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News



Rawai turns coconut waste into cash > p5

Corruption plagues Patong nightlife

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...residential areas had effectively become commercial tourism districts over the past two decades.

“Hardly anybody lives in Nanai anymore,” he said. “People have rented properties and operated businesses there for 20-30 years. If authorities shut everything down, entire streets will become ghost areas.”

He said many operators were willing to comply with the law, but could not obtain licences simply because their areas were not officially zoned for entertainment businesses.

Mr Weerawit also raised concerns over the so-called “33 couples” issue involving businesses operating on disputed land still under court proceedings.

According to him, many operators remain caught in legal uncertainty while continuing to face enforcement action.

EXTORTION

The latest protest follows complaints formally submitted this year to the Phuket Provincial Damrongtham Centre on Jan 5 requesting an investigation into alleged extortion linked to entertainment venue inspections.

The complaint alleged repeated inspections by government officials, cases of individuals allegedly posing as officials to extort

businesses, and claims that monthly payments were being demanded from operators across Phuket.

Business owners also alleged inconsistent and selective enforcement.

At the time, provincial officials promised to investigate the matter and ensure fairness for legally operating businesses.

However, Mr Weerawit says no progress has been made.

The allegations also revive memories of a high-profile corruption case in 2023, when two Patong Municipality officials were arrested for allegedly extorting B300,000 from a business owner seeking approval to change the permitted use of a building under the Building Control Act.

According to investigators from the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) and Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC), one official allegedly acted as a coordinator to collect B250,000 for the permit and another B50,000 for so-called “services”.

The two officials were arrested during a sting operation after allegedly accepting cash from the business owner in Patong.

Authorities at the time said the case involved officials abusing their



PEBA President Weerawit Kreuasombat. Photo: MCOT Phuket

positions for personal gain. Both men denied the charges.

Mr Weerawit also criticised repeated large-scale inspections targeting nightlife venues.

“It’s not acceptable to bring 100 officers to inspect licences, shut businesses one day, then see them reopen the next day,” he said. “What kind of system is that?”

He urged authorities to focus on education and practical solutions instead of temporary crackdowns.

EVERYTHING HAS A SOURCE

During the May 13 protest, one protest sign referencing “1 kilo” drew attention online and among reporters.

Asked about the phrase, Mr Weerawit declined to elaborate.

“It could be pork, it could be beef. I don’t know

what one kilogramme means,” he said.

“But everything has a source.”

He added that when operators were cornered and treated unfairly, “stories eventually come out”.

Of note, when it comes to corruption, Thais often use “1 kilo” to colloquially refer to B1 million in illicit payments.

RESPONSE

Vice Governor Adul Chuthong said provincial officials had already met entertainment business operators following the Bangla Rd gathering in an effort to ease concerns and clarify licensing procedures.

Mr Adul said some entertainment venues had already received licences after submitting applications in April, while others remained under document review or verification.

He said provincial officials were working with operators and local authorities in Patong to resolve licensing issues and reduce the impact on businesses.

However, he stressed that entertainment venues must continue complying with laws governing operating hours, weapons, drugs and underage customers in order to protect Phuket’s tourism image.

Mr Adul also rejected allegations of bribery, insisting officials were acting transparently and according to legal procedures.

“There was no solicitation of bribes from business operators,” he said, adding that all agencies had been instructed to perform their duties transparently.

PRESSURE

PEBA estimates there are at least 400-500 entertainment venues operating in Patong, with approximately 300 belonging to the association.

Mr Weerawit said the nightlife sector remained one of the key drivers of Phuket’s tourism economy.

According to Mr Weerawit, Bangla Rd alone can generate B200-300 million per day during high season, while Phuket’s wider tourism economy contributes billions of baht daily through hotels, restaurants, transport and

related businesses.

Estimates by provincial officials are lower, but mark that Patong is critical to the island’s economy. According to officials, Bangla Rd alone generates at least B100 million in daily turnover, while the wider Patong economy, including hotels, restaurants, transport and related services, is estimated to generate more than B1 billion per day.

“Most tourists who come to Patong come for the lights, sound and entertainment atmosphere,” Mr Weerawit said.

Mr Weerawit also argued that Phuket deserved greater flexibility from the central government due to its economic importance.

“We pay enormous amounts of tax every year, but what comes back to support local people is still insufficient,” he said.

The dispute came as Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul continued to publicly pledge crackdowns on influential figures and “tourism mafia” groups operating in Phuket.

However, nightlife operators insist the licensing and inspection system is rife with corruption, and must be addressed if authorities genuinely want transparency and legal compliance in Patong’s entertainment industry.

Phuket reports 3,484 foreign suspects in criminal cases since 2025

MORE THAN 3,400 foreign suspects have been recorded in criminal cases in Phuket since the beginning of last year, with Myanmar nationals accounting for the largest number of cases, according to statistics presented to Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul during his high-profile visit to the island on May 10.

The figures were reported by Phuket Provincial Police Chief Sinlert Sukhum as the Prime Minister travelled to Bang Tao Beach to address longstanding complaints over encroachment on public land.

According to Phuket Provincial Police, between Jan 1, 2025 and Apr 30, 2026, authorities handled 3,218 criminal cases involving 3,484 suspects identified as foreigners.

Myanmar nationals accounted for the highest number of suspects, with 946 people, or 27.2% of the total. Russians ranked second with 269 suspects, followed by British nationals with 143 and French nationals with 141.

Police also reported an intensified crackdown on violations of Thailand’s Foreign Business Act, particularly ‘nominee’ businesses suspected of



Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum. Photo: Phuket Provincial Police / file

being operated illegally through Thai proxies.

A total of 15 cases have been prosecuted, involving 33 foreign suspects. Russians accounted for the highest number of suspects in those cases, with 13 people charged, followed by 12 Chinese nationals, two

Israelis and six suspects from other countries.

The cases involved businesses including car rental companies, restaurants, real estate operations, design firms and childcare centres.

Police said the offences included foreigners operat-

ing restricted businesses without proper authorisation, continuing operations despite suspended licences, and Thai nationals allegedly assisting foreigners by acting as nominee shareholders.

Regarding the illegal occupation of public beachfront land at Bang Tao, officials reported that three criminal cases are currently under investigation involving encroachment by businesses operating rental rooms, restaurants and massage shops.

Authorities estimate damages at about B18 million, covering more than

three rai of occupied land, said an official report.

Phuket police also highlighted strict enforcement against foreigners driving without licences. Between Jan 1, 2025 and Apr 30, 2026, officers arrested 20,901 foreigners for driving without valid licences.

In the first four months of 2026 alone, 8,625 such arrests were recorded, which police said reflected intensified enforcement efforts aimed at improving safety and order in Phuket’s tourism areas.

The Phuket News

Crackdown on beach access

The Phuket News
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Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Natural Resources and Environment Minister Suchart Chomklin have ordered sweeping action against alleged land encroachment, foreign nominee businesses and officials accused of allowing influential groups to illegally control public beach access in Phuket.

The crackdown follows inspections at Freedom Beach and Nui Beach in Karon last week, where authorities said investigations uncovered long-running encroachment on protected forest land, blocked public access routes and the collection of entrance fees from tourists.

Mr Suchart on May 14 ordered officials to reclaim public land at Nui Beach within one week, declaring that no individual or group had the right to prevent access to the beach or charge visitors entrance fees.

The inspection came one day after Prime Minister Anutin visited Phuket and pledged decisive action against influential groups allegedly occupying public land and exploiting tourism areas.

Joining Mr Suchart during the Nui Beach inspection were



Photo: PR Phuket

Assistant Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Pol Maj Gen Nanthachart Supamongkol, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Director-General Atthapol Charoengchanasa, Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn and senior provincial officials.

Mr Suchart said investigations into encroachment at Nui Beach had been ongoing for years, with legal action already pursued by the Royal Forest Department.

“The beach and forest are public property, and no individual can block access or collect tolls from citizens and tourists,” he said.

He ordered agencies to reclaim the land, remove barriers blocking access and begin restoring the area for public use. Officials were also instructed to examine land title documents issued over former forest land, with any illegally issued titles to be revoked.

The crackdown follows developments in the Freedom Beach encroachment case, where a 51-year-old suspect identified only as Mr Parinthorn surrendered to Karon Police on May 12 to acknowledge charges in four separate forest encroachment cases.

According to Karon Police, the cases involve more than 10 rai of protected forest land within a wider investigation covering more than 57 rai in the Freedom Beach area.

Karon Police Chief Pol Col Pathapi Srichai said the suspect had been formally charged and questioned in accordance with legal procedures.

Pol Maj Gen Nanthachart, who led a multi-agency inspection at Freedom Beach on May 12, said the operation followed direct orders from Prime Minister Anutin to reclaim protected forest land and restore public access to beaches.

Authorities said investigations into the Freedom Beach area uncovered allegations that influential figures had taken control of public access routes, blocked hiking trails and charged tourists entrance fees of B200 to B300.

Officials also alleged forged land title documents had been used in attempts to insert false claims into official land databases.

The wider investigation has so far resulted in 23 legal cases involving 17 suspects across protected forest areas in Karon and Patong.

Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee has called for the

Anti-Money Laundering Office to investigate financial links behind the alleged encroachment network.

The campaign has now widened beyond Phuket after Prime Minister Anutin ordered investigations into officials in both Phuket and Surat Thani over alleged involvement in foreign nominee businesses and illegal land occupation.

According to a Government House source cited by the *Bangkok Post*, Anutin instructed Department of Provincial Administration Director-General Narucha Khosasilvilai to investigate district chiefs and local administrative officials following inspections at Freedom Beach and Koh Pha-ngan on May 13.

Residents reportedly complained that some officials and police officers had either been involved in illegal activity or deliberately ignored violations.

Police Deputy Inspector-General Pol Lt Gen Trairong Piwpan said investigations on Koh Pha-ngan had identified 3,754 registered companies, with 2,381 involving foreign shareholders.

Authorities have arrested two suspects and issued warrants for three others accused of acting as proxies for foreign businesses.

Drownings return to beaches

TWO SEPARATE DROWNING tragedies at Phuket’s west coast beaches last weekend have renewed warnings about dangerous surf conditions during the southwest monsoon season.

A 43-year-old Russian woman died after being pulled unconscious from the water at Nai Yang Beach last Sunday afternoon (May 17), while the body of a missing young police investigator was recovered at Nai Thon Beach the same morning after he was swept out to sea on Friday evening.

At Nai Yang Beach, Sakhu Police were notified at about 1:20pm after local residents reported that a foreign woman was drowning offshore.

According to police, a bystander spotted the woman struggling in the water and helped bring her ashore before emergency responders arrived.

Rescue workers from the Sakhu Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor) provided emergency medical aid at



Photo: Sakhu Police

the beach before transporting the woman to Thalang Hospital, where doctors later pronounced her dead at 2:34pm.

The woman was identified as Russian national Tatiana Nefedova.

Police said the Russian Embassy, Immigration Bureau and Border Patrol Police would be notified in accordance with standard procedure. The death remained under investigation.

Earlier the same day, the body of a missing police investigator was found washed ashore near the Phra Ta La To Shrine at Nai Thon Beach at about 6:30am.

Police believe the deceased was Pol Lt Thaphanpapop Awachana-

nukul, also known as ‘Capt Pond’, 25, a deputy investigator attached to Thai Mueang Police Station in Phang Nga.

Investigators reviewing CCTV footage found that at about 6pm last Friday, Pol Lt Thaphanpapop had parked his car beside Nai Thon Beach before entering the water alone.

About 30 minutes later, lifeguards were alerted after the swimmer was pulled out to sea by strong waves and rip currents.

Authorities again warned residents and tourists not to swim at west coast beaches during the southwest monsoon season, especially where red warning flags are displayed.

The Phuket News




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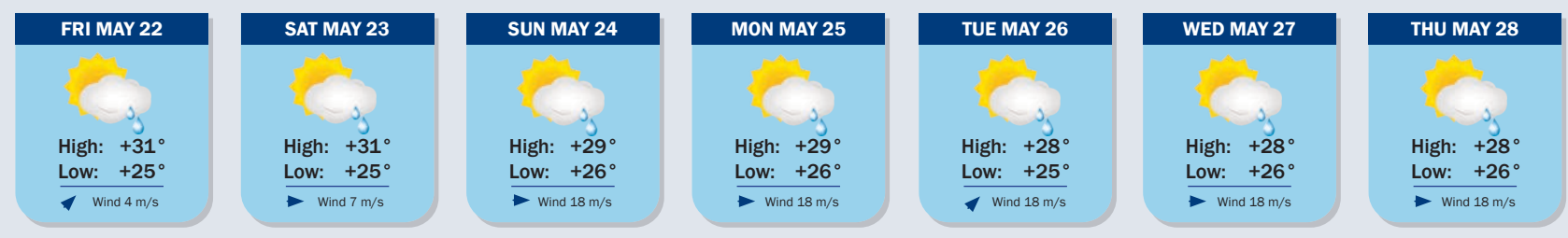
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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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Russian arrested with 1.8kg of drugs

A RUSSIAN MAN HAS been charged with drug trafficking after police seized a large quantity of crystal meth, heroin, ketamine and other drugs at the Tha Chatchai checkpoint on Monday (May 18).

Officers arrested 29-year-old Russian national Gorskii Matvei while inspecting a Phuket-Pattaya bus entering the province, according to a police report.

Police said the suspect was travelling on a Scania passenger bus on the Phuket-Pattaya route when officers stopped the vehicle at the checkpoint for a routine inspection.

During the inspection, officers observed that Gorskii appeared nervous and agitated upon seeing police. He allegedly attempted to push a bag further underneath his seat and was unable to present his passport when requested, the report said.

Officers then conducted a search of the suspect's belongings after obtaining consent.

Police seized multiple



Photo: Tha Chatchai police

illegal substances from a shoulder bag he carried, including 564.74 grams of crystal meth, 471.92g of mephedrone, 129.8g of heroin, 51g of ecstasy, 54.6g of amphetamine and 582g of ketamine.

Also seized were two mobile phones, one MacBook laptop and B11,320 in cash.

Gorskii was charged with selling Category 1 narcotics with intent to sell without permission and causing the drugs to spread among the public.

The suspect and all seized items were handed over to investigators at Tha Chatchai Police station for further legal proceedings.

Police said the investigation is continuing as officers work to identify and dismantle any wider drug network.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Brit arrested over gun for cartel hit

The Phuket News
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A British man accused of supplying the firearm used in the fatal shooting of an Iraqi national in Patong earlier this year has been arrested in Pattaya, police have confirmed.

Officers from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) and the Crime Suppression Division (CSD) arrested the 33-year-old suspect, identified only as 'Amir', at a condominium in Nong Prue, Bang Lamung District, Chonburi, last Friday (May 15).

Amir was wanted under a warrant issued by Phuket Provincial Court on Feb 12 on charges of abetting premeditated murder, illegal possession of firearms and ammunition, carrying firearms in public without permission and firing a gun in a public area without justification.

The arrest follows the fatal shooting of a 24-year-old Iraqi man on Sirirat Rd in Patong on Feb 7.

Police previously arrested a Colombian national accused of carrying out the



Photo: CIB

shooting after locating him hiding near Phuket International Airport while allegedly preparing to flee the country. Officers seized two firearms, ammunition, a motorcycle and clothing believed to have been worn during the attack.

Investigators said the killing was systematically planned, with a group of foreign nationals allegedly supplying weapons to the gunman.

Police believe the murder stemmed from a conflict within an international drug trafficking cartel.

Further investigation identified Amir as one of the suspects linked to procuring the firearm used in the attack. Investigators later

learned he was staying at a condominium in Pattaya and obtained a search warrant from Pattaya Provincial Court before carrying out the arrest.

Several items believed to be connected to the case were seized during the operation, police said.

Amir denied all charges during questioning and was handed over to investigators for further legal proceedings.

The operation was conducted under the direction of CIB Commissioner Pol Lt Gen Natthasak Chaowanasai and CSD Commander Pol Maj Gen Pattanasak Bubphasuwan, with officers from CSD Division 5 carrying out the arrest.

Teen rescued in sex trafficking raid on Rawai massage parlour

CHALONG POLICE AND officials from the Phuket Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office rescued a 16-year-old girl from a massage parlour in Rawai during a human trafficking operation on May 13, arresting the business owner and another masseuse.

Police launched the raid following an investigation into allegations that the parlour was offering sexual services involving minors to foreign customers under the guise of massage treatments.

Undercover officers allegedly found the owner, identified only as 'Ms May', soliciting customers for "special massages". Investigators said clients were charged B1,500 per hour, with



Photo: Chalongs Police

the 16-year-old and another masseuse, 'Ms Nid', 40, allegedly instructed to provide sexual services.

The teenager was placed into the victim identification process overseen by social welfare officials.

Ms May faces multiple charges under the Human Trafficking Act and Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act. *The Phuket News*

Police probe child beating in Kathu

KATHU MUNICIPALITY officials and child welfare authorities have intervened in a child abuse case after allegations that a child was physically assaulted by the stepfather.

The Social Welfare Division of Kathu Municipality said officials were alerted to the incident at about 6:20pm last Friday (May 15) and immediately launched an investigation over concerns for the child's physical and mental wellbeing.

Social welfare officers coordinated with the Kathu Municipality Public Order and Security Unit and the Phuket Provincial Child and Family Welfare Center to assess the situation and ensure the child's safety.

Authorities later returned to gather additional information as part of the ongoing welfare assessment.



Photo: Kathu Police

Officials confirmed the child's family has filed a complaint with Kathu Police, with legal proceedings underway.

The child will undergo medical and psychological examinations while welfare agencies continue monitoring the case and providing support. *The Phuket News*

Rawai cracks coconut waste

The Phuket News

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Rawai Municipality is ramping up its efforts to tackle Phuket's growing waste problem by turning discarded coconut husks from tourist beaches into eco-friendly fertiliser and community income opportunities.

Rawai Mayor Thames Kraitat said the municipality launched the initiative after coconut waste became a mounting problem in the beachside community, where large numbers of tourists consume fresh coconuts daily.

Phuket generates more than 10,000 discarded coconuts each day, according to information released through the MCOT Green Market programme and Rawai Municipality.

Mayor Thames explained that Rawai alone produces around 40 tonnes of waste per day, rising to as much as 80 tonnes during the high tourist season, with organic waste making up the largest share.

Previously, coconut shells and husks were mixed with general waste and transported to the Saphan Hin incinerator site, creating added transport costs and operational problems for waste collection crews.

"Coconut waste damaged garbage truck compactors, increased disposal costs and contributed to waste accumulation in the area," Mayor Thames said.



Photo: MCOT

To address the issue, Rawai Municipality signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with businesses operating at Nai Harn Beach, Yanui Beach, Rawai Beach and the Rawai Sea Gypsy Fish Market to separate coconut waste before disposal.

Under the project, businesses deposit coconut husks at designated collection points, where the waste is shredded into coconut coir using specialised machinery.

Municipal officials said the programme currently processes around 1,000 kilogrammes of coconut waste per day, reducing disposal costs by about

B725 daily while also cutting the amount of waste sent to Phuket's incinerator.

WASTE TRANSFORMED

The processed coconut coir is distributed to residents for agricultural purposes, including use as mulch, fertiliser and soil improvement.

Mayor Thames said the initiative demonstrated how properly separated waste could create benefits for both the environment and the community.

"What we clearly see is that waste that was once worthless, when separated correctly, can create benefits, reduce the burden on

the municipality, and help the community with agriculture," he said.

He added that the programme was also helping build public confidence in waste separation schemes.

"It dispels the misconception that even if you separate waste, the municipality will just mix it all together anyway," he noted.

Rawai Municipality also plans to expand the project to additional areas including Rawai Beach, Pak Bang Beach and the Sai Yuan commercial zone, while increasing the number of shredding machines to cope with rising organic waste volumes.

Officials estimate the expanded programme could eventually reduce coconut waste entering Phuket's incinerator system by up to two tonnes per day.

JOB CREATION

The municipality is also linking the project with vocational training programmes run through its Social Welfare Division.

Residents, senior citizens groups and local environmental volunteer clubs are being trained to produce potting soil from coconut coir, creating opportunities for supplementary income and small-scale community businesses.

Mayor Thames said the long-term aim was to transform waste into an economic resource while addressing Phuket's ongoing rubbish crisis.

"Waste is a crisis for Phuket Province. If we don't work together to manage waste at the source and don't take waste sorting seriously, soon all local administrative organizations will be unable to keep up," he warned.

"My goal is to find a way to make waste have value."

GROWING PARTICIPATION

Rawai Municipality also reported increasing participation in its community waste bank programme, which has been operating for two years.

Membership has grown from 80 to 150 members, while the amount of recyclable waste collected has risen from around one tonne to 2.5 tonnes.

Municipal officials said the coconut waste project was helping raise environmental awareness among both residents and tourists while promoting greater community cooperation in waste management efforts.

The initiative is part of wider attempts by local authorities across Phuket to reduce the volume of waste entering the island's already strained disposal system as tourism numbers continue to grow, Rawai Municipality noted.

The Phuket News

Phuket Town shrine faces encroachment complaint

AN ICONIC CHINESE shrine in Phuket Town is facing the prospect of demolishing or relocating structures after officials confirmed a land encroachment complaint involving neighbouring property boundaries.

Officials from Mueang District Office, Phuket City Municipality and Phuket City Police inspected the Pud Jor Shrine on May 12 following a complaint filed by a neighbouring landowner claiming parts of the shrine complex had been built on land covered by title deed number 742.

The inspection was



Photo: Mueang District Office

ordered by Mueang District Chief and carried out by Deputy District Chief

Apichat Chantrawong and officers from the district Complaint Center.

According to the complaint, structures belonging to the shrine had allegedly

encroached onto privately owned land. The complainant requested authorities coordinate negotiations to have any structures outside the shrine's legal boundary demolished or relocated, and for the area to be restored in accordance with official land title boundaries.

During on-site negotiations, the complainant proposed that official boundary markers be installed according to the title deed. The issue of an adjoining wall would also be considered by the shrine committee, including whether it should be demolished.

Representatives of the shrine committee who

attended the inspection acknowledged the proposal but said the matter would need to be discussed further at a full management committee meeting before any final decision is made.

District officials said both sides signed a memorandum of understanding acknowledging the details discussed during the negotiations.

The Mueang District Complaint Center said it would continue monitoring the case in an effort to reach a fair and legally compliant resolution for both parties.

The Phuket News

Corruption worsening: Survey

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

More than half of Thai businesses believe corruption in Thailand has worsened over the past three years, according to a new nationwide survey released by the Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) under its 'Zero Corruption' campaign.

The survey, conducted among 401 business executives and representatives nationwide between Mar 26 and Apr 10, found that 51.2% of respondents believed corruption had become worse compared with three years ago, while only 0.3% said the situation had improved.

The findings were released as Thailand's private sector intensified calls for stronger anti-corruption measures, warning that graft is becoming a major structural obstacle to economic growth, investor confidence and fair competition.

According to the survey, 58.8% of respondents described corruption as a "major" or "very major" obstacle to doing business, while a further 30.3% viewed it as a moderate obstacle. Overall, 89.1% of businesses said corruption negatively affects business operations to some degree.

Top 10 organisations with the highest average bribe values.

Image: JCC

RANK	ORGANISATION	AVERAGE BRIBE PER TRANSACTION (BAHT)
1	Pollution Control Department	102,160
2	Marine Department	100,000
3	Excise Department	94,667
4	Revenue Department	89,498
5	The judicial process (excluding the courts).	88,750
6	Food and Drug Administration (FDA) / Public Health Service	74,643
7	Department of Highways	70,167
8	Department of Public Works and Town Planning	70,000
9	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation	68,000
10	Forestry Department	67,500

The survey also found that 51% of respondents believed dealing with government agencies had become more complicated and burdensome, while only 3% said bureaucratic procedures had improved.

For the first time, the survey included agency-level data regarding alleged bribery risks in interactions with state authorities. Reports cited agencies linked to highways, traffic enforcement and licensing procedures among those perceived to carry the highest risks of informal payments or demands for facilitation fees.

The key takeaways presented from the survey results:

Direct experience from the business sector.

- 60.9% of applicants for permits from government agencies found implicit messages

or requests for compensation in their "most recent" permit applications.

- 45.9% of companies confirmed that they had paid money, gifts or benefits to government officials to facilitate services.

- 37.3% confirmed that their industry had to pay extra to secure government contracts, averaging 11-15% of the contract value.

- The most common forms of bribery are cash (46.6%), gifts/entertainment (23.1%), and donations/sponsorship (18.7%).

- In the most recent bidding process, a worrying sign was found: 27.3% reported individuals claiming to "help win" and 27.3% received "hints" suggesting the use of certain intermediaries/advisors.

- The main reasons businesses

pay bribes are: complex procedures (29.1%), laws that leave too much room for discretion (25.0%), and resolving regulatory violations (18.8%).

- 52.3% of businesses lack confidence in government whistleblowing channels. Furthermore, 43.7% stated that they "didn't dare to complain" even when they discovered instances of bribery.

The JSCCIB said the findings reflected a growing concern within the private sector that corruption continues to impose hidden costs on businesses and weaken Thailand's international competitiveness.

The anti-corruption push forms part of the 'Zero Corruption: JSCCIB and Friends Do Not Tolerate Corruption' initiative launched earlier this year by

leading private-sector organisations, including the Thai Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Thai Industries and the Thai Bankers' Association.

The campaign has been working with the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) to promote reforms aimed at improving transparency in both the public and private sectors.

Earlier this month, representatives from the JSCCIB's Zero Corruption working group met with NACC officials to discuss measures including stricter penalties for corporate corruption offences, adoption of OECD-aligned anti-bribery standards, stronger whistleblower protections and wider implementation of 'No Gift Policy' practices across government agencies.

Thailand's declining standing in international corruption rankings has added to concerns raised by the business sector. Transparency International's latest Corruption Perceptions Index gave Thailand a score of 33 out of 100, ranking the country 116th globally.

The JSCCIB has warned that unless corruption is addressed more effectively, Thailand risks losing investor confidence and economic opportunities to regional competitors.

Senate pushes for marine upgrade

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND SPORTS visited Phuket last Friday (May 15) to accelerate solutions to key marine tourism infrastructure issues as Thailand moves ahead with plans to position itself as an ASEAN cruise hub.

The committee held a meeting at Phuket International Airport led by First Vice Chairman Mr Thatchayanat Jiarathanakon, joined by Phuket Vice Governor Adul Chuthong and representatives from Phuket Airport, the Phuket Marine Department, Tourist Police, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office and other relevant agencies.

The visit focused on integrating cooperation between agencies to address airport congestion, transport connectivity and water safety measures while gathering information to help shape national tourism policy and infrastructure development.

The discussions form part of the committee's



Photo: Pol Maj Gen Angkur Klaiklung / Facebook

broader mission to study legislation and infrastructure upgrades aimed at developing Thailand's cruise port network into a leading regional hub in Southeast Asia by 2026.

Phuket Airport General Manager Monchai Tanode briefed the meeting on current tourism trends and measures being implemented to facilitate travellers amid ongoing international economic and geopolitical challenges.

Officials from the Phuket Regional Marine Department outlined proposals to improve pier infrastructure and strengthen links between land, sea and air transport systems to improve efficiency and safety.

Authorities noted that Phuket currently has about 4,500 registered vessels

operating in its waters, including speedboats, tour boats, yachts and fishing vessels. Heavy traffic at major piers such as Chalong Pier, Rassada Pier and Boat Lagoon has made marine safety oversight an urgent priority, officials said.

The Phuket Tourist Police also discussed the use of information technology systems to improve tourist safety and support efforts by authorities to tackle illegal accommodation operations in order to strengthen visitor confidence.

Despite global economic uncertainties, TAT figures presented at the meeting showed Phuket remained one of the world's leading tourism destinations during the first quarter of 2026.

Russia ranked as Phuket's largest international market with 416,716 visitors, followed by China with 209,805 arrivals, India with 154,960, the United Kingdom with 82,984 and Germany with 75,684 tourists. *The Phuket News*

World Cup to propel eateries, TV sales

THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP IS expected to energise the restaurant industry during the low season and lift sales for TV manufacturers and distributors.

The matches are scheduled from late night until late morning Thailand time, from June 11 to July 19.

Chanon Koetcharoen, president of the Restaurant Association, anticipates customer behaviour during the tournament will fall into two categories: those who enjoy watching matches at public venues and those who opt to view them at home.

The first group should help to boost sales at casual dining restaurants, pubs and sports bars. Establishments recognised for offering game screenings on TVs or projectors, or those with event-themed décor are likely to attract more customers, he said.

During major matches, some of these venues could be fully booked.

Meanwhile, those watching from home are expected to increase restaurant sales through food delivery platforms, with delivery sales projected to rise by 10% during the tournament compared with typical periods, said Mr Chanon.

However, the sluggish economic conditions may decrease spending per bill, he noted.

Chawapoj Thienthong, head of audio visual at Thai Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, said international sporting events typically drive a 15% increase in TV sales compared with ordinary periods.

During these events, consumers double their live viewing time from about two hours per day to four hours, he said.



Mr Chawapoj says international sports events typically drive a 15% increase in TV sales compared with ordinary periods. Photo: Bangkok Post

Despite economic headwinds, the company reported significant growth in sales of premium TVs and those with screens 75 inches or larger.

Thai Samsung targets 5-7% sales growth for its TVs this year. Over the past 12 months, sales in its premium segment have increased by double digits.

To target this growing segment, the company launched its 'Micro RGB' lineup in Thailand, featuring enhanced viewing through its "Vision AI Companion" and glare-free technologies.

Mr Chawapoj said Thai Samsung introduced AI Soccer Mode and AI Football Mode Pro to deliver smoother visuals, sharper clarity, precise motion, and immersive stadium-like audio for sports enthusiasts.

Vision AI Companion provides real-time match insights and highlights, while artificial intelligence-powered optimisation enhances picture and sound quality for a more realistic, seamless viewing experience.

Bangkok Post

Train driver in fatal Bangkok bus crash admits to drug use

BANGKOK

AFP

The driver of a train that collided with a bus in Bangkok, killing eight people, has tested positive for drugs and was charged with reckless driving, officials said on Monday (May 18).

The freight train crashed into the public bus last Saturday afternoon (May 16) at a busy junction in the capital, with the vehicle bursting into flames and 30 people left injured.

Police charged the train driver, who was also injured, and a railway-crossing guard on Sunday with negligence causing injury and death, said Urumporn Koondejsumrit, chief of the local police station where the crash occurred. Both denied the charge, he said.

"The train driver was found with methamphetamine and marijuana substances in his urine," Anan Phonimdaeng, acting director of the State Railway of Thailand, later told a press conference.

The driver was suspended from duty, he added.

Images on social media on Saturday showed the train approaching a level crossing at a moderate speed before colliding with the bus, which was on the tracks and stuck in traffic.



AFP journalists saw other damaged vehicles and a burned-out SUV near the crash site.

The government will pay families B2.39 million in compensation per deceased victim, Deputy Transport Minister Siripong Angkasakulkiat told reporters on Monday. Those injured would receive between B130,000 and B1 million, Siripong said.

The government was considering a plan to restrict where and when trains were allowed to travel through central Bangkok, senior transport ministry official Jirath Sukolrat said.

Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said freight trains normally travel through the capital at night, but the train that collided with the bus was delayed.

Bangkok police chief Siam Boonsom said on Sunday that there was traffic congestion at the crossing

daily, but never an accident.

Police were reviewing footage of the scene to determine whether the crossing guard was negligent, he told reporters.

"We see the official holding the red flag which means the track was not safe but we also see that the train did not stop or slow down, causing the crash," Siam said.

Footage of the crash site on other days showed vehicles stopped on the track, with officials raising the red flag to signal to oncoming trains to stop until the traffic cleared, he explained.

Authorities were also investigating the speed of the train and its braking distance, Siam added.

Local emergency services said eight people were killed and 30 injured, with 15 still in hospitals as of Monday afternoon.

Schools take steps to limit mobile phone use

BANGKOK

SCHOOLS UNDER THE Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) introduced new measures to control mobile phone use on the first day of the new semester on Monday (May 18).

Outgoing Bangkok governor Chadchart Sittipunt visited Wat Mahannapharam School, one of 437 schools under the BMA, in Phra Nakhon district, to observe the first day of classes.

Mr Chadchart said the BMA had put in place measures to regulate mobile phone use in schools following concerns that children were developing shorter attention spans, worsening eyesight, and reduced interaction with teachers and classmates.

Under the measures, students are to leave their mobile phones with teachers during school hours to help them focus on learning, create a more effective classroom



Photo: Bangkok Post

environment and reduce the health and behavioural impacts associated with excessive screen time.

He said several schools had already piloted the initiative with positive results, adding that studies from several countries supported the effectiveness of such measures.

South Korea passed a nationwide bill banning the use of mobile phones in school classrooms last August, while France passed a bill that banned social media use by under-15s in January.

Similar steps have been implemented in countries including Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

Bangkok Post

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Photos: Wikipedia

Crime Busters With Zimmer Frames

ALL ABOUT BOOKS

Ron McMillan

OK, so I admit to being easily amused, as well as famously pedantic. I enjoy imagining how veteran crime fiction authors must struggle to keep older, best-selling central characters active and virile enough to continue battering

baddies when they are of a seniority associated with retirement homes. That it happens a lot might illustrate how frequently authors fail to envisage their central characters still dodging lead and slinging punches 40 years after their crime fiction debuts.

A favourite case in point: Robert B. Parker's admirable Spenser first turned up in *The Godwulf Manuscript* in 1973. In early books in the series, the erudite Spenser admitted to giving up boxing after having his face rearranged by Jer-

sey Joe Walcott. The fact that Walcott climbed into the professional ring for the last time in 1953, along with references to Spenser's time in the Korean War, means that Spenser (taken care of by writers-for-hire since Parker's death in 2010) continues to go toe to toe with Boston bad guys even in his early 90s. Visualise, if you can, the movie world equivalent: Clint Eastwood shuffling on set as *Dirty Harry* with a .44 Magnum prop rendered totable by being carved from polystyrene.

Another favourite: James Lee Burke's Dave Robicheaux first appeared in *The Neon Rain* in 1987, when Vietnam vet Dave was around 52. Today, he continues to take down Louisiana's worst at 96. Fortunately for us, his task is made easier by frequent collaborations with the greatest sidekick in crime fiction, Clete Purcell.

Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch, another Vietnam vet, seemingly dates from around 1950, meaning he continues to solve cases in his mid-70s. In this company, he is a relative spring chicken. Of ages with Bosch would be Kay Scarpetta, Patricia Cornwell's Chief Medical Examiner and dissector of bodies and inspiration behind interminable decades of CSI television drama, who first donned mortuary scrubs in *Postmortem* in 1986. In 2025, at the age of 75, Kay was still slicing and dicing in the 29th book in the series.

Terrific prose

On the other side of the pond, at the ripe old age of 79, Ian Rankin's John Rebus (first fictional appearance in *Knots and Crosses*, 1987) continues to fight Scottish crime and to sup pints at Rankin's favourite Edinburgh pub, the Oxford Bar. The Rebus series, already boasting 25 titles, now approaches its fifth decade with only subtly rendered signs of Rebus slowing down.

At the relatively youthful end of the age spread is Lee Child's permanently itinerant Jack Reacher, who first drifted onto the written page carrying nothing more than a toothbrush in 1997's *Killing Floor*. Child has now delegated the task of adding to the series (30 books and counting) to his brother; fortunately for the new man at the keyboard, readers will seldom consider that Reacher must now be 65 years old. Or

about the same age as Tom Cruise, though certainly a lot taller.

Author Janet Evanovich has taken a different tack with New Jersey bounty hunter Stephanie Plum remaining in her early 30s since her debut in 1993's *One For The Money*. To this reader, early books in the series (which now stretches to 32 titles) were sought out due to the hilarious relationship Stephanie enjoyed with her Grandma Mazur, who if she's not suspended in time like Stephanie, must now be a candidate for the world's oldest woman.

I highlight these series because I have enjoyed them for decades and heartily recommend to unfortunates who have not encountered them before now. I eventually became a little weary of the Scarpetta and Stephanie Plum books. And I confess to having had enough of Jack Reacher, albeit only after reading 20-plus books with him, towering over opponents; lately I have been put off by the Parker estate's need to keep the money flowing while employing stand-in authors, none of whom ever matched Parker's terrific prose. But I continue to seek out anything that features Dave Robicheaux or Harry Bosch.

In another world are detectives born of a different century who continue to pop up, three of them hailing from the mid-1850s. The company rigorously hoarding rights to characters created by Agatha Christie makes sure of the regular occurrence of new titles featuring Jane Marple and Hercule Poirot (*The latest Jane Marple book, Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel* by Lucy Foley, is due out in September, 2026.) And, enabled by lapsed copyrights, a plethora of authors eager to exploit the sales leg-up from the enduring appeal of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, pump out Sherlock titles as if their incomes depend upon it. Which they most certainly do.

It occurs to Ron McMillan that he has unconsciously adopted the Stephanie Plum model for Rabinder Singh, Scotland's only Sikh police detective. The second title in the series takes place, like the first (Don't Think Twice), in 1993. My Aim Is True is now being reviewed by long-suffering beta readers and will be published soon.

Where to eat in PHUKET

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

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Travels with Basil



BLAZING SADDLES

Baz Daniel
baz_gunner2000@yahoo.com

I had the idea on a morning that had no business being as clear as it actually was. Aged 77, I am unsurprised when a certain fog settles over my mornings – over memory and purpose for example – but that day the light over Phuket was sharp as a blade and Basil, my Jack Russell terrier, was already pacing the bedroom, like an impatient admiral.

I'd been re-reading *Travels with Charley*, that lovely, wandering book by John Steinbeck, and it struck me – not for the first time – that a man doesn't outgrow the need to travel, or indeed if you are of my generation, the need to read. Steinbeck travelled in his truck named Rosinante, named after Don Quixote's horse, accompanied by his noble giant poodle named Charlie. I had my somewhat temperamental Toyota with my mountain bike rattling on the bike rack and Basil eagerly waiting for our next adventure.

When I first read *Travels with Charlie*, I was a callow youth of 14 and I loved the book as a travel adventure of an ageing man and his dog driving off in a camper van one last time to seek out the soul of their homeland... the USA. Now, over 60 years later, as I'd re-read it, I became all too aware of the tragic context within which Steinbeck, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1962, had written it. In his early 60s, after a lifetime of heavy drinking and smoking, he was diagnosed with severe heart disease with little time to live. He'd set off on this final journey for a last look at his homeland of America and died aged 66, just a few years after this book was published.

Now aged 77 myself, though I have not been diagnosed with any life threatening ailments thus far, even if I beat the actuarial tables and soldier on for a while yet, time, as they say, is running out!

"Come on then," I said, to Basil, "tempus fugit, old son, we'd best be off."

Anticipation

There is a particular pleasure in driving without urgency as Steinbeck noted. The road becomes less a means and more a companion – sometimes generous, sometimes contrary. Ours led us across the Sarasin Bridge and up the long curve of the Andaman coast, where the sea seemed to move with a silken seductiveness. At Thai Mueang I parked beneath a stand of Casuarina trees and unloaded the bicycle, as Basil bounded out, full of bottled-up energy and anticipation.

Cycling at my age has become an act both of defiance and negotiation. My legs remember what they once knew, but they require persuasion now, and occasionally forgiveness. Basil, unencumbered by any such considerations of ageing, ran ahead, then circled back, then darted off again, conducting his own erratic survey of the shoreline.

We moved north over the next few days – Takua Pa, Phang Nga, Ao Nang, Krabi, places where limestone karsts rise like the bones of the earth itself, their 280-million-year-old history ardently reminding me of the value of TIME.

In the evenings, we found modest lodgings – rooms with fans that hummed like exhausted bees and beds that accepted Basil and I without question. Basil would collapse in a tangle of limbs, exhausted by his own joy. I would sit outside with a cold drink and watch the light fade, browsing through Steinbeck who wrote of rediscovering America, but what he was really after, I think, was rediscovering his lost younger self.



Baz and Basil exploring the Andaman together. Photo: Baz Daniel

There is something about travel – especially the solitary kind – that strips away the unnecessary. At age 77, one has accumulated a great deal of unnecessary.

On a narrow road near Ao Nang, I stopped the car and simply listened. The jungle has a voice, though it is not a single sound. It is a conversation – leaves, insects, distant water – and Basil, for once, stood still beside me. We shared that moment, neither of us compelled to chase or explain it.

"Not bad, eh?" I said. Basil sneezed, which I took to be agreement.

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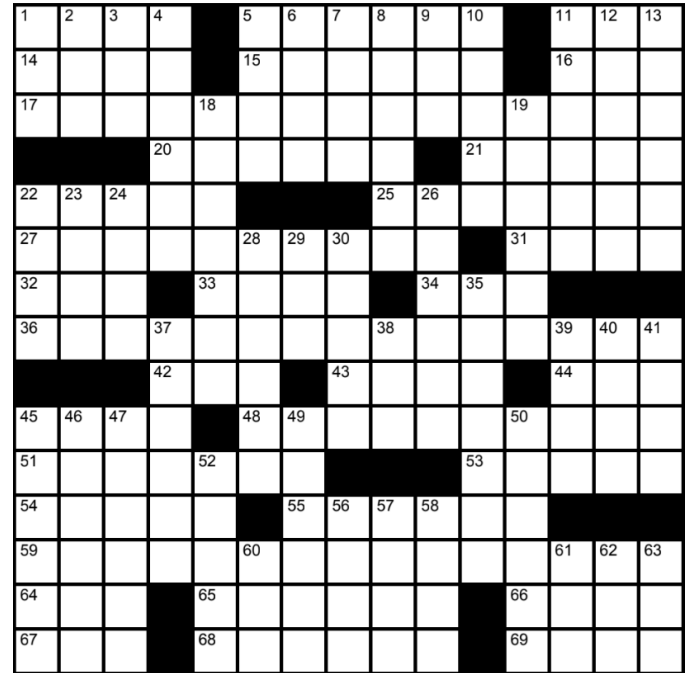
POP QUIZ

1. In which country were antibiotics first used?
2. Bohea is a type of what?
3. Taphophobia is the fear of what?
4. Who said "I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best"?
5. Which country uses juries of 15 people in criminal trials?

Answers below, centre

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Obi, e.g.
 5. Girls
 11. Humanities degs.
 14. Hodgepodge
 15. "Mourning Becomes Electra" playwright
 16. Detergent brand
 17. Keith, Danny, Laurie et al.
 20. Trust
 21. Golf score
 22. Star in Perseus
 25. Sees to it
 27. Ball attendee
 31. Acid ____
 32. Stephen of "Still Crazy"
 33. Distinctive atmosphere
 34. Good buddy
 36. Movie tough guy
 42. Unified
 43. Five-time U.S. Open champ
 44. Sensitive subject, to some
 45. Red letters?
 48. Deficits
 51. Stuff
 53. Chordophones
- Down**
1. Payoff
 2. Miss. neighbor
 3. Newton, for one
 4. Modified car
 5. Patsy
 6. May event, for short
 7. Big name in construction
 8. Splenic
 9. Ferrell flick
 10. Thick blocks
 11. Marine food fish
 12. Friends
 13. Least ingenuous
 18. Brush up on
 19. Sheep meat
 22. Word with wise or mass
- Across**
23. German art song
 24. Vex
 26. Midnight meeting of witches
 28. Most ill-mannered
 29. Unit of energy
 30. Slow
 35. Curved file
 37. Verb tense, in Classical Greek
 38. "Catch-22" pilot
 39. Ice melter
 40. Lothario's look
 41. 1987 Costner role
 45. Of service
 46. Bow
 47. They make you stand tall
 49. Serfs
 50. Charioteer
 52. Listing
 56. Spring bloom
 57. The "B" in N.B.
 58. Big cheese
 60. ____ jacket
 61. Dinghy propeller
 62. Grazing land
 63. Wright wing



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1. Egypt (used mouldy bread as far back as 1550 B.C.); 2. Tea;
3. Being buried alive; 4. Oscar Wilde; 5) Scotland

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

S	E	P	T		P	R	O	S		I	N	T	R	O	
H	A	I	R		T	I	N	T		C	O	R	E	R	
U	S	E	A	S	A	S	C	A	P	E	G	O	A	T	
T	E	R	S	E		K	E	R	I		O	D	D	S	
		H	A	J			E	N	T	O					
A	D	A	M		E	R	A		O	O	D	L	E	S	
G	A	Z	A		S	U	M	A	C	S		O	A	T	
O	N	O	N	E	S	H	I	G	H		H	O	R	S	E
R	E	T		D	A	R	N	E	L		T	E	E	N	
A	S	H	R	A	M		O	D	E		O	S	L	O	
				E	M	I	R			S	I	S			
L	I	A	R		N	O	V	A		S	C	R	A	M	
A	S	Q	U	I	E	T	A	S	A		M	O	U	S	
P	L	U	N	K		O	R	E	S		P	I	C	A	
P	E	A	S	E		R	Y	A	S		E	N	I	D	

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

California mansion, lush with green lawns and vegetation, can guzzle as much water as 90 average homes in one year.

15.4

percent higher risk of death have those with high-stress jobs with little control over their work than those with low-demand jobs.

1,000

years is how long Stephen Hawking believed was the limit of survival of the human race without escaping "beyond our fragile planet".

117 million

American adults are in a facial recognition network used by US law enforcement agencies.

340 billion

US dollars is the annual healthcare costs and lost earnings in the US from daily exposure to hazardous, common chemicals.

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW



Relaxing on Rawai Beach in the evening. Photo by Marco Capriz

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

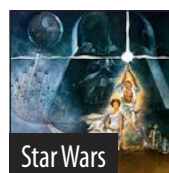
This week in history

May 22, 1762
Trevi Fountain is officially completed and inaugurated in Rome, Italy.

May 23, 1934
American bank robbers Bonnie and Clyde are ambushed by police and killed in Bienville Parish, Louisiana.

May 24, 1607
Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in North America, is founded.

May 25, 1977
Star Wars (retroactively titled *Star Wars: Episode IV – A*



New Hope) is released in US theaters.

May 26, 1896
Nicholas II is crowned as the last Tsar of Imperial Russia.

May 27, 1703
Tsar Peter the Great founds the city of Saint Petersburg.

May 28, 2002
The last steel girder is removed from the original World Trade Center site. Cleanup duties officially end with closing ceremonies at Ground Zero in Manhattan, New York City.

Source: *Wikipedia*

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FRI 22 MAY

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

Friday, 22 May 2026
17:00 - 18:00 hrs.

SAii Laguna Phuket

Free of Charge for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, Registered Alumni Members and attendees who join Phuket Sundowners.

Speakers:
 - **Senior Vice President - Hotel Asset Management Thailand and Vietnam**
 - **Senior Vice President and Head of Hotels Advisory, Thailand**

Joint Chambers Phuket Members Briefing

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

SAT 23 MAY

SWAP CONNECT Phuket

Date: 23 May 2026 (Saturday)
Time: 11:00 to 15:00
Venue: Junkyard Theatre Phuket

We warmly invite you to Swap Connect, a community gathering where sharing makes a difference. Bring the items you no longer need and exchange them for something useful from others. It's a simple way to reduce waste, connect with people, and support a more sustainable lifestyle.

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FRI 5 JUNE



Grow Boating Phuket Evening - June 2026

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

FRI 22 MAY

JOINT CHAMBERS PHUKET SUNDOWNERS

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

SAii Laguna Phuket

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

Register & more details

Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners

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

TUE 26 MAY

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

Four Bedroom Pool Villa

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

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May-June 2026

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NTCC & SANSIRI PHUKET NETWORKING EVENING

Held at The Society by Sansiri Phuket in Cherg Talay on Wednesday, May 14, an enthusiastic group of members from the Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC) and guests enjoyed an inspiring evening of sustainability, design innovation and meaningful business connections. The event offered a unique opportunity to explore how sustainable living is being translated into real residential design — enhancing both environmental impact and quality of life. To find out more about the Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC) visit ntccthailand.org



PHAB 8 - INFINITY BALL

The Annual PHAB Gala Dinner returned on Saturday, May 16, at the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town. And what an unforgettable night it was. This year marks the 8th fundraising event organised by the Phuket Hotels Association and had a very special theme: PHAB ∞ (Infinity). Infinity represents the endless impact that scholarship support has on our community. Every baht raised helps shape the future of young hospitality professionals, strengthens Phuket's tourism industry, and creates opportunities that last a lifetime. More info about Phuket Hotels Association visit phukethotelsassociation.com

England's women retain Six Nations

RUGBY

ELLIE KILDUNNE AND Jess Breach scored two tries apiece as world champions England sealed an eighth straight Women's Six Nations title and fifth successive Grand Slam with a 43-28 win away to France in Bordeaux last Sunday (May 17).

Victory extended England's nearly four-year record unbeaten run to 38 games.

Sunday's match was a Grand Slam-decider, with France – like England – having won all four of their previous matches this Championship.

But the title hopes of France, so long England's closest challengers in Europe, were dented in a first half that ended with England 26-7 ahead.

This was further evidence of England's strength in depth, with coach John Mitchell missing more than a



Kildunne (left).
Photo: AFP

dozen players due to pregnancy, injury or retirement following last year's World Cup triumph.

Earlier, Ireland marked their first stand-alone match at Dublin's Lansdowne Road with a 54-5 rout of Scotland as they finished in third place.

Wales, meanwhile, went down to a record ninth successive defeat as Italy scored seven tries in a decisive 43-24 win in Cardiff.

"What I've just said to the players is that we've just got to be better," said Wales coach Sean Lynn, who has just one win in 15 Tests since he took charge in January last year.

AFP

Tang eyes Baatarkhuu bout

MMA

Bangkok Post

China's Tang Kai sealed a fourth-round TKO at ONE Fight Night 43 last Saturday (May 16) at Lumpinee Stadium in Bangkok and immediately called for a showdown with Enkh-Orgil Baatarkhuu.

Tang defended his ONE Championship featherweight MMA world title in impressive fashion against Shamil Gasanov, having not fought since January 2025 when he suffered a demoralising TKO defeat by Akbar Abdullaev after being dominated for most of the four and a half rounds.

Tang, 30, was spared losing his title only because Abdullaev missed weight and failed hydration, leaving their main event as a non-title fight.

"I hope that one day we can have a rematch – but now I can fight the Mongolian."

That would be Baatarkhuu, the newly crowned bantamweight MMA champion who stunned Fabricio Andrade in December and immediately said he wanted the chance to become a two-division champion.

The 37-year-old, who shot to wider prominence through the Netflix hit 'Physical: Asia' last year, has made no secret of his desire to move up and challenge Tang and the featherweight champion is willing to grant him that wish.



Tang Kai (left) is declared the winner by referee Olivier Coste at ONE Fight Night 43. Photo: Bangkok Post

"I know he wants to fight with me," Tang said. "He can come. He can try. I will show him how different the level is between me and him."

Tang said he would have no issue facing Enkh-Orgil in Mongolia, China or anywhere else ONE decides to stage the fight.

"For me, no problem. In China, I feel more [nervous] and more pressure. So better not in China," he said, smiling.

PREPARED

Tang said he prepared well for Saturday's showdown with Gasanov.

"I prepared everything and trained hard every day. Thank you to my team, my coach, and also thank you Tiger Muay Thai.

"I have trained there for a long time. Me and Shamil trained in the same gym, but we never sparred. Thank you Shamil. He is a good opponent and a good guy."

Tang was also awarded a US\$50,000 (B1.6 million) performance bonus after the win, which he said he would use to support his family and team.

After reminding the division he is still champion, Tang had one more message for the country that has been his adopted home for more than four years.

"I really like Thailand and I love Thailand," Tang said with a smile. "Thank you to my Thailand fans. One day, I will learn to speak Thai."

Antonsen dashes Kunlavut's dream

BADMINTON

ANDERS ANTONSEN CAME FROM behind to defeat Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the BWF Thailand Open final last Sunday (May 17), denying the Thai star his third win in his home tournament at Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok.

Third seed Antonsen, who had won the last meeting between the two at the Thomas Cup, got the better of the defending champion again, prevailing 9-21, 24-22, 21-18 in one hour and 37 minutes.

Kunlavut, who also won the tournament in 2023, had hoped to become the first men's singles player since Joko Suprianto in 1994 to win three titles.

Antonsen took home his first title of the year along with the US\$37,500 (B1,237,500) winner's cheque, with Kunlavut pocketing \$19,000.

Akane Yamaguchi won the women's singles after she dethroned Chen Yufei 21-14, 21-18.

The Japanese took 39 minutes to defeat Chen, who had hoped to become the first Chinese women's singles player in 19 years to retain her title after Zhu Lin in 2007.

Unseeded Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin of Indonesia won the men's doubles after they upset top seeds Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty of India 21-12, 25-23.



Antonsen (left) and Kunlavut. Photo: AFP

It was an impressive comeback by Marthin, who returned to the circuit after missing a year due to an injury sustained at the Sudirman Cup Finals last May. Following surgery on his left knee cartilage Marthin returned at the Bangkok tournament where he reunited with his former partner Carnando.

There was another upset in the women's doubles decider, with unseeded Bao Lijing and Cao Zihan of China edging top seeds Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi of Japan 19-21, 21-16, 21-19.

Mathias Christiansen and Alexandra Boje, who made their third straight final, defeated China's Zhu Yijun and Li Qian 21-17, 21-15 in the mixed doubles decider. Zhu and Li upset Thai top seeds Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Supissara Paewsampran in the semi-finals.

Bangkok Post

Rai wins first major after PGA birdie blitz

GOLF

AARON RAI WON HIS first major title last Sunday (May 17) by capturing the PGA Championship, making birdies on four of the last eight holes to become the first Englishman to win the event in 107 years.

Rai sealed a tense back-nine shootout with a spectacular 68-foot birdie putt on the par-three 17th, firing his career-low major round with a five-under-par 65 to finish 72 holes on nine-under 271 at formidable Aronimink.

Rai defeated two-time major winner Jon Rahm of Spain and American Alex Smalley by three strokes with American Justin Thomas, Germany's Matti Schmid and Sweden's Ludvig Aberg sharing fourth on 275.

The 31-year-old from Wombourne in central England, whose father is of Indian ancestry and whose mother has Kenyan heritage, took home a \$3.69 million (B121mn) top prize from a record purse of \$20.5mn and the Wanamaker Trophy after a dramatic final day.



Rai with the trophy. Photo: AFP

Rai became only the second English player to win the PGA after Jim Barnes captured the first two titles in 1916 and 1919. "Extremely proud," Rai said. "There's a lot of incredible and historic English players over those hundred years who have gone on to achieve incredible things and had phenomenal careers.

"To be the person that's the first one to have won it in a long time from England is an amazing thing and something to be extremely proud of."

Never better than 19th in 12 prior major starts, Rai won his third DP World Tour title last November in Abu Dhabi and his only PGA Tour title in 2024 at Greensboro.

World number two Rory McIlroy, who won his sixth major title at last month's Masters, shot 69 to share seventh on 276 with American Xander Schauffele and Australian Cameron Smith, while top-ranked defending champion Scottie Scheffler shot 69 to finish on 278.

AFP

Title drama goes to the wire

FOOTBALL

AFP

Arsenal are on the brink of ending a 22-year wait to win the Premier League after beating Burnley 1-0 on Monday (May 18), which opened up a five-point lead at the top.

Kai Havertz headed in the only goal but was also lucky to avoid a second-half red card that could have swung the title race back in Manchester City's favour.

The Phuket News goes to print on a Tuesday so, by the time you are reading this, the title could be settled and the Gunners could have been crowned champions if City failed to win at Bournemouth on Tuesday evening (May 19).

Even if City did end the Cherries' 16-game unbeaten run and beat Aston Villa this Sunday, Arsenal will secure the title with victory at Crystal Palace on the same day.

"One more to go," said Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta. "We have done our job, what is in our hands. We now have to wait and see."

Elsewhere, at the other end of the table, West Ham's 3-1 defeat at Newcastle means, at time of press, they look certain to be relegated, with Tottenham realistically only needing one more point to win the battle for Premier League survival. Spurs were due to face Chelsea on Tuesday evening.



Arsenal's Kai Havertz (left) scores the decisive goal against Burnley. Photo: AFP

"Overall bad performance. Too many things (went wrong), I think we gifted them the goals," said West Ham boss Nuno Espirito Santo. "We realise the situation is extremely difficult for us."

Meanwhile, Bruno Fernandes made history in Manchester United's 3-2 win over Nottingham Forest last Sunday by equalling the Premier League record of 20 assists in a season as United secured third place at Old Trafford.

The Portuguese international moved alongside Thierry Henry and Kevin De Bruyne in the single-season assist list when his cross was turned in by Bryan Mbeumo for United's third goal at Old Trafford.

The win continued United's impressive run since interim boss Michael Carrick arrived in January. Carrick is expected to sign a two-year contract to remain in charge on a permanent basis imminently.

Aston Villa beat Liverpool 4-2 to remain in fourth place while Brighton's hopes of European qualification were dented with a later 1-0 loss at Leeds.

Brentford, in eighth place, also suffered a blow to their European ambitions in a 2-2 draw against Crystal Palace, as Sunderland climbed to ninth after a 3-1 win at Everton and Fulham and Wolves drew 1-1.

— Additional reporting by The Phuket News



Photo: AFP

Semenyo magic secures FA Cup win for Man City

FOOTBALL

ANTOINE SEMENYO produced one of the great FA Cup final goals with an audacious back-flick that sealed Manchester City's 1-0 win against Chelsea at Wembley last Saturday (May 16).

Semenyo illuminated a largely scrappy final late in the second half as he improvised a sublime finish to caress Erling Haaland's cross into the net.

The Ghana winger's moment of magic was enough to clinch City's eighth FA Cup triumph and their second piece of silverware this season after the League Cup final win over Arsenal in March.

Semenyo joins Ricky Villa, Michael Owen, Roberto Di Matteo and

Steven Gerrard among the ranks of iconic FA Cup final goalscorers.

The third FA Cup success of Guardiola's reign ended City's run of two successive defeats in the final against Crystal Palace and Manchester United.

Guardiola, who also lifted the trophy in 2023 and 2019, has now won 20 trophies in his glittering decade as City manager.

Chelsea responded less than 24 hours later by confirming Xabi Alonso as their new manager.

Former Liverpool, Real Madrid and Spain midfielder Alonso, who agreed a four-year contract with the Blues, led Bayer Leverkusen to the Bundesliga title in 2024 but was sacked by Real Madrid in January after just seven months in charge. AFP

FIFA confirms World Cup final to have half-time show

FOOTBALL

MADONNA, SHAKIRA AND K-POP megastars BTS will headline a Super Bowl-style half-time show at the World Cup final on July 19 at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, FIFA said on May 14.

Coldplay's Chris Martin is curating the show, which is a first for a football World Cup final but has raised concerns about how long half-time will be.

The biggest-ever World Cup, with 48 teams, kicks off on June 11 in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

"This will be a historic moment for the FIFA World Cup and a show befitting the biggest sporting event in the world," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said on Instagram.

Infantino said the half-time show would be "definitely the biggest stage ever," with six billion people expected to watch the tournament, and "a couple of billion" tuning in for the final.

The move mirrors the show held during the final of the 2024 Copa America in Miami, when Colombian star Shakira performed at half-time at the Hard Rock Stadium.

There was also a half-time show at last year's FIFA Club World Cup final, also at MetLife Stadium, which stretched the break in excess of the regulation 15 minutes.



Infantino. Photo: AFP

Infantino added that FIFA also planned to "take over" New York's Times Square on the final weekend of the World Cup.

The half-time extravaganza, which will also feature characters from Sesame Street and The Muppets, will support FIFA's Global Citizen Education Fund, an initiative working to raise US\$100 million (B3.2 billion) for children worldwide during the World Cup.

Shakira confirmed she will perform the tournament's official anthem Dai Dai and announced she will donate "100 percent of the proceeds" of the song to the fund.

In a statement, Madonna described the concert in support of expanding global education as "deeply meaningful to me." AFP

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Sport



Man City beat Chelsea to win FA Cup > p15



Phuket athletes shine at Kickboxing World Cup

Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

KICKBOXING

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Athletes representing Phuket were among the medal winners at the recent Thailand Kickboxing World Cup 2026 in Bangkok, as the hosts emerged triumphant against strong competition.

The second edition of the event, held at the Thai-Japanese Stadium in the Din Daeng area of the capital between Apr 7-11, saw a healthy turnout of 1,500 athletes and officials from 32 countries. A total of 941 athletes of varying ages and skillsets competed in a range of ring and tatami disciplines, just before Thailand's Songkran festival.

The team from Phuket, led by Natthakorn Yaemrungruang, President of the Phuket Kickboxing Club, along with members of his coaching staff, brought home an impressive 20-medal haul, including six gold, six silver and eight bronze across disciplines including Point Fighting, Light Contact, and Creative Form.

The gold medals went to the following: Phikhanet Sukhyik

(Point Fighting -63 kg); Sasithom Kaewsri (Point Fighting -50 kg); Anusaniya Tantiwacharawarakul (Point Fighting -24 kg); Silawut Chernchom (Light Contact -57 kg); Siroj Silchaitan (Light Contact -74 kg); and Sirisap Longpimay (K1 Professional Creative Form).

Mr Natthakorn praised the entire team, emphasising that the collective medal haul and team performance demonstrated the continued development of kickboxing athletes from Phuket. Furthermore, he stressed that the team represented the province with style and brought great pride to its residents through their achievements on the international stage.

CONTINUED PROGRESS

Thailand, with 378 registered athletes competing, finished top of the overall medal table to claim the title of competition winners, scooping 383 medals (89 gold, 123 silver, 171 bronze). Uzbekistan finished in second place with a 72-medal haul (36 gold, 22 silver, and 14 bronze), while Vietnam took third place with 95 medals overall (32 gold, 33 silver, and 30 bronze).

With an overall 293 female athletes and 648 male athletes involved in the competition the standard across all age and technical categories was extremely high, with participants coming from countries as far and wide as China, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Turkey, Singapore, Malaysia, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Norway, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Bulgaria, Israel, South Africa, the UAE and the UK.

The event was organised by the Kickboxing Association of Thailand (KAT) in partnership with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and the World Association of Kickboxing Organizations (WAKO), and was conducted under international standards consistent with sanctioned K-1 rules.

Over five days of competition, athletes competed across multiple weight divisions and disciplines under WAKO rules, providing a platform for international competition and athlete development. The event also enabled Thai athletes to compete alongside leading international fighters, reflecting the continued progress of the sport at the national level.

Taweedech Thong-on, Director of the Events Division at the TAT, said Thailand's selection as host for a second consecutive year reflects international confidence in the country's growing capability to stage large-scale global sporting events. He added that the tournament contributes to raising the global profile of kickboxing in Thailand, while supporting youth athlete development and promoting sports tourism through international media exposure.

KAT President Phai Likk said the success of the tournament represents an important step in elevating Thai kickboxing on the international stage. He noted that beyond competition, the event reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen the sport's development system, from grassroots participation to elite performance, while reinforcing Thailand's role in the global kickboxing landscape.

UNIFIED FRAMEWORK

Leveraging the success of the event, KAT launched KATPRO Professional Kickboxing, Thailand's first structured professional kickboxing league, on Apr 11 at the same venue. The

inaugural event featured seven bouts with fighters from more than 10 countries and was conducted in line with international professional standards, including official weigh-ins and pre-fight face-offs.

KATPRO Professional Kickboxing strives to integrate sport and entertainment within a unified framework and represents an important milestone in the development of the sport nationally by elevating competition standards, event management and the commercial value of the sport. Following K-1 rules focusing on speed, precision and technique, it features a professional league structure with international fighters that will create new professional pathways for Thai athletes by strengthening connections to international competition.

The successful staging of both events not only reflects Thailand's readiness to serve as a hub for global kickboxing competitions, but also underscores a clear development trajectory for the sport – from grassroots and amateur levels toward a more defined professional system, commented Mr Phai.

Phuket Games encourages a healthier lifestyle for all

ALL SPORTS

A MAJOR SPORTS AND recreation event encouraging Phuket residents to pursue a healthier and more active lifestyle took place earlier this month.

Created and managed by the Sport Association of Phuket, the Phuket Games 2026 was held between May 7-17 and saw a range of multi-sport competitions staged at various venues across the island which was

open to participants of all ages and abilities.

The event featured competitions in 12 sports and recreational activities, including athletics, football, badminton, petanque, ballroom dancing, woodball, sepak takraw, golf, Thai chess, teqball, gateball (a fast-paced, non-contact and highly strategic team mallet sport)... and a karaoke contest!

The opening ceremony was held at 6pm on May 10 at Spahn Hin Stadium,



Photo: Sport Association of Phuket

overseen by Thammawat Wongcharoenyos, President of the Sport Association of Phuket and Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) Committee Member.

Joining Mr Thammawat was: Suphatchai Phetkhong, a member of the Sport

Association of Phuket's executive committee; Rewat Areerob, President of the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO); Somchai Semmanee, Director of the Phuket Provincial Tourism and Sports Office; Prasit Sinsawapak, Deputy Mayor of Phuket Municipality; in addition to selected heads of government departments, associated agencies, representatives from various public and private sector organisations, participating athletes,

and members of the general public.

The event was organised by the Sport Association of Phuket in collaboration with the Phuket Provincial Tourism and Sports Office and the PPAO with the goal of encouraging residents of all ages to exercise in order to develop stronger physical and mental health while using their free time productively.

Furthermore, the event served as an opportunity to select senior athletes in

certain sporting disciplines to represent Phuket province at the 18th Thailand Senior Sports and Recreation Games, otherwise known as the "Nora Games".

This national competition will run between May 27-30 in Phatthalung province and include the following sports: athletics, badminton, petanque, ballroom dancing, woodball, Thai chess, sepak takraw, golf, gateball, and a karaoke contest.

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