

THAKSIN'S VISIT TO PHUKET UNDER SCRUTINY > PAGE 3

# HIGH TIME



Bang Wad reservoir was down to 15% full on Monday, just before the annual rains started to return. Photo: Anton Makhrov

## ANNUAL RAINS ARRIVE JUST AS WATER SHORTAGES HIT RESIDENTS

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Scattered showers across the island this past week brought much-welcomed relief to the island's main water reservoirs, two of which were running low just as the rains arrived.

Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat visited local villagers in Kamala last Saturday (May 4) after their household water supply ran dry.

Joining Governor Sophon in delivering water to the households was Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee, along with other high-ranking local officials, including Dr Somkid Chokong, who serves as Advisor to the Phuket Governor, and Santad

Khumitr. Vice President of the Kamala Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor).

The gubernatorial entourage oversaw delivery of water to people in need in Moo 3, Kamala.

"Local government organisations can use budget funds to distribute water to help citizens who are experiencing drought problems according to regulations," Governor Sophon explained.

"At this time, citizens in Phuket Province are facing a shortage of water for consumption in about 20 communities," he said.

"Therefore, we leave it to community leaders in local areas to pay close attention and help take care of the people [in need of water]," he added.

Local administrations will be able to source water to supply households in need via the Provincial Waterworks Authority, Governor Sophon said.

"There will be approval for local administrative organisations to receive water from the Provincial Waterworks Authority's sources to distribute to the people for solving problems," he said.

Governor Sophon urged people to not worry as rains were predicted to arrive this week, which they did right on cue.

"However, we ask for cooperation from the public to use water economically, because Phuket is an island. There are few sources of raw water," he added.

Governor Sophon pointed out

that Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin had already approved a project to bring water from the Ratchaprapha Dam (the Cheow Lan Reservoir) in Surat Thani Province to bolster raw water supply to Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi.

"This will be good news for the people of Phuket province soon," he said.

The emergency supply of water to 20 communities across Phuket followed calls for people to not worry amid assurances by key water officials just days earlier that Phuket had enough water to supply businesses and residents until the annual rains returned.

According to the Office of National Water Resources (ONWR), as of...

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#### Police take aim at chain cutters



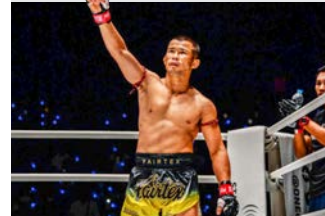
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#### FUGA shows how to exceed



### SPORT PAGE 16

#### ONE gives Muay Thai major boost



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# News



**Kamala canal gets an aerator > p5**



Photo: Chalermpong Saengdee

## 20 areas affected by water shortages

Continued from page 1

...Monday (May 6) Bang Wad reservoir in Kathu was down to 15% full, with 1.56 million cubic metres of water and Klong Kata reservoir in Chalong was 23% full, with 980,000 cubic metres of water, while the Bang Neow Dum reservoir in Srisoonthorn remained 44% full, with 3.17mn cubic metres of water.

### 'JUST IN CASE'

The Phuket branch of the Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA) spent more than B12 million on securing 2.15 million cubic metres of water from private water sources in case the annual rains of the southwest monsoon arrived late.

Despite isolated intermittent showers starting to dampen the island last week, Phuket PWA Manager Sukrit Klinson just last week said that the dry season was not yet over.

Mr Sukrit noted that at that time the total overall water reserves at the three main reservoirs were below 50%.

While noting the increasing number of people on the island, Mr Sukrit still remained confident that there would be enough water to see island residents through until the annual rains arrived.

Regardless, the Phuket PWA had spent "approximately B12mn" on securing a total of 2,150,500 cubic metres of water from private water sources, Mr Sukrit said.

A request for a budget of "approximately B28mn" had also been submitted just in case, he added.

The PWA had an emergency plan in place to support drought measures and the management of water use in the following year, said Mr Sukrit.

No details of those plans were explained.

## Brit charged for throttling, slapping tuk-tuk driver

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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A British man has been arrested and charged for throttling and slapping a tuk-tuk driver during a dispute over the driver not returning the correct change for a fare from Patong to Karon.

Karon Police confirmed that 31-year-old British national Luke Alexander Graham was arrested at a resort on Phi Phi Island at about 9:15pm on Apr 30.

Graham, from Bury, in the Greater Manchester area, was arrested under a warrant issued yesterday by Phuket Provincial Court for the charge of physical assault.

Officers confirmed Graham's identity by checking his passport and he confirmed he was the person named in the arrest warrant, police said in their report.

Graham was informed of the charge against him, and informed of his rights, then taken to Koh Phi Phi Police Station to record his arrest, officers said.

Graham was then brought back to Phuket and taken to Karon Police Station for further legal action.

### THE INCIDENT

According to Karon Police Chief Pol Col Khundet Na Nongkhai the incident occurred at 4am on Apr 27.

Tuk-tuk driver Abdullah Sasahe had picked up Graham in Patong and had brought him to a hotel in Karon for an agreed fare of B400.

On arrival, Graham



Screenshot: Eakkapop Thongtub

claimed to have handed Mr Abdullah a B1,000 note, and demanded his change. Mr Abdullah said Graham handed him only a B100 note.

The pair argued, leading to Graham placing his hands around Mr Abdullah's neck and slapping him in the face before walking off.

Later at Patong Hospital doctors confirmed that Mr Abdullah had an "injury" to his left cheek, but no other external injuries.

Mr Abdullah later filed a formal complaint at Karon Police Station, which was recorded by Pol Lt Col Aeksak Kwanwan

### THE AFTERMATH

At Karon Police Station on May 1, officers from the Karon Police, Phuket Immigration

and the Phuket Tourist Police questioned Graham.

Representing the tuk-tuk driver Mr Abdullah and present at Karon Police Station to give additional statements was his father, Bang Hae.

Bang Hae told reporters that his son called him early Saturday morning to explain what had happened. He said his son did not want the foreigner to get upset, but the foreigner was drunk and assaulted him.

His son, tuk-tuk driver Mr Abdullah, does not speak English, Bang Hae said.

Bang Hae added that he was happy to hear that the foreigner, Graham, had been arrested.

"Two people and a friend were also drunk and carried beer bottles" with Graham

when the incident happened, Bang Hae said.

"When paying the money, I'm not sure if his friend saw what banknote he paid," he said.

Of note, while the video of Graham assaulting Mr Abdullah has been widely circulated, the video only shows the assault. It does not show when the banknote was handed over, a factor that would quickly resolve the issue. Regardless, Bang Hae thanked police for their quick work.

While in the caged van to be transported to Phuket Provincial Court for further detention, Graham told people outside the van that he was sorry for how events had transpired.

However, he added, "You shouldn't steal money."

## Police patrol Patong Beach for illegal night vendors

POLICE ARE CONTINUING their patrols of Patong Beach to arrest and charge people caught illegally selling fireworks and selling alcohol at night.

An official report of a raid carried out last Friday night (May 3) marked that it was conducted under the direction of Patong Police Chief Pol Col Chalermchai Hirsawat, and execut-

ed through Patong Police Deputy Chief Pol Lt Col Somporn Surin.

Patong Police officers together with officials from Patong Municipality began their patrol at 11pm. The raid party was led by fellow Patong Police Deputy Chief Pol Lt Col Supakhom Chuchuai and bolstered by patrol officers.

The officers patrolled the

beach in order to "strictly enforce restrictions on the sale of alcoholic beverages, the illegal sale of fireworks and floating lanterns and the placement of tables and chairs on the beach", said the report.

Although the report did not mention how many people were caught breaking the law, the report did include photos showing plastic chairs

being removed from the beach.

Similar raids carried out Wednesday and Thursday last week (May 1-2) resulted in the arrests of at least three illegal vendors.

Patong Police are urging people to report any illegal activities on the beach by calling Patong Police Station at 076-342769.

Eakkapop Thongtub



Photo: Patong Police

# Police call for bike chain cutters to be deported

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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Police in Phuket will request that the Immigration Bureau revoke the permit to stay of foreigners caught cutting lock chains placed on illegally parked motorbikes,

Phuket City Police Chief Pol Col Pratuang Pholmana announced the move at a press conference held in front of Phuket City Police Station on Apr 30 where the campaign slogan 'You cut, I catch' was launched.

The press conference was also held to specifically highlight a Russian man arrested for cutting the police lock chain placed on a motorbike the Russian man had parked illegally on Phang Nga Rd in Phuket Town on Apr 26.

Present for the press conference was Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum, along with Immigration officials Phuket Tourist police and other officers.

Following a video of the Russian man circulating widely on local social media channels, Pol Maj Gen Sinlert had ordered Phuket City Police Chief Pol Col Pratuang



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

to take swift and urgent action to apprehend the man, named by police yesterday as Russian national German Sarkisov, 37, Pol Col Pratuang explained.

The video became popular as the man was filmed turning to the eyewitness and gesturing with his index finger to his lips in the manner of a "hush" sign before riding off on his bike. Criticism of the man's behaviour centred on him being a person coming to stay in Phuket, but intentionally breaking the law with no fear of police action, he said.

The video was shared online on Apr 26, showing the incident occurring in a prohibited parking area in front of Kasikornbank on Phang Nga Rd, Pol Col Pratuang explained.

Following the order by Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert, a joint team of officers from Phuket Provincial Police and Phuket City Police Station gathered evidence and were issued a warrant for the Russian man's arrest. The warrant was issued on Monday (Apr 29), he added.

He was tracked down and arrested when he pulled up on his motorbike in front of a house in Moo 5, Chalong, Pol Col Pratuang confirmed.

Sarkisov was taken to Phuket City Phuket Police and charged under section 59 of the Land Traffic Act for "damaging, destroying, depreciating or rendering useless a vehicle restraint device placed by an officer to prevent moving

a vehicle".

Sarkisov can communicate well in English and admitted that he was the person wanted in the arrest warrant, Pol Col Pratuang said.

"Sarkisov apparently told police that he was afraid to pay the parking fine as he did not have a driver's licence, and feared the same fine he would face in Russia. He therefore went to a shop and bought cutters for about B500 to cut the chain off and then returned to his residence and was eventually arrested," he explained.

Regarding the campaign slogan 'You cut, I catch', Pol Col Pratuang said, "I want to give this message to foreigners who think about doing something wrong."

"In addition, Phuket City Police Station has had several incidents like this. There have been a total of four arrests, but it doesn't happen often. This is because traffic police officers will patrol their areas of responsibility at all times," he added.

However, Pol Col Pratuang noted that police from now on will submit a request to Phuket Immigration to revoke the permits to stay of foreigners caught breaking such laws.



Photo: Phuket Tourist Police

## Body of foreign woman found off Freedom Beach

POLICE LAST WEEK BEGAN THEIR attempts to identify the body of a dark-skinned foreign woman found floating in the water off Freedom Beach.

Karon Police were informed of the discovery at 2:45pm on May 1.

Police and rescue workers soon organised a recovery mission, and with rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Foundation using a rubber dinghy to recover the body and bring it ashore in front of the Nong Harn lake at Karon.

The body was described as that of a dark-skinned foreign woman about 25-30 years old. She was about 180cm tall and had short black curly hair. The woman was wearing a seashell necklace and shell bracelet on her right wrist. Her body was bereft of any clothing.

Officers found no signs of injury and no signs that the woman had been involved in a struggle. However, her body was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for further examination.

At last report police were working on the understanding that the woman drowned. Officers were hoping genetic testing will help identify the body. *Eakkapop Thongtub*

## Thaksin's trip to Phuket under scrutiny

PAROLED FORMER PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra's trip to Phuket, which he claimed to be a private leisure trip, has drawn flak as he was seen meeting several local administrative officials and business figures on the island.

The trip has also raised questions about its real purpose and whether it violated the conditions of Thaksin's parole.

Thaksin, still viewed by most as the de facto leader of the ruling Pheu Thai Party, arrived in Phuket on Apr 29 and left on Apr 30.

Chaithawat Tulathon, the leader of the opposition Move Forward Party, said his impression was that Thaksin's visit had something to do with the government's plan to push for the establishment of a new entertainment complex, complete with a casino on the premises.

Phuket, he said, is among the cities the government believes have the potential to host such an entertainment complex.

In the last general election, Move Forward secured a surprising clean sweep of all three constituencies on the resort island.

Nattacha Boonchaiinsawat, a Move Forward MP for Bangkok, said no one would have questioned the purpose of Thaksin's trip had he kept a low profile instead of going around inspecting various development projects and pitching his suggestions.

"What Thaksin is doing might not be illegal, but the bigger question is, was it appropriate?" he said, noting that even though Thaksin has been released on parole, he is still on probation.

Thaksin was sentenced last August to eight years in prison – later reduced to one year under a royal pardon – for conflict of interest



Thaksin Shinawatra (centre), joined by veteran politician Suwat Liptapanlop (2nd from left) visits Bangla Rd in Patong last week. Photo: Supplied / Bangkok Post

and abuse of authority while in power from 2001-06. He never spent a night behind bars but instead spent six months in Police General Hospital. He qualified for parole in February based on his age and health condition and the fact that he had served half his sentence.

Technically, Thaksin remains a prisoner even after his release on parole, meaning he must limit his travels.

He said corrections officials and even the justice minister would have a hard time explaining why other parolees were not given the same privileges as Thaksin appears to enjoy, said Mr Nattacha.

The MP noted that Thaksin's trips gained more attention from the media than the government's mobile Cabinet meetings.

He said every move Thaksin has made since his release on parole was meant to send the message that he could do whatever he pleases now that the government is on his side.

Thepchai Senapong, a former Democrat Party MP for Nakhon Sri Thammarat, said Thaksin is often met by high-ranking officials and business leaders on his provincial trips.

*Bangkok Post*

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## PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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Wind 11 m/s

SAT MAY 11

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Wind 11 m/s

SUN MAY 12

High: +35°  
Low: +28°  
Wind 11 m/s

MON MAY 13

High: +35°  
Low: +27°  
Wind 4 m/s

TUE MAY 14

High: +35°  
Low: +28°  
Wind 4 m/s

WED MAY 15

High: +37°  
Low: +28°  
Wind 4 m/s

THU MAY 16

High: +36°  
Low: +27°  
Wind 4 m/s

Screenshot: Supplied

## Police investigate ladyboy assault on Bangla tourist

PATONG POLICE are investigating an incident that saw a group of ladyboys on Bangla Rd engaging in what appeared to be a vicious assault on a tourist early on May 2.

Patong Police in a post online reported that they had called in several "witnesses" to the incident for questioning late afternoon on May 2.

The post by Patong Police openly marked that the post was in response to a video of the incident posted online by the 'Hot Jung Phuket' Facebook page.

According to police, the transgender ladyboys said that the tourist rode a motorbike onto Bangla Rd at about 5:20am.

The ladyboys said they "greeted" him, but

the tourist refused their welcome and allegedly turned around to attack them.

The video plainly showed the tourist walking away when one of the ladyboys, a blonde, approached him from behind and punched the tourist in the back of the head.

It also showed the tourist fleeing while being chased by another ladyboy who was brandishing a bottle over her head in either a threat to or an attempt to hit him with it.

The report by police made no mention of the video also showing at least two young men joining in the attack and viciously beating the tourist before the tourist could make his escape.

*Eakkapop Thongtub*

## Drug use still on the rise

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The prevalence of drug use across the island is continuing to rise, the Phuket Provincial Narcotics Prevention and Suppression Center committee has confirmed.

From October 2023 through March 2024 there were 1,335 arrests in 78 drug cases in Phuket (not including kratom and marijuana), an increase of 6.21% on the same period a year earlier Phuket Vice Governor Sattha Thongkam was told at a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on Apr 30.

Present for the meeting was Capt Pongsakorn Itsombat of the Royal Thai Navy, representing the Phuket branch of the Internal Security Operations Command (Isoc), which serves as the political arm of the Thai military.

Also present were officers from the Office of the Narcotics Control Board Region 8 branch as well as other relevant anti-drug enforcement agencies.

In March 2024 alone there were 255 arrests in 86 drug cases (not including kratom and marijuana), marking an increase of 50.89% from February, officers at the meeting confirmed.

"The drug situation in Phuket continues to spread. Most drug cases involved amphetamines and crystal meth (ya ice)," said an official report



Photo: PR Phuket

of the meeting.

The most common type of drugs illegally used were amphetamine (ya bah), followed by ya ice, heroin and cocaine, respectively.

The areas with the highest incidence of drug use were Muang Phuket District, followed by Thalang District and Kathu District, respectively, the report noted.

Most drug arrests were that of general contractors and construction workers.

The information reported at the meeting was marked as accurate as of April 30, 2024.

The efforts to continue crackdowns on illegal drug use would continue while the committee explored other policy guidelines to help reduce illegal drug use on the island, including treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, the report noted.

The situation report on drug use in Phuket came the same day that a 29-year-old British man was arrested at Phuket International airport for attempting to bring into Thailand a small bag of cocaine that was hidden in his passport.

Immigration officers at the airport reported that the man was arrested in the Arrivals Hall at the airport at about 7pm on May 2.

The small plastic bag containing the cocaine weighed 0.42 grams (including the bag), airport immigration noted in their report.

The man, from Enfield in north London, was placed under arrest and handed over to Sakhu Police.

He has been charged with bringing a Category 2 narcotic into the country and illegal possession of the drug.

## Electric motorbike catches fire

A 28-YEAR-OLD MAN escaped unharmed after the electric motorbike he was riding caught fire on Thepkasattri Rd last week.

Wichuthat Chotchuang, a resident of Moo 1, Thepkasattri, was riding northbound along Thepkasattri Rd at about 5:20pm last Friday (May 3) when he noticed smoke coming from motorbike.

He stopped in time, near the entrance to Baan Lipon Housing Authority residential estate, to dismount and flee to safety before flames engulfed the motorbike.

Bystanders attempted to extinguish the fire, to no avail. Fire trucks from Srisoonthorn Municipality soon arrived and doused the flames.

Mr Wichuthat said that the motorbike was working nor-



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

mally when he noticed signs of overheating. Moments later, smoke billowed from the vehicle, prompting him to check, then quickly stop and get off the motorbike.

The motorbike was only one year old, but Mr Wichuthat admitted that he had made modifications to the vehicle. *Eakkapop Thongtub*

## Woman jumps from Thepsrisin Bridge

A 32-YEAR-OLD WOMAN battling long-term depression was taken to hospital for injuries sustained after she jumped off the Thepsrisin Bridge, which joins Saphan Hin with Sakdidet Rd, early last Friday morning (May 3).

Police were called to the scene at 5:20am.

Officers arrived at the scene to find a white Toyota sedan registered in Phuket parked on the bridge.

Responders from the Kusoldharm Foundation were already at the scene, attending to the woman who had jumped.

The woman, a resident of Montri Rd in Phuket Town, was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for medical care.

The extent of her injuries were not reported, but the location of her jump saw her fall only several metres before hitting the ground below.

The bridge, opened in 2016 and built under a budget of B176 million, passes through mangroves.

The woman was able to explain to people at the scene that she had been battling depression for years. She had



Photo: Phuket City Police

long been drinking alcohol to counter her depression, but to no avail and still wanted to end her life.

A passer-by who saw the woman standing on the bridge stopped and tried to prevent her from jumping, but also to no avail.

At last report the woman was in care at Vachira hospital.

*If you or anyone you know is in need of emotional support and counselling, please contact the Samaritans of Thailand at their 24-hour hotline 02-113-6789 (English & Thai) or the Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai).*

*Eakkapop Thongtub*

# Putrid Kamala canal gets some fresh air

The Phuket News  
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Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat conducted an inspection of Klong Pak Bang in Kamla last weekend to observe an aerator installed in the hope of alleviating the foul stench emanating from the canal.

Joining Governor Sophon for the inspection were Phuket MP Chalermphong Saengdee and Dr Somkid Chokong, Advisor to the Governor of Phuket Province.

Also present were a host of local officials, including Santhat Khummit, Deputy Chief of the Kamala Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor).

Mr Santhat explained that the aerator was provided by the Energy Research Center of Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi.

The unit is powered by solar panels with an inverter motor. With a production capacity of three kilowatts, the aerator can add an average of 450 litres of oxygen per



Photo: PR Phuket

minute to the canal, which is hoped to effectively improve water quality, he said.

Governor Sophon ordered the Kamala OrBorTor to allocate a budget to install two similar machines within one year to increase the efficiency of wastewater treatment in the canal, which still remains black due to the volume of wastewater continually dumped into it.

Governor Sophon also asked for cooperation from

local business operators and residents to help maintain the cleanliness of rivers and canals.

He emphasised the importance of integrating wastewater treatment systems into construction projects, including hotels and residential developments, to ensure sustainable environmental conservation, said an officials report of the inspection.

The report made no mention of any recent action to

inspect local venues for illegally dumping untreated wastewater into the canal.

The canal, often black and producing foul odours from the volume of wastewater in it, flows to Kamala Beach, where it crosses the sand and empties into the beach water where tourists play.

Kamala Beach, as it does each year, suffered yet another episode of black water scaring tourists over health concerns as recently as February.



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

## Police search for herd owner after car hits cow

POLICE LAST WEEK began trying to identify the owner of a herd of cows that crossed the Baan Don - Cherng Talay Rd on May 1. One of the cows was struck by a passing white Toyota Yaris.

Pol Lt Col Noppadol Thonmanee of the Thalang Police was informed of the incident at about 10:15pm.

Police and emergency workers arrived at the scene, in front of the Baan Khian Market, to find that the driver of the car, Ms Tiddee (family name withheld), was

not injured in the collision.

The cow that was struck, however, had run off into a nearby field.

Ms Tiddee's car had suffered a broken windscreen, a broken headlight and other damage to the front.

No one has claimed to be the owner of the cows that crossed the road unherded.

Police confirmed they are still trying to identify and locate the owner in order to hold the person responsible for damages.

Eakkapop Thongtub

## Widening of 'Tha Reua shortcut' complete

A ROAD JOINING BEHIND Wat Tha Reua, south of the Heroines Monument, to Baan Manik in Cherng Talay, has been expanded in the hope of alleviating heavy traffic congestion on Thepkrasattri Rd and on Srisoonthorn Rd.

The small section of road, which joins Route 3030 to a small road leading to Baan Manik in Cherng Talay, has now been expanded to five metres wide and the road resurfaced with asphalt.

The small road is accessed via Route 3030, which joins Thepkrasattri Rd just south of Wat Tha Reua.

Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat has praised the owner of the land for making the road available for expansion, and open for more traffic.

The move is in line with his 'One Road, One Tambon' policy, which aims to develop Phuket's secondary road network in the hope of dispersing traffic from Phuket's already clogged main roads.

The small section of road joining behind Wat Tha Reua to Baan Manik has even been proposed as a "shortcut



Photo: PR Phuket

between Phuket Town and the airport", according to an official report of the road's resurfacing.

The move to expand the road began in January, through the coordination of Srisoonthorn Municipality with officials from the Phuket branch of the Department of Rural Roads and from the Thalang branch of the Department of Lands.

The previous condition of the road, only a couple of metres wide, was too small for vehicles to pass each other, and was at risk of accidents, officials noted at the time.

In a post online last

week, Srisoonthorn Municipality thanked PNK Construction Co Ltd for providing the heavy machinery required to expand and resurface the road.

Governor Sophon called for more people to step up to help develop secondary roads across Phuket to alleviate traffic congestion on the island.

A new road being developed from Kathu to Srisoonthorn is underway after local landowners came forward to donate the land needed in order to build a new road across the hills between the two key residential areas. *The Phuket News*



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# TCC blasts wage hike plan

Bangkok Post

The Thai Chamber of Commerce (TCC) is opposing the government's plan to increase the minimum daily wage to B400 for workers nationwide, expected in October.

Poj Aramwattananont, vice-president of the TCC and the Board of Trade of Thailand, described the proposed hike as a double-edged sword, with both negative and positive effects.

"Some businesses can afford to increase wages, but some may face adverse impacts. The proposed hike will cause problems in several provinces that are not ready such as Phrae and Nan where there are very few industrial plants and hotels [to accommodate tourists]," he said.

Mr Poj said that wage hikes should be applied to industries with more Thai workers than immigrant workers. Otherwise, money will flow out of the country.

"The hikes will also impose financial burdens on business operators. This is a major issue, and I will discuss it with the Labour Ministry," he said.



The Thai Labour Solidarity Confederation and State Enterprises Workers' Relations Confederation march from Democracy Monument to Government House to mark Labour Day on May 1. Photo: Nutthawat Wichieanbut / Bangkok Post

He added that the TCC's provincial chapters nationwide were to hold a press conference to voice opposition to the plan. The event will be joined by representatives of about 30 associations including the construction, hospitality, retail and wholesale, logistics and rubber sectors.

Sangchai Theerakulvanich,

president of the Federation of Thai SMEs, also said he disagreed with the proposed hike.

He said small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are struggling to recover after reeling from the effects of geopolitical tensions on the global economy.

"SME operators have to control costs. Wage hikes

will also hurt about 2.7 million micro-enterprises, which employ about 5.5mn workers," he said.

The hike to B400 a day was approved by the tripartite committee on Mar 26 and took effect in parts of 10 provinces on Apr 13.

It has been applied to tourism-related businesses

and four-star hotels with at least 50 employees, according to Pairoj Chotikasathien, permanent secretary for the Labour Ministry and chairman of the committee.

The hike applies in Bangkok's Pathumwan and Wattana districts, Chiang Mai's Nakhon Chiang Mai municipality, all of Phuket, the area under the jurisdiction of tambon Ao Nang administrative organisation in Krabi, Songkhla's Hat Yai municipality, Surat Thani's Koh Samui district, Phangnga's tambon Khuk Khak municipality, Pattaya City in Chon Buri, Prachuap Khiri Khan's Hua Hin municipality and Rayong's tambon Ban Phae.

However, critics have blasted the move, saying it only benefits workers in the tourism sectors of select regions and, therefore, discriminates against other types of businesses nationwide.

Labour Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn previously said the B400 minimum daily wage that has been promised for workers nationwide will likely be implemented on Oct 1.

He said the tripartite wage committee – comprising repre-

sentatives of the government, employers and employees – agreed at its last meeting on Apr 17 that there would still be another adjustment made this year.

He said the next meeting of the wage committee is scheduled to be held on May 14, when further discussions will be carried out on the B400 daily wage proposal.

The minister, however, said the final decision will rest with the committee, adding he does not have the authority to order it to approve the proposal.

Mr Phiphat also urged employers who think they cannot bear the cost to seek the government's help.

Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has pushed for minimum wage increases for other areas and business types after promising a B400 rate during the election campaign, much to the chagrin of businesses that claimed they would make the country less competitive.

The daily minimum wage was raised for all Thai workers on Jan 1, with the new rates varying by province, from B330 to B370. Those increases ranged from B2-16, or an average of 2.37%.

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## Households spend most on travel, petrol, phone bills

THAI HOUSEHOLD spending on consumer goods in April averaged B18,187, with the biggest expenses being on public transport, petrol and mobile phones, according to a Commerce Ministry survey.

The non-food and alcoholic products category accounted for 58.50% of the total expenditure while the food and non-alcoholic products category comprised the remaining 41.50%, said Poonpong Naiyanaporn, head of the ministry's Trade Policy and Strategy Office.

Costs of public transport, petrol and mobile phones totaling B4,267 made up the biggest chunk of spending in the first category. Spending on food for cooking at home amounting to B1,651, the most in the second category.

Mr Poonpong said the consumer confidence index declined to 51.9 in April, down from 54.1 in March, but had remained above the 50 mark for 17 straight months. The decline was due to the Thai economy



A woman buys eggs from a vendor at Sri Kaema Market on Pracharat 2 Road in Bangkok's Bang Sue district. Photo: Pornprom Satrabhaya / Bangkok Post file

yet to reach full recovery mode despite a boost from Songkran celebrations, amid worries about higher costs of living and expenses for the new school term.

Meanwhile, Wattanasak Sur-iam, Director-General of the Internal Trade Department (DIT), said officials are closely monitoring the prices of goods affected by extremely hot weather conditions, such as fresh

vegetables and fruits.

"All street food vendors and eateries must clearly show the price of each dish. The DIT will launch random inspections to see if vendors increase prices unfairly. The public can send tip-offs via our hotline 1596. Wrongdoers can face a fine of up to B140,000 or a jail sentence of up to seven years," Mr Wattanasak said.

Bangkok Post

# Govt row with bank heats up

## BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The dispute between the government and the Bank of Thailand (BoT) intensified last Sunday (May 5) when Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin stood by Pheu Thai leader Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who recently criticised the central bank's stance on interest rates.

Speaking at an event last Friday at Pheu Thai's headquarters, Ms Paetongtarn weighed in on the dispute between Mr Srettha and the BoT, which has refused to bow to his constant pressure to cut interest rates.

She criticised the BoT, saying its independence from the government was hindering efforts to boost the economy.

"The law that keeps the Bank of Thailand independent from the government is a problem and a major obstacle in solving economic problems," she said.

Ms Paetongtarn said the country has relied heavily on fiscal policy to shore up the economy, which has resulted in high public debt and budget deficits.

"If the BoT doesn't understand and cooperate with the government [in its efforts to tackle economic problems], we can't [win]," she said.



Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin shares his vision in a meeting at the Pheu Thai Party headquarters on Friday. Photo: Pattarapong Chatpattarasill / Bangkok Post

The government has repeatedly urged the BoT to consider revising its interest rate policy and lowering the benchmark rate to stimulate the economy. Mr Srettha previously said the current rate of 2.5%, a 10-year high, is hurting the public and may exacerbate the nation's high household debt.

Mr Srettha on Sunday reiterated that interest rates are an important issue as high rates impose financial burdens on people.

"What Ms Paetongtarn said

is a reflection of the public mood. Personally, I understand the BoT's independence. I believe I can work with the BoT. I have always respected it," Mr Srettha said.

"The government believes the interest rates should be cut, but the BoT governor has reason not to. From now on, the government will hold talks with four major banks to ask them to reduce their interest rates.

"Independence [of the BoT] is one thing. But we must not forget that whether you are civil servants,

politicians, or a financial institution, you work for the sake of the people. We have different approaches to solving problems. Everyone can criticise everyone," the prime minister said.

He said he would meet the newly appointed Finance Minister, Pichai Chunhavajira, to discuss how to coordinate with the BoT to ensure the government can work more efficiently with the central bank.

Mr Srettha denied accusations the government has been pressuring the BoT to bow to its calls for

lower interest rates. "We only relay public needs to the BoT," he said.

Sirikanya Tansakul, a deputy leader of the opposition Move Forward Party, said Ms Paetongtarn's criticism of the BoT is nothing new.

"Ms Paetongtarn's remarks will not create any more pressure on the BoT, as the prime minister already took aim at the BoT for refusing to comply with the government's policy.

"However, as Pheu Thai leader, Ms Paetongtarn's remarks could have some implications as the ruling party may use its majority in parliament to push for an amendment to the Bank of Thailand Act to curb the BoT's independence," Ms Sirikanya said.

"This will be a major issue, and the public as well as foreign investors will keep an eye on whether the BoT will be able to maintain its independence," she said.

"It is wrong to force the BoT to fall in line with government goals. It is also incorrect to think that the BoT's independence is an obstacle to fixing economic problems."

Commerce Minister Phumtham Wechayachai said on Sunday the BoT is not above criticism.

"It is not an agency that cannot be criticised. Ms Paetongtarn's criticism shows she is sincere and concerned that the BoT's refusal to cut interest rates will affect people," he said.

## Phi Phi drought could lead to closures

### KRABI

LOCALS ON PHI PHI Island have not had enough fresh water for their needs for over two months, leading to the consideration of temporary closures of some business operations should the dry spell continue.

The resort island in Krabi is facing another freshwater shortage after similar incidents during the tourist high season have occurred over the past several years.

Sanphet Sisawat, President of the Krabi Tourism Association, said that the private company that provides tap water for households, businesses, restaurants, hotels and resorts on the island had stopped supplying freshwater since Apr 23 as the water reserve in its five-rai area was running out.

Some business operators on the island had been forced to buy raw water from downtown areas in Krabi to consume, he added.

A local source also revealed that even large hotels, resorts and businesses on the islands were reportedly



Photo: Khon Krabi / Facebook

nearly out of water reserved in their own artesian wells. Some considered temporarily shutting their businesses down if the situation did not improve due to small downpours.

Mr Sanphet said that the situation had caused huge damage to the island tourism operators, as it had caused hotel and tour programme cancellations.

To compensate the operators, Mr Sanphet said that the Krabi provincial authority had requested that the Third Navy Area supply 100,000 litres of fresh water per ride from its base in Phuket.

He said the authority also considered employing private logistics ships to supply the

locals with 200,000 litres of water per ride.

On Krabi's mainland side, a source said that many areas had suffered a similar drought situation as the resort island.

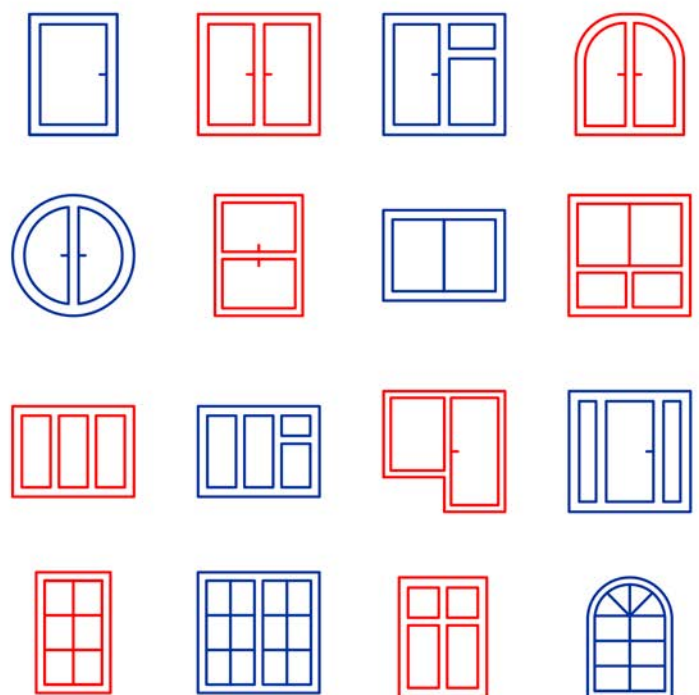
Despite the local authority's attempts to use raw water in reservoirs and a request for artificial rain, the source said that water levels in those reservoirs are now very low.

Krabi Provincial Waterworks Authority is reported to have come up with a three-part mitigation plan, the first stage of which would involve short-term rental of three mobile water production plants, said the source.

Bangkok Post



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# 'The Fall Guy' takes a stand

David Griffiths

Get ready for one of the most surprising but fun joyrides of 2024. While many cinema fans out there might be a little worried about the action-comedy tag linked to the brand-new film *'The Fall Guy'*, there is absolutely nothing to be worried about here because *'The Fall Guy'* is not just a great action-comedy, it is an excellent film all round and deserves to be one of the blockbuster successes of this year.

Directed by David Leitch (*Bullet Train*) at its core *The Fall Guy* is the romantic story of production assistant turned director Jody Moreno (Emily Blunt – *Edge of Tomorrow*) and stuntman Colt Seavers (Ryan Gosling – *La La land*).

The pair are the perfect couple – they click on every level and love spending time together, but then while working on the latest action blockbuster starring Tom Ryder (Aaron Taylor-Johnson – *Kick-Ass*), Colt has a severe accident that results in him hurting his back. Rather than letting Jody take care of him, Colt bolts, deciding that she is better off without him.

Flashforward a year and Colt is working as a valet while Jody has been given the chance to prove herself as a director on Ryder's latest blockbuster. Out of the blue and without warning Jody, the film's producer, Gail Meyer (Hannah Waddingham – *Les Miserables*), contacts Colt and tells him that Jody wants him to come and work on the film – which is being filmed in Sydney, Australia.

Without hesitation Colt jumps on a plane and arrives on set where he learns that first of all Jody has no idea that he was coming and that Gail has an ulterior motive – rather than just work on the film, she wants him to go and find Ryder, whom she believes has fallen in with a criminal crowd that has put his life in danger.

What makes *The Fall Guy* such an exceptional film is that while it dabbles in a lot of different genres, it never leaves any of them hanging or underused. First, the romance aspect of the film works – Colt and Jody are a likeable couple and you want to see them back together by the end of the film.

Then there is the comedy side to the film, which once again thanks to a brilliant screenplay by Drew Pearce (*Mission: Impossible Rogue Nation*) nails every single comedic moment that it attempts without ever getting in the way of the story at hand. That screenplay certainly deserves a mention because the film is so well written that it manages to keep the audience on the edge of their seat while also providing such genuine twists and turns that nobody will see coming.

To top that all off, there are the action sequences of the film. And yes, while the film has some direct nods to franchises like *Mission: Impossible*, *The Fast and the Furious*, *Dune* and *Mad Max* to name a few, it also has enough originality to more than impress even the most hardened action fans. To say this is a film that some will instantly fall in love with is an understatement.

Perhaps even more important is the fact that the action sequences of this film, if not the film itself, should be considered a tribute to stuntpeople both past and present. While many may not want to admit it, stuntwork is an art form in itself, an artistic endeavour that has cost some people their lives over the years. While we have to wait and see whether there will finally be a recognition of stunt work in The Academy Awards over the next few years this film certainly gives those brave performers some much-deserved recognition, especially with the brilliant behind-the-scenes montage during the final credits.

Of course there are other things that make this film something special as well – there is the stunning soundtrack and the sensational use of songs within the screenplay itself – especially the placement of *Against All Odds* by Phil Collins and *All Too Well* by



Taylor Swift. These songs aren't just used in the film, they are written into the film with some beautiful writing of the screenplay.

Then there are also the amazing acting performances. Ryan Gosling was born to play Colt and he brings the likable character to the screen in a way that very few actors would be able to. Alongside him is Emily Blunt who is equally brilliant and seems to throw her heart and soul into this performance... all while having a lot of fun. And while both are stunning in their roles they are also both nearly overshadowed by one very, very cute stunt-dog who steals every scene he is in.

*The Fall Guy* is one truly amazing film. It just goes to show that a popcorn movie can have a touch of brilliance while still entertaining the audience. And just a tip: if you're going to see the film, one of its funniest moments is in the end credits and comes in the form of a truly surprising yet hilarious cameo... so make sure you stick around – but to be honest, you'll probably be glued to your seat anyway as *The Fall Guy* is an unrelenting ride of action, romance and thrills that certainly will not disappoint.

The *Fall Guy* is currently screening in Phuket and is rated '13'

4/5 Stars

David Griffiths has been working as a film and music reviewer for over 20 years. That time has seen him work in radio, television and in print. He is also an accredited reviewer for Rotten Tomatoes. You can follow him at [www.facebook.com/subcultureentertainmentaus](https://www.facebook.com/subcultureentertainmentaus)

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Photo: FUGA Beach Club

# FUGA Beach Club exceeds

Jason Beavan  
gm@classactmedia.co.th

As you step into FUGA Beach Club, away from the hustle and bustle of Patong, you are greeted by a view that takes your breath away. Located next to Loma Circle (Dolphin Circle) at the northern end of Patong Beach, the club features modern and stylish design, combined with views of the Andaman Sea, creates a great ambience.

Whether you choose to dine indoors or outdoors on the beachfront terrace, every seat offers a front-row view of the sparkling waters and golden sands of Patong Beach.

The attentive and friendly staff

make every guest feel pampered and well taken care of. From the moment you arrive until your departure, the service is impeccable, with staff members going above and beyond to meet your needs.

FUGA Beach Club's menu is a delightful fusion of international and Thai flavours, crafted by talented chefs who focus on the use of fresh, local ingredients. The extensive menu offers a wide array of dishes, ranging from seafood specialities to vegetarian options, guaranteeing something for everyone.

We opted to start with ordering a number of dishes straight away, and it all arrived together in a short time. Top picks were the Salami Pizza, the mozzarella just oozing beautifully and the Crab Burger, with crab meat, avocado

and house cocktail dressing, fried soft-shell crab and the outstanding sweet potato fries. (Note to self: order an extra side of the sweet potato fries.)

Somewhat as a surprise, the Mozzarella Sticks with tangy tomato dip were hard to stop eating. And let's not forget the Cold Cuts and Cheese "to share" (which I could have had all by myself), with a great selection of mixed cheeses, marinated olives and locally produced salami and Serrano ham.

We will have to go back and sample more items from the menu, as the pastas, especially the Garlic Chili Oil Rock Lobster Penne looked delicious, as did the Sushi And Sushi Rolls that are made fresh from their sushi bar.

FUGA Beach Club boasts an extensive selection of handmade beverages,

perfect for quenching your thirst on a hot day. What better way to enjoy the stunning views than by sipping on a refreshing juice.

A great addition to the Phuket beachside scene, and with parking just across the street, FUGA Beach Club is the perfect place for locals and visitors to spend a lazy day in Patong.

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# POP QUIZ

1. Which word in the phonetic alphabet (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc...) is also a capital city?

2. Which city is the capital of California?

3. Who was the only British Prime Minister to have been assassinated?

4. The word dinosaur, from the Greek "deinos" and "sauros" literally translates as what in English?

5. When the first modern hand grenade became available to British troops in 1915 what was it called?

Answers below, centre

# SUDOKU

Hard

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

# Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

1. TV monitor?

4. Annex

9. Gumption

14. "So that's your game!"

15. Sierra \_\_\_\_

16. Saddle horse

17. Conrad Hilton's ex

20. "I swear!"

21. Hold forth

22 1987 Costner role

23. "That's awful!"

24. Alliance that includes Lat.

27. Ark contents

32. Affair

34. Lady rapper

37. Humans, e.g.

40. Mythological ship

41. "Love Happens" star

44. Otherwise

45. Uris novel

46. Mud hole

47. Crusted

49. Words to live by

51. Crack

52. Break bread

55. Bring in

59 Kind of den

61. It's for the birds

63. Three-time Academy

Award nominee

67. Adjust

68. Arab leader

69. Hurricane heading: abbr.

70 Oater group

71. Obstreperous

72. Bleeding Gums Murphy's instrument

28. Kimono sash

29. Abundant

30. Culminating point

31. Early Judean king

33. A donde \_\_\_\_? (Spanish)

34. Boot out

35. Consonant type

36. Glorify

38. Carpenter's groove

39. Tight

42. Margaret Thatcher \_\_\_\_ Roberts

43. Doctrine

48. Appoint as agent

50. Mozart's "Il mio tesoro," e.g.

53. Lungful

54. Piano man?

56. Overhangs

57. Boxing venue

58. Heat-resistant glass

59. "My bad"

60. Note

61. Bowled over

62. Exceedingly

63. Dummy

64. Swearing-in words

65. Beetle juice?

66. Churchyard tree in "Romeo and Juliet"

# Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Lima; 2) Sacramento; 3) Spencer Perceval (d. 1812); 4) Terrible lizard; 5) Mills bomb

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16				
17				18						19				
20							21							
22								23				24	25	26
				27	28	29	30	31		32	33			
34	35	36		37				38	39		40			
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51				52	53	54					55	56	57	58
			59				60		61	62				
63	64	65						66						
67						68						69		
70						71							72	

Visit: [www.ilovecrosswords.com](http://www.ilovecrosswords.com)

# Solutions to last week's puzzles:

G A B D A D S F A U N A L O R R I R O N L I K E L Y T H E B A C H E L O R E T T E H A D A G O E I R E S O S S T E R N B R E A S T S O S O S Y O W L E T H S I N H O S P R E Y T H E B I G G E S T L O S E R C A L A S H N A T O O D E H I L L G O G O W A S E N V Y O N L I N E E X T R E M E M A K E O V E R B L O U S E P Y R E E M U S E P T E T H E A R S A M	2 8 9 5 4 1 3 6 7 3 5 4 9 6 7 8 2 1 7 6 1 8 2 3 4 5 9 4 1 7 2 9 5 6 8 3 8 3 6 7 1 4 5 9 2 9 2 5 6 3 8 1 7 4 6 9 3 1 5 2 7 4 8 1 7 2 4 8 6 9 3 5 5 4 8 3 7 9 2 1 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.

6.24 billion

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

Source: Uberfacts

# ISLAND VIEW

Spirit of Phuket Town. Photo by Tina Olitakič

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket?  
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# This week in history

**May 10, 1688**  
King Narai of Thailand nominates his daughter Sudawadi to succeed him, with the foreigner Constantine Phaulkon along with Mom Pi and Phetracha acting as regents. The ensuing revolution leads to the Ayutthaya Kingdom severing all ties with Europe.

**May 11, 1949**  
Siam officially changes its name to Thailand for the second time. The name Thailand had been in use since 1939, but was reverted to Siam in 1945.

**May 12, 1926**  
The Italian-built airship 'Norge' becomes the first vessel to fly over the North Pole.

**May 13, 1787**  
Capt Arthur Phillip leaves Portsmouth, England, with 11 ships full of convicts (the 'First Fleet') to establish a penal colony in Australia.

**May 14, 1955**  
Eight Communist bloc countries, including the Soviet Union, sign the Warsaw Pact defense treaty.

Aerial view of Las Vegas in the 1920s. Photo: US War Dept

**May 15, 1905**  
The City of Las Vegas, Spanish for 'The Meadows', in Nevada is founded when 110 acres (0.44km2) are auctioned off. The plot will later become the downtown area.

**May 16, 1988**  
US Surgeon General C. Everett Koop officially reports that the addictive properties of nicotine are similar to those of heroin and cocaine.

Source: Wikipedia

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Friday 24th May 2024  
17:00 - 18:00 hrs.

Angsana Laguna Phuket (TBC)

Free of charge for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members

Dr. Worita Sarnthanasri  
Dermatologist from Bangkok Hospital Phuket

Dr. Philip Atkinson  
Regional Director of Bangkok Hospital Phuket

**AustCham Thailand Members Briefing**

Before Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners, join us for an insightful discussion at our AustCham Thailand Members Briefing on 'Prioritizing Skin Health in a Fast-Paced World for Business Professionals' from Bangkok Hospital Phuket & Siriroj on Friday 24 May 2024, 17.00 - 18.00 hrs at Angsana Laguna Phuket. Free for AustCham, partner Chambers' and Australian Alumni Members. Email - [office@austchamthailand.com](mailto:office@austchamthailand.com)



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**AustCham Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners**

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, AMCHAM, BCCT, Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber, CanCham, FTCC, GTCC, NTCC, Phuket Chamber, TICC and Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, Phuket Sundowners. 18.00 - 21.00 hrs., at Angsana Laguna Phuket. Join us for a wonderful night of making new connections and catching up with familiar faces in the Australian-Thai business community. As well as, getting to know and learn from our corporate sponsor, Bangkok Hospital Phuket and Bangkok Hospital Siriroj. As well as to our education partner, Nurture Higher Education. THB 650 for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members, THB 1,200 for non-members. Email - [office@austchamthailand.com](mailto:office@austchamthailand.com)

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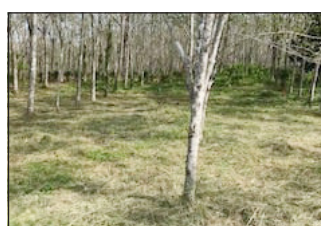
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## GROW BOATING NETWORKING EVENT - MAY 5

Another great turnout on May 5 for the monthly Grow Boating networking event. This month was held at the Isola Restaurant at Royal Phuket Marina who supplied some tasty snacks with 5 Star Marine as the drinks sponsor. 5 Star Marine put a call out for suggestions on what areas of marine safety people see as being the next on the list to tackle.



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## Uber, Thomas Cup heartbreak for Thais

### BADMINTON

THAILAND'S UBER CUP team bowed out in the quarter-finals of this year's championship after losing to Indonesia 3-0 in Chengdu, China, last Saturday (May 2).

Ratchanok Intanon narrowly lost to Gregoria Mariska Tunjung 20-22, 18-21 in the opening singles tie, while doubles players Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai went down to Apriyani Rahayu and Siti Fadia Silva Ramadhanti 17-21, 14-21.

With the team desperately needed a point to stay alive, Supanida Katethong took the first game against Ester Nurumi Tri Wardoyo before the Indonesian fought back to take the second and the third games to claim the 19-21, 21-19, 21-19 victory and a place in the semi-final for her team.

Thailand's men's Thomas Cup team were unable to progress from the group stage, suffering consecutive defeats to Indonesia.

Doubles players Peeratchai Sukphun and Pakkapon Teeraratsakul won Thailand's only point after they battled past Fajar Alfian and Muhammad



Supanida Katethong.  
Photo: Bangkok Post

Rian Ardianto 21-19, 14-21, 21-11.

Panitchaphon Teeraratsakul fell to Anthony Sinisuka Ginting 16-21, 13-21 in the opening singles match before Peeratchai and Pakkapon pulled Thailand level.

Jonatan Christie restored Indonesia's lead with a 21-16, 13-21, 21-12 win over Saran Jamsri.

Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin eased past Sirawit Sothon and Natthapat Trinkajee 21-13, 21-10 before Chicago Aura DWI Wardoyo took the fourth point for Indonesia with a 21-10, 21-11 win over Nachakorn Pusri.

China beat Indonesia in the both the finals of the Uber and Thomas Cups on Sunday.

Bangkok Post

## Norris lands maiden F1 win

### FORMULA ONE

AFP

McLaren's Lando Norris won the first Formula One race of his career with a shock victory over world champion Max Verstappen in the Miami Grand Prix last Sunday (May 5).

Breathing life into an F1 season that risked becoming a one-man story again, Norris, in his 110<sup>th</sup> race for McLaren, beat Verstappen by over seven seconds with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finishing third.

Verstappen, who began on pole, had won four of the opening five races of the season and leads the world championship standings.

It looked like business as usual with the Dutchman, who had won the previous two Miami races, leading until lap 24 when he pitted and Norris's McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri took over the lead.

Australian Piastri himself went into the pits four laps later, allowing Norris to grab the lead and the British driver never looked back.

Crucially, Norris was able to pit during a safety car on lap 30, earning him a valuable time advantage which he never relinquished.

The safety car came after Kevin Magnussen clipped Logan Sargeant, sending the American Williams driver into the wall, bringing a yellow flag.

Norris, who had 15 podiums before his first win, took full advantage of the safety car and with Verstappen struggling



Lando Norris celebrates his maiden F1 win in Miami with teammates. Photo: AFP

to catch up, he secured his maiden victory.

It was the first time Verstappen has been beaten on track, when he finished the race, since Ferrari's Carlos Sainz won in Singapore in September last year.

Norris was hoisted in the air by the McLaren mechanics as his long wait for a victory in the sport came to an end.

"About time huh?" said Norris. "I guess a lot of people doubted me along the way. I've made a lot of mistakes over the last five years, my short career, but today we pulled it all together, so this is all for the team," he added.

The nearest Norris had come previously to winning a Grand Prix was in Sochi, Russia in 2021 when he led in the

latter stages before failing to make a tyre change early in rain, costing him dearly.

"I'm very happy for Lando, it's been a long time coming and it's not going to be his last one. He definitely deserves it," said Verstappen.

Sainz finished fourth with Verstappen's Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez in fifth place but the pair swapped places after stewards imposed a post-race penalty of five seconds on the Spaniard for his collision with Piastri.

Mercedes pair Lewis Hamilton and George Russell finished sixth and eighth with RB's Yuki Tsunoda in seventh, Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso in ninth and Alpine's Esteban Ocon 10<sup>th</sup>.



## The June/July 2024 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

Distributed in resorts/hotels lobbies, in a high number of restaurants and coffee shops, plus inserted in one issue of *The Phuket News* each month, it is a great way to Talk to Phuket.

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# Haaland rout tames Wolves

## FOOTBALL

AFP

Erling Haaland scored four times as Manchester City thrashed Wolves 5-1 to move within one point of Arsenal after the Premier League leaders beat Bournemouth 3-0 last Saturday (May 4).

The Norwegian striker scored two penalties, a fine curled finish and a majestic header to make it 36 goals in all competitions this season as Pep Guardiola's team look to retain their league title.

Hwang Hee-chan pulled one back for Wolves before Julian Alvarez capped City's sixth consecutive league win, extending their unbeaten run in the competition to 20 games.

The reigning champions, who have a game in hand on Arsenal, will clinch an unprecedented fourth successive English title if they win their last three matches.

They head to Fulham tomorrow (May 11) before visiting Tottenham on May 14 and hosting West Ham five days later.

"It's three games, hopefully we win the first and the second and arrive to the third with our destiny in our own hands," Guardiola said.

At the Emirates Stadium, Arsenal cruised to a fourth successive victory, with goals from Bukayo Saka, Leandro Trossard and Declan Rice.

Chasing their first title since 2004, Arsenal's 26th Premier League victory this season equalled the club's top-flight



Erling Haaland scored four times against Wolves. Photo: AFP

record for a single campaign.

"It was probably the best first half we've played all season," Gunners boss Mikel Arteta said.

Arsenal travel to Manchester United in their penultimate game on Sunday before hosting Everton on May 19.

Liverpool shattered Tottenham's hopes of finishing in the top four with a 4-2 win that left Aston Villa on the brink of Champions League qualification despite their 1-0 defeat at Brighton on Sunday.

Mohamed Salah opened the scoring for Jurgen Klopp's team before further goals from Cody Gakpo, Andrew Robertson and Harvey Elliott put Liverpool in cruise control, despite late goals from Son Heung-min and Richarlison.

Villa are seven points ahead of fifth-placed Tottenham, who have a game in

hand but will miss out on the top four if Unai Emery's men win one of their remaining two matches.

At the bottom, Burnley's hopes of avoiding relegation suffered a huge blow as Newcastle ran riot in a 4-1 win at Turf Moor to leave Vincent Kompany's second bottom side five points from safety, with only two games left remaining.

However, fourth bottom Nottingham Forest took a giant step towards survival with a 3-1 win against already-relegated Sheffield United, while Luton remain in trouble after they could only manage a 1-1 draw at home to Everton.

Elsewhere, West London rivals Brentford and Fulham shared a dour 0-0 draw and Manchester United's tumultuous season hit another low when they were hammered 4-0 by Crystal Palace on Monday.



Archer is back. Photo: AFP

## Archer recalled to England squad for T20 World Cup

### CRICKET

PACEMAN JOFRA ARCHER has been recalled to England's squad for the defence of their T20 World Cup crown after a year out of action.

The 29-year-old, who has endured a string of injuries since his international breakthrough in 2019, has not played competitive cricket for a year but has recovered from a right elbow injury.

He takes his place in a 15-man provisional squad captained by Jos Buttler for the tournament that starts on Jun 1 in the West Indies and the United States.

Archer has managed just 15 T20 appearances for England since making his international debut five years ago but is still considered a potential game-changer.

Another factor in England's favour is that he grew up in Barbados so is knowledgeable about Caribbean conditions.

England begin the defence of the title they won in Australia in 2022 against Scotland in Barbados on Jun 4.

Managing director of England men's cricket Rob Key said Archer was "desperate" to play on his home island.

"Jofra's a bowler that is just so special you do everything you can to try to get him back playing and we've sort of taken the longer road this time but as always with Jofra, it's fingers crossed until he's out there playing," said Key.

"It's like when you're waiting for something really good to happen, you don't quite believe it until he's there but he's tracking well at the moment." AFP

## Futsal final heartbreak for Thais

### FUTSAL

HOSTS THAILAND were denied a home victory and a first title in the final of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup on Apr 28 when they lost to Iran 4-1.

Asian powerhouse Iran produced a dominant performance to defeat the hosts with relative ease to secure a historic 13th AFC Futsal Asian Cup title at the Bangkok Arena.

The Iranians seized control from the very start of the match to deny Thailand a maiden title as the Central Asian side made up for losing to Japan in the decider of the 2022 edition.

Iran scored their goals through Mahdi Karimi, Saeid Ahmad Abbasi, Ali Asghar Hassanzadeh and Mohammadi, while Jirawat Sornwichian scored Thailand's only goal of the match.

"I'm very sad for the Thailand fans, but at the same time, we lost to a superior team," Thailand head coach Miguel Rodrigo said after the game, adding that he felt his side could have



Iran celebrate their win. Photo: Bangkok Post

done better.

Iran head coach Vahid Shamsaei was delighted with his teams' record win, saying post-match: "I remember the day we lost the 2022 final against Japan. I had to apologise to everyone.

"Today, I'm happy that they stayed patient with me and I want to dedicate this trophy to everyone back home."

The Thai team reached the final after they edged Tajikistan 6-5 in a penalty shoot-out after their semi-final ended 3-3 after extra-time at the Indoor Stadium Hua Mark in Bangkok on Apr 26.

It was heartbreak for

Tajikistan in their maiden semi-final appearance who led 3-1 at one point before Alongkorn Janphon scored for the Thais and then Therd-sak Charoenphong levelled the score with two minutes left to force the game into extra-time.

No goal was added in the extra-time, leading to the penalty shoot-out where Narongsak Wingwon scored the winner to secure Thailand's third final appearance in the competition.

Iran had beaten Uzbekistan in a penalty shoot-out 5-4 after both teams finished tied 3-3 after extra time in their semi-final encounter.

Bangkok Post

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# Sport



Thai woe in  
AFC Futsal  
final > p15

# NICE ONE!

## ONE chief donates B20mn to Muay Thai gyms

ONE Championship chairman and CEO Chatri Sityodtong (right) poses with a gym owner after donating money and gear to the gym. Photo: Bangkok Post



### MUAY THAI

Bangkok Post

ONE Championship Chairman and CEO Chatri Sityodtong has donated B2 million to Muay Thai gyms in the southern and northeastern parts of Thailand.

Sityodtong has given B500,000 to 40 camps in the two regions, hotbeds for producing Muay Thai fighters yet areas where the sport is plagued with poverty.

"Last year, I travelled all over the country to meet gym owners and athletes. I felt very sorry for them. They made low income, everyone was at a loss," Chatri said.

"So me and my team wanted to give a hand to the fighters, gym owners, and small promoters all over the country. Not just in the Bangkok area. ONE and I invest all over the country for Muay Thai, because if I don't do it, who will?"

"This is very important because Muay Thai is our heritage. It has a long history in our country, and it would be a shame if no one helped or invested in our gyms and fighters. It's not just an investment for today, we have to think in the

long term."

ONE has changed the landscape of Muay Thai in Thailand, with the promotion now airing the highest-rated weekly Muay Thai event - ONE Lumpinee - on Thai television from Lumpinee Boxing Stadium.

"You can fight in ONE Lumpinee and maybe go on to ONE Championship. But [we] must invest first, and now almost every gym is losing money," he said.

"Many gyms received 500,000-baht donations, better gear, better food for fighters, so they could afford to pay for trainers. We help them with many things."

ONE's roster is now home to a range of top Thai talent, each with their own unique "rags to riches" story.

Chatri hopes that by nurturing up-and-coming talent at the grassroots level, he can unearth even more stars capable of achieving more fame and fortune on a global scale.

"When ONE Lumpinee started it provided inspiration to boxers and gyms across the country because it is the pathway to escape poverty and gives fighters a purpose for success in their lives," he said.

### USA RETURN

Chatri's donation followed confirmation that ONE Championship is making its eagerly anticipated to the United States on Sept 7 with ONE 168: Denver with two of Thailand's most famous mixed martial arts world champions featuring as the headline acts.

Atomweight champion Stamp Fairtex will step up a division to challenge ONE strawweight MMA world champion Xiong Jing Nan, while two-sport ONE bantamweight world champion Jonathan Haggerty will put his Muay Thai strap on the line against flyweight kickboxing king Superlek Kiatmoo9.

Xiong has reigned over the women's strawweight MMA division since its inception in 2018, successfully defending her title on seven occasions to make her the longest-reigning women's world champion in ONE history.

There are few challenges left for the Chinese superstar in her weight class, but there is another history-making athlete in the division below her that is moving up for another shot at greatness.

Stamp became the first combat sports athlete ever to win world titles in three separate sports in

2023, claiming the ONE atomweight MMA world title to add to her ONE atomweight Muay Thai and kickboxing world titles.

Superlek has also got his wish for a shot at another belt fulfilled.

'The Kicking Machine' has held the ONE flyweight kickboxing world title since January 2023. But after his latest defence against Takeru Segawa earlier this year, he mentioned Haggerty as a man who was in his crosshairs.

'The General' shocked the world when he crushed longtime bantamweight Muay Thai divisional ruler Nong-O Hama inside one round last April. The Brit then won the vacant ONE bantamweight kickboxing world title with a scintillating two-round demolition of Fabricio Andrade in November.

Haggerty will be looking to keep his unbeaten run in the bantamweight division alive when he takes on Superlek in Colorado in September.

### LEGENDS COLLIDE

Another huge fight on the card is the match-up between British Muay Thai legend Liam Harrison and Seksan Or Kwanmuang.

'The Hitman' faces Seksan in a

140-pound catchweight Muay Thai contest with Harrison eager to cap off his legendary career with a bang against one of the most exciting fighters in the sport.

The 38-year-old has teased retirement in recent times after a career that has netted him three Muay Thai world titles across 117 fights.

Harrison has been involved in some of the most memorable fights in Muay Thai history, not least the one-round slugfest against Muangthai PK Saenchai at ONE 156 where the Brit recovered from two early knockdowns to record three of his own and a stunning TKO victory.

Known as 'The Man Who Yields To No One', Seksan earned his moniker on the Thai stadium circuit for his all-action fighting style that earned him multiple Muay Thai world titles across 270-plus fights.

He was considering retirement before ONE gave him an opportunity he couldn't refuse last year.

Eight memorable victories followed, earning the 35-year-old several performance bonuses and a B3.5 million contract with the Asian powerhouse promoter.