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RAID TOWN



Photo: PR Phuket

MORE THAN 600 PHUKET FIRMS UNDER NOMINEE INVESTIGATION

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

More than 600 Phuket companies have been identified as being at risk of operating as illegal nominee businesses as the government escalates its campaign against foreign-controlled enterprises, land ownership and corruption across the island.

The crackdown was announced in Phuket last Saturday (June 20) by some of Thailand's most senior

police commanders and government officials following a coordinated week-long enforcement operation that saw officers execute search warrants across Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga.

Deputy National Police Chief Pol Gen Samran Nualma travelled to Phuket to personally announce the results alongside National Police Inspector-General Pol Lt Gen Nophasil Phoolsawat, Region 8 Police Commissioner Pol Lt Gen Surapong Thanomjit, Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen

Sinlert Sukhum and senior representatives from the Ministry of Interior, Immigration Bureau, Department of Business Development, Department of Lands and other agencies.

The operation targeted 89 plots of land across Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi, covering more than 49 rai and carrying an estimated combined value of B1.05bn.

Police estimate Phuket has more than 30,000 registered companies, including more than 11,000 with foreign shareholders.

Analysis by investigators has identified more than 600 companies requiring further investigation over suspected nominee arrangements.

In the latest operation, police said investigators identified 10 companies in Phuket suspected of acting as nominees linked to four land plots covering more than two rai and valued at B116 million.

Courts approved 59 arrest warrants and officers arrested 48 suspects, comprising 27 Thais and 21 foreigners. Those arrested...

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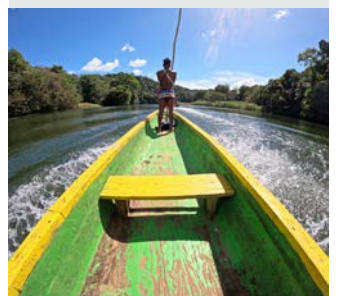
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Governor moved
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Marathon hits
big milestone



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News



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Police launch nominee blitz

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...included 11 Israelis, two French nationals, two Polish nationals, two Swiss nationals, one South African, one British national, one Dutch national and one Russian national.

Authorities are also investigating a further 39 Phuket companies whose shareholding structures indicate foreigners may effectively control the businesses. The companies are linked to 52 land plots worth about B115mn.

Combined, Phuket investigations involve 56 plots covering about 15 rai with a total estimated value of B231mn.

According to Region 8 Police, one of the key Phuket investigations centres on the G-Mat Hospitality Co Ltd network in Patong.

Investigators searched premises at 19/10 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong, where they found G-Mat Hospitality Co Ltd operating alongside Abale Co Ltd, which police said was registered to operate restaurants and cannabis retail businesses from the same address.

Police said the investigation also linked the network to Fitness Hero Bangjo Co Ltd in Srisoonthorn, Thalang.

According to investigators, Thai shareholders admitted holding shares on behalf of Israeli nationals.

The companies, established in 2019, operated hotel, resort, condominium and motorcycle rental businesses. They had also previously held tourism licences, but those licences were later revoked after authorities found violations involving the required composition of company directors.

The Ministry of Interior has also ordered investigations into more than 200 foreign-linked



Photo: PR Phuket

companies believed to own land in Phuket.

Deputy Interior Minister Polapee Suwunchwee announced the move after meeting senior provincial officials during a two-day visit to the island with fellow Deputy Interior Minister Worasit Liengprasit.

Mr Polapee said the Department of Lands had been instructed to pursue both criminal and civil action where companies were found to be illegally holding land. "Thailand must belong to the Thai people," he said.

The ministry has also ordered officials to re-examine beach boundaries, land title documents and possible forest encroachment while coordinating with the Department of Forestry on inspections across Phuket and neighbouring tourist provinces.

EXTORTION ALLEGATIONS

Alongside the nominee investigations, provincial officials have opened inquiries into allegations of extortion and land disputes involving businesses in Patong's Soi Saensabai.

Officials from the Phuket Damrongdharma Centre, Department of Provincial Administration, Patong Police, Phuket Provincial

Land Office and other agencies inspected the area following complaints submitted directly to Prime Minister Anutin.

Investigators stressed there is currently no evidence confirming allegations involving influential figures or organised criminal groups.

Phuket Damrongdharma Centre Director Monchai Saeleow said officials were still gathering evidence and verifying complaints.

"Such conclusions require clear evidence and cannot be made based solely on complaints," he said.

Patong Police are investigating both alleged land encroachment and claims that business operators were subjected to extortion.

No arrests have been made and no charges have been filed while officers continue interviewing witnesses and await official land surveys.

RULES TO BE REWRITTEN

During their visit, the deputy ministers met business operators in Patong and later announced a review of regulations governing hotel licensing, zoning, taxation and business operations.

Mr Worasit said many laws and ministerial regulations had

remained unchanged for more than a decade and no longer reflected Phuket's economic reality.

"The objective is to update outdated regulations while ensuring transparency and making it easier for businesses to comply with the law," he said.

The ministers also launched a temporary business assistance clinic at the Mueang Phuket District Office to help accommodation operators obtain hotel licences after years of complaints that thousands of businesses had been effectively locked out of the legal system.

Officials estimate Phuket has about 5,000 accommodation businesses, yet only around 800 currently hold hotel licences.

WIDER CAMPAIGN

Rather than focusing solely on illegal hotels or isolated nominee cases, authorities are now simultaneously targeting nominee companies, illegal land ownership, suspected corruption, extortion complaints and outdated regulations that officials say have contributed to long-standing problems.

Authorities have also warned lawyers, accountants and business consultants that anyone found advising clients on how to circumvent Thailand's nominee laws could face prosecution.

Officials insist legitimate foreign investment remains welcome, but say businesses operating through illegal structures will face increasingly intensive scrutiny.

The coordinated investigations are expected to continue in the coming months as authorities analyse company records, land ownership documents and financial evidence while pursuing

further search warrants and legal action where offences are identified.

PHUKET SPECIAL

Officials made clear the focus on Phuket reflects the island's unique business environment, where tourism has attracted substantial foreign investment over several decades.

While many foreign investors operate legally through Board of Investment privileges or other approved structures, investigators believe nominee arrangements have become widespread in sectors where Thai law restricts foreign ownership, including tourism-related businesses, property development and some service industries.

Police said the latest investigations are intended to distinguish between legitimate foreign investment and businesses using Thai shareholders to circumvent the Foreign Business Act.

"This is not about discouraging foreign investment," officials said. "It is about ensuring that everyone operates under the same legal framework."

Authorities said the operation extends well beyond suspected nominee companies.

Investigators are also examining possible offences involving land ownership, tax compliance, company registration, work permits, immigration, licensing and alleged corruption linked to business operations.

Officials said evidence uncovered during one investigation by any one of the agencies involved in the crackdown could be shared with other agencies where additional offences are identified, and charges can be pursued.

Hotels under threat in reclaiming beachfront land

HOTELS BUILT ILLEGALLY on protected land in Phuket face demolition from next month as the government steps up a sweeping campaign to reclaim beaches, revoke unlawfully issued land documents and dismantle long-standing encroachments across the island.

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Suchart Chomklin has vowed that authorities will permanently reclaim public beaches and state land from illegal occupation, warning

that several well-known hotels are among the properties facing demolition following final court rulings.

"After this demolition, things will never be the same again," Mr Suchart said. "No one will be able to seize it again. We will return it to the people and to fishing communities."

The minister said he would chair a meeting of the Phuket Model Committee to review every outstanding beach encroachment case and establish a timetable for enforcement.

He stressed that no-one would receive special treatment.

"If anyone breaks the law, we will show no mercy because the Prime Minister has given me strict instructions not to show favouritism to anyone," he said.

Officials are also preparing to submit disputed land documents to the Department of Lands for revocation where investigations determine they were issued unlawfully.

"Soon you will see me demolishing many more

well-known hotels," Mr Suchart said. "Honestly, I don't want to, but once the court issues a final order, demolition is mandatory."

NUI DEMOLITION ORDER

Forestry officials have ordered the occupant of more than 15 rai at Nui Beach, within the Nakkerd Hills National Forest Reserve, to demolish 39 structures and restore the land.

The order, issued under Section 25 of the National

Forest Reserve Act, requires the occupant known as "Mr Singha", also known by several aliases, to remove all buildings, fences and other structures from the site.

Officials posted the notice on June 19 after the occupant failed to appear to receive it in person.

Senior Forestry Specialist Thanandon Petchdee said the structures include buildings left standing after an earlier demolition operation in 2020 together with dozens more identified

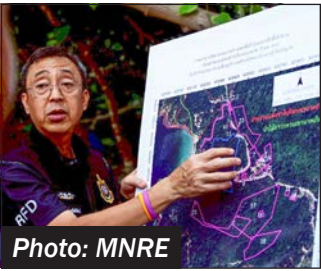


Photo: MNRE

during enforcement action in 2024.

The demolition must be completed by July 9. If the order is ignored, forestry officials will issue a final notice before carrying out the demolition themselves and recovering all costs from the occupant.

The Phuket News

Governor ousted as purge deepens

The Phuket News

editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn has accepted his abrupt transfer to Bangkok, insisting he has no regrets over his tenure while denying claims he became embroiled in the bitter internal conflict that has engulfed the province's administration.

Mr Nirat's transfer marks the latest stage in an unprecedented shake-up that has seen at least eight senior Phuket officials removed or transferred in less than a month, amid allegations of corruption, abuse of power, influential figures and deep divisions within the provincial administration.

The Cabinet on June 16 approved a Ministry of Interior proposal transferring Mr Nirat to the post of Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior after just 210 days as Phuket governor. He will be replaced by Chotinrin Kertsom, pending royal endorsement.

The move came only one day after Vice Governors Adul Chuthong and Teeraphong Chuaychoo were also transferred out of Phuket, signalling Bangkok's strongest intervention yet in the province's administration (see story below).



Photo: PR Phuket

Speaking publicly for the first time since the decision, Mr Nirat said he fully respected the order by Prime Minister and Interior Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Interior Ministry Permanent Secretary Arsit Sampantharat.

"I respect the Prime Minister's decision," he said.

"I am not discouraged. I will continue to do my best in my duties and uphold what is right. What I achieve will be judged by my superiors."

Mr Nirat firmly rejected suggestions that he had aligned himself with either side in the ongoing disputes among senior provincial officials.

"I had no problems with anyone," he said.

"I was the one who went down to resolve the conflict. The conflict already existed before I arrived. I went to resolve it in my capacity as governor, not to align myself with any particular person."

He acknowledged, however, that not everyone accepted his efforts.

"If people believed me, they adjusted. Those who didn't believe me did not."

Mr Nirat conceded that while progress had been made against organised crime and illegal activities, longstanding disputes within the provincial administration had proved far more difficult to resolve.

"Many things have progressed

significantly. The foreign mafia has been brought under control," he said.

"As for the conflict among people in the area, I may not have been able to resolve it yet. That has become an issue at ministerial level."

He added that if his inability to resolve those disputes had led to his transfer, he accepted the decision without complaint.

"If I cannot control the situation and the Ministry of Interior decides to transfer me, I respect the decision."

The sweeping reshuffle has unfolded against a backdrop of mounting allegations over entertainment venue licensing, public land disputes, bribery and the influence of powerful local figures.

When announcing the governor's transfer, PM Anutin insisted the decision was aimed at restoring effective administration rather than punishing individuals.

"We prioritised efficiency in work performance," he said.

"We need people who do not have conflicts and who can work together."

He stressed that Phuket remained one of Thailand's most important economic provinces and warned the government would not tolerate land encroachment, intimidation of residents or the

influence of powerful interests.

"I don't want to wait nine months for investigations and fact-finding committees," he said. "I have instructed the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior to solve the problems as quickly as possible."

Mr Arsit later defended replacing Phuket's entire senior leadership, comparing the situation to having sand inside a shoe.

"Sometimes when there is sand in your shoe, it becomes difficult to walk," he said. "You have to take the shoe off, empty the sand out and put it back on."

He said investigations into allegations involving provincial officials would continue despite the transfers.

Mr Nirat also maintained he had consistently warned officials against corruption throughout his time in office.

"I instructed them not to break the law, not to ask anyone for bribes and not to oppress anyone," he said.

Asked whether those warnings had upset some officials, he smiled before replying: "Of course."

The political upheaval means Phuket has now had four governors in less than a year, highlighting continuing instability at the highest levels of provincial government.

DOPA targets just one Patong hotel

A PATONG HOTEL HAS been raided for allegedly operating without a licence just months after its operator was convicted for the same offence, with officials accusing the business of continuing to flout the law despite a court ruling.

The June 16 operation targeted Chateau du Village Patong Hotel on Phra Metta Rd as part of the Department of Provincial Administration's (DOPA) crackdown on illegal hotels.

DOPA said investigators found the hotel was accepting bookings through online platforms and operating without the licence required under the Hotel Act 2004.

Officials alleged the hotel had already been prosecuted by DOPA's special operations unit in February, but continued operating in breach of the law.

"This reflects a blatant disregard for the law and negatively impacts legitimate businesses," DOPA said.

According to the police report, Chateau Phuket Co Ltd, represented by Athiwat Saengsom, will again face prosecution for operating a hotel without a licence.



Photo: DOPA

Police confirmed the hotel had previously been convicted of the same offence. In February, the Phuket Provincial Court imposed a six-month prison sentence, suspended for one year, a B10,000 fine and a further daily fine of B1,000 from Jan 31, 2025, until the offence ceased.

The latest complaint has been lodged by Kathu District officials, with Patong Police continuing the investigation.

The raid follows similar operations across Phuket. Last week, DOPA arrested operators of seven allegedly unlicensed accommodation businesses in Patong, Karon and Rawai.

Notably, DOPA identified Chateau du Village

Patong Hotel and its operator by name. In previous raids, the department had withheld the identities of hotels under investigation and has offered no explanation for the change in policy.

DOPA maintains that the latest raid was part of a "nationwide crackdown" ordered by DOPA Chief Narucha Khosasilvilai.

Narucha himself is facing a formal investigation of corruption and election interference following the sacking of Phuket Provincial Palad Rungruang Thimabut.

Yet the "nationwide crackdown" so far has targeted only hotels in Phuket.

The Phuket News

New vice governors arrive

TWO NEWLY APPOINTED Phuket vice governors have officially taken up their positions, marking the latest changes to the province's senior administration amid Phuket's ongoing corruption fiasco.

Former Samut Sakhon Vice Governor Pol Lt Col Khetarat Chansilp and former Songkhla Vice Governor Romdon Hayia-wae began their new roles on June 16, replacing Adul Chuthong and Teeraphong Chuaychoo, who transferred to Songkhla and Nakhon Sri Thammarat respectively.

The appointments came one day after Cabinet approved the transfer of Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn to Bangkok to serve as Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior.

Before formally starting work, Pol Lt Col Khetarat, accompanied by his wife Phichatra Chansilp, paid respects at the Phuket City Pillar Shrine and the Heroines Monument.



Photo: PR Phuket

A graduate in Economics from Chulalongkorn University with an MBA from Lincoln University, Pol Lt Col Khetarat began his career with the Tourist Police before joining the Department of Special Investigation (DSI). He served as a special investigator in financial crime cases and later headed the Centre for Prevention and Suppression of Influential Figures before being appointed vice governor of Samut Sakhon in 2024.

Mr Romdon also officially reported for duty on June 16 after transferring from Songkhla.

Speaking briefly after arriving, he said it was too early to comment on his priorities while awaiting

his formal assignment of responsibilities.

"I am ready to perform my duties to the best of my ability and to work for the people of Phuket," he said, adding that he looked forward to working with all sectors to help drive the province's development.

Mr Romdon previously served as Vice Governor of Songkhla and has held senior roles within the Department of Provincial Administration and the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre. He holds degrees from Chulalongkorn University, Ramkhamhaeng University and the National University of Singapore.

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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Wind 4 m/s

SAT JUNE 27

High: +29°
Low: +25°
Wind 7 m/s

SUN JUNE 28

High: +29°
Low: +26°
Wind 22 m/s

MON JUNE 29

High: +29°
Low: +25°
Wind 25 m/s

TUE JUNE 30

High: +29°
Low: +26°
Wind 22 m/s

WED JULY 1

High: +29°
Low: +26°
Wind 22 m/s

THU JULY 2

High: +29°
Low: +26°
Wind 22 m/s

Photo: ISOC Region 4

Chinese 'supervisors' arrested at condo project

AUTHORITIES ARRESTED 16 Chinese nationals and 62 Myanmar workers during a raid on a condo development in Cherg Talay as part of an investigation into suspected illegal foreign business operations and nominee ownership.

The joint operation at the Ayana Heights Seaview Residence Phuket project was carried out at about 10am on June 18 after officials received complaints from local residents about suspicious activities involving foreign nationals, ISOC Region 4 reported.

The raid was led by the 4th Army Region's Command Centre for Combating New Forms of Security Threats and Counter-Terrorism, with support from military and other government agencies.

Officials said the investigation was launched

after reports that Chinese nationals were working as engineers and site supervisors, while most of the construction workforce consisted of Myanmar nationals.

During the inspection, officers arrested 16 Chinese supervisors for working while holding visas that did not permit employment in Thailand. They also detained 62 Myanmar workers who were unable to produce documents proving they had legally entered the country.

All suspects were handed over to Cherg Talay Police for legal action. Authorities said the investigation is continuing and has been expanded to examine possible foreign nominee business arrangements and other offences under Thai law.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Tuk-tuk driver charged over boxer's death

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POLICE have charged a tuk-tuk driver with reckless conduct causing death and failing to stop and render assistance after Scottish boxer Colin Cairney died from injuries sustained when he fell from the back of a moving vehicle in Patong early on June 14.

The driver, identified only as 34-year-old Kit-chapong from Phatthalung, was summoned to Patong Police Station on June 15 after investigators identified him through witness statements and CCTV footage.

Mr Cairney, 29, suffered critical head injuries after falling from the tuk-tuk on Phra Baramee Rd at about 4am. He was taken to Patong Hospital before being transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he later died.

Mr Cairney, from Stirling, Scotland, held an undefeated professional boxing record of 10 wins from 10 fights and won the WBO International Welterweight title in Hong Kong last year.

According to investigating officer Pol Lt Col Surachat Thongyai, Kitchapong



Photo: Colin Cairney / Facebook

admitted driving the tuk-tuk. He told police he picked up Mr Cairney and a female companion from Bangla Rd and agreed to take them to a hotel in Kalim.

The passengers reportedly said they did not have enough cash to pay the fare and asked to be taken to several ATMs, but were unable to withdraw money. Kitchapong said he then drove back towards Bangla Rd.

While travelling along Phra Baramee Rd, he said he felt something unusual with the vehicle but did not stop. He continued for about

two kilometres before realising Mr Cairney was no longer in the tuk-tuk. Kit-chapong admitted he did not stop, notify authorities or report the incident.

Police said the tuk-tuk belonged to Kitchapong's brother, from whom he rented it for commercial use. Kitchapong has reportedly confessed to both charges.

Pol Lt Col Surachat said compensation discussions are underway between the suspect and Mr Cairney's uncle, who lives in Phuket.

The investigation is continuing as police prepare to forward the case for prosecution.

1.2kg of crystal meth seized in bust, third suspect hunted

TWO SUSPECTED DRUG dealers have been arrested and more than 1.195kg of crystal meth (ya ice) seized in a Phuket narcotics operation, with police continuing to hunt a third suspect.

Officers from the Phuket Provincial Police Narcotics Suppression Division arrested Itthichai Imsombat, 40, and Boonyarit Muttaphan, 44, during a raid on a commercial building in Ratsada last Saturday (June 20).

Police seized 1,195.19g of crystal meth, 1,794 methamphetamine pills (ya bah), a digital scale, two mobile phones and other items linked to the alleged



Photo: Phuket Provincial Police

trafficking operation.

The pair have been charged with possessing Category 1 narcotics with intent to sell and illegal drug use. They were handed over to Phuket City Police for legal action.

Police are continuing efforts to locate a third suspect, Charan Kongsuwan, 43. Eakkapop Thongtub

Woman found alive after Sarasin Bridge jump

A 37-YEAR-OLD WOMAN from Phatthalung was rescued alive on June 18 after reportedly jumping from Sarasin Bridge several hours earlier and drifting in the Andaman Sea before being spotted by local fishermen.

Tha Chatchai Police received a report at 3:38am that a person had jumped from the outbound side of the bridge linking Phuket and Phang Nga. A black Toyota sedan registered in Phatthalung was found parked on the bridge.

After an extensive search by rescue teams from Phuket and Phang Nga, fishermen located the woman floating about seven to eight kilometres offshore.

Volunteer rescuers recovered her and brought her ashore at Pak Phra Beach in Mai Khao before



Photo: Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation

she was taken to Thalang Hospital for treatment.

Police said they will interview the woman once she is well enough to provide a statement.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Second incinerator still a year away

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Phuket's long-awaited second waste incinerator will not be completed until June next year, with delays blamed on disruptions to the shipment of machinery and materials caused by conflict in the Middle East, extending the island's waste-disposal crisis for at least another year.

The revised timeline was confirmed as Phuket City Mayor Suppachoke Laongphet inspected progress at the Phuket Provincial Integrated Waste Disposal Centre at Saphan Hin, where newly arrived machinery is being prepared for the second phase of installation.

Municipal officials said the project had originally been scheduled for completion by the middle of this year. However, delays in the delivery of key equipment forced contractor EA Waste Management Phuket Co Ltd to seek an extension.

"The international conflict in the Middle East affected the transportation of some materials and machinery," Phuket City



Municipality said. "As a result, the construction period has been extended and completion is now expected in June 2027."

The new facility, being built alongside the existing Phuket Provincial Waste Disposal Centre, is designed to process up to 500 tonnes of waste a day using a closed incineration system intended to minimise odour and reduce impacts on nearby communities.

EA Waste Management Phuket plans to begin loading waste into the plant's bunker system about three months before construction is completed to allow commissioning and testing between April and June next year.

The delay means Phuket will continue struggling with a significant waste-processing shortfall.

During a visit to the waste disposal centre on June 18, Deputy Interior Ministers Polpeerap Suwanachawi and Worasit Liengprasit were briefed that the island is now generating about 1,400 tonnes of rubbish each day, while the existing incinerator can process only about 700 tonnes.

Once the second incinerator is operational, total disposal capacity is expected to increase to around 1,200 tonnes per day, still below the current volume of waste being generated.

The deputy ministers, accompanied by Secretary to the Interior Minister Chaiwat Junthirapong, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Provincial Administration Ronnarong Thipsiri, Deputy Prime Minister's Office spokesperson Ploytalay Laksmisangchan and Mayor Suppachoke, inspected the facility and

discussed long-term solutions with local officials.

Speaking during the visit, Mr Polpeerap said Phuket's continued growth as one of Thailand's leading tourism destinations required authorities to plan well beyond completion of the second incinerator.

He said waste management strategies should look at least three to five years ahead, with further increases in disposal capacity likely to be needed as the province's economy, population and tourism industry continue expanding.

The deputy minister also called for studies into new waste-management technologies and suitable investment models to improve efficiency while minimising environmental impacts.

He thanked Phuket City Municipality for taking responsibility for managing waste generated across the island, but stressed that solving the problem could not be left to a single agency.

Instead, he said, central government, local administrative organisations, the

private sector and the public all had roles to play in reducing waste and supporting sustainable disposal systems.

Mr Polpeerap added that the Ministry of Interior would support improvements to relevant laws, regulations and budget mechanisms to strengthen Phuket's waste-management capacity and ensure it keeps pace with future growth.

The municipality has previously warned that the second incinerator alone will not solve Phuket's waste crisis.

Earlier this year, Mayor Suppachoke acknowledged that the island's main landfill at Saphan Hin had already exceeded its original design capacity and could no longer be expanded outward, highlighting the need to reduce waste volumes as well as increase disposal capacity.

Phuket City Municipality said it would continue closely monitoring construction of the second incinerator to ensure the project is completed as quickly as possible while providing long-term environmental benefits for the island.

Drowning deaths spur beach safety push

PHUKET OFFICIALS ARE stepping up beach safety and disaster preparedness efforts as rough seas and heavy rain continue to pose risks during the southwest monsoon, which has claimed 56 lives in drowning incidents across the island over the past three years.

Figures compiled by the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) show Karon Beach remains the island's deadliest beach, accounting for 20 drowning deaths between 2024 and 2026 – more than one-third of all fatalities recorded during the period.

Kata and Surin beaches recorded five deaths each, followed by Patong and Mai Khao beaches with four each, Kamala and Ley Phang beaches with three each, and Nai Thon and Sai Kaew beaches with two each. One drowning death was recorded at each of Ao Por, Bang Tao, Nai Yang, Freedom Beach, Koh Racha Yai and Koh Racha Noi.

By district, Mueang recorded the highest toll with 27 deaths, followed by Thalang with 19 and Kathu with 10.



Against that backdrop, ISOC Phuket last week proposed placing lifeguard services under a single authority to improve standards, training and rescue coordination across the island.

At a meeting attended by representatives from the PPAO, the Phuket Provincial Tourism and Sports Office, local authorities, beachfront businesses and lifeguard groups, the PPAO was identified as the proposed lead agency to oversee lifeguard operations province-wide, with support from MoTS Phuket.

The meeting also called for additional safety measures, including multilingual warning signs at beaches and other high-risk coastal areas to better alert foreign

visitors to dangerous swimming conditions – namely deadly rip currents during the southwest monsoon season, from May through October.

Meanwhile, the DDPM's Phuket-based Region 18 office brought together 62 disaster-response officials from five Andaman provinces for a large-scale exercise testing how agencies would respond to major floods and landslides during the monsoon season.

The tabletop exercise, held at Seabed Grand Hotel, simulated multi-province disaster scenarios to test command structures, communications, resource deployment and emergency decision-making.

The Phuket News

Layan park plan moves forward

PLANS HAVE BEEN revived to transform 172 rai of state land at Layan Beach into a public park, with provincial officials seeking private-sector support to develop one of Phuket's most controversial disputed land sites.

Nirat Pongsitthaworn, at the time still Acting Phuket Governor, last week chaired a meeting with local officials, business leaders and executives from the Gardens of Eden project to discuss development of the beachfront land in Cherng Talay.

The proposal includes landscaped green space, recreation areas, parking and public toilets. Officials stressed no permanent buildings are currently planned, with any future construction requiring additional legal approvals and public consultation.

"Everything is on the table. There is no talking under the table," Mr Nirat said, pledging the project would proceed transparently and in accordance with the law.



Authorities said legal procedures for some aspects of the project could take three to six months, while landscaping and initial site improvements may begin sooner.

Gardens of Eden has offered financial support after previously contributing to beach improvement works. Phuket Province has already spent about B12 million on preliminary works, while Laguna and Central have also expressed interest in supporting the project.

The site has long been at the centre of one of Phuket's most contentious land disputes. Commonly known as the Layan land case, it involved years of legal battles over about

178 rai of prime beachfront land worth tens of billions of baht.

In 2022, then-Department of Special Investigation Director-General Traiyarit Temhiwong reaffirmed that the Supreme Court had ruled the land was state property.

Officials said converting the area into a public park would provide valuable green space while helping prevent future encroachment. Provincial agencies have been instructed to prepare infrastructure plans covering drainage, utilities, safety systems and access roads before development begins.

The Phuket News

The Hidden Compliance Risks Behind Thailand's POS Systems

ADVERTORIAL

For many businesses, a point-of-sale (POS) system is seen simply as a payment tool at the cashier. In reality, it has become central to business operations.

Across restaurants, cafés, hotels, retail shops and convenience stores, POS systems now sit at the core of daily activity. Beyond processing payments, they record sales, track inventory, generate accounting data and support tax reporting within a single platform.

As Thailand advances toward a digital economy, businesses increasingly depend on these systems not only for efficiency but also to meet regulatory and tax obligations.

What is often overlooked is that POS compliance is no longer just an IT or accounting matter. It has become a legal and governance issue.

Under Thailand's Revenue Code, businesses using POS systems to issue abbreviated tax invoices (ABB) may need prior approval from the Revenue Department (TRD). In practice,



this requirement is frequently overlooked, particularly by businesses focused primarily on operational functionality.

The registration process generally involves submitting an application to the TRD, together with details of the POS system. This typically includes how transactions are recorded, how invoices are generated, how data is stored, and how reports are produced. Supporting documents, sample invoices and system specifications are often required.

The TRD's objective is to ensure that systems reliably

capture transaction data, prevent record manipulation and generate tax invoices that comply with legal requirements. Depending on system complexity, the review may involve follow-up questions or system demonstrations before approval is granted.

Once approved, businesses are expected to use the system in line with the approved structure. Material changes – such as modifications to invoicing formats or data handling – may require further notification or renewed approval.

These requirements are

particularly relevant for high-volume businesses such as restaurants, cafés, supermarkets, retail stores, and petrol stations.

The rationale is straightforward. Authorities want assurance that sales records, VAT calculations and accounting data reflect genuine transactions. As tax administration becomes increasingly digital, inconsistencies between POS data, accounting records, and tax filings are easier to detect during audits.

The risks for businesses go beyond tax penalties. Weak or non-compliant systems can lead to accounting discrepancies, operational inefficiencies and audit challenges. In some cases, they can also create reputational risks if financial records cannot be clearly reconciled.

Conversely, businesses that implement compliant POS systems from the outset benefit from improved transparency, stronger internal controls, and reduced regulatory risk over time.

POS systems should therefore no longer be viewed as purely operational tools. They are an integral part of a company's broader compliance and governance framework.

As digital transactions become the norm and regulatory scrutiny increases, businesses can no longer treat POS compliance as a back-office technical issue. Those that approach it as a governance priority will be better positioned to manage risk, maintain transparency, and support sustainable growth in Thailand's evolving digital economy.

For more information, contact: infophuket@bdo.th

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Licensing drive targets 4,000 hotels

THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR has launched a two-week campaign in Phuket to help thousands of unlicensed accommodation operators enter the legal system, with deputy ministers pledging to cut red tape and review laws that have left most of the island's hotels operating without licences.

Deputy Interior Ministers Polapee Suwunchwee and Worasit Liengprasit visited Phuket on June 18 to open a consultation and complaint centre for hotel and service establishment operators, meeting business owners to hear concerns over the licensing process.

The centre, operating until July 2, allows operators to apply for licences, receive legal advice and raise concerns directly with officials.

Mr Polapee said Phuket has about 5,000 accommodation businesses, but only around 800 currently hold hotel licences. Another 700 applications remain under consideration, highlighting major obstacles preventing businesses from entering the legal system.

"The government wants

to help entrepreneurs operate legally and fairly," he said.

"We are ready to listen to suggestions from all sectors and consider amendments to laws, ministerial regulations and related rules to reflect the current situation."

He instructed agencies to accelerate approval of complete applications while encouraging operators to use the consultation period to begin the licensing process.

Mr Worasit said many operators continue to face obstacles created by planning laws, land-use controls and other legal requirements.

"The aim is to strike a balance between supporting businesses, maintaining public order and protecting the public interest," he said.

Operators attending consultation sessions complained about lengthy approval times, duplicated paperwork and complex procedures, proposing a one-stop service to simplify applications. Officials said the concerns would be reviewed as part of wider reforms.

The consultation centre is open daily, including public holidays, from 8:30am to 4:30pm at the Mueang Phuket District Office.

The initiative comes as authorities continue efforts to bring more accommodation businesses into compliance while maintaining tourism standards.

Separately, the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO) last week hosted a tourism seminar attended by more than 400 hotel operators.

The PPAO reported maintenance fee revenue collected from hotel guests reached more than B290 million during the first eight months of fiscal 2026, up 4.17% year-on-year. However, May collections fell 8.36% from the same month last year, reflecting continuing volatility in the tourism market.

RAIDS CONTINUE

The licensing clinic follows an intensive enforcement campaign by the Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA), which in recent weeks has targeted dozens of allegedly

unlicensed accommodation businesses across Phuket.

On June 16, DOPA officers raided the Chateau du Village Patong Hotel, alleging it continued operating without a licence despite the operator having already been convicted of the same offence earlier this year. The raid followed earlier operations against seven accommodation businesses in Patong, Karon and Rawai.

The crackdown has coincided with a broader political dispute over alleged corruption within Phuket's hotel licensing system.

Senior government figures have repeatedly alleged that some businesses continued operating after paying bribes to avoid enforcement, although no evidence has been presented publicly. Local official reports have also failed to distinguish between bribery and extortion.

Meanwhile, DOPA Director-General Narucha Khosasilvilai is facing complaints to the National Anti-Corruption Commission and Election Commission alleging he interfered



Photo: PR Phuket

in February's Senate election by directing officials to support candidates linked to the Bhumjaithai Party. Narucha has denied the allegations.

YEARS OF 'PROBLEMS'

The government's latest initiative follows years of complaints from Phuket's small hotel sector that restrictive building regulations, planning laws and licensing requirements effectively prevented many operators from obtaining hotel licences despite repeated attempts to comply.

Successive governments introduced temporary exemptions that enabled about 1,000 previously unlicensed

hotels to become legal, but thousands remained outside the system after those measures expired.

In October 2024, authorities launched what they described as a "final chance" campaign urging operators to register before the exemptions ended. Despite those efforts, the backlog persisted.

The latest campaign represents a significant shift in emphasis – from relying primarily on raids and prosecutions to actively helping thousands of operators who have long argued they were locked out of the licensing system obtain legal status while enforcement against businesses that refuse to comply continues. *The Phuket News*

New penalty guidelines for cannabis offences

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine has issued new penalty guidelines that include licence suspensions or revocations for cannabis businesses found to breach the department's requirements.

The guidelines, developed under the Ministry of Public Health's Controlled Herbal Product (Cannabis) BE 2568 notification, set penalties for licensed operators engaged in re-search, export, sale or processing of cannabis for commercial purposes, department deputy director-general Dr Thewan Thaneerat said on Monday (June 22).

The guidelines are intended to provide a uniform framework for both law enforcement and cannabis business operators, Mr Thewan explained.

Under the rules, operators may face a 30-day licence suspension for failing to maintain or submit the Por Thor 27 form, which declares the source of cannabis and product quantities currently held in stock, and the Por Thor 28, a record of cannabis distribution that covers the daily sales or how cannabis is processed into other products.

Suspension may also be imposed if



Bangkok police inspect a cannabis shop on Khao San Road in Bangkok. Photo: Apichart Jinakul

the mandatory monthly reports are incomplete or not submitted to the registrar said Dr Thewan.

The penalty also applies to operators who sell or export controlled products not certified under Good Agricultural and Collection Practices or equivalent standards; fail to display licences at business premises or provide them for digital inspection; or advertise cannabis products for commercial purposes.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

Operators may face longer suspensions of up to 90 days if they fail to notify authorities of export details, or sell cannabis without the PorThor 33 form, a medical prescription required for every legal sale.

Licences may be revoked for operators who report false information, sell cannabis to vulnerable groups, allow on-site consumption, sell products online or via vending machines or operate in prohibited areas, Dr Thewan said.

Vulnerable groups include people under 20, students, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers. Prohibited locations include temples, dormitories and public parks.

Licence suspension periods for multiple violations will be combined but cannot exceed 90 days. Operators committing a second violation will face harsher penalties, with revocation applied immediately for repeating the same type of offence, Dr Thewan said.

PM Anutin wants foreign culprits deported faster

BANGKOK

PRIME MINISTER Anutin Charnvirakul has ordered legal amendments to speed up the deportation of foreign criminals to prevent them from repeating their offences in Thailand.

The PM has assigned Deputy Prime Minister Pakorn Nilrapant, the Immigration Bureau and the Ministry of Interior to draw up amendments to the immigration law and related regulations to speed up deportations.

Anutin said on June 16 that although foreign culprits are being arrested and prosecuted, the deportation process was time-consuming.

If foreigners face criminal charges in Thailand, the legal process must be concluded before deportation can take place. They can be released on bail but are usually required to surrender their passports. At this stage, some will



Photo: Bangkok Post

go back and resume their normal criminal activities, authorities say.

Once the local criminal charges have been dealt with, foreigners ordered deported will be taken to an immigration detention centre until the order is carried out.

The government has been effectively tackling problems caused by foreigners involved in transnational crime, call scams, proxy business and illicit operations.

Police have said that foreign criminal suspects tend to be concentrated in major tourist destinations, such as Koh Pha-ngan, Phuket and Hua Hin, where they can blend more easily into expatriate communities and business networks.

Bangkok Post

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When road trips go everywhere except according to plan



GLOBETROTTER

Todd Miller

After a year of rugged travel, I made a suggestion to Patrick. "Let's do an easy trip." My definition of easy was a leisurely three-week road trip through Central America. We would start in Panajachel on Guatemala's Lake Atitlán and meander through six countries before finishing in Panama City. One car. One driver. Colonial towns, volcanoes, national parks.

Compared with some of our previous adventures, this journey seemed almost luxurious in its simplicity. Naturally, it immediately began to fall apart.

The first hint that this trip might not unfold as imagined came a few weeks before departure, when Guatemala declared a national state of emergency.

Seasoned travelers develop a flexible relationship with announcements like this. Governments declare states of emergency all the time. Usually life

continues normally for visitors. We ignored the omen.

The second omen was harder to ignore. It arrived the night before our road trip was set to begin, when we learned there would be a last-minute change in drivers.

Our new driver, Jonathan, appeared the next morning several hours late and looking as though he had not slept since the invention of coffee. He also shared one small detail that would have been nice to know earlier. Jonathan had never done the trip we were about to embark on.

The visa plot twist

After a chaotic start – including the awkward moment when we had to guide our guide through the first land border crossing – we finally found some momentum in El Salvador.

That was the calm before the storm.

Patrick soon discovered that Nicaragua had quietly revised its visa rules for travellers from several countries. While I was unaffected by this policy change, Patrick now needed an embassy visa in advance – a process we were told would take months.



Sunset from Guatemala's Cerro de la Cruz. Photo: Todd Miller

Our solution was creative, if slightly absurd. Patrick would fly over Nicaragua to Costa Rica while Jonathan and I continued driving through Nicaragua with the car. The plan was to reunite in Costa Rica five days later. It was not the road trip we had envisioned, but technically it was still a road trip.

Travel logistics resemble dominoes. When one piece falls, the rest quickly follow.

Because Patrick was no longer entering Nicaragua, the authorisation paperwork for our car and driver had to be re-approved on an emergency basis. After a series of improvisations and paperwork revisions and hours at immigration, Jonathan and I managed to enter Nicaragua.

For a moment, it felt like we might regain control of the trip. That optimism lasted three days.

Central America, tag-team style

While in Nicaragua, I had to make an emergency trip to the United States for family reasons. Suddenly our road trip resembled less of a shared adventure and more of a tag-team sporting event.

Patrick was waiting in Costa Rica. Jonathan was somewhere in Nicaragua with our car. And I was on a plane heading north. For several days the three of us were in three different countries at the same time – all participating in the same theoretical road trip.

Eventually I reunited with Patrick and Jonathan in Costa Rica's capital for the final border crossing into Panama. At this point we assumed the trip had finally run out of ways to surprise us. This was optimistic.

From Panama we had to make another unplanned trip to the United States, again for family reasons.

Unfortunately, we arrived during the late-March airport chaos that had American travellers mired in security lines. That week George Bush Intercontinental Airport was reportedly the most disrupted airport in the country. Security lines sometimes exceeded four hours.

Through a combination of hustle and desperation, we managed to get through immigration and security in time for our connecting flight – while many other passengers missed theirs. It felt less like air travel and more like a competitive Olympic event.

The Great Pacific detour

But the real improvisation came next.

Our original plan had been to return to Phuket from the Americas via Europe and the Middle East. Unfortunately, the escalating conflict involving Iran had made that routing impossible.

Instead of crossing the Atlantic, we crossed the Pacific. This felt like a triumph of travel problem-solving – until our flight arrived in Seoul 10 minutes late.

Ten minutes was enough to miss our connection. Because Korean Air operates just one daily flight to Phuket, we



Pulhapanzak Falls, Honduras' largest. Photo: Todd Miller



On the Chagres River in Panama's Chagres National Park. Photo: Todd Miller



Two scarlet macaws in the rainforest canopy in Honduras. Photo: Todd Miller



Jonathan, our driver. Photo: Todd Miller

were rewarded with a 24-hour layover in South Korea. At this point we stopped asking what might go wrong next. The trip had clearly developed its own sense of humour.

A travel tale

The original idea had been simple: a relaxed road trip to enjoy Central America's greatest hits. Instead, we expanded a tidy Central American road trip into a multi-continent adventure and elaborate logistical puzzle.

Every good trip eventually turns into a story. And the moral of this one may be: If everything goes according to plan, you're probably just commuting.

Adventurer Todd Miller has explored more than 130 countries. He authored the best-seller *ENRICH: Create Wealth in Time, Money, and Meaning*. www.ToddMiller.asia

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

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Spielberg the maestro delivers once again

David Griffiths

When some directors have a new film arrive in cinemas, it is not just a release, it is an event. One such filmmaker is the great Steven Spielberg. Not only does he have three Oscars to his name but for the past 50 years he has given us some of Hollywood's best films including *Jaws*, *Schindler's List*, *Jurassic Park* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't slightly nervous when approaching the cinema to see his new film *Disclosure Day*. There was something about the trailer that made this look like it was Spielberg back at his best – and added to that is the fact that this sees the great man returning to one of his favourite subjects – extra-terrestrials. Surely the director that gave us *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *E.T.* couldn't possibly suddenly get this subject matter wrong.

I need not have worried because not only does Spielberg return to his past magic with *Disclosure Day* but he delivers a modern-day cinematic masterpiece.

Written by David Koepp (*Jurassic Park*) *Disclosure Day* begins with a couple on the run. Dr Daniel Kellner (Josh O'Connor – *Challengers*) has stolen one of the U.S. Government's biggest secrets – all of its secret files and footage that proves the existence of extra-terrestrials.

Desperate to get them back his former boss, the evil Noah Scanlon (Colin Firth – *The King's Speech*), has kidnapped Daniel's girlfriend Jane Blankenship (Eve Hewson – *Robin Hood*), but his plan goes wrong. As they meet for the handover Daniel outsmarts Scanlon and ends up leaving with both Jane and the secret files.

Meanwhile, television weather presenter Margaret Fairchild (Emily Blunt – *The Devil Wears Prada*) is at home preparing for work with her partner Jackson (Wyatt Russell – *Thunderbolts**) when a Cardinal bird flies through their window and lands on the table. It makes eye contact with Margaret and suddenly she is



Emily Blunt (centre) in *Disclosure Day*. Photo: IMDb

speaking fluent strange languages and seemingly knowing everything about anybody she meets.

The link between these two events seems to be the mysterious Hugo Wakefield (Colman Domingo – *Lincoln*) who not only knows about Jane, Scanlon and Margaret but seems to be orchestrating everything.

Suspense

Bringing the pieces of the cinematic tapestry together is the maestro himself Spielberg. In a way that only the most masterful of filmmakers can, Spielberg lets the three storylines run simultaneously constantly keeping his audience guessing at what will happen next, while expertly drip-feeding information that begins to bring things together.

Like he does with some of his greatest films, Spielberg also keeps the suspense raised throughout the film without having to rely on big action set pieces. Sure there are some car chases but this is a film where a dialogue-driven scene between Margaret and Jackson can be just as suspenseful as anything action-related.

In fact of the most intense scenes in the whole film is when Koepp's creative idea of 'dropping in' is introduced to the audience. Basically, Scanlon has worked out how to use alien technology to drop a part of himself into the presence of any human on the planet. When he harnesses the power correctly he can 'sit' opposite them and talk to them all while gathering clues to where they are – yes, this goes deep into *Inception* territory. At one point of the film he 'drops in' on Jane in a bid to find out where Daniel is and while the

scene itself is just the two of them sitting opposite each other talking, it leaves the audience holding their breath on every piece of dialogue delivered.

The film also needs to be congratulated for the way that Koepp's screenplay leaves the audience thinking after the credits have rolled. The film raises thought-provoking topics such as what would happen to the world and humanity if we did suddenly have proof that aliens existed. Would wars start, would wars end, would religions change, would humanity lose faith or now have new beings to worship? So many questions are raised that I can guarantee the car trip home from the cinema after watching *Disclosure Day* is going to feel like a theology lecture.

Rounding out what makes *Disclosure Day* one of the best films of the year are the performances from some its cast. Blunt reminds everybody what a sensational actress she can be when she is given the right screenplay while Firth shines as the determined villain in the piece.

Using the style of filmmaking that made supernatural thrillers of the 1990s so amazing Spielberg has once again delivered a piece of cinematic magic. *Disclosure Day* is a blueprint of how to bring suspense to the big screen and just when you think things couldn't get any better it closes with a finale that leaves you simply thinking 'WOW!' And for the real cinephiles out there try to spot how Spielberg manages to tie the film into one of his early masterpieces – *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Disclosure Day is currently screening in Phuket and is rated 13+.

4.5/5 Stars

David Griffiths has been working as a film journalist for over 25 years. That time has seen him work in radio, television and in print. He currently hosts a film podcast called *The Popcorn Conspiracy*. He is also a Rotten Tomatoes accredited reviewer and is an alternate judge for the Golden Globes Awards. You can follow him at Facebook: *SubcultureEntertainmentAus*.



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POP QUIZ

- Where is the largest and busiest port in the world?
- The French musical instrument The Viola has what other name?
- If you suffered from ozostomia what have you got?
- If someone 'Inpissates' a soup, what have they done?
- Which country has over 850 distinct indigenous languages spoken across the nation?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

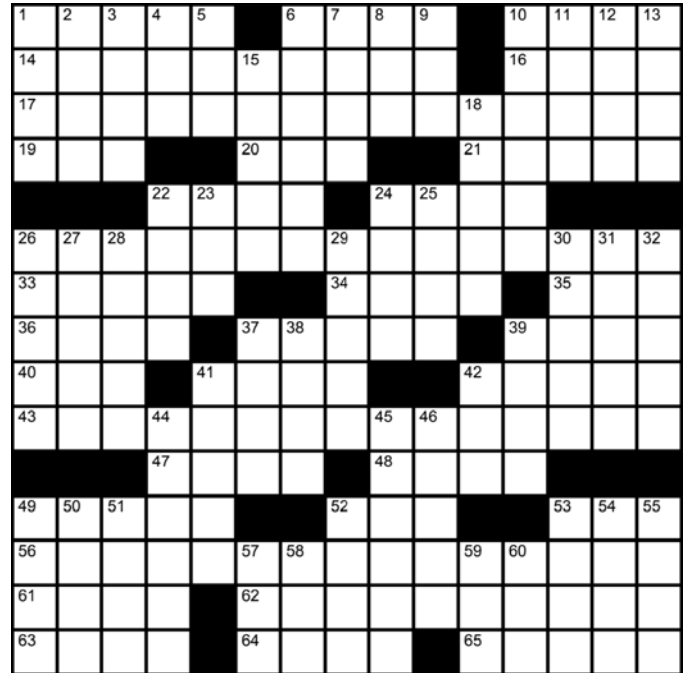
Very Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
- Out of place
 - Hardly thrilling
 - Fit as a fiddle
 - Food wrap
 - Organic compound
 - They were introduced by Sohmer & Co. in 1884
 - "___ Miniver"
 - One of the Clantons
 - Be bombastic
 - Stalk
 - A dog's age
 - Folk instruments
 - Ranee's wrap
 - Microprocessor type
 - Dorothy Parker quality
 - Pen pals?
 - Hike
 - Glazier's item
 - Grp. involved in "the Troubles"
 - "Two Years Before the Mast" writer
 - Elite
 - They're in the key of G
 - Sacred
 - Snakelike fish
 - Category of
- Down
- arachnids
 - QB's cry
 - Frostiness
 - Certain strings
 - Blackhearted
 - Promenades
 - Blue hue
 - Like some chatter
 - Get rid of
 - SALT subject
 - At hand
 - Priestly garb
 - Layer
 - Dress (up)
 - Hindu path to salvation
 - Pool division
 - Not to mention
 - Cool, once
 - Kidnap victim
 - "The King and I" role
 - Cabbage
 - Besides that
 - Letters
 - Charged, in a way
 - Shades
 - Apply
 - Auspices
 - Bounce
- Jellied garnish
 - Where "Aida" premiered
 - Club publication
 - Dalmatian, e.g.
 - Anticipate
 - Dentist's direction
 - Editorial directives
 - False god
 - Just
 - See 8-Down
 - Legal right
 - The whole enchilada
 - Excite
 - Body of work
 - Malodorous
 - Look out for, maybe
 - Bat's home
 - Soprano's song, maybe
 - Get better
 - "Cleopatra" backdrop
 - Contents of some cartridges
 - "Hey, over here!"
 - Kimono closer
 - Doze
 - Be shy
 - Time delay

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:
(1) Shanghai, China; (2) The Alto; (3) Haltosis (bad breath); (4) Thickened it; (5) Papua New Guinea



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2.65

was the high school Grade Point Average (GPA) achieved by Steve Jobs.

9

milligrams of cocaine is estimated to have been in each glass of Coca-Cola under the original formula created by John Pemberton.

600

minutes of sitting and taking only 1,500 steps each day is the common average activity of a person who is obese.

1,000

kilometres is how far an average Dutch person cycles each year.

10,000

cases of muscle spasms and 1,700 sprains were treated by paramedics at a 2016 marathon in Qingyuan, China.

6.7 million

children in the United States live in households where at least one firearm is stored both unlocked and loaded, meaning roughly one in ten American children is exposed to unsecured, readily available firearms.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Sunset at Saphan Hin. Photo by Sutharat Khaodee

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

This week in history

June 26, 1483

Richard III becomes King of England.

June 27, 1898

The first solo circumnavigation of the globe is completed by Joshua Slocum from Briar Island, Nova Scotia.

June 28, 1969

Stonewall riots begin in New

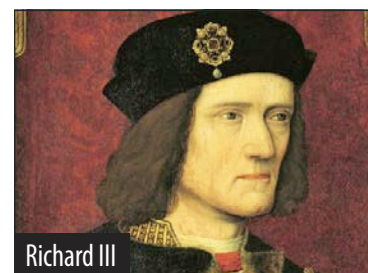
York City, marking the start of the Gay Rights Movement.

June 29, 1613

The Globe Theatre in London, built by William Shakespeare's playing company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, burns to the ground.

June 30, 1934

The Night of the Long Knives,



Richard III

Adolf Hitler's violent purge of his political rivals in Germany, takes place.

July 1, 1520

Spanish conquistadors led by Hernán Cortés fight their way out of Tenochtitlan, Mexico after nightfall.

July 2, 1966

France conducts its first nuclear weapon test in the Pacific, on Moruroa Atoll.

Source: Wikipedia

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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. canchamthailand.org/upcoming-cancham-events

FRI

3
JULY

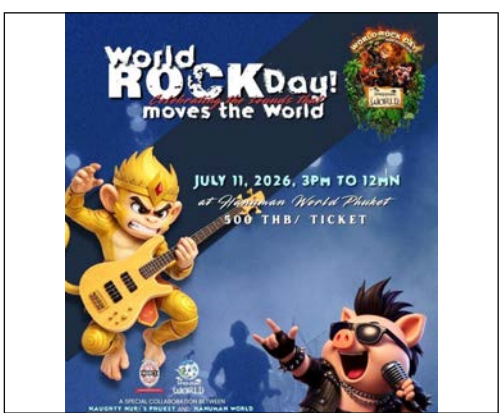


Grow Boating Phuket Evening - July 2026

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. We are delighted to announce that our joint drinks sponsor for the evening will be Blue Paradise and Aqua Thrill. Blue Paradise design unique itineraries to show you the secret corners of the Andaman Sea and Phang Nga Bay. Modern boats, top-notch crews, and personalized service will create unforgettable experiences for you. See www.blueparadisetravel.com Aqua Thrill offer a new way to explore the sea with you as the captain. Self-drive your own mini speedboat through the stunning Andaman waters. See aquathrill-thailand.com 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

SAT

11
JULY



World Rock Day 2026 | Phuket's Ultimate Music Festival

Join us on July 11, 2026, at Hanuman World Phuket for an unforgettable day of live rock performances. Featuring 15 rock bands and over 50 performers from around the world, the event will showcase incredible talent, electrifying performances, food & beverage booths, and a festival atmosphere unlike any other in Phuket. Event Details: • Date: July 11, 2026 • Venue: Hanuman World Phuket • Time: 3:00 PM – 12:00 Midnight • Early Bird Ticket: 300 THB (Book now until July 3 only) • Regular Ticket: 500 THB • Email: marketing@naughtynuristhailand.com • For ticket reservations and inquiries, please contact us via email. Presented by Naughty Nuri's Phuket and Hanuman World Phuket. Join fellow music lovers for Phuket's ultimate World Rock Day celebration.

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June/July 2026 issue



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PROPERTY FOR SALE



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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

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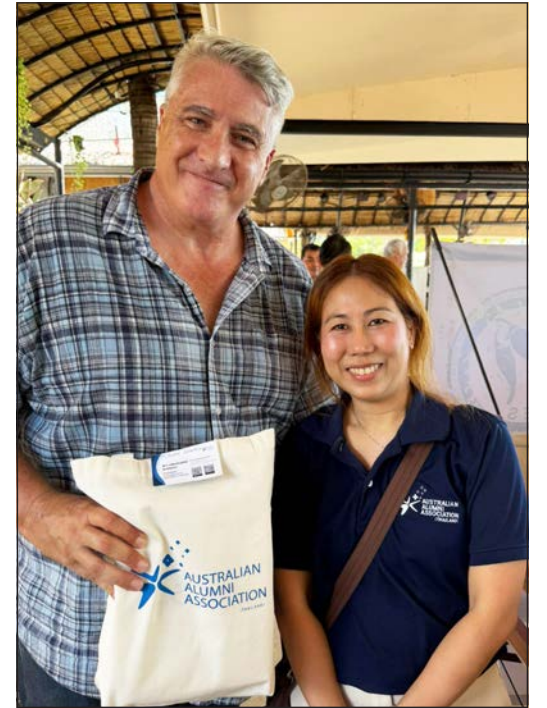
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AUSTRALIAN ALUMNI BUSINESS NETWORKING EVENT

The Australian Consul General of Phuket, together with Austrade and the Australian Alumni Association (AAA) Thailand, organised an Alumni Business Networking Events held on June 13 at Carpe Diem Beach Club Phuket and Aja Bistro. The day started with an Aussie style BBQ at Carpe Diem featuring sensational Australian lamb and products hosted by Austrade, ending with drinks and canapés at AJA Bsitro. It was a wonderful opportunity for Australian alumni to reconnect with old friends, establish future business connections within Phuket and Krabi community, and enjoy a social gathering in true Aussie style.





Kantaphon. Photo: Supplied

Kantaphon falls in Macao final

BADMINTON

KANTAPHON WANGCHAROEN's wait for his first World Tour title continues after the Thai star suffered a heart-breaking loss in the men's singles final of the US\$370,000 (B12.2 million) BWF Macau Open last Sunday (June 21).

Playing in his first final in over nine years, former world No.12 Kantaphon easily won the first game against China's Hu Zhean 21-11 but dropped the next two games 10-21, 13-21.

It was a disappointing end to an impressive week for Kantaphon, who made his first final since the Princess Sirivannavari Thailand

Masters in February 2017.

Kantaphon, the 2019 World Championships bronze medallist, has slid to No.66 on the back of a series of early exits. This year he had to play the qualifying rounds of even the Super 300 events on the BWF World Tour.

South Korea's Kim Ga-Eun won the women's singles, while China's Bao Lijing and Cao Zihan won the women's doubles.

Jin Yong and Lee Jong-Min of South Korea won the men's doubles final and top seeds Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin of China defeated fifth seeds Chan Yin Chak and Ng Tsz Yau of Hong Kong in the final of the mixed doubles event.

Bangkok Post

Phuket hosts Hua Hin Cricket Sixes tourney

CRICKET

Neil Quail

The revamped playing surface at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) in Thalang is set to be tested next week as the Hua Hin Cricket Sixes tournament comes to town.

The famed 30-year-old tournament trades the Gulf of Thailand for the Andaman Sea this year due to ground unavailability in Hua Hin, starting on Monday (June 29) and running through to Saturday (July 4).

Teams from five continents will touch down in Thailand for the fast-paced, six-a-side action with the new tournament destination in Phuket blending fierce sporting rivalries with island paradise vibes, said organisers.

Teams from Australia provide the bulk of the participants, although teams and players from many parts of Asia, India, Saudi Arabia, the Arab Emirates and even the west coast of the United States will also be involved.

The tournament features everyone from seasoned social club cricketers to former and current international cricketing stars, creating a unique melting pot of athletic pedigree and beach-side banter. The competition consists of the Open or Cup division



The Alan Cooke Ground in Thalang is the new home for the Hua Hin Cricket Sixes. Photo: Supplied

where some current first-class players from India and past greats make up the teams. Then follows cricket for all ages, the Masters, Vets, and Super Vets divisions. The game is adjudicated by a band of very senior umpires, mainly from Australia.

There is an air of extra anticipation following the confirmation that a full upgrade has been carried out on the hrd wicket at the famous Phuket cricket venue to elevate it to true international status.

Between blistering cover drives and tactical bowling spells, participants swap their whites for resort wear, with welcome and farewell dinners scheduled for all involved at the Amora Beach Resort Phuket in Bang Tao Beach.

"The Hua Hin Cricket Sixes began in April 1996 at the Dusit Thani.

However, after 30 years, the event ended when the resort reclaimed its grounds for development," explained Tom Karnasuta, chairman of the Hua Hin Sixes in Phuket Committee.

"Efforts to find a new venue were challenging but ultimately resulted in relocating to the ACG in Phuket with the added attraction of a revamped playing surface," he added.

"We extend thanks to Anthony van Sleetuwen of Sala Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort, Neil Quail from ACG Ground and Events, and the Hua Hin Sixes in Phuket committee for all their help in coordinating this change.

"The tournament's legacy continues in Phuket and the local cricket community and friends are all welcome to join in the fun and action this year," Tom concluded.

Phuket badminton comp wows

BADMINTON

THE PHUKET-HOSTED TOYOTA PHUKET INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGE 2026 badminton tournament concluded on June 14, with organisers stating the success of the event reinforced the island's potential as a world-class sports city and sport tourism destination.

Organised via a collaboration between the Badminton Association of Thailand under the Royal Patronage, the Sport Association of Phuket, and the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), the six-day event drew over 400 participants from more than 25 countries competing for a prize pot of US\$20,000 (B650,000).

Former Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn presided over the closing ceremony at the 4,000-seat indoor gymnasium at Saphan Hin, where he was joined by Air Chief Marshal Monthol Sachanukorn, President of the Badminton Association of Thailand and Thammawat Wongcharoenyos, President of the Sport Association of Phuket and Sports Authority of Thailand Committee Member.

The atmosphere throughout the competition was vibrant and lively, attracting large crowds of local, regional and international fans. Leading players involved in the



Photo: PR Phuket

competition included: South Korea's Jeong Na Eun, who was a silver medalist in mixed doubles at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games; Le Duc Phat from Vietnam; Christian Adinata from Indonesia; as well as many promising Thai athletes and members of the Thai national team.

Mr Nirat congratulated all competing athletes, stating that this was important event that provided an opportunity for Thai and international athletes to showcase their potential, gain experience and achieve results on the international stage.

Furthermore, he praised the extensive network of partners, sponsors and associated organisations that collaborated to make the competition a success, something that reflects Phuket's potential to host international sporting events to the highest standards.

The competition also played a significant role in stimulating the local economy, he added, with the influx of local, national and international athletes, coaches, officials and supporters resulting in significant economic activity and tangible vibrancy across the island.

The Phuket News

Thai spikers upset Canada, lose to Netherlands

VOLLEYBALL

THAILAND DEFEATED Canada 3-1 to claim their second consecutive win at the FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League 2026 last Saturday (June 20), boosting their hopes to stay in the elite league next season.

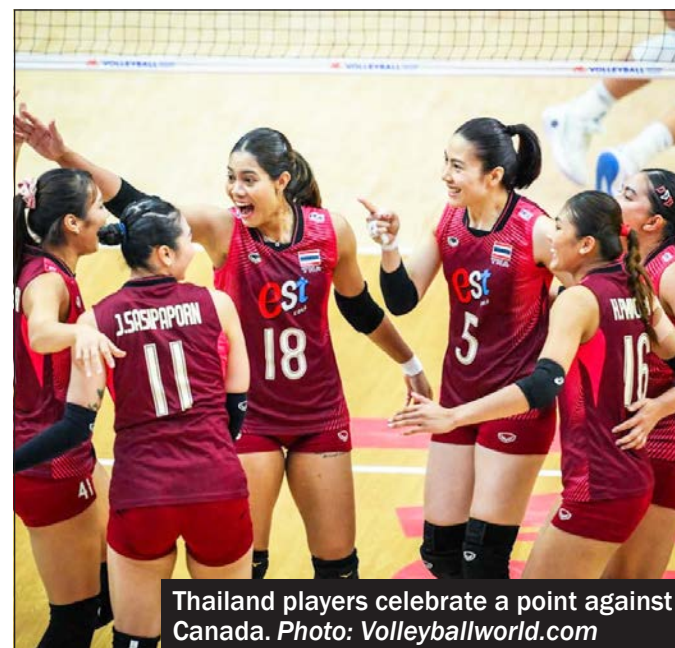
However, the Thais followed this up with a straight sets loss to the Netherlands the following day to dampen their celebrations somewhat.

Thailand started this year's campaign with five straight losses, but put a stop to their disappointing run with a 3-0 victory against Bulgaria on June 18.

The players kept their winning momentum with another impressive performance in front of a full-house crowd at Bangkok's Huamark Indoor Stadium on Saturday night.

The team registered an entertaining 25-21, 22-25, 25-18, 25-20 victory over the world No.10 Canada.

The starting line-up featured setter and captain Pornpun Guedpard, Thatdao Nuekjang, Sasipaporn Janthawisut, Pimpichaya



Thailand players celebrate a point against Canada. Photo: Volleyballworld.com

Kokram, Ajcharaporn Kongyot, Wimonrat Thanapan and libero Piyanut Pannoy.

Outside hitter Sasipaporn had another top-class display, leading the team's scoring chart with 22 points (19 kills, 1 block, 2 aces). Fellow outside hitter, Ajcharaporn added 16 points (14 kills, 1 block, 1 ace), while middle blocker Thatdao had 12 points (8 kills, 3 blocks, 1 ace).

Opposite spiker Kiera Van Ryk top-scored for the Canadian team with 22 points (20 kills, 1 block, 1

ace), while middle blocker and captain Emily Maglio added 12 points (5 kills, 7 blocks).

However, the Thais' joy was relatively short lived as they were defeated on Sunday by the Netherlands in straight sets (25-23, 25-22, 25-15).

After the second week of competition Thailand holds a 2-6 record with 9 points. They next head to Kansai, Japan, on July 8-12 for week 3 to play the United States, Japan, Brazil and Türkiye.

Bangkok Post

Minnows shine on global stage

FOOTBALL

AFP

World Cup debutants Cape Verde scored a second-half equaliser to salvage a 2-2 draw against Uruguay last Sunday in Miami (June 21), backing up their shock opening stalemate with Spain.

Cape Verde took a surprise 21st minute lead as Kevin Pina scored their first ever World Cup goal from a free-kick, only for Uruguay to strike twice shortly before half-time.

But 40-year-old Uruguay goalkeeper Fernando Muslera's mistake allowed Helio Varela to grab Cape Verde's second just after the hour mark and neither side could find a winner.

Spain's 4-0 win over Saudi Arabia in Group H earlier Sunday saw them top the group on 4 points with one game remaining. Cape Verde and Uruguay both have 2 points and Saudi Arabia 1 point.

Meanwhile, in Group E tiny Curacao battled to a 0-0 draw with Ecuador to earn the first World Cup point in the Caribbean island's history after an outstanding performance from goalkeeper Eloy Room.

Six days after being humbled 7-1 by Germany on their World



Cape Verde celebrate Helio Varela's goal in the 2-2 draw against Uruguay. Photo: AFP

Cup debut, Curacao – the smallest nation ever to reach the finals with a population of about 156,000 – produced a resilient display to frustrate the South Americans and keep alive their hopes of reaching the knockout stage.

Room was the standout figure, making 15 saves and just missing out on the World Cup record of 16 by American Tim Howard in 2014.

Earlier, Germany defeated Ivory Coast 2-1 thanks to a brace from substitute Deniz Undav to secure their place in the knockout stage for the first time since they won the title in 2014.

Japan delivered a commanding 4-0 win over Tunisia in the World Cup's 1,000th ever match on Saturday to move to the brink of the knockout stages, while the North Africans were eliminated after a second successive defeat in Group F. Japan share top spot in the group with the Netherlands who demolished Sweden 5-1.

CRUSHING

The tournament's host nations all fared well in their second group games, with the United States securing their place in the knockout round after they overcame Australia 2-0 in Seattle

last Friday. Mexico defeated South Korea 1-0 in Guadalajara to advance from their group, while Canada delivered a crushing 6-0 defeat to Qatar to top Group B.

Argentina won their opening Group J game against Algeria 3-0 on June 17 thanks to a hat-trick from talisman and captain Lionel Messi.

The 38-year-old followed this up with a brace in the 2-0 win against Austria on Monday to surpass Germany's Miroslav Klose as the highest scorer in World Cup history on 17 goals. The win also ensured the defending champions progress

from the group stage.

Elsewhere, Mohamed Salah inspired Egypt to their first ever World Cup win as they downed New Zealand 3-1 on Sunday, while Norway's Erling Haaland scored twice against African champions Senegal in a 3-1 win on Monday in Group I to follow up his brace in the 4-1 victory against Iraq in their opening game on June 16.

In the same group tournament favourites France opened their campaign courtesy of an impressive 3-1 win against Senegal, with Kylian Mbappe scoring twice to become his country's all-time leading scorer.

The Real Madrid striker scored two more in the 3-0 win against Iraq on Monday to reach 16 World Cup goals, just one behind Messi.

England got their campaign off to a winning start as they overcame Croatia 4-2 in Group L on June 17, with captain Harry Kane scoring twice to bring him level with Gary Lineker on 10 World Cup goals for the country, his 81st in 115 England appearances. At time of press Thomas Tuchel's men faced Ghana in their second group encounter on Tuesday (June 23).

— Additional reporting by
The Phuket News

Clark wins second US Open

GOLF

WYNDHAM CLARK captured his second US Open title after a back-nine battle last Sunday (June 21), holding off Sam Burns for a wire-to-wire triumph at blustery Shinnecock.

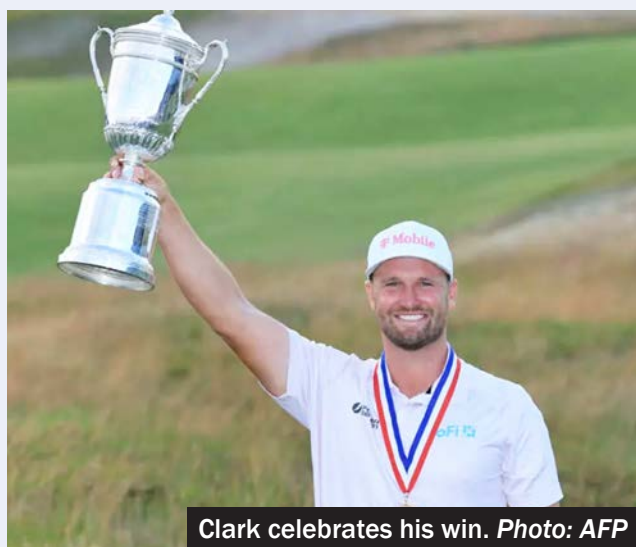
Clark, whose other major crown came at the 2023 US Open, fired a three-over-par 73 to finish 72 holes on four-under 276 and defeat fellow American Burns by one stroke.

"Pretty amazing," Clark said. "It's surreal to be honest."

Clark began the day with a six-shot lead, saw it shrink to a single stroke as he struggled early, then grinded through the back nine.

"I played some ugly golf the last two days, but my putter and short game kept me in it," Clark said.

"It comes down to just believing good things are going to happen and you're going to make the putt. And fortunately the



Clark celebrates his win. Photo: AFP

ones that I needed to make I did."

Clark sank a 24-foot birdie putt at the par-five 16th after finding deep rough off the tee then overcame a bogey at 17 with a two-putt par from 52 feet at 18 for the triumph.

Clark became only the ninth wire-to-wire US Open winner and the first since Germany's Martin Kaymer at Pinehurst in 2014.

Clark celebrated on Father's Day with a hug from his dad Randall, who

flew in yesterday to surprise him, while capturing the record top prize of \$4.5 million (B148mn) from a \$22.5mn purse.

"That was a shock," Clark said. "My dad hasn't been to many events. For him to be here in person is amazing."

Burns was second on 277 after a closing 67 with South Korean Tom Kim third on 279 after a 70.

Top-ranked Scottie Scheffler fired a 71 to share fourth on 280 with fellow Americans Keith Mitchell and JT Poston. AFP

Phuket News

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Sport



Magic Messi breaks goal record > p15



Photo: PR Phuket

GOING THE DISTANCE

Laguna Phuket Marathon hits major landmark

MARATHON

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

More than 7,000 competitors from countries far and wide joined in the landmark 20th Laguna Phuket Marathon last weekend (June 13-14).

The ‘Laguna Phuket Marathon 2026 Presented by Supersports’ held at the spectacular Laguna Grove on Saturday and Sunday saw runners compete over a range of distances designed to encourage participation from as many people as possible.

This included the “Sunset Runs” of a 2-kilometre junior run, a 5km fun run, and a 10km mini marathon, all held on Saturday between 4pm and 7:30pm, and the “Sunrise Runs” of a 21.097km half marathon and the 42.195km full marathon held early on Sunday. The varying routes passed through lush tropical rain forests, expansive rubber and pineapple plantations and the historic Thalang district, before looping along the breathtaking Nai Yang and Layan beaches just as the morning sun illuminated the Andaman Sea, creating a memorable experience for all involved.

Organisers explained how the event was strategically positioned to showcase Phuket as a year-round destination, with the marathon proving that the island’s

“Green Season” – characterised by cooler breezes, vibrant tropical foliage and refreshing occasional showers – is the perfect backdrop for outdoor sports and wellness travel.

The event also featured an official Running Club Affiliate Program, designed for teams of 10 or more which rewards larger clubs with complimentary race entries, a dedicated Club Zone Tent and a free club banner. Crucially, this initiative also helped raise B40,000 in funds from participating clubs for the Children First Fund (CFF), which helps underprivileged children in Phuket.

DOMINANT

Chinese athletes were dominant in both the men’s and women’s main race as Zhipeng Huang took the men’s title in an impressive 2 hours 45 minutes and 35 seconds, while compatriot Ling Wu won the women’s race in 3h 3m 46s.

Elsewhere, Thailand’s Hadee Dendu won the men’s half marathon with a time of 1h 17m 36s, with Chiaki Morikawa of Japan claiming the women’s title in 1h 19m 11s.

Sergei Zyrianov of Russia won the men’s 10km mini marathon with a time of 35m 5s and Sharon Tan of Singapore claimed the women’s race in 41m 6s.

In the 5km fun run Cian Ehrismann of Ireland won the men’s race in 16m 58s, with

Soraya Saait of Thailand triumphing in the women’s with a time of 19m 53s.

Theo Lancelot of Thailand won the boy’s junior 2km run with a time 6m 48s, while Alicia Siao of the United States won the girl’s title with a time of 8m 28s.

LONGEVITY

Prior to the race start on both days a moment of silence was observed to allow all attendees to mourn and express their respect and gratitude to Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Narendiradebyavati, who sadly passed away on Thursday, June 11.

Former Phuket Governor Nirat Pongsitthaworn oversaw the start of Sunday’s main race activities, flagging off the full marathon at 4am and the half-marathon an hour later.

Mr Nirat was joined at the opening ceremony by representatives from various public and private sector entities, including: Siriwan Seeharach, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office; Somchai Semmanee, Director of the Phuket office of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports; in addition to selected executives from Laguna Phuket and GAA Events Co Ltd, the event organiser.

In a speech prior to the 4am race start Mr Nirat praised the longevity of the event, which over a 20-year time span has become

established as a leading road race for serious and amateur runners alike from all over the world. Similarly, the race has played a significant role in promoting Phuket’s image as a world-class sports city and tourist destination, he added.

The race also played a significant role in stimulating the local economy, explained Mr Nirat, with the influx of local, national and international athletes, coaches, officials and supporters resulting in significant economic activity and tangible vibrancy across the island.

WARM HOSPITALITY

Mr Nirat then praised and thanked the extensive network of partners, sponsors and associated organisations that collaborated to make the event a success, something that reflects Phuket’s potential as an international active lifestyle destination for sports, health and wellness, in addition to its capacity to host international sporting events to the highest standards.

He was keen to extend special thanks to all agencies that worked closely together to oversee safety measures, traffic management, and medical services to ensure the smooth running of the event in order to create a positive impression on participants and promote Phuket’s image as a Sports City and a world-class sports tourism destination.

In regards to event security, the Phuket Provincial Police provided personnel and equipment for inspecting suspicious objects and ensuring security along the entire race route, including a face recognition system. Additionally Thalang District provided 213 members of the Volunteer Defense Corps who were stationed at various points along the race route, while tourist Police Division 3 provided personnel and vehicles to escort the leading athletes.

In terms of medical and public health, the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office provided emergency medical vehicles with staff to care for participants throughout the competition, while the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) and local administrative organisations provided mobile toilets, LED screens and cleaning services at the various event areas.

Finally, Mr Nirat welcomed all runners to the event, particularly those who were visiting from overseas, and wished everyone the very best of luck for their respective races. He concluded by saying he hoped everyone managed to enjoy some time to explore Phuket and savour its natural beauty as well as the warm hospitality of its residents and that he looked forward to welcoming all participants at next year’s event.