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FREE FLOW



Photo: PR Phuket

PM ORDERS ALL CANALS TO BE CLEARED TO AVOID MORE FLOODS

The Phuket News
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Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has called on officials across the island to ensure all waterways are cleared of debris and dredged sufficiently to maximise water flow as a measure to help avoid future flooding similar that suffered across central Phuket late last month.

During his visit to Phuket last Friday (July 5), PM Srettha visited areas in the hills above Kamala affected by recent landslides, which were described as occurring in “Baan Hua Khuan Tai in Kathu”. Of note, while specifically mentioning the village by name, local official reports omitted using the searchable word of the general locality: Kamala.

The visit was aimed at assessing the damage and coordinating immediate relief efforts at Baan Hua Khuan Tai, a village severely impacted by the landslides during the heavy downpours, said one official report of the PM’s visit. However, the area in the hills has no obvious large construction projects underway. The landslides appeared to be natural.

Not specifically mentioned in local official reports of the PM’s visit was that it was the homes at the base of the hill, on the fringes of Kamala town, that were inundated by mud in the water runoff in the heavy downpours.

Accompanied by Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat, the Director-General of the Department of Water Resources, and the Director-General of the Department of Highways, the

Prime Minister received a detailed briefing on the situation and ongoing assistance efforts for the affected residents, said the official report.

The landslides, triggered by continuous heavy rainfall, caused significant disruption in at least 18 locations across three districts. The saturated soil, unable to absorb any more water, led to multiple incidents of land displacement, the report said. Not mentioned was that one such mud runoff was in hills at the back of Patong.

Addressing the urgent need for solutions, Prime Minister Srettha ordered the immediate implementation of floodways to manage water flow and prevent further damage. He also requested detailed maps of landslide-prone areas in Phuket to

discuss long-term preventive measures with Jatuporn Buruspat, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Of note, such plans the identification of risk areas already for decades have been required as part of the provincial natural disaster response plan.

During his visit, the Prime Minister interacted with local residents, who recounted the unprecedented landslides. Many, having lived in the area for decades, expressed their gratitude for the Prime Minister’s direct involvement, another official report noted.

Prime Minister Srettha acknowledged the severity of the situation, emphasising the need for both short-term and long-term solutions.

“In the short term, we must focus...

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Brit steals van, wrecks havoc on Patong Hill



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Sustainability is a matter of style at JARAS



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Phuket’s super seven shine at karate comp



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News



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Local marine tourism safety gets a boost

PHUKET PROVINCIAL Office held a hands-on workshop for tour boat personnel last week as part of a project aimed at elevating the safety standards of maritime tourism within the 'Andaman Tourism Development Zone'.

The workshop, held at the Pearl Hotel in Phuket Town on July 3, was declared underway by Phuket Vice Governor Norasak Suksomboon.

Welcoming the attendees, Ratchadaporn O-in, Director of the Tourism and Sports office in Phuket, underscored the importance of this training for both local and international visitors.

The initiative seeks to enhance service standards and improve the knowledge and skills related to the safety management of tourists among tourism operators, Vice Governor Norasak said.

"The swift implementation of this project is crucial to enhancing the high-value service standards. It focuses on equipping tourism personnel with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes suitable for the service profession, as well as improving safety management skills for tourism operators.

"This will boost confidence in health safety among both Thai and international tour-



Photo: PR Phuket

ists visiting Phuket, thereby enhancing the tourism potential and safety in Phuket and its connected areas. This, in turn, will create a positive image and increase tourist confidence, leading to income distribution within the community and benefiting local residents," he said.

Ms Ratchadaporn reported that the workshop received budget support from the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Tourism and Sports for the fiscal year 2024.

The training, aimed at fostering safety confidence among tourists in Phuket, Krabi, and Trang, comprised two main courses: 'Tour Boat Personnel Training'; and 'Life-guard Training'.

The Tour Boat Personnel Training course is conducted in five sessions, each with 50 participants. The first session took place in Trang on June 20, followed by the second in Krabi on June 27. The remaining three sessions were held in Phuket on July 3-5.

The Phuket News

PM Srettha vows to keep Heroines Underpass dry

The Phuket News
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During his visit to Phuket last Friday (July 5), Prime Minister Settha Thavisin was plainly told of local residents' concerns that any flooding of an underpass built under the Heroines Monument will only cause more traffic problems in Phuket.

PM Srettha landed at Phuket airport at 1pm last Friday (July 5) and made his way to the Heroines Monument, where he was briefed on the underpass project, aimed at alleviating severe traffic congestion in the area.

Accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Suriya Juangroongruangkit, who also serves as Minister of Transport, PM Srettha addressed the local community's concerns and outlined plans to prevent flooding in the new tunnel.

Chalermphol Kertsap, Chief of Srisoonthorn Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor), along with local representatives, expressed happiness about the tunnel construction but raised concerns about potential flooding inside the tunnel during heavy rain. They stressed the need for an effective drainage system,



Photo: PR Phuket

noting that past flooding had caused significant problems.

"We are happy about the tunnel construction but worried about water flooding the tunnel. We urge the government to incorporate effective drainage solutions," Mr Chalermphol said.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the severe traffic congestion and flooding problems at the Heroines Monument. He confirmed that the government had approved the budget for the tunnel project, which is expected to be completed by 2026. However, no date for the start of construction was given.

PM Srettha said the Ministry of Transport had detailed the issue: the 26-kilometre

road has seven traffic lights, one roundabout and 12 U-turn points, all contributing to slow traffic.

He assured residents that their concerns were being taken seriously, directing relevant agencies to study and implement drainage routes to prevent tunnel flooding.

The PM emphasised the need to address tunnel flooding due to its location along a waterway. He instructed provincial officials to prepare support plans, such as installing water pumps and drainage channels, without impacting surrounding communities.

While waiting for the tunnel's completion, short-term measures include blocking certain sections to speed up

traffic and expanding city roads to distribute vehicles more efficiently, he said.

PM Srettha expressed confidence that these measures would significantly reduce both traffic and flooding issues in Phuket in the short and long term.

"We are committed to addressing both traffic congestion and flooding in Thalang District. The government has approved the budget for this tunnel project to ease traffic woes. We understand that this road, with its numerous traffic lights, roundabouts, and U-turn points, causes significant delays. We have implemented short-term measures to speed up traffic flow and plan to expand the city's road network," the PM said.

"Approximately 200 households have been affected by past flooding. With these short-term and long-term measures, we believe that both traffic and flooding problems in Phuket will be significantly reduced," Prime Minister Srettha concluded.

According to one official report of the PM's visit, "His commitment to addressing these issues moved some villagers to tears, grateful that their concerns were being heard."

Kamala, Srisoonthorn get flood attention after PM orders action

Continued from page 1

...on creating floodways and expanding water channels to prevent overflow and protect the residents," he stated. He further stressed the importance of establishing early warning systems and reinforced structures, such as dams and terraces, to mitigate future risks.

The Prime Minister highlighted the necessity of identifying and addressing other vulnerable areas beyond the immediate crisis. "From the maps provided by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, we see at least seven to eight other critical spots that need attention," he said.

When questioned about the measures for safeguarding homes in high-risk zones, Prime Minister Srettha assured that every effort would be made to protect the residents without causing undue disruption.

He also expressed confidence in the local government's capacity to manage the situation, acknowledging the unprecedented nature

of the landslides.

During a follow-up visit to a water drainage site near Kamala Post Office, the Prime Minister was warmly welcomed by residents, who were eager to express their support and gratitude, another report noted, repeating the issue of local residents' gratitude for such a visit.

Prime Minister Srettha concluded his visit with a commitment to bring the issue to the Cabinet, urging swift and comprehensive action.

"Our officials understand the urgency, and with careful planning, we can control and mitigate these risks effectively," he assured.

Of note, during his visit PM Srettha did not stop by the residential areas in Tambon Thepkasattri and Srisoonthorn which were the most severely affected areas by the flooding during heavy downpours on June 30, leaving hundreds displaced.

INTO ACTION

Just one day after PM Srettha's visit,



Photo: PR Phuket

Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat last Saturday (July 6) conducted inspection visits to flood-hit areas in Srisoonthorn and Thepkasattri in order to gather information to be used in formulating long-term solutions to present to the Cabinet for budget approval.

Governor Sophon first led his inspection team to inspect waterways and planned measures to mitigate future flooding in flood-struck areas in Srisoonthorn.

Joining the inspection tour was Rewat Areerob, President of Phuket

Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), while leading the tour of the area was Srisoonthorn Mayor Chalermphon Kertsap.

Srisoonthorn in Thalang District is a critical water catchment area that experienced severe flooding on June 30. The flooding notably impacted Thepkasattri Rd, a major route into and out of Phuket Town, causing significant disruptions.

Thalang District had been declared a flood disaster area, said an official report of the inspection last Saturday.

Floods affected 5,385 people in 1,799 households across 28 villages (moo baan) in five subdistricts (tambon) in Thalang District, the report noted.

In Srisoonthorn alone, 2,000 people in 700 households across eight villages were affected by the floods of June 30.

Also on Saturday, Governor Suwannarat led efforts to provide assistance to people in Thepkra-

sattri, also described as a severely affected area.

The operation involved government agencies, including the Phuket Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office (DDPM-Phuket) and the DDPM Region 18 office (also based in Phuket), as well as personnel from the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command at Cape Panwa and local volunteers.

The effort, dubbed 'Big Cleaning Day', focused on restoring homes, roads and canal routes in Thepkasattri, which comprises 2,035 affected people in 680 households across 11 villages, another official report noted.

Governor Suwannarat has instructed local administrative organisations to expedite the removal of waterway obstacles and expand water routes, said the report.

He emphasised the importance of vigilance and continuous monitoring of weather forecasts throughout the rainy season, which continues through October.

Brit charged for theft of van, Patong Hill collision

The Phuket News
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Police have charged an 18-year-old British man for stealing a passenger van and causing a head-on collision on Patong Hill last Saturday night (July 6) that brought traffic in both directions over the hill to a standstill for hours.

Patong Police were called to the scene, about 100 metres past the Chao Por Sua Temple ("Tiger Temple") at the top of hill, at 8:19pm last Saturday.

Police and rescue workers arrived to find a white Toyota van registered in Songkhla had crashed head-on into a black Hyundai van registered in Phuket.

The foreign tourist who had stolen the van, later named by police as Charlie Thomas Micheal Hoe, 18, was trapped inside the vehicle.

Kusoldharm Foundation rescue workers had to use equipment to free him from the wreck. Hoe, from Middlesbrough, England, was then transported to Patong Hospital.

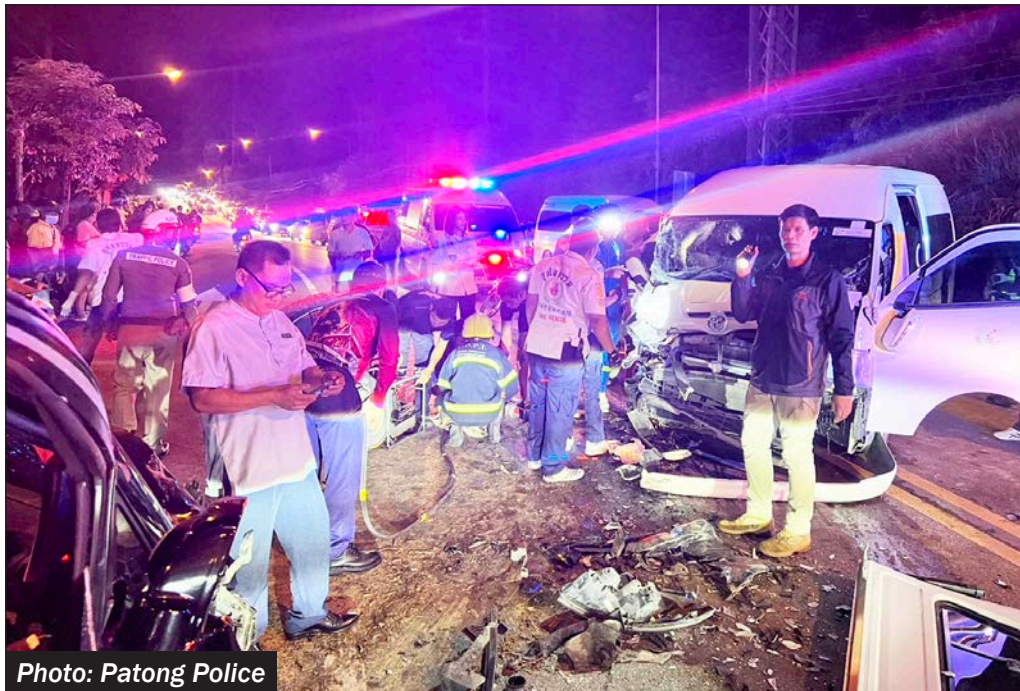


Photo: Patong Police

The driver of the Hyundai van, Sompong Rueangchan, had sustained leg injuries in the impact.

Thiwa Santichatsak, the owner of the stolen Toyota van, said he had parked with the engine running to buy durian in front of the PTT gas station on the way up to Patong Hill. The foreign man, Hoe, seized the opportunity to steal the van and sped off

towards Patong.

The collision on Patong Hill paralyzed traffic in both directions for more than an hour. While directing what traffic they could past the accident site, Patong Police noted that efforts to clear the vehicles were still underway at 9:30pm.

Further investigation revealed that Hoe previously had been involved in another

incident. Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee reported that the same tourist had assaulted a Myanmar citizen, a worker in the neighborhood, leading to his arrest and subsequent hospitalisation.

Hoe managed to escape from the hospital, which led to the theft of the van and the ensuing accident, Mr Chalermpong said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Police search for man after tourist knife attack

PATONG POLICE ARE trying to track down a Thai man wanted for attacking an Indian tourist with a knife, leaving a wound to his head.

Patong Police were informed of the attack at about 11:10pm last Sunday night (July 7).

Officers arrived to find an Indian tourist, named as Aneesh Kumar Nikathithara Purushan, 37, with a small knife wound to his scalp.

Officers were told that Mr Aneesh, his wife and a friend returned from traveling outside. The friend went up to the room on the fourth floor and entered their room, but had not closed the door yet, as he was waiting for Mr Aneesh and his wife.

When Mr Aneesh arrived at the room, he saw an unidentified man walk down the hallway towards him, smoking as he walked.

When walking past Mr Aneesh, the man blew cigarette smoke in Mr Aneesh's face, but Mr Aneesh did not respond because he could not speak English, so instead he gave the man a stern look.

After walking about four to five metres past Mr Aneesh,



Photo: Patong Police

the man turned around and kicked Mr Aneesh in the face, causing Mr Aneesh to fall to the floor.

The man then drew a knife, not more than 15cm long, and tried to stab Mr Aneesh in the face, but Mr Aneesh reacted quickly and used his hands to fend off the knife, which ended up cutting his scalp.

Mr Aneesh's friend came to help, but the man ran away, making his exit behind the hotel.

The friend informed the hotel staff of the attack, who in turn called the police.

After rescue workers arrived and provided first aid, Mr Aneesh went to Patong Police Station to file a formal report of the attack.

At last report police were searching for the perpetrator. Eakkapop Thongtub

Jimi Sandhu killer pleads guilty

A CANADIAN EX-SOLDIER has pleaded guilty to his involvement in the February 2022 murder of Canadian gangster Jimi Sandhu in Phuket.

Matthew Dupre entered the guilty plea on the first day of his trial at the Criminal Court in Bangkok on June 27, the *Vancouver Sun* reported.

Dupre admitted his role in the dramatic targeted hit at a beachfront resort on the southern holiday island, said Sgt Brenda Winpenny, of the anti-gang Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit in the province of British Columbia.

The shooting of Jimi 'Slice' Sandhu by two foreign men was captured on security video outside the Beachfront Hotel in Rawai on the night of Feb 4, 2022. Sandhu had been staying in a private waterfront villa beside the hotel. Fake Canadian identification and cash were found in the villa.

Sandhu, 32, was a member of the United Nations gang in Vancouver. He grew up in nearby Abbotsford but was deported to India in 2016 for serious criminality.

He had been travelling in and out of Phuket since 2016. At the time of his death, he



Matthew Dupre is escorted by police after his extradition from Canada in May last year. Photo: Bangkok Post

was wanted in India for drug trafficking, had just been banned from Malaysia, and had spent stretches of time in Vietnam. Thai police said they believed he was involved in drug trafficking throughout Southeast Asia.

He rented the villa where he died in November 2021, but left Phuket around Christmas 2021. He was spotted at a fancy New Year's Eve party at the five-star Amari Watgate Hotel in Bangkok before leaving the country, the *Sun* reported. He returned on Jan 27, eight days before his murder, flying in on a private jet from Malaysia.

Dupre and Lahrkamp arrived together at Phuket International Airport on Dec 18, 2021, the Thai police investigation determined. Both returned to Canada on Feb 8,

2022 and within days were identified as murder suspects.

Canadian police, investigating at the behest of their Thai counterparts, suspected the slaying was linked to a gangland feud in British Columbia. They searched Dupre's home in Sylvan Lake, Alberta; the residence of co-accused Gene Lahrkamp; and the Ontario home of a third suspect, who was never charged.

Dupre was arrested on Feb 20, 2022 by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at his home in Sylvan Lake.

Lahrkamp remained at large but died aboard a small plane that crashed near Sioux Lookout in northern Ontario on April 30, 2022.

Dupre agreed to be extradited in May 2023 and has been in custody in Bangkok since. Thai authorities agreed to waive the death penalty in order to satisfy Canadian requirements for extradition.

Dupre and Lahrkamp both served in the Canadian Armed Forces, leaving as corporals. Dupre served from 2005-13 and Lahrkamp from 2012-18, the *Sun* reported. Dupre's LinkedIn page said he later worked as a private military contractor in Syria and Iraq.

Bangkok Post

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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TUE JULY 16



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Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

WED JULY 17



High: +37°

Low: +28°

Wind 4 m/s

THU JULY 18



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Wind 4 m/s

Foreigners nabbed for embezzlement, overstay

A 37-YEAR-OLD BRITISH man has been arrested at Phuket International Airport while trying to enter the country on a new passport, as he was wanted on an arrest warrant for a charge of embezzlement issued to his old passport.

Immigration officers at the airport reported that British national Alexander Laurence Church, 37, was arrested at the international arrivals hall at 1:10pm on July 1.

Church was attempting to enter the country on a new passport, as the arrest warrant, issued by Phuket Provincial Court, had identified him using his previous passport. The arrest warrant identified the passport number of Church's previous passport, the officers reported.

Church was taken into custody by officers from the Patong Police, and he was taken to Patong Police Station for "further legal action".

Phuket Immigration officers have also reported the arrest of four foreigners for staying in the country illegally, after their permit to stay had expired (com-



Photo: Phuket Immigration

monly called 'overstay').

Immigration reported the arrests on July 2, naming the suspects as: 'Mr Mohamed', Egyptian national, overstay of 1,898 days; 'Mr Zubair', Pakistan national, overstay of 1,734 days; 'Mr Haitham', Egyptian national, overstay of 234 days; and 'Mr Dmitrii' Russian national, overstay of 413 days.

All four were charged with illegally staying in the country, Phuket Immigration confirmed.

The "owner" (usually meaning "operator") of one guest accommodation venue was charged with failing to inform Immigration of foreigners staying at the location as required by Section 38 of the Immigration Act, Phuket Immigration also confirmed.

The name of the accommodation venue was not reported.

No further details of the arrests were provided.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Fisherman warns of extortion at Kalim

Eakkapop Thongtub
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A local fisherman has come forward, seeking justice after a man allegedly acted like a mafia, collecting tolls and threatening tourists with a machete at Kalim Beach.

The incident has sparked outrage on social media, with many calling for immediate police action.

The case gained widespread attention after a popular Phuket page broadcasted a live video, showing a fisherman being threatened with a machete. The video quickly went viral, drawing comments such as "Let's get to the end of it" and "Why didn't the police arrest him?"

The fisherman, 'Mr Wut', captured the incident, around 4pm on June 30, on video. He described how, on the day of the incident, he and his friends had been fishing at Kamala Beach before heading to Pa Phrao, near a local café. It was here that they encountered a man in a white shirt and jeans, demanding a toll of B50 per person.

Mr. Wut recounted his confrontation with the toll collector, who claimed to be sent



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

by the owner of bungalows in the area. When Mr Wut began recording the encounter, the man brandished a machete and demanded they talk elsewhere. Fearing for their safety, Mr Wut and his friends left and reported the incident to the police.

However, Mr Wut expressed frustration with the police response. According to him, officers at Patong Police Station dismissed the case, stating that no harm had come to them and no money was exchanged. The only potential charge they considered was for carrying a knife in public.

"Personally, I think it could be considered extortion. But police say it's just a story,"

he said.

Mr Wut highlighted the danger posed to tourists, especially foreigners unaware of such threats. "It's scary if foreigners go around 6pm. What do you do when attacked by a machete?" he said.

Affan Wama, a friend who was present during the incident, echoed Mr Wut's concerns. He stated that despite having video evidence showing the man holding a machete and money, the police refused to file a report, deeming it hearsay.

Both Mr Wut and Mr Affan are urging the public to take the matter seriously and for authorities to ensure the safety of beachgoers in Phuket.

Body of woman found after jump from Sarasin Bridge

THE BODY OF A WOMAN who jumped from the Sarasin Bridge last week has been found among mangroves at Tha Chatchai, at the northern tip of the island.

Tha Chatchai Police Station reported that the woman, identified as Kanokkan Wongchan, had jumped from the Khok Kloi side of the Sarasin Bridge into the channel of fast-moving water separating Phuket from the mainland at about 4:45pm on July 4.

Rescue teams had been conducting a search operation since the incident, and finally discovered her body among mangroves in Moo 3, Mai Khao, at about 3:30pm last Saturday (July 6).

Rescue workers at the scene transported the body to the pier



Photo: Tha Chatchai Police

in front of Wat Tha Chatchai before taking it to Thalang Hospital.

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

Eakkapop Thongtub

Police praised for halting smoke-billowing pickup

CHERNG TALAY POLICE HAVE been praised for stopping one pickup truck billowing black smoke after the pickup drove past Cherng Talay Police Station.

Cherng Talay Police on July 3 posted online a 1.04-minute video of the pickup discharging its cloud of pollutants, along with the message: "#Drive safely and pay attention to your fellow passengers."

"If you don't respect the rules, Choeng Thale Police Station is happy to provide service at your location."

It was later explained that the pickup was pulled over in front of Wat Cherno Talay. It was not explained what legal action was taken against the driver.

Social media users praised the quick action of the police and condemned the pickup truck driver. Comments ranged from praise for the police to frustration with the truck's pollution.



Screenshot: Cherno Talay Police

"Thank you very much to the police #Cherno Thale Police Station, karma can't catch up. The police caught up with me," one user commented.

Another remarked, "Cool based on other people's weaknesses, I admire the police, I don't understand what's so cool about it. Making others angry."

Other comments pointed out that the support for the police in taking action against the pickup driver should be interpreted by police as encouragement to continue to do the same against other offenders in the area.

Eakkapop Thongtub



Photo: PR Phuket



Blessings of the sacred water

The Phuket News
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The sacred water blessing ceremonies in Phuket for the auspicious occasion of His Majesty the King's 6th Cycle (72 years) Birthday Anniversary on July 28 have drawn to a close.

The ceremonies started with the drawing of sacred water from a blessed well at Wat Chalong on July 4, after which the sacred water was carried in a blessed vessel to Wat Phra Thong in Thepkra-sattri, Thalang.

Established in 1785, Wat Phra Thong is of historical significance to Phuket and is renowned for its half-buried Buddha statue, known as

'Phra Phut'.

Legend has it that a boy tied his buffalo to what he thought was a post, but both the boy and the buffalo died. In a dream, the boy's father learned that the post was actually the Buddha's hair, leading to the discovery of the statue. Despite efforts, only the upper half of the statue could be unearthed.

King Rama VI renamed the temple from Wat Phra Phut to Wat Phra Thong. The temple was visited by King Rama IX, Bhumibol The Great, on March 11, 1959, who inscribed his initials on a stone plaque at the temple entrance, and the temple received royal recognition on Oct 27, 1980.

The sacred water blessing ceremonies at Wat Phra Thong began at the temple's Viharn (congregation hall) last Sunday (July 7). The initial ceremony was presided over by Phra Udom Wachiramongkol, Chief Monk of Phuket and Abbot of Wat Mongkol Nimit.

The civil ceremonies were led by Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat. The event saw participation from hundreds of government officials, judiciary members, military personnel, police officers, state enterprise employees and local residents.

The ceremony commenced with Governor Sophon paying respects to a portrait of His Majesty the King, followed by offering floral tributes and

lighting incense and candles. A Brahmin then recited an auspicious incantation.

Governor Suwannarat proceeded to light candles and incense in honor of the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha) before taking his seat. Sacred chants and rituals were performed, with Phra Udom Wachiramongkol leading the monks in the blessing of the sacred water.

At the auspicious time of 5:18pm, the chief monk lit the victory candle, and the monks chanted blessings. The ceremony included traditional musical performances, the invocation of protective chants, and continuous prayers by senior monks, creating a profound spiritual atmosphere.

The ceremonies at Wat Phra Thong continued on Monday (July 8) with a candlelight procession ceremony to celebrate the holy water of the Buddha, with Phra Udom Wachiramongkol presiding over monastic ceremonies and Governor Sophon presiding over the civil ceremonies.

To conclude the ceremonies, Governor Sophon decanted the water from the sacred vessel into a blessed white vase that was brought to Phuket Provincial Hall for safekeeping until the Governor carries the water to the Minister of Interior in Bangkok, where he is to arrive this Sunday (July 14).

Sacred water from 107 blessed sources throughout

the country this Sunday are also to arrive at the Minister of Interior, where all the waters will be kept until July 25, when there will be a ceremony to "invite" the holy water from the 107 sacred water sources to be brought to Wat Phra Chetuphon Wimon Mangkhalaram (Wat Pho).

At Wat Pho, an ancient temple which King Rama I the Great ordered to be built for monks to study Dharma, will be another consecration ceremony of the sacred water.

On July 28, the sacred water will be brought to the Amarin Winitchai Throne Hall at the Grand Palace to be used in a morning ceremony to honor His Majesty The King's birthday.

Sakhu Police Station gets Muslim prayer building

SAKHU POLICE STATION has opened its new Muslim prayer building, praised as the first prayer building within a police station in the country.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum officiated the opening of the new building last Friday (July 5).

Present for the occasion were Komon Dumlak, Chairman of the Phuket Provincial Islamic Committee; Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Pol Col Akanit Phithaksat, Trin Panyawai, President of the Sakhu Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor); Monchai Tanode, General Manager of Phuket International Airport; along with Sakhu Police Chief Pol Col Salan Tantisasanakul and honored guests.

"The construction of this prayer building is a landmark event, being the first of its kind in Thailand," Pol Maj Gen Sinlert said.

"It exemplifies our commitment to serving the public



Photo: PR Phuket

and tourists, offering a beautiful and clean environment for prayer. We believe this will become a key check-in location for Muslims visiting Nai Yang Beach and contacting the Sakhu Police Station."

Pol Col Salan explained that the initiative aims to accommodate both citizens and tourists, particularly those of the Muslim faith, who frequent the Sirinath National Park and the police station.

He noted that previously,

the lack of a designated prayer space had led visitors to pray in unsuitable locations, including around trees and other people.

"The 'Prayer Building for the People' was built in a design that combines Chinese and Arab culture to be beautiful, durable and strong," he added.

"It marks a significant step in public service, ensuring that Muslim visitors have a designated, clean, and beautiful place to pray," he said. *The Phuket News*



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The Phuket News - Talking to Phuket

Chinese crucial for property in Q4

Bangkok Post

August will be a critical month to gauge the number of Chinese tourists in Phuket during the fourth quarter, as the condo market on the island is projected to have the highest launch of new supply in its history.

Nattha Kahapana, managing director of property consultant Knight Frank Thailand, said tour agents from China typically visit Phuket in August to explore accommodation and survey tourism-related products in preparation for China's Golden Week in October.

"The arrival of Chinese tour agents next month will indicate whether tourists from the mainland will visit Phuket in the fourth quarter," he said.

"Their return means a lot to the condo market on the island as Chinese buyers typically are among the top two nationalities."

According to the Real Estate Information Center, Chinese and Russians led other foreign markets in receiving condo transfers during 2018-23.

"Phuket's condo market will see a record influx of new units, estimated at 5,739 for this year," said Mr Nattha.

"The comeback of Chinese buyers is seen as crucial to absorb the supply."

He said the condo market in Phuket has witnessed robust demand



A tourist relaxes at Karon beach. Mr Nattha says the Phuket condo market reached a sales peak last year. Photo: Achadtaya Chuenniran / Bangkok Post

and a strong recovery since 2022, reaching its peak in sales last year.

All locations on the west coast, from Nai Yang beach in the north to Rawai beach in the south, registered an increase in demand in 2023.

According to Knight Frank Thailand, the number of new condo units launched in Phuket peaked in 2019 at 4,828 units, up 88% from 2,563 units in 2018. The key drivers were buyers and developers from China.

The market rebounded last year with 4,081 units launched, rising from 1,619 units in 2020, none in 2021 and 941 units in 2022.

Condo sales recovered to 3,892 units last year on the island, nearly quintupling the amount in 2022.

The most launches last year occurred in Bang Tao, representing 46%, followed by Layan at 25% and Nai Han 14%, according to Knight Frank Thailand.

Layan and Bang Tao recorded the top two new condo units sold last year, with 1,385 units and 849 units, respectively, followed by Nai Han with 524 units.

Sales in other locations were less than 260 units.

"Following an influx of Russian buyers in 2022, the market is now anticipating a new boost from Chinese buyers," said Mr Nattha.

However, he said Chinese buyers have not fully recovered because of economic challenges and the

government's crackdown on money transfers, which will prompt buyers to find other solutions for financial transactions.

Mr Nattha, who is a native of Phuket, said Chinese buyers play a crucial role in the condo market as they are frequent guests of the island for a whole year, unlike Europeans who mostly visit during the high season, while arrivals from the Middle East and India prefer the rainy season.

"European visitors and property buyers in Phuket are declining as they perceive it as a mass market and crowded destination, rather than the luxury destination it once was. They seek privacy and exclusivity," he said.

Phuket consistently thrives unlike other destinations, meaning hotel occupancy rates are strong and room rates were 20-30% higher than 2019 levels, said Mr Nattha.

VISA WAIVER FLIGHTS

The number of flights between Thailand and China has risen to 55,000 in the past eight months since the two countries signed a mutual visa exemption agreement, according to the Ministry of Transport.

The 55,433 flights from October last year to May represented a 213% increase from the same eight-month period a year earlier, Deputy Transport Minister Surapong Piyachote said on last Saturday (July 6).

The ministry projects that 86,150 flights will operate between the two countries in the fiscal year that ends on Sept 30, he said.

Currently, flights from China operate at Don Mueang, Suvarnabhumi, Phuket, Chiang Mai, Samui and Krabi airports. Flights to and from economic hubs like Chengdu in southwestern Sichuan province have recorded a noteworthy increase.

Over the past eight months, 5,896 flights were recorded to and from Chengdu, with expectations of the number reaching 8,850 by year-end.

Mr Surapong said he had asked Aeronautical Radio of Thailand (Aerothai) to expand capacity to manage increased flight volumes.

Aerothai is enhancing air traffic service efficiency through new parallel routes, upgraded technology systems, improved airspace structure and management guidelines, he said.

Plans include a new air traffic management system and installation of systems to improve capacity and efficiency through air traffic flow management (ATFM) practices.

The aim is to handle about 2 million flights by 2038, with a focus on personnel training, route adjustments, airspace design and setting up off-site backup air traffic management.

Also, Aerothai president Nopasit Chakpitak said the company had started a project to develop U-tapao Airport and the Eastern Aviation City under its initial phase.

Thailand Charter Show set to return

THE THIRD EDITION of the Thailand Charter Show, organised by the Thai Yachting Business Association (TYBA), will be held at Phuket Yacht Haven on Nov 1-3, just before the start of the high season.

The Thailand Charter Show is Southeast Asia's premier Yacht Charter Show for yachts and superyachts. The show is a luxury yachting event that provides a platform for crewed charter yachts and brokers to showcase their boats in a stunning location, organisers said in a release.

"The Thailand Charter Show is an international charter event for Yachting & Tourism industry professionals and selected invited guests and encourages engagement between yachts, marine industry players, sponsors, and professional visitors in an intimate environment," the release said.

"International and local Charter Brokers, Luxury Travel Agents, Luxury Tour Operators, and Hotel Industry Professionals will be introduced to Phuket's renowned charter yachts,



Phuket Yacht Haven. Photo: via Thailand Charter Show

experience Phuket's famed hospitality and will enjoy a program of destination, activities and sustainable yachting information, and enjoy local entertainment," the release added.

For the first two days, charter yachts are on display at Phuket Yacht Haven Marina and the last day features a one-day, invitation only 'familiarisation' cruise aboard participating yachts to charter destinations around Phuket and nearby to help build and realise potential business and partnerships.

"The mission is to offer the most effective platform for brands to capture and interact with the most relevant target audience. An organising committee of TYBA members will run the event with the participa-

tion of leading international charter brokers and other local charter companies," the release concluded.

Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Tourism Minister at the time, revealed at the Thailand Charter Show last year that the 'yacht tourism' season in Phuket from October 2022 through April 2023 was expected to boost the Thai economy by more than B1.1 billion.

Thailand Charter Week alone, organised by the TYBA, was expected to boost the local economy by B200 million, Mr Phiphat said.

For more information about the Thailand Charter Show visit the Thailand Charter Show website or email info@thailandchartershow.com

The Phuket News

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Cannabis impact panel requested by advocates

BANGKOK
Bangkok Post

Cannabis advocates are calling on the government to set up a committee to study the impacts of the plant before proceeding to relist it as a narcotic.

Prasitchai Nunual, secretary-general of the Writing Thai Cannabis' Future group, which held a protest near Government House on Monday (July 8), said the study should cover physical health, mental health, its effects on society and its therapeutic benefits compared to tobacco and alcohol.

He said if the findings show that the impacts of cannabis are no worse than those of tobacco and alcohol, a special law should be enacted to regulate its use.

If the findings suggest otherwise, the plant should be controlled as a narcotic.

"A committee should study the issue. The facts should be established and laid out for the public to see," he said.

Mr Prasitchai also claimed



Cannabis advocates organise a protest outside Government House on Monday (July 8). Photo: Bangkok Post

the change in the cannabis policy is an attempt by certain government figures to protect the interests of major players who stand to benefit from reclassifying cannabis as a narcotic in the name of protecting people's well-being.

On July 5 the Public Health Ministry's committee controlling illegal drugs voted to support the reclassification of cannabis and hemp as narcotic drugs except for their branches, leaves, roots and seeds.

Cannabis buds and any materials containing more than 0.2% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) will once again be criminalised.

"All related laws should be amended before Jan 1. That is the timeframe that we are expecting for this law to take effect," said Dr Surachoke Tangwiwat, deputy permanent secretary at the Ministry of Public Health.

On Monday, the protesters also threatened to expose alleged ties between influential financial groups and politicians, particularly those in the ruling Pheu Thai Party leadership.

Meanwhile, a community enterprise in Nakhon Ratchasima's Phimai district is urging the government to assist small-scale cannabis

businesses affected by the government's failure to transform it into a new cash crop.

Thongchai Posawang, leader of a community enterprise that grows medical cannabis, said the group has signed a memorandum with the Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine.

However, growing cannabis for medical use incurs high costs while the price of harvesting is not as good as expected, he said, adding the group has suffered heavy losses and has no hope of recouping investments made.

Now, the group is concerned about whether farmers will still be allowed to grow the plant, he said.

"We'd like to know what measures the government has in store to help the farmers who fell for their campaign words," he said.

"Will the government allow farmers to grow cannabis for medical use and research after this?" he added.

According to Mr Thongchai, the community enterprise was established in 2020, and more than 230 farmers joined.



Passengers at Suvarnabhumi airport. Photo: Bangkok Post

Airport alcohol ban on holy days lifted

BANGKOK

ALL SIX MAIN INTERNATIONAL airports, including Suvarnabhumi and Phuket, will now be permitted to sell alcoholic beverages on five major Buddhist holy days to boost spending by travellers and promote tourism.

The National Committee on Alcohol Beverage Policy decided on July 4 to allow all airports under Airports of Thailand Plc (AoT) to sell alcoholic drinks on Asarnha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Makha Bucha, Buddhist Lent and the end of Buddhist Lent days.

AoT operates Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phuket and Hat Yai airports.

Alcohol sales are currently banned across the country on these holy days of Buddhism.

Deputy Prime Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit, who chaired the meeting, said

lifting the ban would generate more revenue from tourism.

However, he did not specify when the new decision will come into effect, as it still requires the amendment of the Prime Minister's Office announcement on the matter.

The meeting also halted a proposal of the State Railway of Thailand (SRT) to reconsider selling alcoholic beverages, including beer, at stations and on trains.

Policymakers instructed the railway agency and the committee to study the plan further, taking economic and public health benefits into consideration.

The SRT has not allowed alcohol sales at train stations or on board since 2015. The ban was implemented after a former employee drank beer on a train and later sexually assaulted a 13-year-old passenger before throwing her out of the train window in July 2014. Bangkok Post

EC denies dragging out Senate results

BANGKOK

THE ELECTION COMMISSION (EC) has brushed aside criticism that it is dragging its feet in announcing the certified result of the election for 200 new senators after a near two-week lapse since the June 26 vote.

Speaking after the EC's meeting on Monday (July 8), EC chairman Ittiporn Boonpracong said the result could not be announced because several issues must be addressed first.

He declined to say if the poll agency, which was also scheduled to meet on Tuesday, would announce the result while insisting that it was not stalling no matter what critics said.

A source at the EC said if the result was not announced on Tuesday, it would likely be deferred for another week when Mr Ittiporn returns from planned leave.

The EC is under pressure from the Senate election winners and losers. One has already demanded the agency endorse the result to prevent the existing Senate from remaining in its position, while another called for it to investigate alleged fraud and questionable eligibility rulings.

Several former candidates on Monday threatened to file a malfeasance complaint against the EC if it rushed to announce the result before their complaints about irregularities are heard.

One also filed a petition with the Administrative Court to suspend the announcement of the result and ask the outgoing Senate



Senate candidates enter their final round of elections in Nonthaburi on June 26. Photo: Bangkok Post

to impeach the poll commissioners for violating the charter.

The organic law on the Senate composition does not stipulate an exact timeframe for the EC to announce a result. The law only requires that the EC leaves five days after the final round of the election to resolve complaints.

Meanwhile, the outgoing Senate on Monday voted 101:10 with 17 abstentions to set up a 23-member special panel to investigate the Senate poll. The panel has 30 days to complete its work.

Outgoing Senator Somchai Swangkarn defended the move, saying the senators felt duty-bound to oversee the process until their last day in office and ensure a clean handover to the next higher chamber.

Bangkok Post

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Crafting a Cherng Talay community

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

As the building boom across Phuket continues, a lack of facilities to support this growth is starting to become apparent. Are there enough facilities on the island to accommodate the influx of new residents? An increase in young families means a need for infrastructure to be built around them. This is where Flying Lizard comes in.

Flying Lizard is scheduled to launch at the end of 2024, offering a haven for families in the north of Phuket. With 2,300 square metres of dedicated indoor and outdoor play areas, a gourmet restaurant, a parent-focused co-working space and a dog park, Flying Lizard is purpose-built from the ground up to offer a space for both parents and kids alike. The playground equipment will meet European safety standards and although key pieces will be coming in from Europe, the goal will be to locally produce what is possible, keeping in line with Sustainable Development Goals.

The playground design has been created by Bangkok-based specialists Lekka Studios, who have worked very closely with Flying Lizard's Co-Founder and International Pre-School teacher, Anna Koczor.

"We wanted to create a space that provides both a fun environment for the kids as well as aiding in their develop-



An artist's impression of the indoor playground to be available at the 'Flying Lizard'. Image: Supplied

ment. We want to strongly encourage kids to put down their screens and enjoy being kids again," says Anna.

Flying Lizard's founder, David Ghani, is a Phuket resident who has raised five children on the island over the past 12 years. "Trying to enjoy a meal with my wife without having to run after young kids every 30 seconds is something I've always dreamed of. After sharing my challenges with other families, I realised I wasn't alone and decided to do something about it," David says.

After the pandemic, there was a sudden growth in remote workers, freelancers and online business owners. Many of these people had young families and struggled to find a balance to manage work and family life. "Our goal is to offer a space where parents can take their kids with them but also get some work done if needed," adds David. Flying Lizard will have a dedicated co-working space as well as sound proof 'zoom' rooms to make conference calls, he explains.

Flying Lizard will have an experi-

enced team of childminders on hand to supervise kids as they play. However, parents will be able to sit in full view of the play spaces so they can still interact with their kids. Each separate playspace will be age-specific so that kids will only interact with other kids in their own age range. A dedicated events space will host birthday parties as well as a daily schedule of events for different ages. Amongst others, this will include Baby Sensory classes, Kids Yoga, Cooking Classes, Arts & Crafts and a variety of different energy releasing classes.

The restaurant will use 100% locally sourced product in its food menu and is under consultancy from Elliot Gould, Operations Director at Marriott International. There will be a dedicated healthy kids menu as well as options for babies. A family focused Sunday Brunch will be a weekly highlight in order to gather families from the community together to socialise.

One of the sustainability goals of the project is to train disadvantaged kids in the restaurant giving them the food and beverage skills required to be ready for the workplace. Flying Lizard will work with a number of local charities on this initiative.

Flying Lizard's first location will be situated three minutes' drive from Blue Tree and is planning to not only become the best family hangout in Phuket, but throughout the country. A nationwide rollout is planned spanning 20 outlets in three years.



The August/September 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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JARAS sustainable in style

Amy Bensema

Recognised by the Michelin Guide in 2022 and 2023, JARAS Restaurant is a sophisticated contemporary restaurant with a focus on sustainable ingredients which combine authentic flavours and progressive presentation into an exceptional Thai fine dining experience. Nestled amongst the pine trees overlooking Kamala Beach, JARAS Restaurant integrates flavours of the locale with the long-standing European tradition of enjoying a pre-dinner drink and canapes.

Upon entering JARAS, it's easy to see that the elegant restaurant is a well-oiled machine. Service is quick and efficient, the interesting interiors are meticulous, and the open kitchen concept allows guests the opportunity to watch the chef and his team craft their culinary creations. I'm excited because even before looking at the menu I know that this is going to be a fun dining experience.

My dining partner and I decide to select dishes from the extensive à la carte menu. We decide on Moo Hong Thod, the signature appetiser Thod Man Poo, Pla Krapong Tom Som, Gaeng Keaw Waan Gai and the recommended signature curry, Massaman Pae. Given a choice of rice, we decide on berry rice. Despite how busy the restaurant is (reservations are recommended), the food



Photo: JARAS

arrives at our table rather quickly. Of course, we take loads of photographs before we dig in.

The presentation of the food is immaculate and the flavours are sumptuous. The Moo Hong Thod is a JARAS spin on the traditional dish – it's a crispy spring roll stuffed with braised pork and black pepper. I love it from the first bite! The Thod Man Poo resembles a fancy donut, but inside is deep-fried crab meat, minced chicken and bread-crumbs. This signature is served with house-made chilli jam and is melt-in-your-mouth delicious. Much to my surprise, the Pla Krapong Tom Som soup does not have an overbearing fish

taste. Instead, the clear soup with snapper, shallot, lemongrass, turmeric and spring onion has a well-balanced taste and is really comforting.

I sample the Gaeng Keaw Waan Gai next. It's a house-made green curry with diced chicken thigh, eggplant, basil and coconut caviar. The curry is rich and creamy, and the coconut caviar bursts in the mouth – nice touch, honestly. The Massaman Pae, consisting of southern slow-cooked goat, potato, onion, coconut milk and flavoured Tamarind brew is entirely unique; this dish is a popular signature, and I've never tasted anything just bursting with flavour like it.

Although our meal is satisfying, we do save room for dessert. The house made Coconut Gelato is light and refreshing and pairs well with my latte. The Tabtim Krob is a traditional Thai dessert consisting of water chestnut infused with sala syrup, apple syrup and jack fruit served with coconut ice cream. It's sweet and delicious, and scooped up in an instant.

In addition to the à la carte menu, the restaurant also offers the 'Jaras Experience Tasting Menu'. This nine-course menu must be booked 24 hours in advance and is for guests 18 years old and above only. Signature adult beverages, Thai spirits, a variety of coffee drinks and of course, an extensive grape-based beverage list – either by the glass or bottle – are also available.

Located in the InterContinental Phuket Resort north of Kamala Beach, JARAS Restaurant is open daily for lunch from 12pm-4pm with dinner service from 5pm-10pm (last order at 9.30pm). 9-course Sustainable Menu 6pm-10pm (24 hours advance booking required).

Reservations are paramount for this tantalising meal experience. Price range: More than B1,200. Major credit cards accepted. Car park on site. Has smoking area. Free WiFi hotspot. Tel: 076-629999. Website: Phuket.intercontinental.com/dining/jaras. Facebook: JARAS Restaurant Phuket



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POP QUIZ

1. Fort Bragg, the world's largest military base, is now called what?
2. Deimos and Phobos are the only two moons of which planet?
3. PEZ candy is named after which German word?
4. Ailurophobia is the fear of what?
5. The first version of Windows was released in which year?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

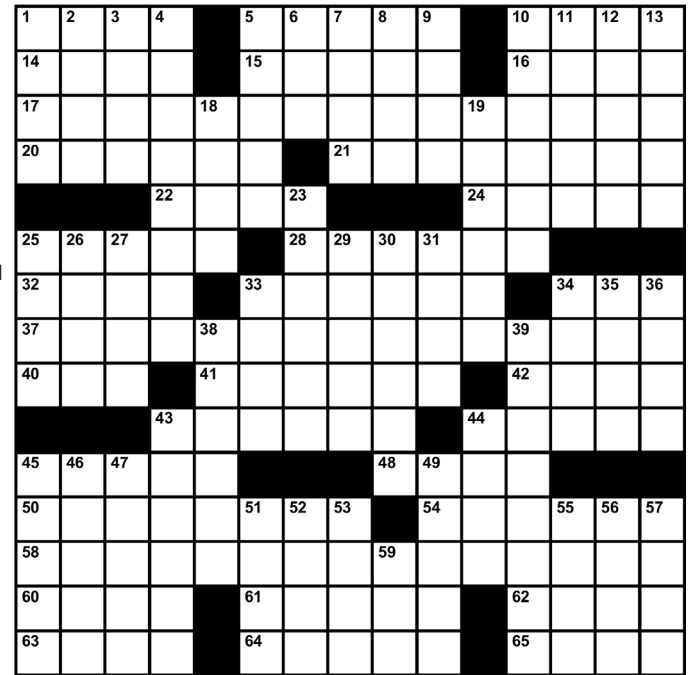
	5	6						9
4			9					7
		3			6			
5				3			1	
		7	6		1	4		
	2			5				7
			7				9	
	8				5			2
7						1	5	

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Mideast port
 5. Mea ____
 10. Breakfast, lunch or dinner
 14. The "C" in U.P.C.
 15. Foreign
 16. Anise-flavored liqueur
 17. Old Glory colors
 20. Desk item
 21. Robbers
 22. South African monetary unit
 24. Shipping weights
 25. Sulk
 28. Foot part
 32. Continental currency
 33. Diner features
 34. Former Portuguese colony in India
 37. Gummo et al.
 40. 3,600 secs.
 41. Circular
 42. A shot
 43. Sesames
 44. Eurasian herb
 45. Show fear
 48. Quarrel
 50. Device for examining the ear
- Down**
1. "God's Little ____"
 2. Active one
 3. Old literary work
 4. Hub of activity
 5. ____ terrier
 6. Final: abbr.
 7. Willingly, in olden times
 8. Resound
 9. Author Rice
 10. Frilly hat of olden days
 11. Swedish physiologist Ulf ____
 12. Blue hue
 13. Fertile soil
 18. Top dog
 19. Can't stand
 23. Agent Orange, for one
 25. "Little Women" woman
 26. European coal area
 27. Mine finds
 29. Chivalrous
 30. Emphasize
 31. Norse thunder god
 33. Fiber source
 34. Sweet cherry
 35. Middle Earth creatures
 36. Pale
 38. Punish with an arbitrary penalty
 39. Gives hope
 43. Attacks
 44. Keyed up
 45. Terra ____
 46. Different
 47. Beat
 49. Verse
 51. Gulf sultanate
 52. 100%
 53. Latin 101 word
 55. Everglades deposit
 56. ____ Major (constellation)
 57. Nicholas I or II
 59. Little butter?

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Fort Liberty (renamed June 2, 2023); 2) Mars; 3) Pfefferminze (peppermint); 4) Cats; 5) 1985 (Nov 20)



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

E	P	I	C	E	P	E	E	N	A	V	A	L
D	I	N	G	A	L	I	N	G	E	R	I	C
D	A	V	I	D	A	N	D	G	O	L	I	A
A	N	A	V	I	E							
O	R	P	I	N	A	S	T	O	N	I	S	H
S	C	O	R	E	K	E	E	N	P	A	R	A
H	A	N	S	E	L	A	N	D	G	R	E	T
A	N	T	E	Y	O	U	S	H	E	E	L	S
F	D	A	A	C	N	E	S	U	V			
T	O	P	D	R	E	S	S	O	M	E	G	A
I	O	U										
B	A	R	N	U	M	A	N	D	B	A	L	L
B	L	U	E	S	L	O	D	E	S	T	O	N
C	E	N	S	E	P	S	S	T	S	P	A	R

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

9

milligrammes is roughly how much cocaine each glass of Coca-Cola used to contain until 1903.

30

years old were Marilyn Monroe and Queen Elizabeth II when they first met each other. They were both born in 1926.

20,000

one-litre bottles of air every day is how much humans need to breathe.

160,000

US dollars is the value of the diamond Arizona man Walter Earl Morrison stole and then traded for \$20 worth of marijuana.

1

billion

US dollars is the offer ABBA turned down to reunite in 2000.

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW



Boat Lagoon sunset. Photo by David Boucher

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

This week in history



July 12, 1962

The Rolling Stones perform their first concert, at London's Marquee Club.

July 13, 1923

The Hollywood Sign is dedicated in the Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles. It originally reads 'Hollywoodland', but the last four letters are dropped after renovation in 1949.

July 14, 1881

American outlaw Billy the Kid is shot and killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett in the Maxwell House at Fort Sumner, New Mexico.

July 15, 1910

In his book *Clinical Psychiatry*, Emil Kraepelin gives a name to Alzheimer's disease, naming it after his colleague Alois Alzheimer.

July 16, 1941

Joe DiMaggio hits safely for the 56th consecutive game, a streak that still stands as a Major League Baseball (MLB) record.

July 17, 1402

Zhu Di, better known by his era

name as the Yongle Emperor, assumes the throne over the Ming dynasty of China. He later builds the Forbidden City and orders Admiral Zheng He to undergo major sea voyages across the South Pacific and Indian Oceans.

July 18, 1992

A picture of Les Horribles Cernettes becomes the first photo posted to the World Wide Web.

Source: *Wikipedia*

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7th Accor Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon 2024

Accor Hotels is excited to announce the 7th Accor Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon 2024, set to take place on Sunday, July 14, 2024. This highly anticipated event will kick off at 6:00 a.m. at the stunning Nai Harn Beach, Rawai, and will lead participants along the picturesque Promthep Cape route, offering breathtaking views and a refreshing coastal atmosphere. The Accor Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon 2024 is more than just a run; it's a celebration of community spirit and a commitment to making a positive impact. Every step taken during the Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon will contribute to a brighter future for underprivileged children. Event Details: Date: Sunday, July 14, 2024 Time: Starting at 6:00 a.m. Location: Nai Harn Beach, Rawai, Phuket Race Categories: - Fun Run: 5 kilometres - Pet Run: 2.5 kilometres - Mini Marathon: 10.5 kilometres - VIP: Choose any distance This event embodies our commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle, community engagement, and supporting charitable causes. We look forward to welcoming runners of all ages and abilities to this beautiful part of Phuket. Let's run together by the seaside and make a difference in the lives of underprivileged children. For more information, please visit our website at www.facebook.com/HeartBreakHillsPhuket

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Skål International Phuket Dinner - July

We are delighted to invite you to our Skål monthly dinner, hosted by Sue Ultmann, Executive Manager of Baan Rim Pa restaurant. Since 1989, Baan Rim Pa has been serving its multi-award-winning Royal Thai and local cuisine to guests from around the world. Perched on the side of a cliff facing the Andaman Sea with panoramic views across the bay of Patong, it is the ideal location for this months Skål dinner. Limited parking is available outside and opposite the restaurant. We recommend taking a taxi. Registration 6pm. Members THB 1200. Non-Members THB 1600. To find out more visit - facebook.com/SkalPhuket



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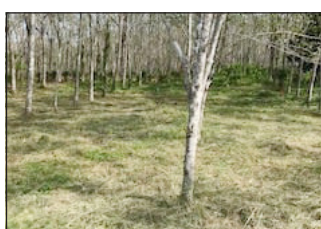
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GROW BOATING PHUKET NETWORKING EVENT - JULY

Another great night despite the rain. Thank you to the Thai Yachting Business Association for the sponsorship of the drinks, to Isola Restaurant for the super cold beverages as well as the delicious food. See you all at the next event at Phuket Boat Lagoon on Aug 2nd which will be sponsored by Southeast Asia Pilot.



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July/August 2024 issue

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Bagnaia leads going into MotoGP break

MOTOGP

FRANCESCO BAGNAIA capitalised on Jorge Martin's cruel late crash to win the German MotoGP last Sunday (July 7) and take control of the world championship.

Martin appeared to have the race wrapped up but made a mistake and fell at turn one on the penultimate lap to hand the win to the double world champion.

Marc Marquez, who will be Bagnaia's teammate next season at Ducati, took second, with Alex Marquez, his younger brother, completing the podium.

"I don't know what happened," lamented Martin.

"It took me by surprise, I was pretty much in control, the pace was good, I was riding perfectly."

Martin's dramatic departure from the Sachsenring stage gifted not only the race victory to Bagnaia but also the riders' standings.

Bagnaia heads into MotoGP's summer break



Martin crashes out on the penultimate lap in Germany. Photo: AFP

10 points clear of Martin.

"It wasn't easy," said Bagnaia, who was winning his fourth successive grand prix after Assen, Italy and Catalunya. "I'm very happy. It's the first time I win here in Sachsenring."

Marc Marquez is an eight-time winner on this circuit but the six-time former world champion has not won a race since October 2021.

"I promise you I would trade a victory to be on the podium with my brother, it's an amazing feeling," said the Spaniard.

The MotoGP season resumes after the summer break at the start of August in Britain. AFP

Hamilton wins emotional home race at Silverstone

FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato

michael@boxofneutrals.com

Lewis Hamilton broke a near 1,000-day victory drought after an emotional charge to first place at his home British Grand Prix ahead of old foe Max Verstappen last Sunday (July 7).

A record-breaking reported 164,000 people braved the intermittent rain and wind to witness Hamilton claim his 104th career victory and ninth at Silverstone, a new record for domination by a driver at a single circuit, in a masterclass of tactical driving and wet-weather brilliance.

The seven-time champion hadn't won a race since Saudi Arabia in 2021, the penultimate race of his failed title duel with Verstappen some 945 days and 56 rounds ago, and burst into tears as he took the chequered flag and received a British Union Jack from a trackside marshal.

"Thank you so much, guys," he said over team radio as he held the flag aloft to a standing ovation in the grandstands. "It means a lot to me, this one."

It was Hamilton's last home race appearance in Mercedes colours before he switches to Ferrari in 2025.

The home hero's journey to the top step required him to out-race and out-strategise four other rivals in a five-car fight for victory that lasted until the



Lewis Hamilton celebrates after winning the Formula One British Grand Prix at Silverstone last Sunday (July 7). Photo: AFP

very last lap.

Teammate George Russell started on pole and set about controlling the grand prix in the opening stint, but the arrival of rain on lap 25 broke open the race.

In slippery conditions Hamilton easily outclassed the sister Mercedes car to take the lead, but it was Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri in the McLarens behind that really excelled in the drizzle before a second band of heavier rain arrived to shake order again.

There was a sense of inevitability, however, about the seven-time champion winning at home. Despite Verstappen gaining ground and setting his fastest lap of the race in pursuit, Hamilton beat his former title rival to the flag by 1.465 seconds.

"I think just it's been incredibly mentally challenging, I think for everyone in the team," Hamilton said of his winless streak and Mercedes's struggles for form since 2021.

"But I think just knowing how hard everyone's continued to work, knowing how I've managed just to keep my head in it... honestly, it's the most incredible honour to be standing on the top of the podium and hearing the national anthem."

Norris finished in third place, with Piastri fourth ahead of Carlos Sainz. Nico Hulkenberg was an excellent sixth for Haas while Aston Martin returned to the points with Lance Stroll and Fernando Alonso in seventh and eighth ahead of Alex Albon and Yuki Tsunoda completing the top 10.

Injuries strike All Blacks and England ahead of decider

RUGBY

ALL BLACKS SCRUM-HALF TJ Perenara and England prop Joe Marler are both considered unlikely starters for the second and final Test in Auckland tomorrow (July 13) where New Zealand will chase a series sweep.

Perenara appeared to hyper-extend his knee in a collision with a team-mate during the first half of last Saturday's (July 6) 16-15 win in Dunedin and did not return after the interval.

"We've got plans in place if he's not right," All Blacks coach Scott Robertson said.

The 32-year-old was playing his 81st Test, 18 months after suffering a serious Achilles tendon rupture in a drawn Test against England at Twickenham.

Marler's foot injury ended his 95th Test prematurely and he's likely to miss the Eden Park decider, according to coach Steve Borthwick.

"A man as tough as Joe leaving the field clearly means it is not just a small injury. It's not just a bruise," Borthwick said.

"We don't know the full extent of it, but clearly it doesn't look good for next week."

Marler's exit heralded a 63-minute debut off the bench for Fin Baxter, although the Harlequins prop struggled to stabilise a wobbly England scrum.



England's George Martin is tackled by New Zealand's Sevu Reece. Photo: AFP

Borthwick said the scrum was one of several areas that would need addressing but refused to blame three missed shots at goal from fly-half Marcus Smith for the defeat.

"Everyone makes mistakes and Marcus also produced magic on that pitch today," he said.

All Blacks fly-half Damian McKenzie registered the same two-from-five goal-kicking return, including being "timed out" when taking longer than 60 seconds to attempt a late penalty goal.

McKenzie called for a shot clock to be installed on the big screen at New Zealand venues.

"I can't always count to 60 in my head, especially when I'm trying to focus. I just missed the time," McKenzie said.

England must defy history to square the series at Eden Park, where New Zealand have not lost a Test since 1994.

England are also chasing their first win over the All Blacks on New Zealand soil in 21 years. AFP



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RESERVATION:
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This event is jointly organized by Asia MICE Planner, Malaysian Club Thailand, Only One Tour International & Malaysian Thai Friends Group

Saka finds redemption

FOOTBALL

AFP

Bukayo Saka banished the heartache of his penalty miss in the last European Championship final after starring in England's passage to the last four of Euro 2024 last Saturday (July 6).

Arsenal forward Saka was England's saviour in Duesseldorf, his stunning 80th minute equaliser keeping England in the tournament just as they looked set to limp out early.

And the 22-year-old confidently struck home the third of five perfect England penalties as Gareth Southgate's much-criticised team reached the semi-finals of their second straight Euros.

Cole Palmer, Jude Bellingham, Saka, Ivan Toney and Trent Alexander-Arnold converted their penalties to send England through, as they went some way towards exorcising the ghost of their shoot-out defeat by Italy in the final of Euro 2020.

It was a happy occasion for Saka whose saved penalty three years ago led to Italy snatching the title at Wembley



Bukayo Saka celebrates the quarter-final win against Switzerland. Photo: AFP

and racist abuse from some fans on social media directed at him, Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho.

"You can fail once but you have a choice of whether or not you gonna put yourself in that position again. I'm a guy that's gonna put myself in that position, I believed in myself and when I saw the ball hit the net I was a very happy man," Saka told reporters.

"I'm not going to be focusing on the past, that's done. I can only focus on now and taking the penalty. Of course I know there were a lot of nervous people watching, my family included in the crowd, but I kept my cool and I scored."

Penalties have so often been the bane of England at major tournament but after Jordan Pickford saved Manuel

Akanji's opening spot-kick for the Swiss, England's players showed remarkable composure under high pressure.

"We have some of best takers in the Premier League and in the world, so we talked about it before and if it did come to penalties we would be pretty confident," added Saka.

"You saw that today, we scored five out of five and

we're through to the next round."

Southgate was effusive in his praise of Saka who was also for large portions of the match England's most dangerous player in the unfamiliar position of right wing-back.

"I gave him a massive cuddle on the pitch. He's a special boy, a dream to work with... Of course you're pleased for everybody but especially for him," said Southgate.

"That takes courage but we have belief in him. We had belief in him previously, but he's now got a lot more experience of those pressure moments and his all-round performance was exceptional."

LABOURED

However, questions remain over how England are performing as Saka's equaliser was the Three Lions' first shot on target and saved England from an embarrassing exit at the hands of the Swiss.

England were largely solid but again laboured in attack as Harry Kane toiled to little effect up front and Jude Bellingham struggled to perform as he has at Real Madrid.

At time of press, they were

set to play the Netherlands in the semi-final on Wednesday (July 10) after the Dutch came from behind to beat Turkey 2-1 last Saturday.

Samet Akaydin sent Turkey ahead in the first half before Stefan de Vrij equalised for the Netherlands with 20 minutes of the game remaining.

The Dutch then won it six minutes later when Mert Muldur bundled a low Denzel Dumfries cross into his own net under pressure from Cody Gakpo.

Spain were set to meet France in the other semi-final on Tuesday (July 9). Spain defeated hosts Germany 2-1 last Friday, thanks to Mikel Merino heading home Dani Olmo's cross just as the match looked destined for a penalty shoot-out.

France won their quarter-final clash with Portugal 5-3 on penalties after a goalless 120 minutes last Friday.

It was overdue success in a shoot-out for Les Bleus after they lost the 2022 World Cup final on penalties to Argentina and went out of the last Euros three years ago in the same way, against Switzerland in the last 16.

Penalty shoot-out pain for Thailand's U16 in ASEAN final

FOOTBALL

THAILAND'S U16 TEAM SUFFERED penalty shoot-out heartbreak by losing to Australia 8-7 in the final of the ASEAN U16 Boys Championship in Surakarta, Indonesia on July 4.

Quinn Macnicol's goal in first-half injury time cancelled out Poramet Laoongdi's 33rd minute strike as the match ended 1-1 after 90 minutes.

Australia thought they had the lead on 75 minutes but Anthony Didulica's goal was ruled out after a VAR check for handball.

Thailand also came close to scoring in stoppage time but a shot by Natthakit Phosri just missed the target.

It was the first time the Thais had qualified for the final of the event since 2019 although the defeat ended their hopes of a second ASEAN U16 crown after their maiden victory in 2015.

"First of all, we have to congratulate Australia for winning the tournament," said Thailand coach Jadet Meelarp.

"Australia played well and it was a very close game and the result had to be decided by a penalty shoot-out.

"For some of the boys this was their first international tournament so they were quite nervous. It's a pity we didn't win but I have no regrets because every player fought hard from the first round and they showed



Thai players are left dejected after the final loss. Photo: Supplied

a good fighting spirit," he added.

Hosts Indonesia defeated Vietnam 5-0 in the third-place match.

Thailand will next play in the AFC U17 Championship qualifying round in Chon Buri between Oct 23-27. They are in Group D along with Brunei, India and Turkmenistan.

"We will have the AFC U17 Championship qualification round in October," said Jadet.

"When we get back to Thailand, we will talk about our preparation and the training to build up fitness of the players. Our goal is to qualify for the FIFA U17 World Cup finals."

Meanwhile, the four teams participating in the 50th King's Cup have been confirmed as Syria, Tajikistan, the Philippines and hosts Thailand.

The tournament will be held from Oct 7-15 and classified as an International 'A' event during the FIFA Day break. The venue is yet to be finalised. *Bangkok Post*



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Sport



Home comfort for Lewis with big win > p14

SMASH HITS

Super seven shine at national karate tournament

Chitchanok Fong (right) from the Phuket Karate Center in action at the 55th Thailand Karate Championships 2024. Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

KARATE

Ben Tirebuck
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

A group of seven young students from a local gym helped put Phuket on the map at the national karate championships last month after a number of impressive performances.

The Thailand Karate Championships 2024 took place at Rangsit University in Pathum Thani Province on the weekend of June 29-30 with close to 500 athletes participating in 71 separate events.

The team from Phuket Karate Center were in fine form against some very stiff opposition from all over the country, ultimately taking home one gold medal, five bronze medals and two awards for outstanding performance.

Led by Phuket Karate Center head instructor Yingyong Chongtaweetham, the students and the local schools they represented were

as follows: Chitchanok Fong from Phuket Kindergarten School; Angkiron Thongsuk, Anusaniya Thongsuk, Krittapas Bunphan, Phattharakon Sripraphan and Sadayu Wijitnawee, all from Pluk Panya Municipal School; and Phakchanya Wimun from Srinagarindra the Princess Mother School, Phuket, located on the edge of Phuket Town.

Anusaniya won the team's solitary gold medal while also claiming a bronze in two separate categories of kumite competition in the individual female 6-7 years age class. Kumite is one of the three main sections of karate training, along with kata and kihon.

Further bronze medals went to Chidchanok in the individual female 8-9 year class, Krittapas in the individual male 10-11 year class under 35-kilogrammes, Phattharakon in the individual male 10-11 year class and Sadayu in the individual male 12-13 year class under 45kg.

Furthermore, young Anusaniya won the best individual female

athlete award for the 6-7 year old age group in the female kumite competition.

Head instructor Mr Yingyong was recognised for his fine efforts in nurturing the young athletes, specifically Anusaniya's achievements, when he was awarded the best instructor of a female athlete in the 6-7 years old age group of the kumite category.

"I would like to congratulate the athletes who received awards here and ask all athletes to use the various experiences they have gained as motivation to strengthen their morale and inspire them to strive to train," commented Mr Yingyong after the tournament. "Develop yourself to be more skilled while aiming for excellence in the future," he added.

FINE EXAMPLE

The young team from the Talat Yai-based Phuket Karate Center have a strong bond where team work is imperative. This was emphasised perfectly by the fact that

student Chitchanok Fong, who is the daughter of Mr Yingyong, became affectionally known locally as 'the young girl who sells lotus flowers' after she took to doing so at a shrine nearby the gym every morning. All the proceeds raised from this activity went towards costs for the entire team to travel to north to Pathum Thani for the recent tournament.

In recognition of their achievements and for representing the province with such distinction, the students and their instructor attended a special ceremony at Provincial Hall on Tuesday (July 9) where they met with Phuket Governor Sophon Suwannarat, who cited the students as a fine example for other youngsters to follow.

The recent Thailand Karate Championships in Pathum Thani was the 55th annual edition of the event, with 476 athletes from gyms, dojos and training centres all over the country participating. There were 77 winners slots from the total 632 events up for grabs, as well as other

prize categories such as winning team total score award, youth team award and public team award. Total prize money of more than B150,000 was distributed to athletes and teams finishing in the top three spots in selected categories.

The tournament was inaugurated by Gen Surachat Jitjang, President of event organisers the Karate Sports Association of Thailand (KSAT), at 11am on June 29 in the Recreation Building at Rangsit University. "The event was a resounding success, with participation numbers up by more than 100 compared to last year," commented a KSAT official. "This illustrates a positive trend as we continue to grow the sport and identify new talent which can eventually progress to represent the nation."

This will no doubt be music to the ears of the super seven from the Phuket Karate Center who will be looking to the future and their development with great anticipation and excitement.

Running the 'Heartbreak Hill' to help underprivileged children

FITNESS

RUNNING ENTHUSIASTS and fitness fans are looking forward to the return of a popular event to Phuket's shores this weekend.

The 7th Accor Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon takes place on Sunday (July 14) at Nai Harn Beach, with close to 2,000 people expected to take part.

As well as offering both a physical challenge and a fun day for runners of all ages and abilities,

the occasion supports a commendable cause, with all proceeds raised donated to help underprivileged children in Phuket.

There are three separate distances that participants will be entering: a 5-kilometre Fun Run, a 2.5km Pet Run, and the 10.5km Mini Marathon. The event has a 6am start time at Nai Harn Beach before participants run along the picturesque Promthep Cape area as part of their respective distances.

"The Accor Heartbreak Hill Mini-Marathon 2024 is more than

just a run; it is a celebration of community spirit and a commitment to making a positive impact which embodies our commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle, community engagement, and supporting charitable causes," organisers Accor Group said in a press release prior to the event.

Every step taken across the three distance events will contribute to a brighter future for underprivileged children via donations by the Accor Group's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program. This

initiative helps develop education opportunities such as language facilities for children based in local schools nearby the Accor hotel in Phuket Town.

The last time the event was held in Phuket was September 2022 when over 1,700 people joined in the fun.

The previous time it took place on the island was in 2018 prior to COVID-19-related disruptions that saw most local and international events postponed or cancelled.

People are welcome to come



along to support the runners and enjoy the fun on the day, organisers said. For more information please visit www.facebook.com/HeartBreakHillsPhuket. *The Phuket News*