But his record for Brazil is patchy. He scored just once in the World Cup four years ago and has only eight goals in 47 caps overall.

HARRY KANE (ENGLAND)

England's captain and

all-time record goalscorer enters probably his last shot at World Cup glory off the back of a stunning season for Bayern Munich.

Kane scored 58 goals in 50 games as Bayern romped to the Bundesliga title and narrowly missed out on the Champions League final.

At international level he has spearheaded the rise of the Three Lions to serial contenders, but is yet to end his nation's 60-year wait to win a major tournament.

Kane has often been hampered physically at international tournaments,

exhausted by his exertions during the club season.

However, this time his minutes have been managed by Bayern for months as they prioritised a deep run in the Champions League, with the Bundesliga long since won.

LAMINE YAMAL (SPAIN)

The breakout star of Spain's Euro 2024 triumph, Yamal's hopes of taking the world by storm will depend on his recovery from a hamstring injury.

The 18-year-old has not featured since suffering the injury for Barcelona on Apr 22 and could reportedly miss Spain's first two group games against Cape Verde and Saudi Arabia.

After a slow start to the season, Yamal had been in blistering form prior to his injury, scoring 24 goals in all as Barca cruised to a second consecutive La Liga title.

Spain will be confident of negotiating the early stages of the tournament before unleashing the player many regard as the best in the world for the latter stages.

Liverpool appoint Iraola as new boss

FOOTBALL

LIVERPOOL HAVE CONFIRMED Andoni Iraola as their new manager after sacking Arne Slot following a calamitous Premier League title defence.

Iraola quickly emerged as Liverpool's top target to replace Slot, whose two-year reign came to a shock end when he was dismissed on May 30.

Liverpool gave no indication as to the length of the 43-year-old Spaniard's contract but British media have reported that he has signed a two-year deal.

"Really excited, really excited, because obviously you know about Liverpool, you know that it's a big club, a massive club, one of the biggest in the world," Iraola, who called time on his impressive spell with Bournemouth at the end of this season, said.

"But feeling inside and understanding a little bit more of this club, I always thought it's a special club.

"You don't need a lot of things to get attracted by Liverpool. Liverpool is Liverpool."

After criticism of Liverpool's lacklustre performances in Slot's second season at Anfield, Iraola is expected to deliver a more urgent, aggressive style of football, which characterised the team under beloved former manager Jurgen Klopp.

Iraola earned rave reviews for Bournemouth's sixth-place finish in the



Iraola. Photo: AFP

Premier League this season, which secured the club's first qualification for Europe, in the Europa League.

Bournemouth improved each year under Iraola, finishing 12th, ninth and sixth.

He arrived at the south coast club from Raya Vallecano in 2023, having previously managed Mirandes and AEK Larnaca in Cyprus.

Born in Spain's Basque Country, Iraola played more than 500 games for Athletic Bilbao before a stint in Major League Soccer with New York City, where he teamed up with Frank Lampard and Andrea Pirlo.

He will arrive on Merseyside with Liverpool at a crossroads after Slot's failure to maintain the club's position at the summit of English football. AFP

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Sport



Team Hollywood claims Samui Regatta > p15



The Phuket Piranhas squad. Photo: Supplied

TOUCH RUGBY

Saacha Kang

Twelve members of the Phuket Piranhas and Family Touch Rugby group travelled to Chiang Mai last month to compete in the Chiang Mai International Touch Rugby Tournament.

Hosted on the weekend of May 15-16 in the northern province, the Phuket collective competed in the Mixed Division of the tournament, which was hosted by Hedgehogs Touch Rugby and Lanna Rugby Club.

The touring squad consisted of six adults and six youth players aged between 13-16 who had never trained or competed as a team before, including Marie Melot, Josh Stanton, Chris Hallewell, Mark Leech, Arjan Kang, Guillaume Haas-Ryffel, Toby Williams, Yuna Coffey, Isabella Charmette, Sukhjit Kang, Biba Kang and Saacha Kang. The squad carried a very eclectic feel as, despite all players being based

in Phuket, there was a wide variety of nationalities represented, including Thailand, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Australia and Japan.

The tournament brought together strong teams from around Asia, including Bro Town from Singapore, Columbo Touch Rugby from Sri Lanka, the South East Asia Barbarians, and the Firebacks (Thai National Women) and the host team, the Hedgehogs.

With experienced opposition and a full-sized touch pitch waiting for them, the Piranhas knew they were in for a challenging weekend.

EYE-OPENER

The Phuket Piranhas' opening game was against the experienced Singapore team Bro Town – and it was an eye-opening defeat for the team. However, despite the speed of the game and the size of the pitch testing the Piranhas early on, they continued to battle hard and showed great determination throughout the match.

This was followed by another

difficult fixture against the Firebacks, the Thai National Women's team. It was an encounter where the Piranhas truly held their own and pushed the national squad all the way despite registering another narrow defeat.

As the day continued the Phuket Piranhas grew more confident with every game. Their teamwork improved, communication became stronger and players began adapting to the fast-paced style of international touch rugby.

Their final game of day one came against the host team, the Hedgehogs, who put up an excellent defensive performance and made the Piranhas fight for every point. After a tense and exciting match the Piranhas managed to secure a 4-3 victory, an amazing way to finish the opening day of the tournament.

DETERMINATION

Day two brought tougher competition, tired legs and an early morning start, but determination remained strong throughout the squad. Carrying on from the

excitement of the previous day's action, the Piranhas faced Columbo Touch Rugby, who had travelled all the way from Sri Lanka, in their first match of the day.

It was an impressive performance that saw a 5-1 victory secured for the Piranhas – the perfect way to start the day which put the team in high spirits for the rest of the tournament to come.

The Piranhas continued to improve throughout the day and fought hard in every match against more experienced opposition from around the region. Quick touches, strong support play and determined defence helped keep them competitive as they battled through the final stages of the tournament.

Ultimately, after a hard fought weekend of touch rugby, the Phuket Piranhas reached the Plate Finals where they once again faced the Hedgehogs. Both teams gave everything they had left, producing one of the most exciting games of the weekend

and although the Piranhas narrowly missed out on the win, they finished 4th overall in a highly competitive international tournament.

By the end of the weekend all 12 members of the touring group had represented the Phuket Piranhas with pride. The tournament gave the youth players valuable experience against strong international teams while also creating unforgettable memories and friendships both on and off the pitch in Chiang Mai.

A special thank you to Laana Rugby Club for hosting and to all of the other teams for helping produce a memorable tournament.

Anyone interested in touch rugby and getting involved with the Phuket Piranhas can come along and join in the regular training sessions held at Blue Tree in Chermg Talay every Wednesday and Saturday.

Alternatively, for more information please visit: Family Touch Rugby Phuket on Facebook or @family_touch_rugby_phuket on Instagram.

Penguins shine brightest on a damp finals day at the ACG

CRICKET

THE ISLAND'S OLDEST side the Patong Penguins took on league debutants Chermgtalay Tsunamis in the eagerly anticipated grand final as the Phuket Cricket League concluded on May 24.

Held at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) in Thalang,

it would be the experienced Penguins who would add further to their already illustrious history, clinching the title with a 19-run victory.

A rain-reduced 25-over match saw the Penguins' openers Simon Wetherell (19) and Pelham Myburgh (38) establish a solid 40-run partnership before off-



Photo: Supplied

spinner Ashton Dicks removed the former in the 7th over. The leagues' top-scorer Myburgh continued

to add to his tally before Adam Victor produced an almost unplayable delivery to remove the Namibian on the stroke of drinks.

Craig Morgan (12) looked to increase the run-rate post-drinks before a well executed slower ball from Camdon Dicks removed the dangerous left-hander in the 17th over.

With fewer than 10 overs remaining and his team's century now brought up, captain Jagsir Brar added a snappy run-a-ball 12 before he became Victor's second scalp of the day, while Andy Langston's (25) stubborn resistance was finally ended by Peter Burges as the score read 125/5 heading into the final five overs.

Some tight death-over bowling from Burges and Cam ensured the trio of Abhishek Sundar (11) Curt Livermore (13*) and Ajay Sampige (3*) could only muster a further 28 runs as the Penguins ended their innings with a below-par, yet defensible, 153 from 25 overs...

Continued on page 14