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SAFETY POINTS



National police chief Pol Gen Damrongsak Kittiprasit holds up an e-ticket receipt at the launch of the penalty points system. Photo: Royal Thai Police

NEW POINTS SYSTEM FOR DRIVING LICENCES COMES INTO EFFECT

**Chutharat Plerin
& Anton Makhrov**
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Dr Wiwat Seetamanotch, Manager of the World Health Organisation (WHO) – Royal Thai Government Country Cooperation Strategy for Road Safety Programme, has high hopes for the demerit points system for traffic violations to come into effect on Monday (Jan 9).

The new system just might be the catalyst needed to start encouraging a change in driver behaviour in Thailand that will finally see a fall in the country's notorious rate of deaths and injuries in road accidents.

Dr Wiwat is of special importance to Phuket. He is Vice President of the Provincial Traffic Accident Prevention Support Plan. As a former Deputy Chief of the Phuket Provincial Health Office, he has long championed road-

safety initiatives in the province.

He is also the person who in 2015 brought to public attention Phuket's special place as the most dangerous province in the country for road accidents, at a time when Thailand was ranked, according to officially recognised statistics, as the most dangerous country in the world.

Dr Wiwat sees equality as the first main benefit of the points system, whereby points are deducted from a driver's licence for each offence accordingly. "I think that it [the points system] is a very good thing, because in foreign countries [a similar] scoring system creates justice for society. For people who are wealthy, paying a fine of B500 to B1,000 does not affect them, but for poor people paying B500-1,000 can mean a lot compared to their income. A demerit point system treats all people equally," he said.

"Repeated offences will see the points given [initially 12 points] re-

duced to zero. If a driver has a licence suspended because all the points have been deducted, that will plainly indicate there is a problem in driving behaviour or lack of knowledge," he added, alluding to the fact that if repeat offenders wanted to continue driving they would need to change their attitude, and behaviour, towards driving on the roads.

People being required to undergo driver and road-safety training in order to regain their points will have an effect, Dr Wiwat notes. Key to this understanding is that the penalty for being caught without a driving licence come Monday will be much more severe than previously.

"The penalty for driving without a licence, including a licence that has been suspended, is now up to three months' imprisonment or a fine of up to B10,000, or both. This one also has the formal support of the Department of Land Transport,

because the number of people driving without a licence is quite high," Dr Wiwat said.

Of note, during the Seven Days of Danger safety campaigns for the annual Songkran and New Year holidays, driving without a licence is traditionally the most common traffic violation for which people are fined. During the Songkran holidays in 2019, the most recent year when Phuket had a comparable number of drivers on the roads, more than 4,500 people were stopped and fined for driving without a licence in only seven days.

That game has changed, as Dr Wiwat noted, "If a person continues driving without a licence, because it has been suspended, then this will be a serious offence. And if a licence is suspended three times, then the misconduct is habitual and the licence may be revoked altogether. This will prevent continued offences..."

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17,000 jobs still
yet to be filled



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**Homegrown
music does
Phuket proud**



SPORT PAGE 12

**Football world
mourns after
legend Pele dies**



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News



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High hopes for road safety ahead

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“Therefore, in the long run, every Thai person must have a driver’s licence and law enforcement will become more effective. In the beginning, we must use the laws that we already have, but those laws are considerable, and the penalty for driving without a licence is now stronger,” he said.

THE SYSTEM

After more than a year in fine tuning, the points system to come into effect on Monday (Jan 9) was officially announced by national police chief Gen Damrongsak Kitiapras and Land Transport Department Director-General Chirute Visalachitra on Dec 1.

Gen Damrongsak explained that the new provisions were introduced through the “Regulations on rules, methods and conditions relating to the driving behaviour score recording system of licensed drivers, 2022” issued under



People arrive at the scene after a deadly high-speed impact near Chalong Circle on Dec 28. Photo: Phuket Info Center

the Traffic Act, 2522, specifically through an amendment to Section 142/1. The changes are to take effect on January 9, 2023.

Under the system, all Thai driver’s licences will be assigned 12 points. Points will

be deducted from the licence with each traffic violation. Offences, and the number of points to be deducted, have been classified into four levels.

Of note, the points system applies to Thai driver’s licences only. No mention has

been made of any effect on the driver’s licences of foreigners caught breaking traffic laws, other than the relevant fines and other penalties.

Offences such as speeding, not wearing a helmet while riding a motorbike, not wearing a seatbelt, not stopping for a pedestrian crossing or using a mobile phone while driving, will cost drivers one point for each infringement. Disobeying traffic signals (running a red light), for example, will cost drivers two points.

More serious offences such as leaving the scene of an accident (hit-and-run) will cost drivers three points, while driving while drunk or under the influence of another substance will cost drivers four points, Gen Damrongsak explained.

These offences, 20 in total, were under the purview of police, Gen Damrongsak said.

Other offences regarding the legality of operating a vehicle on a public road were under regulations administered by the Land Transport Department, and classified separately, he added.

Offences administered by the Land Transport Department, numbering 42 in total, will see points deducted only if the offender fails to pay the fine within the time given, Gen Damrongsak confirmed.

Such offences included violating traffic signs, or markings, on the road, parking in a no-parking area, failure to present a valid driver’s licence while driving, and so on, he said.

All traffic violations will be recorded through the Royal Thai Police ‘Police Ticket

เริ่ม 9 มกราคม 2566

ตัดคะแนนความประพฤติในการขับรถ

แบบแรก

ตัดคะแนนทันทีที่ทำผิด

“สร้างวินัยขับปลอดภัยให้โอกาสแก้ไขไม่ทำผิดซ้ำ สร้างความเท่าเทียมภายใต้กฎหมายด้วยมาตรฐานสากล”

A notice by the Department of Land Transport lists examples of demerit points for specific offences. Image: DLT

ตัด 1 คะแนน
ใช้โทรศัพท์มือถือขณะขับรถ
ไม่สวมหมวกกันน็อก
ไม่คาดเข็มขัดนิรภัย
ขับรถด้วยความเร็วเกินกำหนด
ขับรถบนทางเท้า

ตัด 2 คะแนน
ไม่ปฏิบัติตามสัญญาณจราจร
ไม่สวมรถจักรยาน
ไม่ปฏิบัติตามป้ายจราจร
ขับรถโดยไม่คำนึงถึงความปลอดภัย
ไม่ปฏิบัติตามป้ายจราจร

ตัด 3 คะแนน
ขับรถในเลน
ขับรถในเลน
ขับรถในเลน

ตัด 4 คะแนน
เมาเหล้า
ขับรถในเลน
ขับรถในเลน
ขับรถในเลน

Management (PTM)’ database, which will automatically deduct points from the respective licences, he said.

To facilitate payment of traffic violations, a special ‘e-Ticket’ website – <https://ptm.police.go.th/eTicket/> – has been set up by the state corporations Krung Thai Bank and National Telecom, he added.

People can pay fines through the ‘Krungthai NEXT’ and ‘Paotang’ mobile banking apps without fees. The ‘e-Ticket’ website accepts payments via debit and credit cards.

National Telecom will create an app called ‘KHUB DEE’ through which people can check how many points they still have left on their licences, Gen Damrongsak explained.

At time of press, the app had yet to become available on Google Play or Apple’s App Store.

SUSPENSION

Any driver who loses all 12 points will be automatically suspended for driving for 90 days. Any person caught driving while their licence is suspended will face a fine of up to B10,000 or up to three years in jail, or both, in accordance with Section 156 of the Traffic Act, Gen Damrongsak confirmed.

“If the licence is suspended for a third time within three years, it may be suspended for longer than 90 days, and if the driver’s licence is suspended again for the fourth time, it may be revoked altogether,” he said.

RECLAIMING POINTS

Points will automatically be

restored one year from the date of the offence, except when the points result in the licence being automatically suspended, Gen Damrongsak noted.

If that is the case, the driver will have only eight points restored on completion of the 90 days’ suspension, he said. The driver will have to continue for the following year with only those eight points.

Points may also be reclaimed by undergoing driver and road safety training through the Land Transport Department. People can apply to undergo the training sessions at their local Land Transport Office, he said.

People can apply to voluntarily undergo the driver training to have points restored if their licence has less than six points. However, they can undergo the training sessions only twice within one year.

After completing a training session, drivers must pass a test, with the pass mark set at 60%. The training sessions range from two to four hours, depending on the number of points to be reclaimed.

Drivers who fail the test can apply to take the same test for a second time on the same day. If they fail again, they can apply to take the test for a third time within seven days of the first test failure. It was not explained what happens if a driver fails the test for a third time.

Drivers can undergo special training sessions to have their licences restored to a full 12 points. For details people need to contact their local Land Transport Office, Gen Damrongsak said.

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Shot vendor given helping hand

Noodle vendor shot by cop given work to support own family

Chutharat Plerin
thai@classactmedia.co.th

Aroon Thongplab, a 26-year-old noodle vendor left paralysed after he was shot by a drunk off-duty police officer on Bangla Rd, Patong, in February last year, has been given a full-time job so he can continue to provide for his young family.

The police officer involved, Pornthep Channaong, shot Mr Aroon in the stomach then taunted Mr Aroon while he writhed on the street begging for mercy. Pornthep even fired another shot at close range at Mr Aroon, luckily missing him.

In August this year Pornthep was found guilty of all charges against him initially sentenced to 33 years and four months imprisonment for attempted murder and drug- and gun-related charges. CCTV footage of the incident was instrumental in the court's decision.

Pornthep's sentences were reduced to 25 years and four months imprisonment for



Photo: Pisona Group

attempted murder, 15 days' jail for drug use, and a fine for firearms offences reduced to B1,000.

However, Pornthep was also ordered by the court to pay B7,992,500 in damages, to be paid over 20 years. The damages awarded included

the fact that Mr Aroon had been left paralysed for life by the bullet, which came to rest next to his spine.

Mr Aroon and his family were left to suffer the added strain of financial hardship while the case, repeatedly delayed, was finally heard

in court.

The Royal Thai Police graciously announced they would pay for Mr Aroon's medical bills – though all surgeries and treatments were provided by Vachira Phuket Hospital, the main government hospital on the island.

Regardless, fundraising efforts were still much needed to help with the nurse care needed after Mr Aroon returned home, and the medical support equipment needed, such as an appropriate bed, to which Mr Aroon was confined while he was recovering. Fundraising

by expats on the island raised some B400,000 to help Mr Aroon and his wife Kulthida Chananan, and to support their two young children

More good news arrived at Mr Aroon's household on Dec 28, with the confirmation that the Pisona Group of companies, based in Patong and led by local businessman Preechawude 'Prab' Keesin, had him hired to organise social activities.

Mr Prab confirmed to *The Phuket News*' Thai-language sister newspaper *Khao Phuket* that Mr Aroon will receive B20,000 salary for his new position.

Mr Prab also confirmed that Mr Aroon will also take on the role as a "CSR (Stay for Others)" staffer working for the Patong Development Foundation, which was founded by Mr Prab.

Mr Aroon expressed his gratitude to Mr Prab and all people involved for giving him the opportunity to return to work and earn money.

"I will be able to take care of myself and my family again," he said.

American, 35, dies in plunge at airport

A 35-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN MAN DIED from his injuries after plunging from a platform on the third story at Phuket International Airport on Dec 28.

The man, named only as "Mr Jason", had been staying at a hotel in Nai Yang, south of the airport, since Dec 17, confirmed Airports of Thailand Phuket branch (AoT Phuket), which operates Phuket airport.

On Dec 20, he presented himself to a doctor near the airport and explained that he suffered from depression. He presented antidepressants that he had been prescribed and a medical certificate confirming his condition.

'Mr Jason' also explained that he was stressed because he had no money to buy an air ticket to go home and no money to spend.

The doctor reported that during this conversation Mr Jason was speaking normally and rationally. The doctor advised him to keep taking his medication and that if he needed further treatment or different medication he could present himself at Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town.

The doctor also coordinated with Tourist Police so they could provide assistance. Mr Jason took the doctor's advice and presented himself at the Tourist Assistance Center (TAC) at the airport and explained his situation that same day.

Mr Jason informed the TAC officers that he had contacted relatives in the US, but his relatives had not given any assistance. The TAC then contacted the US embassy in Bangkok in order to request the embassy to provide the money for Mr Jason to fly home, and that he pay the US government back later.

The request was to take the embassy about one week to consider. The TAC staff provided initial assistance by buying water



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

and food for Mr Jason while he waited for the embassy's reply.

However, for reasons unexplained by AoT Phuket, Mr Jason reportedly refused the loan from the embassy, instead saying he would wait for his sister to transfer the money needed.

No further details of Mr Jason's condition, behaviour or mental state were reported until about 3:08pm on Dec 28, when he jumped off a three-story high platform at the smoking area of the departures section of the international terminal at the airport.

Doctors and nurses were quickly at the scene and performed immediate first aid. He was rushed by ambulance to Thalang Hospital with emergency responders performing CPR en route.

However, Mr Jason was pronounced dead at Thalang Hospital at 4pm, AoT Phuket confirmed.

The area where the incident happened at the airport was sealed off while security guards assisted officers from the Sakhu Police continued their investigation, the release AoT Phuket concluded.

If you or anyone you know is in need of emotional support and counselling, please contact the Samaritans of Thailand at their 24-hour hotline 02-713-6791 (English), 02-713-6793 (Thai) or Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai). The Phuket News

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Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

THU JANUARY 12

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Low: +27°
Wind 4 m/s

Labour crisis hits agenda

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Department of Employment will promote job vacancies in Phuket to poorer provinces in the Northeast as part of its strategy to resolve the crippling labour crisis in the island's tourism industry.

Hotels and other tourism businesses will also be encouraged to hire former inmates and elderly persons, and more steps will be taken to manage the importation of migrant labour "to do jobs that Thai people do not want to do", Bunyawee Khaipan, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Employment, said at the 'Phuket Job Fair 2022', held at the Central Festival Phuket shopping mall on Dec 27.

The job fair saw 43 businesses with more than 2,000 vacancies on offer open to receive applications from potential employees.

According to the Phuket Provincial Employment Office, there are 1,423 places of employment in Phuket with 17,173 job positions waiting to be filled, said an official report of Ms Bunyawee's visit.

The job fair was organised by the Phuket Employment Office in collaboration with the Phuket Tourist Association, the Thai Hotel Association (Southern Region chapter) and the Patong Human Resource Management Club.

Present for the occasion were Phuket Vice Governor Danai Sunantarod, Pichit Singthongkham of the Phuket Recruitment Office and Rangsiman Kingkaew of the Phuket Tourist Association.

Of note, the job fair also saw the Phuket Employment Office offer career counselling services and registration services for those looking

to work abroad.

Ms Bunyawee said Minister of Labour Suchart Chomklin was aware of the acute labour shortage in Phuket, especially in the hospitality and tourism sectors, and had assigned her to take action to help resolve the crisis.

"The problem of labour shortage in the Phuket area is the result of the tourism situation in Phuket continuing to recover after the country fully reopened. Currently, there are about 8,000 foreign tourists travelling through the airport each day, with the number of tourists expected to increase through the end of 2022 and into early 2023. In addition, the proportion of Thai tourists increased at 41.34% compared with 2019," Ms Bunyawee said.

The type of businesses with the highest number of vacancies are hotel and other accommodation businesses, in the positions of front desk staff,

food and beverage service staff, housekeepers and spa masseuses, followed by tourism-related service business and wholesale and retail businesses, respectively, she added.

The measures were agreed on to help resolve the labour shortage in the short-term, Ms Bunyawee said.

The first is to promote job vacancies in Phuket to provinces in the Northeast, highlighting that Phuket now has a minimum wage of B354 a day, the equal highest in the country, she said.

"The Department of Employment will also work with educational institutions in the Northeast to offer students work placements in Phuket where they will gain valuable work skills and experience," she added.

The third short-term measure will be the Department of Employment working with the Department of Skill Development Training to develop people with work skills matching

those in short supply in Phuket, such as Thai massage and mechanical work. The people to be targeted to develop the much needed skills included vocational students and soldiers preparing to discharge from military service, Ms Bunyawee said.

"In the long term, we will use career guidance for students to help guide those looking for work to enter the labour market with the skills in high demand in Phuket," Ms Bunyawee continued.

"In addition, we will coordinate with businesses to hire reformed inmates and the elderly to work, and manage the importation of migrant workers to replace vacancies that Thai workers do not want to do," she said.

"Business operators will need to adjust their staffing policies, reduce their requirements and focus on those who are ready to learn and willing to develop themselves while working," Ms Bunyawee said.



A job-seeker fills in an application form at the Phuket Job Fair before the New Year. Photo: PR Phuket

Cathay Pacific steps up Hong Kong flights

AIRPORTS OF THAILAND Senior management and staff at Phuket International Airport (AoT Phuket) saw in the New Year on Jan 1 by welcoming 118 arrivals from Hong Kong on a Cathay Pacific flight.

The flight, CX771, was called "the inaugural flight of Cathay Pacific Airways, route HKG - HKT". Flight services CX771 actually resumed on Aug 10, 2021 as the first flight to return from Hong Kong under the 'Phuket Sandbox' tourism



Photo: AoT Phuket

entry scheme. Jan 1 saw the flight service return to its daily routine.

Present to welcome the arrivals from Hong Kong at Gate 15 of the International

Passenger Terminal were Phuket airport General Manager Monchai Tanode along with airport and airline staff. Welcome gifts were handed to the arrivals as they disembarked.

The arrivals from Hong Kong followed Phuket airport welcoming 11,027 international arrivals on the last day of the year.

According to Phuket Airport Immigration Daily Report, a total of 578,926 international arrivals landed at Phuket airport from Nov 1 - Dec 31.

During the last two months of the year, 161,504 Russians landed on the island, with Indian nationals far behind in second place with 63,510 arrivals.

Rounding out the top 10 arrivals by nationality during November and December were the UK (31,974), Australia (31,531), Singapore (31,425), Kazakhstan (24,673), Germany (22,891), Malaysia (20,861), United States (15,281) and South Korea (14,112).

The Phuket News

Experts play down COVID fears as Chinese return

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Health experts are attempting to allay concerns that new coronavirus strains in China may be imported into Thailand, saying they are less worrisome than the dominant strain already here.

They made the remarks as Chinese tourists are expected to flock back to Thailand after Beijing reopens its borders on Sunday (Jan 8).

Anan Jongkaewwattana, a virologist at the National Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, said that China is currently hit by highly transmissible Omicron strains, mainly BA.5.2 and BF.7, which are descendants of the BA.5 Omicron variant.

The two strains are responsible for more than half of confirmed cases in China, he said on Monday (Jan 2).

The highly transmissible and immune-invasive Omicron XBB.1.5 variant, which is rapidly becoming dominant in the US, has also been detected



Chinese tourists at Suvarnabhumi airport in February 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo: Bangkok Post

in China, he added.

"Interestingly, the Omicron subvariant BA.2.75, now a dominant strain in Thailand, has not been detected in China yet.

"We are concerned that the strains in China may be imported into Thailand.

"But BA.5.2 in China is nothing new in Thailand because we already experienced it. It is already starting to fade away. The BA.2.75 subvariant in Thailand is more worrisome," he added.

Dr Manoon Leechawengwongs, a pulmonologist with Vichaiyut Hospital, posted on

Facebook that Thais should not panic about new strains of COVID-19 in China being imported into the country.

"Mutations of the virus can happen anywhere in the world. We should treat and welcome Chinese travellers as our guests in the same way we do to visitors from other countries," he posted.

"We should stop fearing COVID. We have to co-exist with it and receive regular booster shots of vaccine like we get an influenza vaccine.

Precautions, such as wearing masks in crowded places, washing hands, and maintain-

ing physical distances, are still recommended."

The National Committee for Communicable Diseases has said that screening at airports won't be required for the time being. However, the committee does expect arrivals to show proof of vaccination and a suitable insurance policy.

This came after Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said on Dec 29 that the government would not require Chinese visitors to take a test for COVID-19 before or after they arrive.

"Disease control measures will focus not only on public health but also economic benefits," Anutin said.

"We must consider economic matters... Many Thai people have been vaccinated. There are medicines and hospitals for infected people. Arrivals will not pose any serious risk."

Meanwhile, the Tourism Authority of Thailand is urging business operators to ensure their staff have received a COVID-19 vaccine booster to prepare for the return of Chinese tourists.



Chuan. Photo: Bangkok Post

Expect vote buying to be 'rampant', warns Chuan

BANGKOK

HOUSE SPEAKER CHUAN Leekpai has predicted that vote-buying will be rampant in the coming general election as some politicians continue to mix money with politics.

Mr Chuan said a poll conducted by parliament showed that respondents were concerned about corruption and called for measures to address the problem.

"When it comes to money politics, politicians will seek political gain in an unscrupulous manner," he said on Jan 1.

"If MP candidates spend money [buying votes], where do they get it from? It is obviously from someone who is rich enough to give them the money.

"We have to campaign and tell people that if they want a decent government, they must choose decent MPs.

"If they want an honest government, they must vote for honest MPs. If you voted in corrupt people, you get a corrupt government, and the problem will befall the people and the country.

"In the next election, we must not vote for corrupt politicians."

Mr Chuan also admitted he was concerned that money politics and corrupt politicians would lead to the military staging another coup.

"The current constitution which has been touted as being designed to stamp out graft has still failed to achieve that goal as corruption continues to rise," he said.

He also noted that several parties are now focused on voters in the South despite the region not having many House seats up for grabs compared to other regions, particularly the Northeast.

Bangkok Post

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- How many movies was Elvis Presley in?
- What was the Latin name of Paris in Roman times?
- The shortest recorded war in history – between 38 and 45 minutes – was fought between which countries?
- With a height of 979 metres and a plunge of 807m, where is Angel Falls, the world's highest waterfall?
- In which two countries is Coca-Cola not sold?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

- Labor
- Hot chocolate?
- Spanish liqueur
- Balcony section
- Suffix with sect
- Foofaraw
- Nuclear alternative
- Saw things
- Peron, to friends
- Open tract
- Organic compound
- Bibliophile's suffix
- Copy cats?
- Bookworm
- O.T. book
- Peter, Paul or Mary
- "Brave New World" drug
- Some political set-ups
- Child of fortune?
- La ____
- Links prop
- Radio format
- Garden whistler?
- Store posting: Abbr.
- Wedding attendant
- Paltry amount
- Auto parts giant
- Old Spanish coins
- Family entertainment

Down

- Map
- Unfrequented
- Arch type
- Profundity
- Extreme
- Neighbor of Wash.
- Martial arts expert
- Statistic, e.g.
- Biased
- 20s dispenser
- Short fiber
- Kind of talk
- ____ bean
- Hindu doctrine
- Sister of King Arthur
- Affix a brand to
- Dweebs
- N.C.A.A. tournament division
- E'en if
- Certain post
- Duck

- "A merry heart ____ good like a medicine": Proverbs
- Eurasian wheat
- Tears down, in the U.K.
- Interpol song
- Peter and others
- Victorian
- Hypothetical substance
- ____ Books, digital library
- River to Donegal Bay
- Zoomed
- Speculate
- Kind of ray
- Guts
- Abide
- Cairo's river
- Pakistani language
- Maple genus
- Air bag?
- Retired fleet
- Occupational suffix
- Come together
- Computer monitor, for short

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Elvis tarred in 34 movies, featured in at least 53; 2) Luteitia; 3) United Kingdom and Zanzibar; 4) Venezuela; 5) 3) Cuba and North Korea

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20								21				22		
				23		24	25				26			
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				52			53	54			55			
56	57	58			59						60	61	62	63
64			65						66	67				
68					69						70			
71					72						73			

Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

S	2	W	A	M	M	8	I	S	C	V	A	G	A	R	10	11	12
T	1	I	R	E	I	N	C	O	G	S	A	L	E				
E	3	T	R	N	A	14	S	C	A	L	A	T	I	E	D		
P	5	H	O	N	E	P	A	R	T	Y	L	I	N	E	S		
P	7	A	L	T	E	R	P	E	A	R	L						
E	15	L	D	R	I	C	H	A	R	D	I	O	N	21	22	23	24
H	16	E	A	P	E	E	T	V	N	E	T	W	O	R	K	30	31
H	18	E	A	P	E	E	T	V	N	E	T	W	O	R	K	32	33
E	19	R	R	A	T	A	T	A	T	M	O	A					
A	25	V	E	R						B	E	H	E	S	34	35	36
T	26	R	A	N	S	I	S	T	O	R	R	A	D	I	O	37	38
H	27	A	V	E	A	L	A	T	E	M	I	E	N				
U	28	R	I	C	S	E	P	I	A	A	C	R	E				
D	29	E	S	K						L	O	S	S				

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2.5

days are spent every year by the average American looking for misplaced items.

85

percent of people in the US believe they are less biased than the average American.

1911

is the year when a baseball team of death-row prisoners had their executions delayed if they kept winning.

156,721

people have signed a petition for the next heavy metal in the periodic table to be named 'Lemmium', after Motörhead's Lemmy.

31 trillion

US dollars is the current national debt of the United States, the largest external debt in the world.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Beautiful Bang Tao. Photo by Chris Oakes

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

This week in history

January 6, 1929

Mother Teresa arrives in Calcutta, India, to begin her work among India's poorest and sick people.

January 7, 2015

Two gunmen commit mass murder at the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris, shooting 12 people execution style, and wounding 11 others.

January 8, 1297

François Grimaldi, disguised as a monk, leads his men to capture the fortress protecting

the Rock of Monaco, establishing his family as the rulers of Monaco.

January 9, 2007

Apple CEO Steve Jobs introduces the original iPhone – the first smartphone model designed and marketed by Apple Inc, colloquially known as the "iPhone 2G" after 2008 – at a Macworld keynote in San Francisco.

January 10, 49 BC

Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon river, in northeastern



Steve Jobs and the first iPhone. Photo: AFP

Italy, just south of Ravenna, signalling the start of civil war.

January 11, 532 AD

Nika riots in Constantinople:

A quarrel between supporters of different chariot teams – the Blues and the Greens – in the Hippodrome escalates into violence. Nearly half of Constantinople is burned or destroyed and tens of thousands of people are killed in one week of unrest.

January 12, 1554

Bayinnaung, who would go on to assemble the largest empire in the history of Southeast Asia, is crowned King of Burma.

Source: Wikipedia

Original music in Phuket



PHUKET MUSIC SCENE

Andy Tong Dee

When I go home to the UK, I am amazed to see so much musical creativity, with ordinary pub bands sometimes playing more of their own songs than covers. Such creativity has served us well, producing the best pop group in the world (The Beatles), the finest rock group (Led Zeppelin) and the world's most creative solo artist (David Bowie). It is an astonishing achievement for a country of just 60 million.

Sadly, when I come back to Phuket, all I seem to ever hear played live in music venues in English are cover songs from before 1990. However, while Phuket may be trapped in something of a rut creatively, I believe there are grounds for hope we can get out of it.

Gary Crause of the Phuket Academy of Performing Arts is aware of the importance of musical creativity – no one achieves stardom playing songs by other people. Gary drills this into his students, and not just his students. I saw his son Blaze play only his own songs at the Lean On Me Festival two years back. Gary's own band, Dark Fiber, also contributed a fine, all-original set that day with fellow local songwriter Rob Cook on guitar.

Rock veteran guitarist, Colin Hill, has written songs since he was 15, and he often slips a few into his sets. He told me that some of his songs still turn up on Australian Indie radio stations long after he left to come here, also that some of his songs online have had over 50,000 listeners.

His fellow Australian musician Mike Mitchell runs a music school at his VK Studios in Cherno Talay,



Anteo Quintavalle.

where he, like Gary, encourages his students to get creative. Mike won a major songwriting competition some years ago and, listening to his song Broken Wings, I can well understand why. A brilliantly-crafted ballad about an often self-destructive need to please others, such an offering can easily stand its ground on any radio station alongside Colin's.

Colin has played for a couple of years now at the Mexican Bar in Boat Avenue, Laguna, and it's here that he became friends with its co-owner, Anteo Quintavalle. Anteo asked Colin to help him record his own songs and, after much hard work, Anteo released an album of his songs on Dec 23, 'One Step at a Time', with Mike Mitchell contributing drums, keyboard and bass.

Asked why he wanted to write his own songs, Anteo told me, "I believe creativity is a human purpose, and those whose lives are deficient in this will feel somehow unfulfilled. I find songwriting can wake up buried memories and experiences and give them new life and meaning."

Listening to the album, it soon became clear his songs are deeply introspective and emotional. I was

particularly drawn to the song Our Time Will Come. Anteo described it: "It's a spiritual song written during the latter stages of the COVID pandemic, a time when I was moved by the stories of friends who had been separated from their families and loved ones in their final moments."

However, sad and reflective though his songs may sometimes be, there is a message of hope running like a golden thread through them, a thread best seen in the album's title track One Step at a Time. Anteo remarks, "It's a song about unearthing self-belief and finding new purpose in our lives, understanding that all things are possible with determination and faith."

Anteo has been performing some of these songs with Colin at the Mexican Bar with some success. "They have been well received when performed live, getting more applause and compliments than the staple classic rock cover songs also played," he said.

This proves that any worries Phuket's musicians may have about performing newer and original songs are entirely misplaced, that Phuket's tourists and expats are waiting to hear them, and not just the same old, tired, done-to-death cover songs from over 30 years ago.

So, all you budding Bob Dylans out there, don't be afraid to pick up that guitar and write and perform your own songs. For now in Phuket, as that great Nobel-winning songwriter once sang, "The times they are a-changing!"

Anteo's album One Step at a Time can be heard on Spotify. Check out SoundCloud for original songs by Mike Mitchell, Dark Fiber and the Colin Illy Hill Band. Rob Cook's can be found on Bandcamp (Rob C).

Andy Tong Dee is a local expat and musician living in Phuket. Find out more about Phuket's music venues and artists at his website www.phuketmusicscene.com.



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COUNTDOWN IN PATONG

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6 JAN

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We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Isola restaurant at the Royal Phuket Marina from 5pm on Friday the 6th of January. We are delighted to announce that our sponsor for the evening will be Asia Sponsorship News who opened an office in RPM in October 2022. Asia Sponsorship News (ASN) is the leading market intelligence service for the sponsorship industry. See <https://asiasponsorshipnews.com/> There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by Isola Restaurant for all attendees and as always, all your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming, please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to growboatingphuket@gmail.com Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/growboatingphuket Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See www.thepuketnews.com

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WED

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THU

12 JAN



Thailand International Boat Show 2023

The Thailand International Boat Show A Luxury Lifestyle Event (TIBS) will take place at Royal Phuket Marina between 12 – 15 January 2023. Entrance to the show is free and you can register online at www.thailandinternationalboatshow.com. Children's day entertainment will take place on the afternoon of the 14th of January and further entertainment will take place every evening in the town square for all to enjoy. For more information please contact Phusanisa.t@thailandinternationalboatshow.com or call +66 (0) 76 600 225.

SUN

15 JAN



TIBS Charity Gala Dinner

The Thailand International Boat Show A Luxury Lifestyle Event will host a Charity Gala Dinner which will take place at the InterContinental Phuket Resort, Kamala on the evening of Saturday 14th of January 2023. An evening of food, drink and entertainment will make this event a great start to 2023 and booking is essential as space is limited. For more information and to book tickets please contact Phusanisa.t@thailandinternationalboatshow.com or call +66 (0) 76 600 225

SAT

21 JAN



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FRI

27 JAN



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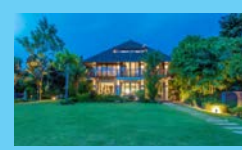
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Gunners go seven points clear as Man City slip up

FOOTBALL

AFP

Arsenal head into 2023 with a formidable seven-point lead at the top of the Premier League after a 4-2 win at Brighton, while Manchester City's title defence suffered a major setback as Everton snatched a 1-1 draw against the champions last Saturday (Dec 31).

Mikel Arteta's side powered to a fifth successive league victory thanks to goals from Bukayo Saka, Martin Odegaard, Eddie Nketiah and Gabriel Martinelli on New Year's Eve at the Amex Stadium.

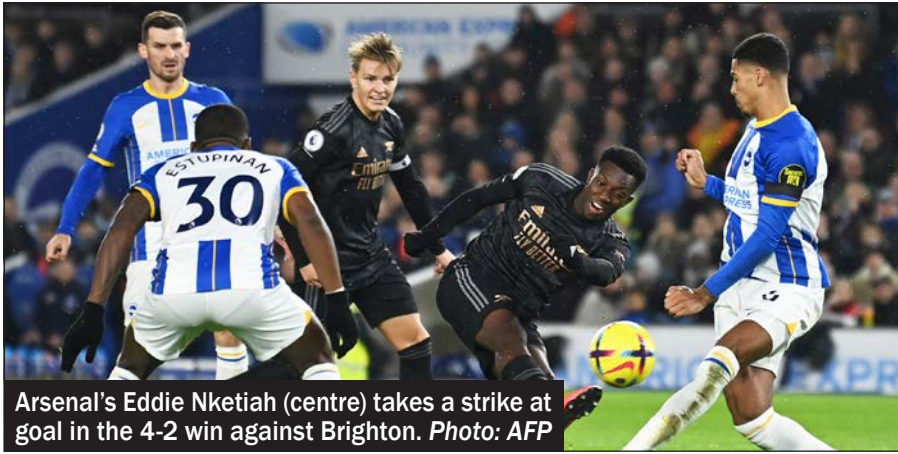
"It's a big win against a really good side," Arteta said. "We know the other results, but we know our success will be from what we do."

Arsenal's ninth win in their last 10 league matches was even sweeter coming just hours after second placed City stumbled at the Etihad Stadium.

Pep Guardiola's side blew the lead given to them by Erling Haaland as Demarai Gray scored an eye-catching equaliser for struggling Everton.

City have failed to win two of their last three league games and head into 2023 in danger of surrendering the title they have won four times in the last five seasons.

Guardiola stayed positive, saying: "Dropping points at home is always



Arsenal's Eddie Nketiah (centre) takes a strike at goal in the 4-2 win against Brighton. Photo: AFP

tough. But we played really good in the last three games and it makes me feel optimistic."

Elsewhere, Marcus Rashford responded to his benching for missing a team meeting after over-sleeping with the late strike that clinched Manchester United's 1-0 win at Wolves.

United manager Erik ten Hag dropped Rashford because of an "internal disciplinary" issue that broke "our rules".

The 25-year-old's exile only lasted until half-time when he was sent on by Ten Hag in a move that proved the catalyst for fourth placed United to seal their fifth successive win in all competitions.

Third placed Newcastle's six-match winning run came to a halt in a 0-0 draw against Leeds at St James' Park, while Joao Palhinha's last-gasp goal sealed

Fulham's 2-1 win against Southampton, who sit bottom of the table after a fifth successive defeat.

Crystal Palace eased to a 2-0 win at Bournemouth as Patrick Vieira's side ended their three-match goal drought thanks to Jordan Ayew and Eberechi Eze.

Tottenham's New Year got off to a terrible start as they were beaten 2-0 at home by Aston Villa, meaning they have now won only two of their past seven matches.

For Villa it meant back-to-back away league wins as they continue to improve under new manager Unai Emery.

Spurs remain in fifth place one ahead of Liverpool who were surprisingly beaten 3-1 by Brentford on Monday thanks to strikes from Bryan Mbeumo, Yoane Wissa and an Ibrahima Konate own goal. *AFP*



Andoo Comanche. Photo: Andrea Francolini

Andoo Comanche wins Sydney to Hobart race

SAILING

AUSTRALIAN SUPER-maxi Andoo Comanche secured a fourth line honours victory in the gruelling Sydney-Hobart ocean race on Dec 28, but fell short of setting a new course record.

The 100-foot yacht, skippered by John Winning Jnr, triumphed in a nail-biting finish after leading the blue water classic for much of the race.

It completed a quartet of line honours wins for the boat in the prestigious event since 2015 under a third different owner.

Andoo Comanche crossed with a time of one day, 11 hours, 56 minutes and 48 seconds – about 20 minutes in front of rival supermaxi Law Connect – and just under three hours short of its own record.

The current race record of one day, nine hours, 15 minutes and 24 seconds was set by the same Comanche boat under a different skipper in 2017.

Winning Jnr was part of the team that won the event in 2016, but said it was something special to skipper his own crew.

"To do it in a campaign that I was part of putting together is really quite exceptional," he said.

The 109-strong racing fleet set off from a sun-splashed Sydney Harbour on Boxing Day (Dec 26) to chart their way through the 628-nautical mile course (1,163km) to Hobart.

Last year's defending champion Black Jack crossed third, followed by Wild Oats, which fell behind after tearing one of its sails earlier in the race. *AFP*



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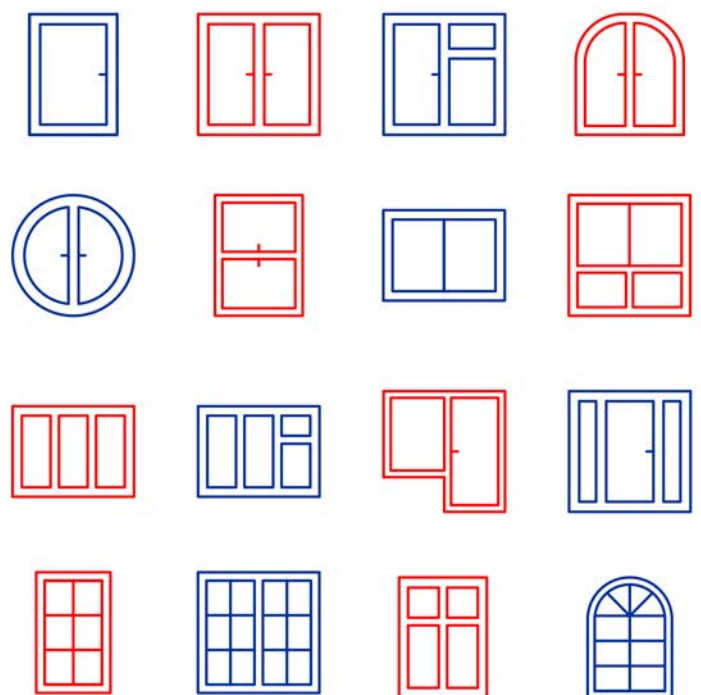
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Sport



Arsenal open up a gap at the top > p11



Pele after winning the World Cup with Brazil in 1970. The football legend passed away on Dec 29. Photo: AFP

FOOTBALL

AFP

Brazilian football icon Pele, widely regarded as the greatest player of all time and a three-time World Cup winner who masterminded the “beautiful game”, died last Thursday (Dec 29) at the age of 82.

The Albert Einstein hospital in São Paulo treating Pele said in a statement that his death after a long battle with cancer was caused by “multiple organ failure”.

Named athlete of the century by the International Olympic Committee in 1999, Pele is the only footballer in history to have won three World Cups – in 1958, 1962 and 1970.

Nicknamed “O Rei” (The King), he scored more than

1,000 goals in one of the most storied careers in sport, before retiring in 1977.

He had been in increasingly fragile health, battling kidney problems and colon cancer – undergoing surgery for the latter in September 2021, followed by chemotherapy.

Reaction instantly began flowing in, with current Brazilian star Neymar saying Pele had “transformed football into an art”.

‘SAMBA FOOTBALL’

Born Oct 23, 1940, in the southeastern city of Tres Coracoes, Edson Arantes do Nascimento – Pele’s real name – grew up selling peanuts on the street to help his impoverished family get by. His parents named him for American inventor Thomas Edison.

But he was soon given the nickname Pele, for his mispronunciation of Bile, the name of a goalkeeper at Vasco de Sao Lourenco, where his footballer father once played.

Pele dazzled from the age of 15, when he started playing professionally with Santos. He led the club to a flurry of titles, including back-to-back Intercontinental Cups, against Benfica in 1962 and AC Milan in 1963.

Known for his genius with the ball, he epitomized the sublime style of play called “samba football” in Brazil, where he was declared a “national treasure”.

He scored an all-time record 1,281 goals in 1,363 matches for Santos (1956-74), the Brazilian national team, and the New York Cosmos (1975-77).

But beyond his records,

he will be remembered for revolutionising the sport, his ever-present number 10 on his back.

The first global football star, he played a lead role in the game’s transformation into a sporting and commercial powerhouse, tapping his preternatural athleticism despite his relatively small size – 1.70 meters (just under five-foot-seven).

He also played with heart, visible in the iconic black-and-white footage of the 17-year-old phenom bursting into tears after helping Brazil to its first World Cup title, in 1958.

Eight years earlier, seeing his father cry when Brazil lost the 1950 World Cup final at home to Uruguay, he had promised to bring the trophy home one day.

Pele reached the pinnacle of his greatness at the 1970

World Cup in Mexico, the first broadcast in colour, where he starred on what many consider the greatest team of all time, with talents such as Rivellino, Tostao and Jairzinho.

He was often welcomed like royalty when travelling abroad with Santos or the national team. Legend has it in 1969 his arrival in Nigeria was the occasion for a 48-hour truce in the bloody Biafra war.

Pele declined offers to play in Europe, but signed for a brief, lucrative swan song with the New York Cosmos at the end of his career, bringing his star power to the land of “soccer”.

His reign extended beyond the pitch, with gigs as a movie star, singer and later sports minister (1995-1998) – one of the first black Cabinet members in Brazil.

But he faced criticism at

times in Brazil for remaining quiet on social issues and racism, and for what some saw as his haughty, vain personality.

Unlike Argentine rebel Diego Maradona, his rival for the title of greatest of all time, Pele was seen as close to those in power – including Brazil’s 1964-1985 military regime.

He was deeply moved when Maradona, his longtime friend and rival, died of a heart attack in 2020 at age 60. “The world has lost a legend,” he wrote at the time.

“One day, I hope, we will play soccer together in the sky,” he commented at the time.

Pele’s funeral was held on Monday at the Santos Stadium in São Paulo with thousands of fans and dignitaries in attendance.

War Elephants on course to defend AFF title

FOOTBALL

THAILAND REMAIN ON TRACK to defend their Asean Football Federation (AFF) Championship after winning their qualifying group and advancing to the semi-final stage.

In their final Group A match of the AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022 on Monday (Jan 2) the War Elephants defeated Cambodia 3-1 to top the group on 10 points, ahead of Indonesia on goal difference, and progress to tomorrow’s (Jan

7) semi-final first leg.

Goals from Sumanya Purisai and a brace from Teerasil Dangda at Thammasat Stadium in Bangkok ensured they defeated Cambodia to follow up on previous wins against Brunei (5-0) on Dec 20 and the Philippines (4-0) on Dec 26. Thailand drew their other group game 1-1 against Indonesia on Dec 29.

Thailand’s semi-final opponents will be the runner-up in Group B which, at time of press, had yet to be determined, with Vietnam,

Singapore and Malaysia all vying for second place.

Despite starting Monday’s game top of the group and marginally ahead of Indonesia on goal difference, the War Elephants knew a defeat would mean exiting the competition at the first hurdle for the first time since 2010.

They also ran the risk of a second-place finish if Indonesia were able to beat the Philippines in Manila by a sufficient margin in a game that kicked off at the same time as the Bangkok encounter.

However, Indonesia could only register a 2-1 win against their opponents, meaning Thailand’s 3-1 win was enough for them to finish as group winners.

Thailand dominated the opening exchanges against Cambodia on Monday with Teerasil scoring his first, a penalty, just before half-time and Purisai making it 2-0 shortly after the restart.

Sieng Chanthea pulled one back for the Cambodians midway through the second half but Teerasil’s second goal of the game put the game out



Teerasil Dangda. Photo: AFP

of reach and ensured the victory.

Thailand will next play the runners-up of Group B tomorrow, with the first leg away from home, before they return to Bangkok for the return meeting on Monday (Jan 9). Ben Tirebuck