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KEEPING TABS



Police and security personnel man a checkpoint on Soi Bangla. Photo: PR Phuket

LADYBOYS, TOUTS ON BANGLA RD TO BE REGISTERED FOR 'SAFETY REASONS'

The Phuket News
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Ladyboys and touts frequenting Bangla Rd will have to be registered in order to ply their trade on the street, and touts will have to register which businesses they work for, officials have reported.

The news follows Weerawit Kreuasombat, President of the Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA), last week calling for officials to regulate touts, illegal vendors and even ladyboys on Bangla Rd.

The request came at a meeting on Nov 22, chaired by Phuket Pro-

vincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Somprat Prabsongkram, held to discuss ways to reduce factors on Bangla Rd that annoy tourists.

The meeting was intended to focus on people using motorbikes with sidecars to illegally sell products on Bangla Rd, including people selling alcoholic beverages from foam boxes along the popular nightlife street.

Mr Weerawit, however, wanted to broaden the range of people, and activities, that are to be brought under control.

"I would like the relevant agencies to address all the wrong things on Soi Bangla at the same time, to create a

good image for Soi Bangla," he said.

"I therefore would like to propose to organise the ladyboys who come to harass guests on Soi Bangla. There are at least 100 of them waiting at various points along the street, propositioning prostitution to tourists. Sometimes they steal from tourists," Mr Weerawit said.

"People come from Pattaya and Bangkok who do not know who is who, and think that in Soi Bangla there should not be ladyboys who sell prostitution to tourists," he added.

"If we are unable to manage them, it would be wise to have them registered to know who is there. If

anything happens, we would be able to track them down," Mr Weerawit explained.

Mr Weerawit asked for touts on Bangla Rd to be treated the same: "This includes touts soliciting customers. There are a lot of them as well.

"Touts often harass tourists, and often offer prices higher than what it actually costs at the store. Some of them have weapons, sell drugs to tourists, and sometimes they are involved in problems involving physically assaulting tourists," Mr Weerawit said.

"This group, too, should be controlled. They should be registered and...

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Four restaurants added to latest Michelin Guide



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Racers return for first King's Cup in over two years



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News



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Islandwide CCTV to be integrated

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...it should be recorded which venue they work for, instead of letting them work freely like 'ghosts' as it is today," he added.

"All these things destroy the image of Soi Bangla Walking Street," Mr Weerawit said.

Mr Weerawit also called for the parking of taxis, tuk-tuks and motorcycles for hire at each end of the street to be controlled. "At this time, they can park anywhere they want," he said.

"Another thing that is becoming popular in Soi Bangla is marijuana that is open for sale in many shops," Mr Weerawit continued.

"We would like this to be organised so it is sold and smoked under formal rules, and not allowed to be taken out and smoked in the street, which has a wide variety of tourists... Some people like it, some people don't," he said.

An official report of the meeting, without naming any persons responsible for the decisions, said that vendors selling food from motorbikes with sidecars will be banned from entering the street, but will be found appropriate sites to sell their food elsewhere.

The sale of alcoholic beverages openly from foam boxes along the street will be banned entirely, simply because "it is illegal".

Ladyboys and touts will have to be registered in order to ply their trade on the street, and touts will have to register



Signatories present the MoU to integrate all government and police CCTV. Photo: PR Phuket

which businesses they work for, said the report.

Regarding marijuana and cars parked at the end of the street, the report marked only that "the responsible agencies must strictly follow the rules of the law".

ONE EYE

Officials last week signed an agreement that will see all CCTV networks from every police station and every municipality on the island integrated into one accessible system.

The announcement was made on Nov 22 at the mass-signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between all the agencies and government offices involved.

In total, the signatories included 12 municipalities, six tambon administrative organisations (OrBorTor), 11

police stations, the Phuket Provincial Office, Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), Phuket Highways Office, Phuket office of the Department of Rural Roads, Phuket Marine Office, Phuket Immigration and Tourist Police.

The MoU detailed the scope of cooperation for the Integration of network connections and data via closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems, explained an official report of the event.

"This means that all agencies according to the memorandum of agreement will work together to integrate the network connection and data via closed-circuit television (CCTV) system and help each other to take care of and to be able to use the closed circuit television (CCTV) system effectively in the care, sur-

veillance, safety services for people and tourists in Phuket," the report said.

Under the agreement all agencies are responsible for maintaining the CCTV networks already under their purview, and must assist in making available connections for all other agencies to access their networks..

All police stations must have two officers available at all times to monitor the network.

All CCTV feeds on the network are to be available to the "CCTV Command Center", the report added.

"The Governor of Phuket has the power to control and command the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system of all agencies in the event of natural disaster and terrorism," the report noted.

"In this regard, all agencies

will coordinate cooperation between each other to support operations as well as follow up and evaluate the results of the implementation of this memorandum of agreement for the utmost benefit," the report said clearly.

PHUKET CRIME - FREE

The announcement of the integrated CCTV system followed Governor Narong on Monday (Nov 21) meeting with Phuket's top-ranking police to launch a new initiative called "Phuket Crime - Free".

Under the initiative police are to provide "White areas for foreigners (crime and drug-free) Phuket Province" – with "white" referring to "purity".

Present for the meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on Monday were Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sermpan Sirikong and Phuket Immigration Chief Pol Col Thanet Sukchai.

Also present were Phuket Vice Governor Amnuay Pinsuwan, Phuket Provincial Office Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Somprat Prabsongkram along with a host of other high-ranking officials.

Col Thanet explained the "Phuket Crime - Free" initiative involved three phases:

Phase 1: Professional police screening of tourists/items arriving by land/water/air according to standard operating procedure. This included integrated activities by Phuket Immigration, Port

Customs House, Marine Office and Phuket Provincial Police when inspecting residential locations, with the activity conducted in line standard procedures empowered under Immigration Act, especially in instances where criminal activity has been identified and action is taken without without informing tourists, and results in the execution of an arrest or fine.

Phase 2: Working proactively, creating cooperation. This involved cooperation between government agencies and the private sector "to create social responsibility". This stage involved meetings and MoUs and the /registration of private organisations working together with administrative divisions, police officers, local administrations, ISOC (the political branch of the Thai military), the Labour Office, Phuket Tourist Association, DEPA, PKCD and Phuket Immigration.

Phase 3: For the peace of the people [sic]. This phase included officers performing random drug, criminal inspections, criminal operations and "closed searches"; the purpose being to build confidence into white "shelters", or areas, to help build confidence among tourists. This phase involves the integrated cooperation of police, administrative departments, public health officers. The Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO), Immigration officers and the Phuket Provincial Office.

Complete building the expressway first, warns traffic expert

A LAND TRANSPORT expert with the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning has warned of huge traffic jams on Thepkasattri Rd if construction of the light rail project begins before the Muang Mai - Koh Kaew - Kathu expressway is completed.

Jiraroj Sukonrat, Director of Regional Transport and Traffic Systems Promotion Bureau, delivered his warning at a meeting of the Phuket Provincial Land Transport Committee at Phuket Provincial Hall on Nov 23.

Also present at the meeting were representatives



Mr Jiraroj explains the traffic problem at the meeting. Photo: Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning

from the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT) and the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA), both leading the mega-projects currently tabled to alleviate Phuket's traffic woes.

"Construction along Route 402 [Thepkasattri rd] is quite difficult. There will be traffic jams," Mr Jiraroj said.

"We have looked at the special route, through Muang Mai, Koh Kaew and Kathu,

which will run parallel to Route 402. This route will need to be completed before construction [on Route 402] in order to partially drain the volume of traffic [from Route 402]," he explained.

"Completing the expressway before construction of the MRTA [light rail project] will reduce the traffic volume on Route 402 line, which will result in the MRTA project having less impact on traffic," he said.

The point was taken under advisement.

Phuket Vice Governor Amnuay Pinsuwan, who chaired the meeting, repeated the explanation that the Muang Mai - Koh Kaew - Kathu expressway

will cover a distance of about 30km, starting in Tambon Thepkasattri and continuing south to Koh Kaew. The expressway will run parallel to Route 4024 (the bypass road) and connect with Route 4029 (Phra Baramee Rd), where it is planned to connect with the "Kathu-Patong Expressway Project", better known as the Patong Tunnel project.

"If this project is successful it will help solve the problem of traffic congestion, reduce accidents and increase the convenience of traveling in Phuket. It will improve the quality of life of people in Phuket as well as help promote Phuket as a tourism

destination," Vice Governor Amnuay said.

The Muang Mai - Koh Kaew - Kathu expressway project was currently still undergoing its environmental impact assessment (EIA), to assess the engineering, economic, financial and environmental suitability and design of the project, Mr Amnuay said.

The feasibility study began on April 1 and is scheduled to take 15 months, he said.

The operational plan for the project is 43.68% complete, which is ahead of schedule, V/Gov Amnuay added. *The Phuket News*

Patong drains get national attention

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Pongrat Piomrat, Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, for the whole country, was in Patong last week to see firsthand what was causing the town to repeatedly flood with each heavy downpour.

Patong, along with much of the island, suffered heavy flooding during the incessant downpours last month, but most recently flooded again with just one downpour on Nov 18.

Local officials later identified the ongoing installation of new drains near the wastewater plant in Patong as the cause of the problem. The project is installing new, larger drains in order to expand the drainage capacity of the channel there.

During his inspection on Nov 22, Mr Pongrat was joined by Sommit Sombon, Inspector-General of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, and Viboon Leepattanakit, Director of the Office of Structural Engineering and Work Systems.

Taking point in inspection was Pramote Promthong, a civil engineer with special



Pongrat Piomrat (left) inspects the drainworks in Patong last week. Photo: PR Phuket

expertise as the Chief of the Flood Prevention Group Office of Support and Development.

Representing Phuket to highlight how seriously local officials were taking the problem were two Phuket Vice Governors – Pichet Panaphong and Amnuay Pinsuwan – along with Kathu District Chief Siwat Rawarangkul and Patong Mayor Chalerm Sak Maneesri along with a handful Phuket Provincial and Patong Municipality Public Works and Town Planning officers.

Mr Pongrat was told that construction of the project to

expand the drains had been ongoing since 2016.

Under the government contract, the deadline for completing the project is this month, November 2021, said an official report of the visit.

However, the project, operating under a budget of “about B222 million”, had not yet been completed, the report added, stating the obvious.

“The delay in construction caused problems. It was found that the project caused people to suffer from flooding during heavy rains,” the report, unsigned, admitted.

Steel sheet piles under construction and construction rubble blocked the passage of water, causing an obstruction in the waterway, exacerbating drainage problems during heavy rain, the report explained.

After hearing this, Mr Pongrat instructed local Public Works and Town Planning officers to draw up a plan to have the project completed “as soon as possible” in order to “alleviate the suffering of the people”.

The plan is to be submitted to the national office of

the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, the report added.

“We must take into account the suffering of the people. This is important,” Mr Pongrat said.

“The goal is that the construction must be completed by September 2023, with staff from the Department of Public Works and Town Planning keeping a close eye on operations every month,” he said.

“And if it is found that any work that the contractor company is unable to perform, it must be forwarded to other companies that can perform it immediately in order to avoid delays in the work,” he added.

As an urgent matter, Mr Pongrat, under advisement of his accompanying experts, ordered for more steel sheet piles to be removed to open the drainage channel during heavy rains so that the water could drain quickly.

FLASH FLOODS STRIKE AGAIN

Within 24 hours of Mr Pongrat’s inspection and promises, major roads and areas across Phuket flooded again as a large storm front passed over the island, dumping an hours-long deluge.

Areas affected by the downpour, in the early evening on Nov 23, included Chalong, Kathu, Phuket Town and areas along the west coast.

Traffic was affected in many areas, including the Tha Kraeng Intersection in Phuket Town, in front of Blue Tree in Cherg Talay and even in front of Lotus’s on the bypass road.

The rising water level in Bang Yai Canal again raised serious concern, with the water coming within just inches of breaching the canal’s banks.

Pumps were deployed throughout Phuket Town to help divert the rising water. The efforts appeared to have been effective, with no major flooding reported in the area.

Officers from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Region 18 office were deployed to heavily affected areas across the island.

DDPM Region 18 office Director Chaowalit Nitratrat said that the flash flooding was exacerbated by the high tide.

After the rains had eased, and the tide receded, floodwater in most areas drained away within two to three hours. Officers were dispatched to assist in areas where floodwaters remained, he added.

Both tsunami-warning buoys back online

BOTH OF THE TSUNAMI-WARNING buoys owned and maintained by the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC), operating under the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM), are back online after months of being out of service.

Station 23401, installed as part of a multinational array of tsunami-warning buoys in the Bay of Bengal, began transmitting real time data to the US Government’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) at midnight on Nov 22.

However, the data range presented by the NDBC shows that the buoy actually became operational at midnight Nov 19.

The milestone marks the return to service after more than a year of the buoy being out of action.

Station 23401 stopped transmitting data in October last year. The buoy was confirmed as “missing” from its installed location, but later recovered.

Station 23461, installed in the Andaman Sea approximately 340km northwest of Phuket, about halfway between Phuket and the Nicobar Islands, began relaying real-time data to the NOAA on Nov 18.

Station 23461 stopped transmitting data on June 7 this year, with Thai authorities explaining that the problem was with data not synching with NOAA servers.

The two warning buoys were installed by crew on board the ship MS Seafdec, which left Phuket on its DDPM mission to “replace” two tsunami warning buoys that were no longer functioning.

DDPM Director-General Boontham Lertsukeekasem was in Phuket to officiate the

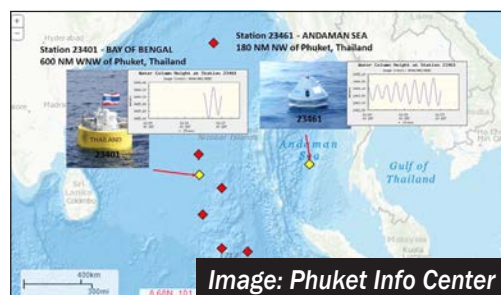


Image: Phuket Info Center

high-profile sending off of the MS Seafdec, named after the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center.

The ship departed Phuket Deep Sea Port, on the east coast of Cape Panwa, at 3pm on Nov 15 with two tsunami-warning buoys on board to “replace” the two that were not functioning.

In announcing that both tsunami-warning buoys were operational again, the Phuket Info Center, which operates under the Phuket Governor’s office, on Nov 23 noted, “The new set of tsunami monitoring buoys in the Andaman Sea and Indian Ocean have been installed to replace the original buoys. That completes the maintenance cycle for tsunami-monitoring buoys.

“They are ready to use continuously and efficiently and can warn in advance quickly. This allows government agencies and the public to be prepared to deal with tsunamis and evacuate in a timely manner, as well as build confidence in the safety of life and property for the public and tourists,” the centre noted.

However, even with Station 23401 back online, at time of press it remained the only tsunami-warning buoy in the multinational array in the Bay of Bengal that was transmitting real-time data to the NOAA. *The Phuket News*

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Wind 4 m/s

THU DECEMBER 8

High: +30°
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

Governor pushes 'Traffy Fondue'

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw is pushing for people to use the 'Traffy Fondue' app as a way of filing complaints about waste pollution, traffic and other issues and being able to see progress by officials in dealing with the problem.

Governor Narong chaired a meeting on Nov 21 to highlight the app and have expert Dr Wasan Phattharathikom, senior researcher at the Intelligent Transportation and Traffic Systems Research Laboratory of the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), explain the benefits of using the app to local officials.

"Traffy Fondue helps to increase efficiency in managing people's problems, including listening to problems, complaints, the suffering of the people, and reach a fair resolution in a timely manner," Dr Wasan said.

Members of the public can also provide suggestions through the app that might solve the officials' problems for them, he added.

"The problem and complaint management system Traffy Fondue will help government agencies and the local government organisations receive three benefits: social benefits; benefits to the community; and benefits to the environment," Dr Wasan said.



Photo: PR Phuket

The app also increases officials' efficiency in responding to problems, he added.

"It increases the efficiency of four things: it increases the efficiency of the work of the staff; it increases the efficiency of budget allocation and expenditure of the agency; it reduces the risk of damage to life and property; and it increases the quality of life of the people," Dr Wasan said.

"It is an important assistant in managing the city effectively. People take pictures of the problems that occur, specify the location and specify the type," he said.

"The system will forward the problem to the correct agency and responsible officials immediately. People reporting the problem can follow the progress in having the problem resolved," he explained.

"City administrators can help direct and monitor the problem, and see statistics and overview of operations anytime, anywhere," he added.

Currently there are 46 agencies in Phuket that have applied to be on the Traffy Fondue app, comprising seven tambon administrative organisations (OrBorTor), 12 municipalities and 27 government agencies, Dr Wasan noted.

Of the 46, seven agencies have already long been registered on the app: Cherng Talay OrBorTor, Phuket City Municipality, Phuket Provincial Public Health Office, Kathu District Public Health Office, Provincial Police Region 8 and the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization

Governor Narong described the Traffy Fondue app, which was first announced in 2018, as one of two New Year's gifts for the people in 2023. The other gift was the project to develop the former Phuket Provincial Prison in Phuket Town into a public area for people to use together.

Minimart robbed at knifepoint

POLICE ARE TRYING TO track down a man who robbed a convenience store in Srisoonthorn at knifepoint on Nov 24.

Thalang Police were called to the scene, in Baan Pon, Moo 2, Srisoonthorn, at around 6pm.

Lt Col Kraisor Boonprasop and fellow officers arrived at the scene to find shop assistant Kanyaphat Chalothorn, 55, still in a state of shock after the robbery.

Ms Kanyaphat told Thalang Police that just before 6pm a customer walked into her shop and took a bottle of M150 energy drink. The man then proceeded to the counter but instead of paying for the drink produced a 'sharp knife' and demanded money from the counter.

Having grabbed the cash, the robber fled with B1,500, riding away on an unidentified black motorcycle.

The suspect was slim, about 175cm tall, dressed in all black



A man in black robbed Baan Pon Minimart in Srisoonthorn on Nov 24. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

clothes complete with a black cap and a black mask.

Police are now checking CCTV footage from the store and other cameras in the area to track down the robber and bring him to justice, Thalang Police said.

The suspect's 'sharp knife' was found on the ground not far from the crime scene. Police seized the blade as evidence.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Polish man dies as motorbike slams into taxi

A 69-YEAR-OLD POLISH MAN died after his motorbike slammed into a taxi on the Kamala-Patong road during rain last week.

The accident occurred on the Kuan Yak hill, in Moo 6, Kamala, on Nov 23. Officers were informed of the accident at about 5:50pm, reported Lt Col Somprasong Labaisaard of the Kamala Police.

Officers arrived to find the taxi, a Toyota Altis with green licence plates, parked by the side of the road with damage to the front right side of the car.

Taxi driver Wirayut Thongpaen, 43, a resident of Moo 5, Ratsada, was at the scene waiting for police.

On the road right beside the front right corner of the car was a Phuket-registered Honda Click 125 motorbike that was ridden by the Polish man, named by police only as "Mr Baran".

Mr Baran had suffered serious injuries to his head and right leg. He was rushed to Patong Hospital, but pronounced dead.

According to police investigating



Photo: Kamala Police

the accident, witnesses said Mr Baran was riding at speed when the motorbike slid on the wet road, causing the motorbike to cross into the oncoming lane and slam into the taxi.

Police noted they were continuing their investigation into the accident, and that the relevant embassy had been informed of the Polish man's death.

Eakkapop Thongtub

'Gus' reaches Mt Everest Base Camp

Kevin Mansfield

Phuket boy "Gus", at just 7½ years old, and his mum 'Nan' Mansfield and their team of eight, successfully reached Mount Everest Base Camp in their attempt earlier this month.

The team reached the Base Camp at 5,340m on Nov 14.

We believe Gus to be the youngest Thai citizen who has completed the trek, a significant achievement.

Successful treks in the Himal [Himalayas] depend on several factors. Firstly, the professionalism and experience of the company employed: the efficiency of the back office in case of emergency, proven safety and evacuation protocols, effective communication and workable SOPs (standard operating procedures).

Secondly, the quality of the guides is vital. Their knowledge of the route, the environment (terrain and weather), their ability to read trekkers' body language, and their ability to communicate important information in a clearly understood manner is fundamental to success.

Thirdly, the fitness level and preparation of the in-



Gus and the team. Photo: Supplied



Gus at the Base Camp milestone. Photo: Supplied

dividuals is also a key factor including psychological preparation of what to expect in terms of terrain and temperatures. We saw several adults sitting and crying along the way as they had no idea what they had gotten into. Gus actually encouraged them to keep going.

Our group had ticked all of the boxes, and had worked previously with the trekking company for over 20 years. An added advantage was that between our group, we had over 19 treks to either Everest or Annapurna. A host of experience.

Following a pre-trek safety brief, and not so comfortable bus ride to a regional airport (probably the most dangerous part of the whole journey), we took a flight to the infamous Lukla airport (also called Tenzing-Hillary Airport), which was where our trek would start. An easy four hours on the first day to get our bodies accustomed to what lay ahead.

Over the next eight days we would cover 71km to reach base camp and ascend vertically over 3,500m – an average of 12km per day. As you ascend above 4,000m

the amount of oxygen decreases and by Base Camp, it is difficult to breathe, with physical exertion creating a continued "out of breath feeling". November is Autumn in Nepal, and the peak season for trekking, so temperatures although cold are manageable with the correct clothing and equipment preparation. Winter starts late November and goes through to February, when trekking is much more difficult with a higher level of risk.

One of the interesting terms used in Nepal to describe the upcoming trail is

'Nepali flat', a delightfully optimistic description of a walking path which leads to a lower elevation, but requires a few thousand metres of ascent to reach that lower elevation.

It's difficult to describe the exhilaration of finally reaching our goal. As a family, to share such an experience, brought an overwhelming emotional response. And there were tears all round. For Gus, he was keen to share the moment with his teachers and students at Kajonkiet Thalang school, where he has received great support. His classmates had been follow-

ing his progress on YouTube.

Our other Phuket trekkers Michelle Hossack and Sherri Drolet made the trek look easy, a testament to their prior training. If you ever consider trekking in Nepal, follow Gus's advice: "If I can do it, so can you – just keep trying!"

He will be happy to give you advice!

Note: Our exhilaration has been tempered by the sad news of the tragic passing of two Thai ladies trekking in the western part of Nepal, our thoughts are with their friends and families.

Sa Ton Pho community still homeless

OFFICIALS HAVE SET up an inspection committee to look into and resolve the ongoing issue of homeless residents of the Sa Ton Pho community.

The Sa Ton Pho community was evicted from land in Chalong and then again from land near Rassada Pier in May this year and have still yet to be granted anywhere they can call home.

The Sa Ton Pho community derives its name, meaning "Bodhi Tree Pond", from where the residents once lived near Phuket Zoo in Moo 3, Chalong.

The residents lived on unused land around a natural pond in the area, which is primarily mangrove swamp, but were evicted by the landowner.

The residents then were granted permission to move to 50 rai of unused land on Sri Suthat Rd, near the monkey viewpoint near Rassada Pier, but were again asked to move through legal action by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO) as there was no legal provision to allow them to stay on that particular land.



Photo: PR Phuket

As no solutions have thus far been forthcoming, a meeting was held on Nov 23 at Phuket Provincial Hall to expedite the situation.

Phuket Deputy Governor Amnuay Pinsuwan chaired the meeting and was joined by Yosakrit Chusri, head of the Phuket Land Academic Group, in addition to community representatives and heads of relevant government agencies.

Mr Yosakrit said that he had tried to help the Sa Ton Pho community after

they were evicted but that a resolution had yet to be reached.

He added that the meeting on Nov 23 sought to accelerate the process so suitable solutions could be implemented and the community could find somewhere to lay claim to as home after so long being homeless.

A committee has been established to do exactly that and will be monitored to ensure appropriate progress is being made.

The Phuket News

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Bid for 4am nightlife closing hits 'safety' wall

THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE Control Committee last Friday (Nov 25) dismissed a private sector proposal to extend the period of selling alcoholic beverages at night venues until 4am.

The committee's prime concern with the proposal was a potential increase in road accidents due to increased alcohol consumption, said Dr Tares Krassanairawiwong, chief of the Department of Disease Control, who is also the committee's secretary.

He said the panel, in their decision, was concerned that more accidents would greatly burden medical staff.

Along with the private sector, the Tourism and Sports Ministry petitioned the government in September to allow night venues in major tourist areas such as Koh Samui of Surat Thani, Phuket and Khao San Road in Bangkok to stay open until 4am to boost tourism.

However, Dr Tares said the committee considered all aspects involved – health, society and the economy – and found that it was improper to extend the period of alcohol sales. "Its impact is immense if the period is prolonged. We



Tourists enjoy their food and drinks on Khao San Road on Sept 23, 2022. Photo: Pormprom Satrabhaya / Bangkok Post

don't want to see increasing numbers of accidents," he said.

The committee's study found that an extended period of alcohol selling would increase road accidents by 27%, and the number of road fatalities would be up to 10-20 cases per day. If there were aggressive law enforcement activities, such as police checkpoints at night, it would help prevent drunk drivers by 30-50%, but it might not reduce fatalities, he said.

Currently, the law allows alcohol sales during two periods: 11am-2pm and 5pm to midnight for vendors and until 2am for night entertainment venues.

The final decision will be made by the National Alcoholic Beverage Policy Committee headed by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha on Dec 22, Dr Tares said. *Bangkok Post*

Phuket targetted in DBD crackdown on nominees

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

An investigation is underway into 140 companies in Phuket suspected of illegally using nominee shareholders, Deputy Commerce Minister Sinit Lertkrai has confirmed.

The companies are mostly tourism and travel-related businesses and companies involved in real estate, Mr Sinit explained in a release issued on Nov 22.

The in-depth investigation is being conducted with the assistance of the Department of Special investigation (DSI), which will probe 148 companies in total, Mr Sinit noted.

Officials are ready to prosecute to the full extent of the law, Mr Sinit warned.

Of the 148 firms under investigation, in addition to the 140 in Phuket, four are in Chiang Mai, three are in Surat Thani and one is in Bangkok, Mr Sinit said.

Of the 140 businesses in Phuket under investigation 87 are real estate businesses, 42 are travel-related businesses, two are actual hotel and

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ธุรกิจท่องเที่ยวและที่เกี่ยวข้อง	42	—	3	1	46
ธุรกิจโรงแรม รีสอร์ท	2	1	—	—	3
ธุรกิจอสังหาริมทรัพย์และที่เกี่ยวข้อง	87	3	—	—	90
ธุรกิจบริการ	9	—	—	—	9
รวม	140	4	3	1	148

#SuperDBD

Of the 140 businesses in Phuket under investigation 87 are real estate businesses, 42 are travel-related businesses, two are actual hotel and resort businesses and nine are service-related businesses. Image: DBD

resort businesses and nine are service-related businesses.

Deputy Minister Sinit ordered the Department of Business Development to investigate the actual persons shareholders listed as per their situations both before and after they were registered as shareholders in the company.

"Most offenses relating to holding shares on behalf of foreigners [as 'nominees'] are caused by Thai people accepting benefits or consenting or legal advisors suggesting to avoid the law," Mr Sinit said.

"Nominees is a national problem that affects the economy and the image of the country at large. If this problem cannot be solved, it will cause Thailand to lose economic opportunities and lose a lot of income," he added.

"We have ordered the Department of Business Development to define guidelines for preventing nominee businesses both before and after the registration of a juristic person. That is, before registering as a shareholder,

applicants will be required to submit documents issued by banks to certify or show the financial status of Thai partners or shareholders who invest or hold shares in the company together with foreigners," Mr Sinit explained.

"This is to show credibility that Thai people who invest have financial status and can invest by themselves and later be registered as a shareholder," he said.

The investigations will focus on Thai people who hold shares on behalf of foreigners or have "encouraged foreigners to conduct business by avoiding compliance with the Foreign Business Act. B.E.", Mr Sinit said

"Thai people who help, support or hold shares on behalf of foreigners so that foreigners can conduct business by avoiding or violating the law are liable," he added.

"The offense is punishable by imprisonment for not more than three years or a fine from B100,000 to B1 million, or both. And there is also a daily fine of B10,000-50,000 per day until the violation is stopped," he said.



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Public urged to raise guard against new COVID wave

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Health authorities are urging people to raise their guard against COVID-19 as infections rise sharply and new strains multiply amid gatherings and an influx of foreign arrivals.

Dr Opas Karnkawinpong, permanent secretary for public health, said on Monday (Nov 28) the number of COVID-19 inpatients had risen, but most of them had mild symptoms. The number of fatalities was also increasing, he said, although the average number of daily deaths was still 10 or below.

"We anticipate a rising number of small waves that will gradually fall in the New Year," Dr Opas said.

The growing COVID-19 count has prompted more people to seek vaccinations, and he ordered hospitals nationwide to administer vaccines to walk-ins as well as those with appointments.

Dr Chakarat Pitayawong-anont, epidemiology director of the Department of Disease Control, said COVID-19 cases were rising again because people were resuming activities and many had not been inoculated recently.

"Those who were vaccinated or infected more than three months ago should receive a booster shot to prevent



A woman receives a COVID-19 vaccine shot at a shopping mall in Nonthaburi in June, 2021. Photo: Wichan Charoenkiatpakul

severe illness. They should also reduce risks from activities such as sharing meals... especially with elderly family members, who should currently refrain from going out," he said.

Elderly people who contracted COVID-19 or had not been vaccinated in the past three months ago should see a doctor immediately to receive remdesivir or Paxlovid injections, because oral medications alone might not be sufficiently effective for them, Dr Chakarat said.

"During the long holiday period in December, people should protect themselves by wearing face masks in public places and avoiding risky activities," he said.

According to Thai News Agency (TNA), Dr Supakit Sirilak, director-

general of the Department of Medical Sciences, said the BA.2.75 sub-variant of COVID-19 had caused 58% of new cases, fuelled by higher numbers of visitors arriving from India.

He said that as Europeans arrive in the next few months to escape their cold winters, cases of the XBB subtype could rise.

Dr Supakit also said that worldwide the disease was mutating to avoid antibodies and thus spreading faster. Previous cases could fall ill again, and vaccines might not be as effective in protecting recipients as they were before.

Under the present circumstances, people need at least four vaccine jabs, not three as previously advised, he said.



The dead sea turtle washed up on Kinnaree beach in Sattahip district of Chon Buri province last Sunday (Nov 27). Photo: Sea Turtle Conservation Centre / Facebook

Dead sea turtle had ingested 2kg of rubbish

CHON BURI

MORE THAN TWO KILOGRAMMES of garbage have been found inside a sea turtle found washed up dead on a beach in Chon Buri province.

Veterinarians at the Sea Turtle Conservation Centre examined the 20-year-old female turtle last Sunday (Nov 27). They found 100 grammes of fishing net amongst two kilograms in total of ingested waste in its stomach and gut, the centre said on its Facebook post last Sunday night.

The garbage also included nylon filament, plastic and small nails.

The dead turtle was found washed up on Kinnaree beach on Sunday morning before being sent to the navy's turtle conservation centre for examination.

The centre said it could not determine when the turtle died, but the sea garbage it consumed was the cause of death.

The marine reptile had previously been microchipped and vets were tracking its past movements from the ID number.

The centre did not give the turtle's weight, saying only that its shell was 90 centimetres wide and 96.5 centimetres long. *Bangkok Post*

Mum demands justice after soldier son killed in prison

BANGKOK

THE MOTHER OF AN army private in Uthai Thani province has called for justice after her son was allegedly beaten to death by 11 other soldiers while sharing a disciplinary cell.

Pvt Kajornsak, 24, was her eldest son and a private in the Fourth Infantry Division, the 44-year-old mother identified only as Somsri told reporters during her son's funeral at Thung Luang temple in Nong Chang district of Uthai Thani last Saturday (Nov 26).

She said Pvt Kajornsak had been charged with the theft of B500 while on leave to visit his wife in Sukhothai in 2021. He was taken to his unit, where he was sentenced to 13 months of detention at a military prison with release scheduled for Dec 15 this year.

After contacting the prison to clarify the details of his release, Ms Somsri was informed on Nov 21 that the prison chief would be com-



Stories about various kinds of abuse taking place on military bases are not uncommon but the public often does not hear any follow-up. Photo: Wassana Nanuam / Bangkok Post file

ing to meet her personally, causing her great concern.

Before the meeting, however, a village elder informed Ms Somsri that she needed to contact police in Phitsanulok, who told her that her son had died at Fort Somdet Phra Naresuan Maharat Hospital.

Doctors at the hospital indicated Pvt Kajornsak had succumbed to injuries sustained in an assault.

She later learned from the prison chief that Pvt Kajornsak had been attacked by 11 other inmates who have since been charged.

She was told that the beating took place after her son allegedly took two packets of coffee from the group.

Admitting shock and confusion over the incident, Ms Somsri said the 11 individuals had reportedly donated B200,000 in total to her family as a form of reparation.

She urged the media to follow the case of her son, saying she had seen similar stories about abuses in the military quickly forgotten without any justice being served. *Bangkok Post*

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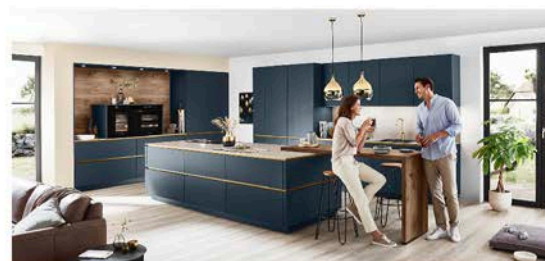
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Phuket bolsters Michelin Guide presence

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Four Phuket restaurants have been added to the latest Michelin Guide Thailand 2023, officially announced last Thursday (Nov 24). Salalay, Gorjan, Khao Tom Thanon Di Buk and Roti Chaofa have been added to the esteemed guide as 'Bib Gourmand' restaurants.

Hosting the launch of this year's guide, the sixth edition of the Michelin Guide in Thailand, at The Athenee hotel in Bangkok were Gwendal Poullennec, International Director, MICHELIN Guides, and TAT Governor Yuthasak Supasorn.

Present for the announcement were Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew and Nanthasiri Ronnasiri, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket office.

Featured in the sixth local edition are 441 dining venues – with six 'two MICHELIN Stars' (all retained their status), 29 'one MICHELIN Star', 189 Bib Gourmand, and 217 other recommended entries.

The four Phuket Bib Gourmand additions to the guide bring to 23 the total number of restaurants in Phuket now listed as 'Bib Gourmand' venues.

The Bib Gourmand distinction recognises both restaurants and street food eateries for offering high-quality food at budget-friendly prices of no more than B1,000 (for a three-course



PRU has maintained its One Michelin Star.

meal: starter, main course, and dessert – exclusive of beverage).

In total, the Michelin Guide Thailand 2023 features 189 'Bib Gourmand' listings (53 new, six promoted). In addition to the 23 in Phuket, there are 82 in Bangkok & Surrounding Cities; 13 in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya; 27 in Chiang Mai; 11 in Phang Nga; and 33 in four representative cities of Thailand's Northeast or "Isan" region, newly covered in the sixth edition of The MICHELIN Guide Thailand – namely nine in Nakhon Ratchasima, 11 in



Jampa is now one of three restaurants in the country awarded a Michelin Green Star.

Khon Kaen, six in Ubon Ratchathani, and seven in Udon Thani.

PRU, a one MICHELIN Star restaurant at the Trisara resort in Cherno Talay, retained its Green Star award for the third consecutive year, while Jampa for the first time received its Green Star listing for striving to educate guests on the benefits of eating fresh and local – serving European contemporary dishes using herbs and vegetables from its own organic farm, seafood sourced from the island fishermen, as well as nutritious and balanced ingredi-

ents that contribute to better eating.

The only other restaurant in the country with a Green Star award is Indian restaurant Haoma in Bangkok.

"After struggling with the pandemic for a couple years, Thailand's culinary and hospitality landscapes have seen new openings around the country. In the restaurant sector, many new fine-dining restaurants have opened – not only by local chefs that focus more on their culinary roots and thus offer a variety of cuisine: Northern Thai, Southern Thai, Isan, authentic Thai, modern Thai, and so on; but also by big investors and world-famous chefs. Our MICHELIN Guide inspectors are very much excited to see such a development in Thailand's culinary sector," said Ms Poullennec.

"The increased number of entries in the newest edition of The MICHELIN Guide Thailand is partly a testament of restaurateurs' achievement in striving to rise above challenges, and partly a result of our coverage expansion to Northeastern Thailand – or 'Isan' – the largest region of Thailand, rich in history, combined with beautiful geography and natural resources. We believe that extending the scope of the MICHELIN Guide to this region will make people know and understand more about Isan cuisine, as well as help stimulate travelling to this region. With this newest MICHELIN Guide Thailand edition, we hope to contribute to the post-pandemic recovery of both culinary and hospitality industries."



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The truth about the world without glasses after the age of 50

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Throughout my 10+ years of experience as a surgeon on this island, I have found that even the world has changed and medical technology has remarkably improved compared with what we had 10 years ago. The mysteries and questions that my patients end up in my consultation room is always be the same: Is it possible for me to see and do things without eyeglasses? And how?

Surely, I totally understand this pain and annoyance. I have listened to all the complaints about my patients living with glasses, and their urge to get rid of them, for more than 10 years. I understand that living life with glasses is not a big thing since no one is going to die from that, but it is a “real” annoyance and not funny.

You will “need” glasses all the time while you awake since you can’t see with your own eyes. Every time you want to read something you need to find your glasses. Still can’t even read your phone even if the font size is super big. Exercise, bicycling, swimming, diving will need glasses and it gets foggy. You can’t see your golf ball and need glasses. Wearing make-up needs eyeglasses. Working in front of a computer needs glasses. Put them on and take them off all the time like crazy. Have 10 pairs of glasses and end up keep losing them.

Yes, I understand how you feel especially if you have to live with this reality for half of your life.

Back to the same question: Is it even possible to see without glasses? And... how?

The truth is: Yes, it is very possible, but you need to understand and adjust your expectations properly since this is not magic from bedtime stories but pure medical science and technological advancement.

Before I continue, here is the deal. I will tell you what it looks like: First, if you are looking for a treatment that guarantee your perfect vision without glasses or something that can make you read and see perfectly in every distance and every condition or risk free procedure, please stop here since it doesn’t exist and is not real. But if you are looking for a solution that can make you see, read and allow you to do your beloved activities 85-90% of your life with your very own eyes or a procedure

that will greatly expand your range of vision and reduce the need of eyeglasses to a bare minimum – this may be your answer, please read on.

The most well-known treatment to achieve vision without glasses is “Laser Vision Correction” which you may know as “LASIK”, but unfortunately the procedure will be less advantageous for people after the age of 50. This is because LASIK will only correct your distance vision but will not work for reading up close. Yes, this means that after LASIK you may be surprised that you will be stuck with reading glasses anyway; that is why you will find that most good candidates for LASIK are age under 40.

However, the better procedure to correct vision after the age of 50 is “Refractive lens exchange” (RLE); you may simply call it “Lens replacement surgery”. This procedure does not like any other form of vision correction treatment since it is very capable of improving your focus for both distance and near vision without glasses.

As its name implies: the procedure is simply to swap out your aged-non functioning natural lens with a Multifocal lens implant (the latest generation is called “Trifocal Lens implant”). If you feel a bit surprised or confused, let me put it simply: it is just like when you go to a glasses shop to update your glasses prescription, but it happens inside your eye.

Trifocal optics lens design is really cutting edge, but at the same time it is already mature technology. It can be considered one of the “big leaps” in the world of Ophthalmology. How it works is very different from your multifocal or progressive glasses with which you need to look through the top portion to see far away and the bottom area to see close-up. The trifocal implant is engineered in a way to provide both a distance focus and a near focus at all times, and your brain will naturally find the correct focus by itself. In short, it works like natural eyes. Since the implant is constructed from non-degradable material, the procedure is supposed to happen only once in a lifetime.

The procedure or implant can’t guarantee that you can totally throw away your glasses – no procedure can, but it helps to make things a lot easier, simpler and more convenient. In general, it is supposed to let you perform almost all of your daily activities (reading labels, menus, cooking, using your

smartphone, swimming, playing golf, exercising, sailing, riding a bike, driving – you name it!) without glasses, and that helps my patients break through the limitations of the need of eyeglasses and more enjoyably live their lives freely as they wish.

I can’t put all information about the procedure here. There is a lot more to learn. Please go to www.brightviewcenter.com or scan QR code for further information.

If you are interested and wish to make your consultation, please email to bpk.brightview@bgh.co.th



Regards

Dr. Captain Wiriyaluppa, MD.
BrightView Center

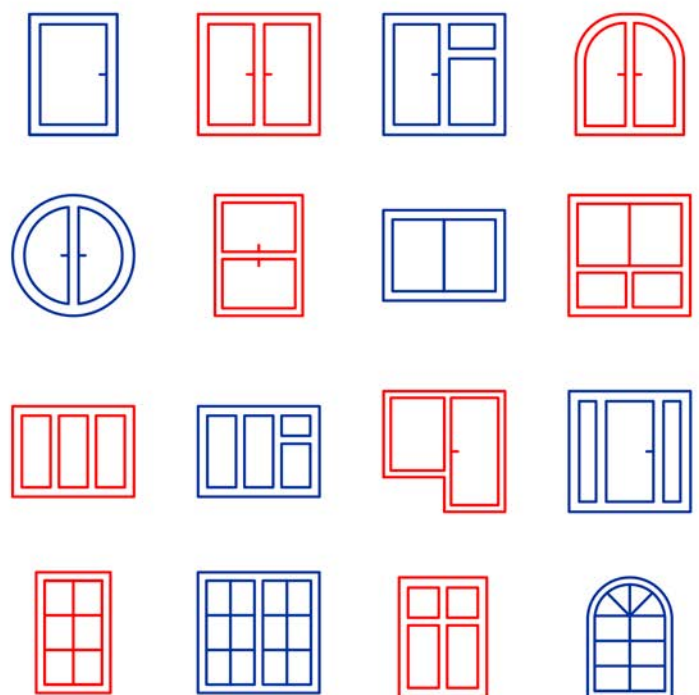
Dr. Captain Wiriyaluppa, MD. had been recognized and received “Zeiss Trifocal Award” from Carl Zeiss Co., Ltd. as among the top two doctors who implanted the most Carl Zeiss Trifocal lenses in Thailand.

The Zeiss Trifocal Award is given only under specific criteria to top specialists with exceptionally high experience of implanting Trifocals lenses.

The Private event for “Zeiss Trifocal Award” happened on 20 OCT 2022 at Courtyard Marriott by Phuket Town.



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POP QUIZ

1. Nicosia is the capital of which Mediterranean country?
2. A philatelist collects what?
3. The woolly mammoth was still around when the pyramids were being built. True or false?
4. A "moment" was a medieval unit of time equal to how many seconds?
5. Capable of floating on water, what is the lightest metal on the periodic table?

Answers below, centre

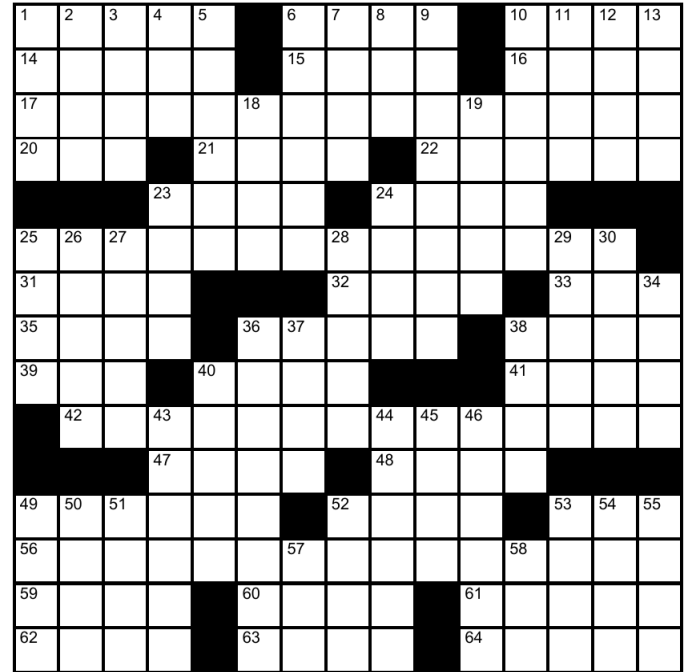
SUDOKU

Hard

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

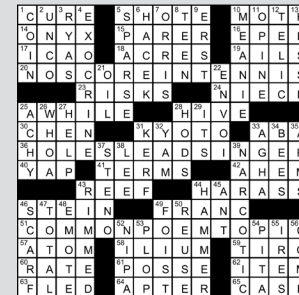
Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
1. West Indies native
 6. Plaintive cry
 10. Immaculate
 14. Suppose
 15. Eye
 16. Better
 17. He drew the "Vitruvian Man"
 20. Frick collection
 21. Buck passers?
 22. Cone-shaped
 23. Word for Yorick
 24. Cartoonist Walker
 25. He painted "The Old Tower"
 31. Sleep ___
 32. Mark's successor
 33. School of the future?
 35. Pharaoh and namesakes
 36. Arroyo
 38. ___ lamp
 39. Be off
 40. Air
 41. Anon's partner
 42. He painted "Tain't You"
 47. Pair at sea
 48. Capture
 49. Railway company
 52. Hokkaido native
- Down
1. Cuba libre
 2. Monkey
 3. Wild time
 4. Whistle Stop ___
 5. Old usher
 6. Small-scale
 7. Psyches
 8. Antediluvian
 9. Guns et al.
 10. Literally, "way of the gods"
 11. Southern side?
 12. Machu Picchu builder
 13. Enclose a room
 18. Stable color
 19. Sign of late summer
23. Gospels follower
24. Stake driver
 25. Selection
 26. Bury
 27. Hot rod propellant
 28. Consonant type
 29. Critical
 30. Shack
 34. Peer
 36. Assurance
 37. Cemetery sights
 38. Off-color
 40. At full speed
 43. Alabama city
 44. 1960's musical
 45. Punish, in a way
 46. Knots
 49. A bit cracked
 50. Focal point
 51. Butter
 52. Not docked
 53. Maintains confidently
 54. Reply to "Shall we?"
 55. 2004 Brad Pitt film
 57. James Whitcomb Riley's "___ I Went Mad"
 58. Bygone bird



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

0

states in the US have a 40-hour, minimum wage work week that pays enough to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

55

percent of people say social media has made relationships with friends more superficial, according to a survey.

95

percent of the average car's life is spent parked.

11,415

sharks are killed every hour by human activities, according to a study by the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS).

43 billion

US dollars worth of unopened, edible food is thrown out in the US every year.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



The end of just another day. Photo by Apichet Pardit

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

This week in history

December 2, 1804

At Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, Napoleon Bonaparte crowns himself Emperor of the French.

December 3, 1992

A Sema Group test engineer uses a computer to send the world's first text message via the Vodafone network to his colleague's phone. It read "Merry Christmas".

December 4, 1989

King Bhumibol Adulyadej

gives a speech expressing concerns about the future of the country's environment. December 4 is later designated Thai Environment Day.

December 5, 2017

The International Olympic Committee bans Russia from competing at the 2018 Winter Olympics for doping at the 2014 Winter Olympics.

December 6, 2006



Photo: Vodafone.co.uk

December 7, 1941

The Imperial Japanese Navy carries out a surprise attack on the United States Pacific Fleet and its defending Army and Marine air forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

December 8, 2013

Metallica performs a show in Antarctica, making them the first band to perform on all seven continents.

Source: Wikipedia

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FRI

2 DEC



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SUN

4 DEC



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MON

5 DEC



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WED

7 DEC



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Wednesday BBQ Night

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WED

7 DEC




PHUKET BREAKFAST BRIEFING
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BDO Phuket Breakfast Briefing - 'Cash is King'

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FRI

9 DEC



Christmas MARKET
 Date: 9th December 2022 (Friday)

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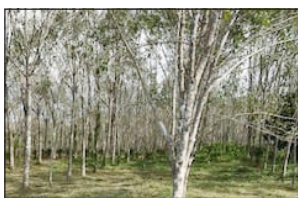
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VARUN MEMORIAL GOLF TROPHY

On a bright Sunday afternoon 60 friends and family of Sam Sethi gathered to honour the 4th memorial of their much missed son, Varun. Held at Red Mountain golf course on Nov 27, it was a celebration of a life with laughter and smiles on the course followed by the awards dinner at Bollywood Phuket Indian Restaurant.

Where to eat in PHUKET

The January/February 2023 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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Deep Week festival returns to Phuket

DIVING

THE 'DEEP WEEK' freediving festival returned to Phuket this week, the second time the event has been held here this year.

Led by Adam Stern and Bangkok Freedivers, in partnership with 5 Star Marine, the event opened last Saturday (Nov 26) and will finish tomorrow (Dec 3).

Over 100 free divers from all over the world participated, making it the world's largest freediving festival.

Deep Week has positioned itself as the best freediving educational event, where some of the top divers, instructors and experts come together from around the world for one week of shared learning experiences.

Phuket was selected due to the water clarity and conditions for freediving, as well as its location allowing access to a number of islands with deep and protected dive sites.

Privately operated speedboats took partici-



Photo: Bangkok Freedivers

pants on short journeys to locations such as Koh Racha and Koh Dok Mai, with access to 60 metres on each dive.

"This type of exciting event attracts a different kind of customer to Phuket as well as highlighting the very best of Phuket's surrounding waters," commented Shaun Stenning, owner of 5 Star Marine.

In addition to freediving, participants also engaged in depth training, theory sessions, fitness, workshops and dinner events to enjoy the experience fully and help enhance knowledge and technique.

The first Deep Dive festival was held in Phuket in May of this year and was a resounding success.

Joanna Matlub

Autumn thrillers bode well for 2023 World Cup

RUGBY

AFF

Tournament hosts France head into next year's Rugby World Cup as favourites but an enthralling series of Autumn internationals suggests the 2023 edition could be the most competitive yet.

France, Ireland and reigning champions South Africa are the leading contenders, but multiple former winners New Zealand and Australia are proven tournament performers.

The French have yet to win the World Cup, having lost three finals, and when they staged the 2007 edition, Les Bleus were twice beaten by Argentina as the Pumas finished third.

However, they are now more defensively resilient under coach Fabien Galthie, with plenty of traditional attacking, although even a talented squad would be hampered were star half-backs Antoine Dupont and Romain Ntamack to be injured.

France's year-ending 35-



French lock Cameron Woki and his teammates head into next year's World Cup as favourites. Photo: AFP

17 defeat of Japan on Nov 20 was their 13th consecutive Test victory, a sequence including a 2022 Six Nations Grand Slam and narrow wins over Australia and South Africa.

The Springboks ended the year with a comprehensive 27-13 win over England at Twickenham last Saturday (Nov 26).

Emerging wing Kurt-Lee Arendse scored a seventh try in as many Tests, with a talented back division given a chance to shine by a typically strong pack.

Ireland's 13-10 win over Australia on Nov 19 meant they became the first team since England in 2002 to defeat the All Blacks, the Springboks and the Wallabies in a calendar year.

England had a poor November, their only win coming against an outmuscled Japan on Nov 12.

They were beaten first-up by World Cup pool opponents Argentina and were well behind New Zealand before, from 19 points down with 10 minutes left, snatching

an improbable 25-25 draw on Nov 19.

Yet if they reverse the Argentina result in France, they could walk the same path to the final as they did in Japan in 2019, where England beat Australia and New Zealand in the quarter and semi-finals respectively.

As for New Zealand, their draw with England sealed a year where coach Ian Foster almost lost his job following defeats by Ireland and Argentina.

Consistency remains an issue for Argentina, their 30-29 win over England followed by a 20-13 defeat by Wales.

Australia endured a brutal Autumn schedule of five Tests in as many weeks, including a surprise loss to Italy, and a raft of injuries meant the Wallabies struggled to field a matchday 23 against Wales last Saturday.

For Wales, another Cardiff collapse came straight after their shock 13-12 loss to Georgia and meant they had won just three of 12 Tests this year, with coach Wayne Pivac facing an uncertain future.

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Danthai claims first crown in seven years

GOLF

THAILAND'S DANTHAI Boonma won the US\$ 400,000 (B14 million) Bangabandhu Cup Golf Bangladesh Open last Sunday (Nov 27) after an enthralling two-horse race with close friend and compatriot Kosuke Hamamoto.

Danthai fired a closing three-under-par 68 at the par-71 Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka for a four-round aggregate of 13-under-par 271 and a one-shot victory over Hamamoto, who carded a 70.

Rattanon Wannasrichan made it a one-two-three finish for Thailand after returning a 67 to finish three behind the champion.

Bangladesh's golfing idol Siddikur Rahman, despite being roared on by strong local support, closed with a 70 to finish in a group of four players tied for fourth, six back from top spot.

Danthai started the day one behind playing partner Hamamoto but a brilliant front nine of three under, which included birdies on seven, eight and nine saw



Danthai poses with the trophy. Photo: AFP

him make the turn one ahead.

It was a lead he did not relinquish, with both players coming home in even par, and allowed him to add the National Open of Bangladesh to The World Classic Championship he claimed at Laguna National in Singapore in 2015.

"I'm so excited about my second win on the Asian Tour," said Danthai.

"Yeah, I can't believe it, because it's been tough in the past two years, I didn't really play very good. I mean, I struggled with my mind and my short game, so I tried to figure out about those things. And yeah, I

can't believe this week."

He won the Boonchu Ruangkit Championship on the Asian Development Tour in 2016 before the drought set in.

Hamamoto, the SEA Games gold medal individual winner in 2017, was in pursuit of his first victory on the Asian Tour and despite finishing second he was more than happy with his performance.

"I am very happy with how my game is trending," said the Thai golfer, whose father is Japanese and mother Thai.

"I just need to stay patient. I am really proud of how I handled myself."

Bangkok Post

Shocks aplenty in Qatar

FOOTBALL

Ben Tirebuck
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

At the halfway stage of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar there have been some pulsating games and several seismic shocks as a number of the traditional heavyweight teams failed to hit their stride.

The biggest upset of all was undoubtedly Argentina losing to Saudi Arabia 1-2 on Nov 22, a result that shook the tournament to its very foundations as one of the pre-tournament favourites fell spectacularly against a team ranked 51st in the world.

Lionel Messi's Copa America champions had come into the tournament off the back of a 36-match unbeaten streak and looked on course for a straightforward victory thanks to their captain's first-half penalty.

However, they were stunned by second-half strikes from Saleh Al-Shehri and Salem Al-Dawsari, which sent the Green Falcons fans into delirium and ensured one of the biggest shocks in the



Saudi Arabia's players celebrate after their shock 2-1 win against Argentina on Nov 22. Photo: AFP

tournament's near 100-year history. It even surpassed Argentina's shock defeat to Cameroon at the 1990 World Cup in Italy, when they were defending champions and had Diego Maradona in their side.

"We made history for football," said Saudi's French coach Herve Renard. "It will stay forever, this is most important," he added.

Argentina would bounce back thanks to a 2-0 win over

Mexico last Saturday (Nov 26), as the Saudis fell to Poland 0-2 to leave Group C wide open.

The shocks continued as Germany lost 1-2 to Japan in Group E on Nov 23. The four-time champions looked comfortable after Ilkay Gundogan put them ahead in the first-half but second-half strikes by substitutes Ritsu Doan and Takuma Asano gave the Blue Samurai the greatest result in their history, sparking scenes

of jubilation in their homeland. To rub salt into the wound, both Doan and Asano ply their trade in the Bundesliga, Germany's domestic league.

However, Japan were unable to follow up their remarkable result in their next game against Costa Rica, losing 0-1. It wasn't a surprise necessarily although it did reflect the thus far unpredictable nature of the tournament.

Germany managed to se-

cure a 1-1 draw with Spain in their second group game to, at time of press, keep their hopes of progressing to the final round of 16 alive.

It was a confidence boost as Spain had demolished Costa Rica 7-0 in their opening game, cementing their position as one of the tournament favourites.

INSPIRED

Elsewhere, Belgium fell to Morocco 0-2 in another major shock, leaving the second-ranked team in the world in danger of a group-stage exit.

Roberto Martinez's side had squeezed past Canada 1-0 in their opening game but looked lacklustre against their inspired opponents, despite possessing the likes of Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard in their ranks.

The loss led to rioting in Brussels where police used water cannon and teargas after coming under attack from football supporters who smashed shop windows, threw fireworks and torched vehicles.

Defending champions France became the first team to qualify for the knockout stages after wins over Australia (4-

1) and Denmark (2-1), with Kylian Mbappé instrumental in both games.

England had hoped to join them but were unable to see off the USA in a hard fought 0-0 draw last Friday (Nov 25).

After a dazzling display in their opening 6-2 win over Iran, England failed to impress and were often second best throughout. Indeed the US could have recorded a famous win had Christian Pulisic's strike that crashed off the crossbar been a few inches lower.

The Australians didn't allow the heavy defeat to the French to deter them as they registered a fine 1-0 win against Tunisia in their second game, with a wonderfully crafted goal by striker Mitchell Duke settling the affair.

At time of press the Socceroos still had every chance to qualify from the group, requiring just a point from their final match against Denmark.

Brazil lived up to their pre-tournament tag of favourites by beating Serbia and Switzerland to progress, likewise Portugal who saw off Ghana and Uruguay to advance to the knockout stage.

'OneLove' armbands abandoned

FOOTBALL

ENGLAND, GERMANY and five other European teams at the World Cup cited the threat of disciplinary action from FIFA for their decision to abandon plans to wear a rainbow-themed armband in support of LGBTQ rights at the tournament.

"FIFA has been very clear that it will impose sporting sanctions if our captains wear the armbands on the field of play," the seven teams said in a joint statement on Nov 21.

Under FIFA rules, players wearing kit that is not authorised by football's world governing body could be shown a yellow card. If that player was then shown a second yellow card, they would be sent off.

The "OneLove" armband due to be worn by the likes of England captain Harry Kane and Germany counterpart Manuel Neuer is designed as part of a campaign to promote inclusivity.

The armbands had widely been viewed as a symbolic protest against laws in the



Photo: AFP

World Cup host nation Qatar, where homosexuality is illegal.

"As national federations, we can't put our players in a position where they could face sporting sanctions including bookings, so we have asked the captains not to attempt to wear the armbands in FIFA World Cup games," the federations of England, Wales, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland said.

Instead of Neuer wearing the armband during his team's Group E opener against Japan on Nov 23, the entire team covered their mouths before kick-off.

"It wasn't about making a political statement - human rights are non-negotiable,"

Germany's football federation tweeted minutes later. Watching in the stadium, German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser did wear the armband.

Qatar's laws against homosexuality have been long-running controversy in the build-up to the World Cup.

Former Qatari international and World Cup ambassador Khalid Salman sparked outrage earlier this month after calling homosexuality "damage in the mind" in an interview with German television.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino has repeatedly insisted however that all fans and visitors to the finals would be welcome, regardless of sexual orientation. AFP

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Sport

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**Qatar-clysmic
World Cup
upsets > p15**

KING'S CUP RETURNS

Regatta action resumes after two-year break



Anticipation is high ahead of The Phuket King's Cup Regatta's return tomorrow (Dec 3). Photo: Guy Nowell

SAILING

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Ray Roberts' Team Hollywood and Kevin Whitcraft's THA 72 will be leading the charge as the Phuket King's Cup Regatta returns to action tomorrow (Dec 3) after a two-year absence.

This will be the first Phuket King's Cup Regatta since 2019 due to cancellations enforced by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions implemented on domestic and international travel and immigration.

The local organising committee delivered a statement of

confidence declaring Phuket is "ready" to host the occasion at a press conference of the "Phuket King's Cup Regatta Royal Cup International Sailing Competition Committee" held at Phuket Provincial Hall last Thursday (Nov 25), chaired by Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong.

Also present at the meeting were Rachadaporn Oin, Director of the Phuket Tourism and Sports office, and Capt Pornprom Sakultem, Director and Secretary of the Competition Committee.

Leading the representatives from the private sector was Pramookpisit Achariyachai, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Kata Group Hotels.

"Phuket, in conjunction with the Royal Varuna Yacht Club [near Pattaya], under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King's Yacht Racing Association of Thailand and the Royal Thai Navy, will hold the 34th Phuket King's Cup Regatta on Dec 3-10 in remembrance of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, King Bhumibol the Great, who always bestowed his grace upon Thailand and the Thai people," Capt Pornprom said.

The opening ceremony, led by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw, will be held on Sunday (Dec 4) at the Beyond Resort Kata hotel, at Kata Beach, Capt Pornprom continued.

The closing ceremony and the royal trophy presentation ceremony will be presided over by Air Chief Marshal Chavalit Pukbhasuk, the Privy Councilor, on Dec 10, he added.

The meeting on Nov 25, held to finalise the coordination of the key agencies and organisations involved, "went smoothly", Capt Pornprom noted.

Before the regatta starts, early IRC sail measurement will be held today (Dec 2), by appointment only.

Registration & IRC Measurement will be held at Beyond Kata Resort & Spa tomorrow, with the International Dinghy Class races at Kata Beach getting underway

in the afternoon with 100 small sailboats sailed by Thai youths, Capt Pornprom explained.

Monday (Dec 5) will see the first warning signal for the main IRC classes at 9am, a day long honoured in Thailand as the birthday of the late King Bhumibol. The day is a public holiday, and also celebrated throughout Thailand as Father's Day.

The event is open to boats eligible to complete in the classes as published in the Notice of Race on the Phuket King's Cup Regatta website. However, to help with the safety and integrity of the event, and in compliance with a statement from World Sailing issued on March 1,

entries shall be open to boats entered or sailed by persons from any nation, but not persons holding only Russian or Belarusian nationality.

Further, boats and competitors shall not display any sail letters, symbols, flags or slogan representing Russia or Belarus on any boat, place or clothing associated with the event.

The penalty for a breach of this rule will be exclusion from further participation in the event and the removal of the boat from the results.

By implementing these measures, World Sailing is supporting a united and coordinated approach within the global sports movement, the statement explained.

Phuket prepares to host World Bodybuilding Championships

BODYBUILDING

PHUKET IS PREPARING TO welcome competitors from 44 nations as it gears up to host the 13th World Bodybuilding Championships next week.

The competition, to be held at Central Floresta shopping mall in Kathu, starts on Tuesday (Dec 6) and will run until Dec 12, with over 1,000 participants involved.

Phuket follows in the footsteps of Bangkok, Pattaya and Chiang Mai, who hosted the tournament in 2015, 2016 and 2018 respectively.

The success of those events

gave the World Bodybuilding and Fitness Sports Federation (WBPF) the confidence that a similarly successful event could be hosted in Phuket, said Sukree Supavareekul, President of the Bodybuilding and Fitness Sports Association of Thailand.

"Thailand is once again honoured that the WBPF has entrusted us to host this special occasion," Mr Sukree said at a press conference on Nov 23.

"There will be more than 1,000 athletes and officials who will compete and officiate in 43 competitions set by the federation," he said.

Team Thailand has selected 45

athletes who will perform across a variety of categories and weight classes, Mr Sukree confirmed, adding that they have set a target of at least 13 gold medals overall.

"All the athletes selected are ready for the competition and everyone is ready to act as a representative of the Thai national team," he said.

Mr Sukree also revealed any athletes that are successful in winning titles at the Phuket event will be guaranteed to represent their country at a range of high-profile events next year, including the 32nd SEA Games in Cambodia on May 5-17, the 55th Asian Champi-

onship in Nepal next September and the 14th World Bodybuilding Championships in South Korea in November.

Next week's event in Phuket is expected to help boost the economy on a local and national scale by hundreds of millions of baht, Mr Sukree confirmed.

Competitors will be representing the following nations: Cambodia, Hungary, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Maldives, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, New Caledonia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, United States, India, Brunei, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Romania, Madagascar, Bhutan, Italy, South

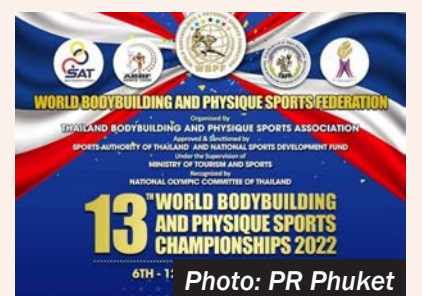


Photo: PR Phuket

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The Phuket News