

TAXI DRIVER PROBED FOR SEX ASSAULT > PAGE 3

ARRIVAL



Tourists arrive at Phuket airport last Sunday (May 1). Photo: PR Phuket

DAY 1 OF NEW ENTRY MEASURES SPURS HOPES OF TOURISM REVIVAL

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Hopes are riding high for finally a serious turnaround in the number of international tourists coming to the island following the eased restrictions for entry to the country brought into effect last Sunday (May 1).

Under the new measures vaccinated tourists no longer need to be tested before departure or after landing in Phuket. Unvaccinated travellers who test negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours of departure will also be allowed to roam free after landing without being tested.

However, all arrivals must still first register via the Thailand Pass system to be issued a permit to enter

the country and unvaccinated travellers who cannot prove they tested negative within 72 hours of departure will must still observe five days' quarantine and test negative before being released.

An estimated 4,400 international arrivals landed in Phuket last Sunday (May 1), the first day under the new entry measures. The number of arrivals on that day alone was already nearly double the daily average for the previous few months, which regularly struggled to see more than 2,000 arrivals a day in Phuket, including Thais returning home, expats and even transit passengers.

The number of foreign tourists coming to Phuket is expected to continue to rise, said Monchai Tanode, General Manager of Phuket

international Airport (AoT Phuket).

Mr Manode was on hand to welcome the 324 arrivals who landed at Phuket airport at 6:55am on Qatar Airways Flight QR842 – the first flight to arrive under the new entry measures.

“On average there are about 27 international inbound flights per day already scheduled for this month,” said Mr Manode.

“This is the first day of the change in entry rules, and we have both domestic and international passengers arriving continuously,” he said.

“After this the number of tourists travelling to Phuket is expected to be no less than 5,000 people a day,” Mr Manode said.

The atmosphere inside the arrivals hall had noticeably improved, officials

noted. “It is particularly busy,” one officer said.

Mr Manode also conducted a final inspection of all the locations where arrivals are processed for entry, including Immigration, Customs and the Thailand Pass counter, where entry documents are checked.

“Everything is in good order. The whole process has been made simpler and it is much more convenient for tourists,” he said.

Phuket Quarantine officials at the airport confirmed that the last person to enter Phuket under the Test & Go entry measures, now scrapped, was cleared by officials to leave the airport just before midnight last Saturday night.

The number of international arrivals under the Sandbox and...

NEWS PAGE 3

Shark bites boy, warnings posted at local beaches



LIFE PAGE 8

Learning to love life after two liver transplants



SPORT PAGE 16

Triple-header sports tourism drive in Patong



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

execeditor@classactmedia.co.th

News



**DSI probes
B50bn land
claims > p5**



Photo: Tourist Police

Lost and found

A 68-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN MAN LOST in the hills behind Naithon Beach last Friday (Apr 29) was later found safe.

Lt Col Ekachai Siri of the Phuket Tourist Police said officers at Sakhu Police Station notified the Tourist Police of the missing man, William Ernest Nehrer, at about 5pm.

Officers gathered at the Pearl of Naithon hotel, where they were told that Mr Nehrer had gone for a walk in the Khuan Naithon forest but had failed to return. Mr Nehrer was last seen at 3:20pm.

Tourist Police, along with officials from the Tourist Assistance Center (TAC) and local residents, organised two teams to scour the jungle trails in the protected park area to search for Mr Nehrer.

He was found safe at about 6:20pm, Lt Col Ekachai reported.

"He was treated for some minor scratches from branches then escorted out of the area and safely returned to his accommodation," he said.

A grateful Mr Nehrer thanked the officers and other members of the search parties for their help.

"I'm very glad to meet you guys," he said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

COVID restrictions eased

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Venues operating as restaurants may now legally serve alcohol until midnight under a new provincial order issued by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew last Friday (Apr 29).

The easing of the early closing time, previously 11pm, came in Phuket Province Order No. 282/2565, marked "Relaxation of closing measures for places and activities that are at risk of spreading disease".

The order was signed by Governor Narong as in effect from last Friday (Apr 29).

The new provincial order confirmed the easing of a wide range of restrictions, confirming Governor Narong's announcement on Apr 26 that officials were preparing to ease regulations under what has been called conditions under 'endemic COVID-19'.

Under the new order all venues still technically considered as



Gov Narong ordered the 'big ease' last Friday (Apr 29). Image: PR Phuket

entertainment venues must remain closed, a rule still mandated by the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) in Bangkok that Governor Narong has no authority to overrule.

However, venues operating as "restaurants", which pubs and bars may open as under special registration, are now allowed to remain open until midnight.

Such "restaurants" must comply with SHA+ or Thai Stop COVID 2 Plus guidelines, and must enforce the COVID Free Setting measures, the order confirmed.

Meanwhile, all large gatherings of people may now be held "as appropriate", as long as the organisers hold the activity in accordance with the COVID Free Setting measures for the event specified.

The activities identified as now all allowed under the COVID Free Setting measures were meetings, seminars, concerts, music performances, events, festivals, operating of department stores, shopping centers, community malls, the holding of trade fairs, exhibitions, fresh markets, flea markets, walking streets, and

"any other activities".

Sports events and places of exercise and training may now continue to operate, again in accordance with COVID Free Setting measures for the activity or venue specified.

"The opening of operations for activities of cockfighting, fish fighting, horse racing, bull fighting, boxing and bird racing can be opened with permission from the authorised person under the Gambling Act, B.E. 1935 and follow the safety measures for the organization (COVID Free Setting) in accordance with the guidelines of places and activities as prescribed by the Ministry of Interior," the order noted.

Businesses and other organisations were urged to arrange staff to work from home where appropriate, and officials were ordered to enforce the regulations in their respective areas.

The order included the standard warnings and penalties for breaches of orders implemented under the Emergency Decree.



MACNELS SHIPPING PHUKET

ANY SHIPMENT ANY WHERE

IMPORT AND EXPORT SERVICES, AIR AND SEA FREIGHT

COMMERCIAL CARGO AND PERSONAL GOODS
INCLUDING HOUSE HOLD RELOCATIONS

- DOOR TO DOOR SERVICES
- CUSTOMS CLEARANCE FORMALITIES
- PROJECT CARGOES INCLUDING BOATS
- WAREHOUSING AND STORAGE
- STRONG AGENCY NETWORK WORLDWIDE
- 20 YEARS STAFF EXPERIENCE IN PHUKET

☎ OFFICE: 076 603907

☎ MOBILE: CALL PETER 0863645862

www.macnellsphuket.com

Test & Go gone, Thai Pass next

Continued from page 1

...Test & Go entry schemes since Nov 1, when the Test & Go scheme was launched, totalled 500,555, Phuket Quarantine officials said.

The new entry requirements are a send-off for the Test & Go scheme, which was lauded to bring much economic relief to the battered tourism industry, but failed to deliver on those promises.

As repeated by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew last week, Phuket's tourism income was crushed by the COVID-prevention policies. Tourism revenues for the island plunged by 96%.

The only average income figure recognised by Phuket officials throughout the pandemic is B1,900 per person per month, announced mid-last year. Although not confirmed officially, that figure is very likely to have increased, but not by much.

The government is hoping to see air travel soar following the lifting of the Test & Go requirements, with double the number of take-offs and landings at the country's airports by the end of this year, reported the *Bangkok Post*.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) expects 83,500 flights per month at all airports by year's end, up from 44,500 at present, following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, government spokeswoman Traisuree Taisaranakul said on Monday.

Significant jumps are expected in both international and domestic flights, she added.

The Test & Go entry requirements were lifted on Sunday (May 1) in a bid to woo



Tourists at Phuket airport last Sunday (May 1) walk past the mobile COVID test booths. Photo: PR Phuket

more international tourists and help the kingdom compete with regional tourism-reliant rivals like Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore.

Tourism operators and vacationers have complained about the continued necessity to register for the Thailand Pass before arriving in the country, urging the government to scrap it too.

The first day after the departure of Test & Go saw about 17,000 air travellers arrive on 96 international flights at Suvarnabhumi and a further 4,000 from 27 landings at Phuket airport, according to the Transport Ministry.

Ms Traisuree said Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha was satisfied with the quick screening and document-checking process at international airports on Sunday and thanked all officials for the smooth transition.

Boy, 8, bitten by shark

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Dr Kongkiat Kittiwattawong, Director of the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) and the leading marine biologist on the island, on Monday (May 2) supported the view that an 8-year-old boy injured at Kamala Beach last Sunday (May 1) was bitten by a shark.

The boy injured was Naphat Chaiyarak Khrystenko, a Thai child with a Ukrainian father and Thai mother who all live together in Phuket.

Rescue workers arrived at the beach soon after 4:30pm and administered first aid for the deep lacerations to Naphat's lower right leg. He was then rushed first to Patong Hospital, then referred to Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

Naphat's injuries were serious wounds, requiring more than 30 stitches.

Naphat was bitten in the water in front of Kamala Police Station. He was some 100 metres from shore, but still in water only one metre deep.

"Initially, we suspected that the injury was caused by one of two types of sharks found in the area: bull sharks



Young Naphat required more than 30 stitches to close the deep bite wounds in his leg. Photo: PR Phuket

and the blacktip sharks, which we find around Kamala Beach," Dr Kongkiat, who has studied marine life in the Phuket region for decades, said on Monday.

"But, in the opinion of David Martin, an underwater photographer and shark expert, it's very unlikely to have been a blacktip shark due to the nature of the attack being very violent. The injuries are believed to be caused by a bull shark," he said.

"However, we cannot confirm exactly which species it is, but the wounds were definitely caused by a shark, because the scene of the incident is not

known for barracuda.

"Specifically, the wound was caused by a shark as both upper and lower teeth were used in combination. It was a sharp wound on both sides and had both upper and lower teeth snapped at the same time. Therefore, it corresponds to the nature of the wound caused by sharks," Dr Kongkiat said.

"In addition, the scene of the incident was a 'stationary zone' where sharks were active. The incident was most likely caused by the movement of the injured [boy] in the cloudy water.

"The shark then came in for food, and thought it was

food, therefore biting the injured leg. But when it took a bite it found that it was not food and therefore did not attack again.

"Also, it's very rare that something like this happens," Dr Kongkiat said.

Dr Kongkiat explained his opinion to the press on Monday when David Martin and Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong met with Naphat.

David Martin first gave his opinion that the bites were inflicted by a shark on Sunday, dismissing initial claims that the bites were caused by a barracuda.

Vice Governor Pichet explained that as Naphat and his parents were not tourists, they would not be entitled to some extra assistance, as is provided to international visitors.

"As for which marine animal attacked the child, academics and experts are the ones to make the best analysis," V/Gov Pichet added.

"Beach guards have been instructed to pay particular attention when supervising tourists' swimming in the sea. At the same time, warning signs and towers must be placed to watch over tourists," V/Gov Pichet said.



Police searched the taxi of the driver called in for questioning last Sunday night (May 1). Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Taxi driver under investigation for alleged sex assault

A PHUKET TAXI DRIVER has been called in for questioning for inappropriately touching the thigh of a 15-year-old Australian girl at a popular shopping mall in central Phuket.

The girl's father filed a complaint at Cherng Talay Police Station last Saturday (Apr 30), officers confirmed.

The incident occurred at the parking lot of Central Festival shopping mall in Wichit on Friday (Apr 29), said the complaint.

The girl and her father were staying at a resort in Cherng Talay, but had to

fly home to Australia on Saturday (Apr 30).

The daughter was unable to remember the taxi's licence plates, but officers called in one driver for questioning at Cherng Talay Police Station last Sunday night (May 1).

No details of the driver were released, but police have confirmed that no charges have been pressed as yet while police continue their investigation.

Tourist Police are assisting with the investigation, officers confirmed.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Officials give electric scooters a test ride

PHUKET OFFICIALS HAVE APPROVED the use of electric scooters at the Phuket Provincial Hall complex on the south side of Phuket Town as a test phase to confirm how safe the "micro-mobility" vehicles are to use.

The approval was announced at Provincial Hall on Apr 27 during a visit by representatives from Beam Mobility (Thailand) Co Ltd, which earlier this year was renting out electric scooters to tourists in Patong and other tourist-popular areas.

At the announcement on Apr 27 Beam Mobility Managing Director Jeff Payne led the handing over of two electric scooters for use by officials.

Present to receive the scooters on behalf of Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew was Kanathip Sukcharoen, Head of the Phuket Provincial Office.

The scooters will be used in security operations around the Phuket Provincial Hall complex, also called the "Phuket Government Center", and for conducting inspections of construction at the site.

The scooters are to be at the Phuket Government Center for a period of 10 months. The scooters will be set up with a computer system to ensure that they are used within the government compound only, and not on public streets.

In February, Phuket police banned electric scooters from all public roads in Phuket.

People caught riding electric scooters on public roads may be fined up to B10,000 following an order issued by Phuket Provin-



Photo: PR Phuket

cial Police Commander Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong.

People caught riding electric scooters on public roads also could be charged with operating a vehicle without a valid licence under Section 64 of the same act, as no licence exists for operating electric scooters, as they are not recognised as vehicles by the Department of Land Transport and hence cannot be registered, Maj Gen Sermphan said in the order.

The penalty for operating a vehicle without a licence is up to six months' imprisonment or a fine of up to B9,000, or both, Maj Gen Sermphan added.

The Phuket News



SUNDAY STEAK & LOBSTER

LIVE DJ, SUNSET HAPPY HOUR
WITH FREE TAPAS, STEAK
AND LOBSTER SPECIAL.

From 5pm.



076 33 8888

events@salaphuket.com

www.salaphuket.com

The Phuket News

CONTACT US

editor@classactmedia.co.th 076 612 550

PURIYA BEAVAN
Editor**CHRIS HUSTED**
Executive Editor
084 307 7408
execeditor@classactmedia.co.th**BEN TIREBUCK**
News / Sport Editor
061 806 8132
editor3@classactmedia.co.th**CHUTHARAT 'UM' PLERIN**
Thai Editor
088 766 1615
thai@classactmedia.co.th**JASON BEAVAN**
General Manager
086 479 7471
gm@classactmedia.co.th**SIRIPORN (NOK) SEANGMAS**
Sales Support
086 479 7470
sales@classactmedia.co.th**NIRAVIT 'MOS' VORAVANITCHA**
THANAPONG 'OAK' KHAO-AMPHAIPHAN
Graphic designersThe Phuket News
@thephuketnews

ADVERTISING

ClassAct Media

The Phuket News

WINDOW ON PHUKET

Where to eat in PHUKET

Новости Phuket

ข่าวภูเก็ต

NEWS TV

LIVE 89.5

Phuket TICKETMASTER

076 612 550 ext. 605

Fax: 076 612 553

Info@classactmedia.co.th

thephuketnews.com

99/7 Moo 1 (Billion Plaza),
T. Kathu, A. Kathu, Phuket 83120

PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

FRI MAY 6



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

SAT MAY 7



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

SUN MAY 8



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

MON MAY 9



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE MAY 10



High: +32°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

WED MAY 11



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

THU MAY 12



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

Raids net 9kg of 'ice', 54k meth pills

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Police have seized more than 9kg of crystal meth (ya ice) and more than 54,000 methamphetamine pills (ya bah) in separate raids in Chalong and Chong Talay.

A Thalang Police operation saw Worakorn 'Jay' Phisan, 36, of Moo 1, Srisoonthorn, arrested at the parking lot behind the HomePro store in Moo 8, Chalong, said a report released by Thalang Police on Apr 28.

The operation was led by Acting Capt* Supapot La-ongsakul of the Thalang Police, noted the report, which credited the operation to no less than 10 senior officers, including Phuket Provincial Police Commander Sermphan Sirikong.

After placing Worakorn under arrest, subsequent raids of two homes in Moo 5, Srisoonthorn found Worakorn in possession of a "Thai-made" firearm with a four-inch-long barrel made to fire .38 bullets.

Officers also seized 5.494kg of ya ice, 40,400 ya bah pills and 70 tablets of ecstasy.

The report marked that officers also seized two ammunition magazines,



A bumper haul seized by Phuket police. Photo: Thalang Police

one of which was loaded with seven .38 bullets. Officers also separately seized as evidence nine .22 bullets.

The paraphernalia seized in the raids included two digital scales, two wooden cabinets that required a key card to open, and the key card to open them, as well as a book containing records of drug transactions, an assortment of plastic bags and a Samsung mobile phone.

Workaorn was placed under arrest and charged with possession of a Category 1 narcotic (amphetamine, ice and ecstasy) with intent to sell, possession of an illegal firearm and

illegal possession of ammunition, the report noted.

Meanwhile in Chong Talay, officers led by Lt Col Phit Thongto of the Phuket Provincial Police seized 3.534kg of ya ice and 14,000 tablets of ya bah in a separate raid.

The drugs were seized after four people were placed under arrest outside a house near a transport company office in Soi Khoktanode 10, Moo 6, Chong Talay, said a separate report issued by Phuket Provincial Police.

The four were named as Pongphat 'Nad' Puttharaksa, 24, and Nuttawut 'Boy' Klongsurin, 28, both living in

Moo 6, Chong Talay, along with Miss Yanin 'Kik' Nuchakong, 26, from Uttaradit province and Ms Patcharin 'Pop' Boonyam, 28, from Kantang District in Trang province.

In placing the four under arrest officers seized as evidence a Phuket-registered Honda Wave 110i motorbike valued at about B20,000, said the report.

The four were taken into custody and charged with possession of a Category 1 narcotic with intent to sell, the report confirmed.

Back in Chalong, a 59-year-old man from Sisaket Province was arrested in Soi Ta-iad.

Roongruang 'Dee' Patikbutr was arrested in front of the All Time House rented room accommodation. A search of his room found him in possession of 24 ya bah pills.

Roongruang was taken to Chalong Police Station and charged with possession of a Category 1 narcotic with intent to sell, the report confirmed.

* A term used by Royal Thai Police indicating that the officer has been approved the rank but that the officer attaining rank had yet to be formalised by proclamation.

Norwegian expat, 76, rescued from fire, beloved dog dies

A 76-YEAR-OLD NORWEGIAN expat was rescued from a house fire at the Phuket Villa Chaofah 2 housing estate in Wichit in the early hours of Monday morning (May 2).

Lt Col Supotpong Chuaidu of Wichit Police was informed of the fire, in Soi 3/2 of Phase 2 at the housing estate, at 4:30am.

Wichit Municipality firefighters and emergency medical units quickly arrived to find thick smoke billowing out of the home.

They were told by local residents that one person, Norwegian man Knut Olsen, was still trapped in the house. Local residents had tried to rescue him but were unable to due to the thick smoke throughout the home.

Rescue workers entered the home and safely brought Mr Olsen out to safety. He was unconscious but breathing unassisted. Firefighters believe Mr Olsen was rendered unconscious by the smoke while he was still sleeping alone in the home.

Mr Olsen was administered emergency first aid at the scene then transported to Dibuk Hospital.

Firefighters found Mr Olsen's



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

full-grown poodle, a female, inside the home. The dog, which neighbours said Mr Olsen was very fond of, had died from smoke inhalation.

It appeared that the fire started from the air-conditioning unit, then spread to the ceiling of the home, causing the thick smoke, firefighters reported.

Local resident Phawika Prasert, 39, said that neighbours were alerted to the fire by a loud noise from the air-conditioning unit.

"The house was thick with smoke, but there were no flames," Ms Phawika said.

Neighbours had rushed into the home to try to get Mr Olsen to safety, Ms Phawika said.

"But we did not know which room he was in because the smoke was so thick," she added.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Driver fined for obstructing ambulance

THE DRIVER OF A BMW SEDAN that obstructed an ambulance while transporting a seriously injured woman to Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town last week has presented himself to police and been fined for the transgression

The driver, named by police only as "Mr Thamrong" (family name not revealed), presented himself at Phuket City Police Station last Saturday (Apr 30), confirmed Phuket City Police Chief Col Sarawut Chuprasit.

Mr Thamrong confirmed he was driving the BMW on Apr 28 when it was filmed by the ambulance crew driving intentionally slow and erratically braking, preventing the ambulance from continuing its journey to the hospital. A video of the incident was posted online, stirring outrage among viewers.

Mr Thamrong said he did not hear the ambulance because he was "old and deaf", Col Sarawut explained in his notice released last Saturday.

Col Sarawut did not confirm how old Mr Thamrong is or give any explanation as to why Mr Thamrong did not notice the ambulance with flashing lights behind him all throughout the time that the BMW was filmed preventing the ambulance from passing.

Col Sarawut did confirm that Mr Sarawut was fined B500, the maximum fine that can be levied under



The driver of the black BMW, 'Mr Thamrong' (left), at Phuket City Police Station last Saturday (Apr 30). Photo: Phuket City Police

Section 74 of the Traffic Act.

Col Sarawut in his notice called for all motorists to give way to all emergency vehicles, especially when they are flashing their warning lights and sounding their siren.

In his six-point explanation, Col Sarawut called for drivers to pull over to the left when safe to do so to allow emergency vehicles to pass. If in traffic, the driver will have to choose which is the best way to get out of the emergency vehicle's way, he added.

Col Sarawut noted that although the maximum fine under the law for obstructing an emergency vehicle is only B500, if the failure to do so results in grave consequences, the driver may face much more serious charges.

In the event that it is later found that the patient in the ambulance dies because the ambulance was intentionally obstructed, the driver may even face a manslaughter charge, he said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

DSI chief inspects claims to B50bn beachfront land

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Traiyarit Temhiwong, Director-General of the Department of Special Investigation (DSI), on Monday (May 2) inspected 178 rai of beachfront land at Layan Beach with an estimated value of about B50 billion that has remained occupied by claimants despite an order by the Supreme Court to vacate their plots.

Considering the complicated history of the claims to the land, which involves some three kilometres of pristine beachfront, the DSI had taken up an investigation of the claims to the land as a special case, said Mr Traiyarit.

At a meeting with Manoch Puchalad, the newly elected Chief of Chong Talay Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor), Mr Manoch explained that the government had been fending off claims to the land for 30 years, stating: "It has been a struggle."

In total nine claimants have refused to recognise their claims to the land dismissed by the Lands Department in



DSI Chief Traiyarit Temhiwong inspects the land at Layan Beach. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

1984, Mr Manoch said.

In dismissing the claims the Lands Department "revoked" illegally issued land title papers the claimants had presented as evidence of the claims, he explained.

Six of the nine filed official objections to the decision, three did not contest losing their claims.

"In handing down its decision against claims by two parties, the Supreme Court ruled first in 2015 and again 2017 that all 178 rai of land is state land. In its determination, the Supreme Court estimated the land to be worth B50 billion," Mr Manoch said.

Mr Traiyarit said that his officers were investigating whether rights to the land by any of the claimants could be verified, even though some of the plots claimed are now within the boundaries of Sirinath National Park.

Also further complicating the issue, claims to the land have not been filed just by individuals, but also now by companies, he added.

The aim of the government is to leave the area in its undisturbed natural state for the public to use as a recreational area, Mr Traiyarit said.

He noted the land in question was valued at about B300

million per rai.

Mr Traiyarit warned that any persons found still trespassing on government land would face prosecution.

"There are many [land] cases in Phuket, but we are paying a lot of attention to this case because other cases are now moving forward. Many cases are in the process of prosecution," he said.

Already 10 cases of land claims in Phuket have been forwarded to the National Counter Corruption Commission (NACC), Mr Traiyarit said.

"There's probably a lot more to try and keep an eye on," he added.

Phuket has gained a notorious reputation for land title documents being illegally issued by officials, much of which has been blamed on Tawatchai Anukul, who was the Phuket Land Office Chief in 2003.

After 13 years on the run, Tawatchai was finally arrested in 2016.

However, within hours of his arrest he was found hanged in his cell at the DSI headquarters in Bangkok.

Jurin promises more homes for sea gypsies

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER and Minister of Commerce Jurin Laksanawisit has vowed to provide more housing for sea gypsies in Phuket and other Andaman provinces.

The promise came last Friday (Apr 29) during a visit to the Moken sea gypsy village in Mai Khao, where Mr Jurin said the government's goal was to enhance the quality of life among the region's native inhabitants by providing "Stable Houses - Sufficiency Homes".

The goal is to provide 26,164 houses for sea gypsies in the Andaman region within the next five years, Mr Jurin said.

Mr Jurin said that the ongoing project to provide homes to indigenous peoples nationwide had seen 120,000 houses provided in the past 10 years. The overall goal is to provide 1 million houses.

Only in the six Andaman provinces of Ranong, Phang Nga, Phuket, Krabi, Trang and Satun have specific goals set for the number of homes to be provided in the next five years. The breakdown by province was: Ranong 2,376 houses, Phang Nga 4,930 houses, Phuket 2,241 houses, Krabi



Photo: PR Phuket

6,260 houses, Trang 5,470 houses and Satun 4887 houses.

"A total of 17,000 houses were built nationwide in 2020, and a further 24,000 houses in 2021. This year a further 27,000 houses will be built, giving a total of 68,000 houses provided over three years," he said.

"We're here to help solve the problems of those of us who don't have a home, don't own land or rent a dilapidated house," Mr Jurin said.

"The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Community Organizations Development Institute [CODI] will help to make roads and provide electricity and water supply and other utilities to such areas, and help secure loans for houses so that the home will finally belong to our brothers and sisters. They will be able to live on state land without being prosecuted," he added.

The Phuket News

Lambert Brothers Insurance Broker (Thailand) Co., Ltd



INSURANCE

- Property & Liability
- Professional Risks
- Life Insurance
- Boat / Yacht
- Accident
- Health
- Car

Contact Us :

Bypass Biz Town
156/48-49 Moo. 5
Chalermprakit Rama9 Road,
Rassada, Muang,
Phuket 83000 Thailand

Tel : 076-608-803, 076-608-483
Fax : 076-238-662
info@lambertbrothers.co.th
www.lambertbrother.co.th
f Lambert Brother
t Lambert Brother



**THAILAND'S
PVC WINDOW
SPECIALISTS**
SINCE 2004



Contact us for the lowest
prices in Phuket



PROJECT SUPPLIES DIRECT
Head Office at Tesco Lotus Thalang Phuket
English 087 061 7631 or Thai 095 463 6422
f PVC Phuket f NathanUpvcBrown



Time to pay the piper

LEGAL MATTERS

Silk Legal

During the height of COVID-19 restrictions, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) applied for “soft loans” from both banks and government agencies alike. The various SME loan initiatives were introduced in late 2020 with the aim of providing businesses with easy access to emergency funding during the first wave of the pandemic.

In Thailand, over US\$15 billion (฿515.887bn) in loans were handed out at interest rates varying from 2% to 4% which were absorbed by the Thai government for six months for SMEs. Over a million companies are said to have made use of the initiative.

By the time applications were closed to new borrowers in 2021, the number of companies that took out COVID-19 loans ballooned to over 2 million, meaning there are now over US\$25 billion of soft loans that need to be paid off in the coming years as the virus approaches endemic status.

These soft loans were a

lifeline for many businesses at the height of the pandemic, but they have started mounting additional financial burdens as repayments intensify as yet another monthly outgoing to already stretched cash flows.

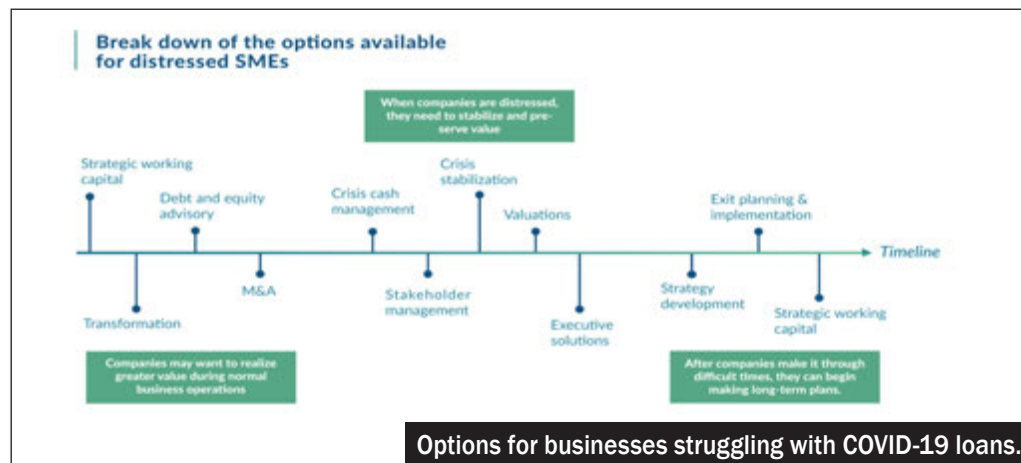
While many businesses have hoped that such assistance would help them survive the pandemic, many have found that they have yet to experience full recovery, if at all. There are fears that more than half of those who took out these support loans will be unable to repay them.

Admittedly, repaying these loans will be difficult given the uneven economic recovery. Nonetheless, it is crucial for struggling businesses to seek

help and advice if they experience difficulties keeping up with repayments before their accounts are classified as non-performing loans. Once loans have been reclassified as non-performing, businesses will find it very difficult to secure future financing and may even risk being put through increasingly aggressive collection procedures employed by collection agencies and other third parties.

HOW THE COVID-19 LOANS WORK

Strategising how one can overcome difficulties repaying COVID-19 loans requires an understanding of what they entail. As a minimum,



if the business is considered viable or high potential as it would signal eventual recovery and growth in the future. In some cases, it may also be possible to write off a portion of the loan depending on the circumstances of the company.

When renegotiating, one of the options that distressed companies may consider is extending the repayment terms of their loans, though certain thought must be taken with regard to possible financial implications, including personal guarantees and mortgaging of assets. While financial institutions were initially encouraged to take a compassionate stance amid the pandemic, the government is facing significant pressure to ensure as much of the funds disbursed to distressed SMEs are recovered as possible. This means it is possible that banks and other financial institutions will begin taking a harder stance on those who attempt to close a company or flee Thailand with outstanding loans, and legislation can trigger civil and criminal investigations into companies that successfully manage to leave an unpaid balance.

Companies should also consider how they used their COVID-19 loans given that they were disbursed to help businesses survive the impact of the pandemic. Companies were generally given freedom to use the loans in whatever way would help their company survive, whether it was paying rent, overheads, or their tax obligations. Using these funds on frivolity, or even to maintain the lifestyles of certain directors or key personnel, may incur severe penalties.

Of course, these are simply general options companies can take when strategising how to repay their COVID-19 loans. However, solutions will ultimately be contingent on the circumstances faced by each individual company in distress. Therefore, it is prudent to seek expert advice before loans go into default where options are significantly worse.

If your company is struggling to repay loans taken out during the height of COVID-19, contact Silk Legal at info@silklegal.com or via the contact form provided at SilkLegal.com to explore the options available to you.

FOOTBALL

DANCE

ART

HEADSTART

SUMMER CAMP

4 - 29 JULY

10% Earlybird Discount for applications before 31 May

MMA

DAYCARE

3D DESIGN

AustChamThailand

Business | Connections | Community

Australian ALUMNI

10 JUN

18:00 - 21:00 HRS

JOINT CHAMBERS

PHUKET

SUNDOWNERS

Friday 10 June 2022

18:00 - 21:00 hrs.

Angsana Laguna Phuket

500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members*

900 THB for non-members

EVENT SUPPORTERS

CAPTAIN HOOK SMOKEHOUSE

vietjet Air.com

RGF GROUP

MEDIA PARTNER

Phuket News

LIVE 89.5

2022 PLATINUM SPONSOR

LINFOX

*Due to limited capacity, walk-ins are not allowed

**Cash at the door is not accepted

Phuket NEWS TV LIVE 89.5

thephuketnews

Thailand Pass stays for now, but in 'faster form'

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government has said it has not cancelled the Thailand Pass registration requirement for foreign travellers yet but it will be made more convenient and quicker to obtain.

Dr Sumanee Wacharasint, assistant spokeswoman for the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA), said the requirement will be retained but the procedure will be streamlined for smoother ease of entry into the country. "The procedure involves checking vaccination certificates, proof of hotel bookings, insurance documents, and documents for booking RT-PCR tests upon arrival," said Dr Sumanee.

The Test & Go entry scheme was cancelled last Sunday (May 1), meaning there is no longer any need for bookings for alternative quarantine (AQ) hotels and RT-PCR tests, which will facilitate faster Thailand Pass registration. Vaccination certificates take less time to check than book-



An air arrival passenger undergoes an immigration process at Suvarnabhumi airport on Apr 28. Photo: Wichan Charoenkiatpakul

ings, Dr Sumanee said.

"Therefore, Thailand Pass registration has remained in place, and there should be no problems from May 1. But the CCSA will monitor the situation regularly. If the situation improves, a further easing of entry rules is expected to follow."

Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul added that the government will consider where they will scrap antigen testing and Thailand Pass registration requirements for foreign visitors once data from the cancellation of the Test & Go entry scheme and RT-PCR tests upon arrival

has been reviewed.

The Test & Go and Sandbox schemes ended on Sunday for vaccinated travellers, replaced by a "no quarantine" programme. RT-PCR testing is no longer required and COVID-19 insurance is reduced from US\$20,000 (B685,000) to \$10,000.

The unvaccinated are now welcome if they present proof of a negative RT-PCR test no more than 72 hours before their trip; but they must be quarantined for five days, with another RT-PCR test on day 4 or 5, and travellers are also advised to self-administer antigen tests during their stay.

TOURISM FEE OF B300 SET FOR Q3

Meanwhile, it has been confirmed the B300 tourism fee is scheduled to begin being collected between August and September this year using the Thailand Tourism Fee (TTF) system implemented by airlines.

Chote Trachu, permanent secretary of the Tourism and Sports Ministry, said last Friday (Apr 29) the fee is meant to help tourists in case of emergency, such as a sudden sickness, accident or political unrest while travelling in Thailand.

He further explained the TTF system will integrate with airlines' websites to display an additional screen for fee collection for foreign passport holders. The TTF system activates 30-day insurance coverage for tourists once they arrive.

People exempt from the tourism fee collection include diplomats, government officials, people with work permits from nationalities under a memorandum of understanding with Thailand, and children under 2 years old.

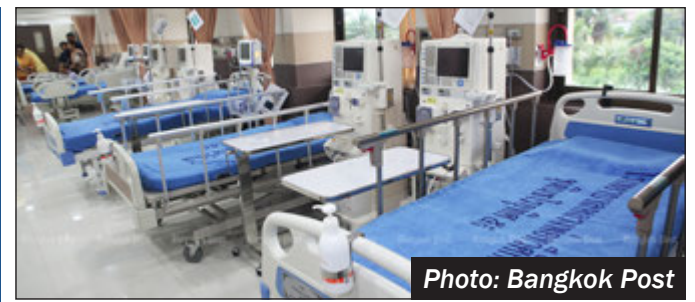


Photo: Bangkok Post

COVID-19 wards start to close

BANGKOK

SEVERAL HOSPITALS have begun closing their COVID-19 wards as the number of virus-linked admissions has fallen, according to the Department of Medical Services.

That is because most COVID-19 patients are now receiving care at home for mild symptoms, said Dr Somsak Akksilp, director-general of the department, on Monday (May 2).

"With this decreased workload in handling COVID-19 patients, it's time for hospitals to return healthcare resources to other departments that need them more," he said.

Dr Naronglit Masayanan, deputy dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Mahidol University, meanwhile, said Ramathibodi Hospital is resuming its normal operation timetable after many were delayed while priority was given to COVID-19 patients.

Lerdsin Hospital, too, is scaling back and will stop admitting COVID-19 cases to its field unit which currently only has 30-40 of its 200 beds filled, said Dr Somsak.

He noted that the field hospital was set up to treat up to 200 patients.

"New COVID-19 patients who come to this field hospital are therefore transferred to a hospital where they actually have the right to free healthcare services," he said.

"[Lerdsin Hospital] now expects to, in about a week or two, resume its normal operations as before [the COVID-19 pandemic began],"

Moreover, he said the close monitoring of coronavirus strains will continue after recent detections of new sub-variants abroad.

"Guidelines on the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 in the event the disease becomes recognised as endemic are currently being drafted," he said. Bangkok Post

BrightView Surgery

Life without glasses, after you're 50?

Yes, it is possible!

"Total solution to say goodbye to eye glasses - Forever"

- Your key solution to a world without glasses.
- Quick and easy procedure, fast recovery.
- State-of-the-art technology to bring back your youthful or Maximize your vision.
- Lifetime solution for cataract, free yourself worrying cataract degeneration.

To know more about BrightView Surgery, please contact us at

www.brightviewcenter.com +66 7625 4425 BPK.Intermarketing@bgh.co.th

BANGKOK HOSPITAL PHUKET

Accredited 1719 www.phukethospital.com MEMBER OF DMS

The Social Brunch

Sundays, 12:00 - 4:00 PM at Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort

- EXTENSIVE MENU. GREAT DRINKS. LIVE DJ. DUO BAND
- KIDS' MENU. CAMP HYATT ACCESS. KIDDIOLYMPICS. FACE PAINTING. MOCKTAIL CLASSES. POOL SNORKELING CLASSES
- COMPLIMENTARY POOL ACCESS FOR ALL GUESTS!

THB 1,490++ includes soft drinks

THB 1,990++ includes soft drinks and a special beverage package

THB 750++ for children 10-14 years old; FREE for children below 10 years old!

In-House guests with breakfast pay only **THB 990++** for brunch with soft drinks, **THB 1490++** for brunch with free flow beverage.

Prices are in Thai Baht and subject to 10% service charge and 7% tax.

For more information and reservations, please call +6676 231 234 or email fnb.phuhr@hyatt.com

HyattRegencyPhuket hyattregencyphuket Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort

HYATT REGENCY PHUKET RESORT

Count your blessings... and your livers!



BLAZING SADDLES

Baz Daniel
baz_gunner2000@yahoo.com

I am sitting in the lovely We Café by Rawai Beach enjoying a healthy salad lunch with one of the most remarkable cyclists I've ever met... hell, he's one of the most remarkable humans I've ever met!

Mark Stevenson recently completed an epic bicycle ride from the north of Thailand to Phuket over the previous two months. He cycled thousands of kilometres, across mountains, past rivers, rice paddies, small town markets, big cities, ancient monuments and modern tourism infrastructure. He cycled the terrifying mountain ride from Chiang Mai to Pai and Mae Hong Song, the so-called "road of three thousand turns". He has cycled on previous trips through Cambodia and Vietnam and down the Mekong, covering mammoth rides that few cyclists can even imagine, never mind contemplate actually achieving.

Even more incredibly, Mark is a hunk of cycling iron aged 68 no less! At an age when most men are looking for their slippers, so they can potter around their geraniums, Mark is out there pushing hard pedals in Asia's often brutal heat for up to 10 hours a day. If all this weren't enough, Mark is also the survivor of not just one, but TWO liver transplants... one of a tiny handful of



Mark Stevenson and his appreciation of life has seen him become a true rarity on the planet.

humans on this planet who can make that stunning claim to immortality.

As I sit with this incredible man, who is as gentle, kind and congenial a lunching companion as you could imagine, it's hard not to feel in awe of his sheer will power, strength of character and immense physical courage. His is a sensationally inspirational story of conquering the most horrendous pain and suffering that life's outrageous fortune can impose.

Mark's incredible journey started not in the far north of Thailand, but many years before. Born in Liverpool in 1954, he grew up in Southport in the tough northwest of England, where Mark's rebellious early years were associated with drug abuse and vio-

lence, resulting in numerous custodial sentences. By the age of 25, this self-confessed 'bad boy', had learned one of life's important lessons, indeed what most people take for granted, that is the true value of freedom. He became very aware that he had to escape his current environment to continue his freedom. In his twenties, Mark's strong character and determination started to shine through and he straightened himself out and started working hard in construction, where his natural strength and determination were great assets in building a successful career.

He emigrated to the lovely city of Cape Town in South Africa and ended up owning and running a construction company there. Adult life had become sweet, until a legacy from Mark's misspent youth caught up with him. Unbeknownst to him, Mark had contracted hepatitis-C from a dirty needle in his teens. In 2010, aged 56, he started feeling very tired and went for tests at Cape Town's famous Groote Schuur Hospital. The prognosis could not have been worse!

Mark was told his liver had a cancerous tumour which was inoperable and he would be lucky if he lived for another 18 months. He decided to return to England and was fortunate enough to be asked if he would take part in a research project testing new drug therapies to reduce the size of cancerous tumours. With nothing to lose, he joined the ground-breaking research and was very fortunate to learn that the therapy had indeed shrunk the tumour in his liver to a size where it became possible to receive a transplant, IF a suitable liver became available.

In 2013, after several false starts, a donated liver was finally procured and a seven-hour operation saw Mark receive the transplant, and became one of a handful of lucky survivors of this difficult medical process.

Mark had visited Thailand several times before his transplant and had become fascinated by Buddhism and meditation. He returned to Cape Town and these spiritual practices, combined with running up Table Mountain, plus gym and cycle-training sessions, became the pillars of Mark's strong-willed endeavour to re-build himself.

Tragically, Mark's new liver failed after only 18 months and in 2015, the same surgeon at Groote Schuur Hospital told him that his new liver was dead and that he should fly back to the UK that very evening in preparation for the worst. Full of medication, Mark arrived back at the famous Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham where he had received his first transplant, for a nail-biting three-month wait until finally another liver became available.

Just 25 months after his first transplant, Mark became one of the almost unique humans on this planet to have undergone two successful liver transplants.

Sitting with Mark at We Café in Rawai after his tremendous cycle trip from Thailand's north, and his even more mind-blowing life's journey, I asked him how he now felt about all that has happened in his extraordinary life.

Mark emphasised that he is essentially a recreational cyclist who has now come to view these long trips as an extended meditation on the beauty and calm of being outdoors. He gave great credit to his Thai partner, Khun On, who encouraged and accompanied him on his epic rides, despite never having ridden before!

Mark spoke with immense passion and insight about the profound gratitude he now has just to be ... here... now... alive.

Mark's incredible life, in which he has twice faced then escaped death, makes his personal appreciation of this powerful piece of wisdom unique. It is, I believe, a wisdom we should all try to comprehend and make our own.

"Bicycling" Baz Daniel has been penning his Blazing Saddles column, chronicling his cycling adventures in Phuket and beyond, since 2013.

Mastery Learning • American Curriculum

Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education



Ensuring success for all by providing education based upon student mastery of all subjects.

Enroll Today!



QSI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PHUKET

81/4 Moo. 1 Chalemphrakiat Ror. 9 Road Kathu
www.phuket.qsi.org • 076 304 312

ANIMAL HOSPITAL

hugme+

CARING FOR OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS 24 HOURS PER DAY.

HUGME.ANIMALHOSPITAL 100/16 MOO7 SRISUNTHON, THALANG, PHUKET 83110

076 510 656

Marriott Bonvoy celebrates the Joy of Gastronomy in Thailand with two-month food festival

‘Eat Out with Marriott Bonvoy’ offers three tiers of culinary promotions throughout May and June 2022, at almost 40 hotels and resorts across the Kingdom

ADVERTORIAL

Marriott Bonvoy is celebrating the timeless pleasures of good company and great gastronomy in Thailand this May and June, with the launch of “Eat Out with Marriott Bonvoy”, a nationwide food festival that promises a series of rewarding dining discounts for Marriott Bonvoy members at almost 40 hotels and resorts all across the Kingdom.

Running from May 1 to June 30, 2022, this two-month epicurean extravaganza will showcase the finest cuisine from Marriott’s hotel restaurants.

Diners can take advantage of a trio of appetising promotions: Tier 1 offers diverse culinary experiences for just B950, Tier 2 is priced at B1,150, and Tier 3 is available for B1,450, a fantastic discount of between 20% and 50%! These promotions apply to an amazing array of F&B events and delicious dishes at participating restaurants and bars.

In Koh Samui for example, a Tier 1 promotion is available at Long Talay, the beachside restaurant at Sheraton Samui Resort & Spa, which is offering a Southern Thai Set Menu for two



people for just B950 – a 25% discount compared to the usual price. Up at Le Méridien Chiang Mai, Favola is offering an Italian Family Set Menu including a salad, antipasti, pasta, pizza and dessert for the Tier 1 price of B950.

Alternatively, Tier 2 deals can be discovered at the brand-new Courtyard by Marriott North Pattaya, where guests can savour the signature Roasted Pork Ribs at Café 22 for the tempting price of B1,150, and at Le Méridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa, where

The Pizzeria’s authentic Italian Pizza Stella di Terra can also be enjoyed for B1,150.

In Phuket, Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa, serving fresh Andaman Seafood Tower for the Tier 3 price of B1,450, while the meats lovers can head to Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong Beach Resort for the rustic grill at Sears & Co Bar and Grill. Likewise, Krua Talad Yai offers a Market Place Buffet, where you can choose fresh meats and seafood. Then the talented

culinary team will cook for you.

Marriott Bonvoy portfolio of hotels and resorts in Phuket taking part in this initiative campaign include Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa, JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa, The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa Phuket, Le Méridien Phuket Beach Resort, Phuket Marriott Resort & Spa Merlin Beach, Phuket Marriott Resort and Spa Nai Yang Beach, The Naka Island Resort & Spa, Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong Beach Resort, and Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town.

And this is just the start! More hotels and resorts will be rolling out their exclusive offers in the coming weeks, creating a nationwide compendium of culinary promotions and perks. With plenty of affordable options for local residents, dining out in Thailand has never been more rewarding!

Eat Out with Marriott Bonvoy is available exclusively to Marriott Bonvoy members. Not a member yet? Join today and enjoy the exclusive benefits for free at www.marriott.com/loyalty/createAccount/createAccountPage1.mi

For more information about Eat Out with Marriott Bonvoy and to book your table in Thailand, please visit <http://restaurants.marriottbonvoy.com/th>.



THAI
RESIDENTIAL

Phuket's No.1 Trusted Real Estate Advisor

Are You Trying To Sell Your Phuket Property?

List Your House, Villa or Luxury Condo with
Thai Residential
and Increase Your Chances
of a **Successful** Sale.



PHUKET@THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM | +66 94 8411 918 | WWW.THAIRESIDENTIAL.COM
THAIRESIDENTIAL CO., LTD. 82/37 SAM PAO COURTYARD, MOO4, PATAK ROAD, T.RAWAI, PHUKET, 83130

POP QUIZ

1. On which day was King Bhumibol Adulyadej crowned King of Thailand?
2. On which special day does your Thai driver's licence expire?
3. Which two actors were the first to have their handprints cemented on the historic Hollywood Walk of Fame?
4. How many Olympic gold medals has Usain Bolt won?
5. Where is it illegal to sell ice cream after 6pm, unless the customer has a note from his doctor?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

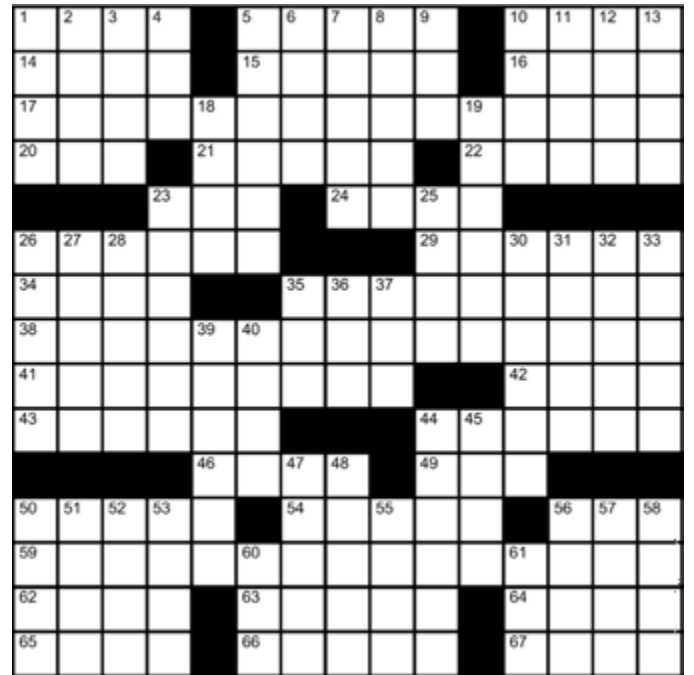
1. Habit
5. Ne plus ____
10. Vitreous substance
14. After-lunch sandwich
15. Sweet rice wine
16. Narrow street
17. Let-downs
20. Didn't straphang
21. Come-ons
22. Dostoyevsky novel, with "The"
23. Fish-fowl connection
24. ____ weight
26. 2005 Best Picture nominee
29. Blowhard
34. Available
35. Homegrown artifact
38. Martinets
41. Finnic people
42. ____ frog
43. Geometric figures: var.
44. African grazing areas
46. Many an office has one
49. Grp. involved in "the Troubles"
50. Adjust

Down

1. Hephæstus and Demeter
2. Part of a score, maybe
3. Lie
4. Stole
5. Jocko Conlan, for one
6. Rear half of a griffin
7. Prosecuted
8. Flush
9. Antenna holder
10. Split
11. Punjabi royal
12. Digging, so to speak
13. Feeler
18. Paranoiac's worry
19. Above ground level
23. Sarge, e.g.
25. Old Mogul

capital

26. Computer programmer
27. Unoriginal
28. Marinara alternative
30. Old World plant
31. Bleated
32. City in Scotland
33. Short pants
35. ____ maison: Fr.
36. Time div.
37. Starfleet Academy grad.
39. Natural
40. Home to the Palazzo Gambacorti
44. Some organs
45. While lead-in
47. In ____ parts
48. It's located on Lake George
50. Annexes
51. In ____ of
52. Bygone despot
53. De Valera's land
55. Social group
56. Fearless
57. Children's author Blyton
58. Glimpse
60. Tease wool
61. Bump off

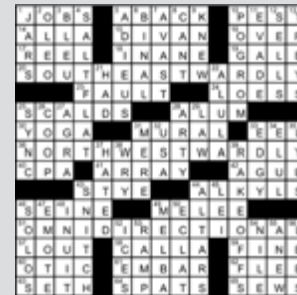


Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

(1) May 5, 1950; (2) Your birthday; (3) Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford (April 30, 1927); (4) Nine; (5) Newark, New Jersey.

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2

tablespoons of honey would give a bee enough energy to fly around the world.

10

hours is how long divers who went missing off the coast of Indonesia in 2008 spent in shark-infested waters before finally reaching "safety" on a remote island... Only to find that the island was full of hungry Komodo dragons.

450

years is how long it takes for one 1 plastic bottle to break down in the ground.

2014

was the year that Kim Jong-un had one of his own officials executed by a flamethrower. He wanted no trace of him left behind...

1.8 billion

US dollars makes Instagram celebrity Kim Kardashian the No 1 richest Kardashian, according to Forbes' 2022 billionaires list.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Best view on Phuket, in 360 degrees. Photo by Bulent Unat

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

This week in history

May 6, 1937

The German zeppelin Hindenburg catches fire and is destroyed within a minute while attempting to dock at Lakehurst, New Jersey. Thirty-six people are killed.

May 7, 2000

Vladimir Putin is inaugurated as president of Russia.

May 8, 1886

Pharmacist John Pemberton first sells a carbonated beverage

named "Coca-Cola" as a patent medicine.

May 9, 1671

Thomas Blood, disguised as a clergyman, attempts to steal England's Crown Jewels from the Tower of London. He is later acquitted and receives more money from the king than the 71-year-old guard stabbed trying to defend the jewels.

May 10, 28 BC

A sunspot is observed by Han



Photo: The Hindenburg ablaze, 1937.

dynasty astronomers, one of the earliest dated sunspot observations in China.

May 11, 1949

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

May 12, 1846

The Donner Party of pioneers departs Independence, Missouri for California, on what will become a year-long journey of hardship and cannibalism.

Source: Wikipedia

Trades & Services

 The Phuket News
 @thephuketnews

CORPORATE SERVICES



VERTIGO
VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

WE MAKE YOU LOOK GOOD.

VERTIGO VIDEO PRODUCTIONS.COM
f i t y

HOME IMPROVEMENT



Waterproofing & Crack Repair

20 year WARRANTY

Drone Survey

under yearly checkup plan...

TCM Asia Co., Ltd - quality services since 2003
office@tcm-asia.com 086-9439834

HOME IMPROVEMENT



MN.PAINTING

German/English: 087 894 8255

No Job too Big
No Job too small

HOME IMPROVEMENT



Lile-it
SMART TILES
Tile Leveling System

Baan Wana - Cherng Talay
Tel : 076 620168

PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE

www.tile-asia.com | letstalk@tile-asia.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT



WOOD FLOOR PHUKET - 20 YEARS

Solid wood floors and engineering.
Decks supplied and installed - Teak & NZ Pine.

f /solidwoodfloorphuketthailand
M Matt 081 271 2684 or Jessica 062 372 6624

HOME IMPROVEMENT



Plumber
German Water Team Ltd.Part
We repair what your husband fixed

MASTERCRAFTSMAN
WE REPAIR AND BUILD NEW:

- ALL KINDS OF HOT AND COLD WATER SYSTEMS
- HOT WATER SOLAR SYSTEMS AND SOLAR PUMPS
- POOL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE
- REPAIR ALL KINDS OF WATER SYSTEMS AND POOL PUMPS
- A VARIETY OF WATER FILTRATION SYSTEMS TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

SHOWROOM NEXT TO WAT CHALONG
OPEN FROM 8AM TO 5PM

094 594 8868 (THAI)
089 645 4848 (GER / ENG)

www.germanwaterteam.com
Email: germanwaterisam@yahoo.de
2212 Moo 8 Chaofa R.d.west Chalong A.Muang Phuket 83130

MARINE SERVICES



Marine Engineering Specialists

C & C MARINE

YANMAR mtu

C & C Marine (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

16/2 Moo 4, Soi Nanai, Thepkasatri Rd., Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200
Tel: +66 (0)76 273247 Fax: +66 (0)76 273248 Mob: +66 (0)81 078 4507
Email: cholmes@candc-marine.com www.candc-marine.com

OTHER



Mac-Nels

MACNELS SHIPPING PHUKET

ANY SHIPMENT ANY WHERE

☎ OFFICE: 076 603907

☎ MOBILE: CALL PETER 0863645862

www.macnellsphuket.com

OTHER



CARING FOR OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS 24 HOURS PER DAY.

hugme

โรงพยาบาลสัตว์ฮักมี
HUGME ANIMAL HOSPITAL

100/16 MOOT SRISUNTHON, THALANG, PHUKET 83110
☎ 076 510 656

WANT TO TALK TO PHUKET?

The **Phuket News** Your Island - Your Paper
 Новости **Пхукета** Твой остров - твои газеты
 ข่าว **ภูเก็ต**

WINDOW ON PHUKET

The map of PHUKET English 中文 Русский

Where to eat in PHUKET

LIVE 89.5 NEWS TV

Contact: gm@classactmedia.co.th

FRI

6 MAY



STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT

98/18 Vises Road, Rawai

Oil: 081 891 4381

www.shakersphuket.com

shakersphuket@gmail.com

FB: shakersphuket

Friday Mussels night

6 PM onwards: Belgian style mussels served with French Fries. All you can eat. Your choice, Your style: Mariniere, White wine, Provencale, Garlic & cream, Creamy curry, Blue cheese or Thai style. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 325 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381



Grow Boating Networking Evening - May 2022

We look forward to seeing you at the next Grow Boating Evening at the Isola Restaurant at the Royal Phuket Marina from 5pm on Friday the 6th of May. We are delighted to announce that our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Thailand International Boat Show & JAND Events. The Thailand International Boat Show 2023 will take place at the award-winning Royal Phuket Marina between the 12th and the 15th of January 2023, with over 6,000 visitors and more than 100 exhibitors expected to attend. For more details see their website at <https://www.thailandinternationalboatshow.com/> There will be a delicious free buffet for all attendees and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner - The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV.

Listen for

DAILY EVENT UPDATES ON

LIVE 89.5

SUN

8 MAY



STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT

98/18 Vises Road, Rawai

Oil: 081 891 4381

www.shakersphuket.com

shakersphuket@gmail.com

FB: shakersphuket

Sunday roast

12PM – 9PM: All you can eat Sunday Roast Buffet Beef, Pork, Chicken & Lamb – Cauliflower, Broccoli, Peas, Carrots, Fried mushrooms, Grilled Tomatoes – Yorkshire pudding – Roasted Potatoes, Mashed Potatoes – Apple sauce, Gravy, Mushroom sauce, Horse raddish, Mint Sauce. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 350 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 175 baht P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

MON

9 MAY



STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT

98/18 Vises Road, Rawai

Oil: 081 891 4381

www.shakersphuket.com

shakersphuket@gmail.com

FB: shakersphuket

Pizza Monday

12 PM till closing: 20% discount on all our pizzas We have a kid's playground zone. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

WED

11 MAY



STEAK HOUSE & RESTAURANT

98/18 Vises Road, Rawai

Oil: 081 891 4381

www.shakersphuket.com

shakersphuket@gmail.com

FB: shakersphuket

Wednesday BBQ night

6 PM onwards: All you can eat BBQ buffet cooked to order. Beef, Pork, Chicken, Burgers, Ribs Sausages,

Fish, Prawns & Squids, salad buffet and veggies, Choice of potatoes, cold and hot sauces, Bread, Buns & garlic bread. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 395 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 195 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

FRI

13 MAY



Phuket Bike Week 2022

Welcome all riders and friends to 26th anniversary Phuket Bike Week 2022 “ New normal ride together “ May13-15, 2022 at The PlayYard Beach, Mai Khao, Phuket. www.phuketbikeweek.com



22nd Phuket International Rugby 10s

It's Great To Be Back. The 2022 Aussie Bar Phuket International Rugby 10s with teams from around the region competing for bragging rights in what has become one of Asia's premier social rugby events. The venue is Thanyapura Sports Club and put the date 13-15 May in your diaries for a weekend of action and fun. For more information contact phuket10s@outlook.com or check out the website www.phuket10s.com Sponsored by Aussie Bar Phuket, Athena Siam Co.Ltd, The Phuket News, World Flair and raising funds for the Asia Center Foundation no into their 20th year of giving kids a chance! Thanyapura Sports Club. phuketrugby@gmail.com

THU

19 MAY



SKAL INTERNATIONAL PHUKET NETWORKING EVENT

1st post Covid event hosted by Banyan Tree Phuket at Angsana. We will celebrate our 26th anniversary and what better way to celebrate with drinks sponsored by Cocktails & Co who will be launching their new product in Thailand. 096 270 9080, contact@skalphuket.org Join us by invitation only. *ALCOHOL MAYBE A HEALTH HAZARD! SKAL International Phuket

FRI

10 JUN



Phuket Sundowners hosted by AustCham - Friday 10 June

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC), Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC) and Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, invite you to join us for Phuket Sundowners to be held on Friday 10th June, 2022, at the Angsana Laguna Phuket. Please register in advance, as walk-ins are not allowed for this event. Limited spaces, please book early to avoid disappointment COVID-19 Requirements: Attendees must be able to show proof of at least double vaccinated and a Negative test result (ATK/RT-PCR) conducted within 24 hours of arriving at the event. Cost: Baht 500 for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. Baht 900 for non-members.

JOB

Full Time Nanny

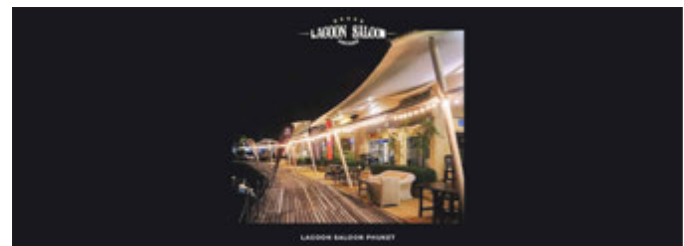
Looking for a nanny to take care of 1y9m old child. Live in or work 7am to 7pm English or/and Thai speaking Nanny experience 3 years 18000, Napakpapha, nicky_karpuzov@yahoo.com, +6639503078

BUSINESSSES FOR SALE

URGENT

Resort for sale /rent

3 rai grasland,6 building 12 rooms ,internet ,own Well ,big pool,parking,restaurant ,5min walk to Makro Lotus any offer considered. 3 rai grasland,6 building 12 rooms ,internet ,own Well ,big pool,parking,restaurant ,5min walk to Makro Lotus any offer considered, bigasail33@yahoo.com



BOAT LAGOON BAR FOR SALE

The Lagoon Saloon Phuket (LSP) in Boat Lagoon is FOR SALE. See our Facebook page for more bar details. Contact Khun Ora on Mobile 082 222 7499. Negotiable.

Reserve your space NOW!

PROPERTY FOR RENT



Land for sale near Mission Heights

Land is 1,656 square meters approx on 3 Chanote titles. Has concrete road, water and electric. Small quiet village close to Mission Heights. I'm looking for 4.5 million Baht, negotiable. Call 093 629 4400.

Alcoholics Anonymous

If you want to drink that is your business

If you want to stop that is ours

Daily Meetings

Patong, Chalong, Phuket Town, Bang Tao & Karon

CALL

081 895 4763

help@aaphuket.org

Google www.aaphuket.com

Australian Visas

Need An Australian Visa or Expert Advice?

Have the confidence dealing with an Australian Lawyer and Agent, based right here in Thailand but regulated in Australia.

Your application will be prepared and lodged for you, as well as expert advice as to the best visas and approach.

We can assist with all visa types, including Tourist, Partner, Work, Study and Family visas.

Had a visa refusal - our team specialise in getting you the result you want.

Phone: 084 400 9487

www.AustralianVisas-Thailand.com

Migration Agents

Registration Number

1464995

www.mara.gov.au



MARRIOTT 'BLOC PARTY' SPURS EXCITING EVENING IN THE HEART OF PHUKET

Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town hosted the first-ever BLOC Party, an upbeat evening featuring live DJs, fantastic food and cool drinks from 11 Marriott hotels and resorts in the Phuket and Phang Nga area. Food trucks & carts included the Salsa Shack, Plant based, BBQ smoker, Coconut bar, Beverage cart and many more.

WINDOW ON PHUKET

The June/July 2022
hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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

Want to be in it?

✉ CONTACT JASON TODAY – gm@classactmedia.co.th

Season on the line for Lewis

Crucial race for seven-time champ in first ever Miami Grand Prix

FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato
michael@boxofneutrals.com

The sold-out Miami Grand Prix this weekend (May 6-8) promises to be a week-long party, but there'll be no celebrating for Mercedes in a crunch two weeks for its title defence.

It's rare to see genuine bewilderment written on Lewis Hamilton's face, but his sense of shell shock at the end of the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix was palpable.

He'd just trailed home 13th, his worst result on pure pace in 13 years, counting way back to 2009 when he was driving an underdeveloped McLaren.

The entire weekend had been poor for Mercedes. Both he and teammate George Russell were knocked out of qualifying in the bottom 10 and made up no ground in the sprint, and though a great start from Russell and a slice of good luck catapulted him to fourth at the flag, there was no misrepresenting how uncompetitive the Mercedes



Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton is pushed to the grid for the start of the sprint race at the Imola GP. Photo: AFP

W13 was at the classic Italian circuit.

A little wild-eyed as he stepped out of the car, Hamilton was almost lost for words at first before he found the most difficult ones to say to express his current predicament.

"I'm out of the championship for sure. There's no question about that."

Just four races into a 23-race season and the seven-time champion had written off his chances – and those of his Mercedes team, the reigning constructors champion.

How did things go so badly wrong?

'PORPOISING'

The Mercedes car is a difficult beast to wrangle. The

era's most dominant team has gambled big on an extreme aerodynamic design – the car has essentially no sidepods, a stark departure from every other machine on the grid – but so far it's not paying off.

Instead the W13 is difficult and unpredictable to drive. Worse, it's the most badly affected by 'porpoising' – the bouncing up and

down on its suspension – as the aerodynamic floor stalls as it touches the ground at high speed and then reloads as the car rises back up.

While some teams have managed to dial out the bouncing and others have incorporated it into their performance envelope – Ferrari's SF-75 is among the more enthusiastic bouncers on the grid – none is experiencing worse porpoising than Mercedes. Indeed it's so bad that Russell is reporting back and chest pain from the violence of the vibrations.

The bouncing can be solved by raising the ride height, but that comes at the expense of performance, making it self-defeating. The team could stiffen the suspension, but that would make the car undrivable over the kerbs. Reducing the downforce overall would make the car difficult to handle at most tracks.

The team is running out of ideas after four rounds. More than once Hamilton and Russell have reported that set-up changes make no difference

to overall performance or, at worst, make the car slower.

The team is a fortunate 47 points behind Ferrari in the constructors standings thanks largely to two non-scores by Carlos Sainz and three retirements for Red Bull Racing, while George Russell is 37 points off Charles Leclerc's title lead, with Hamilton a further 21 adrift.

The season is long, but while Mercedes is still trying to crack its car both Ferrari and Red Bull Racing are working on making theirs faster.

The challenge starts at this weekend's Miami Grand Prix, where the team intends to bring its first round of updates, having held off so far to avoid muddying the waters as it analysed its problems.

The following race in Spain, a well-known F1 test venue, will then be the acid test of the team's progress.

The first-ever Miami Grand Prix is being billed as a high-roller party venue, but there'll be no time to soak in the atmosphere for Mercedes and Lewis Hamilton. Their seasons are on the line.

Phuket News

English Premier League Predictions

thepuketnews.com/predictions.php

Chanettee completes hat-trick

GOLF

TEEN PRODIGY CHANETTEE Wannasaen continued her domination on the Thailand TrustGolf Tour following a four-shot victory over Sangchai Kaewcharoen in the final round of the B3 million Thailand Mixed at Rayong Green Valley Country Club last Sunday (May 1).

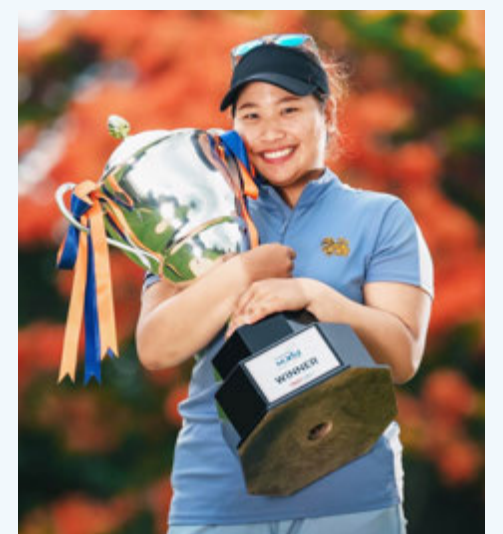
Despite some inconsistent play that led to four birdies against four bogeys, the 18-year-old Chanettee shot a final 71 for a 15-under 269 total to claim her third straight Thailand Mixed title thanks to a nine-shot advantage at the start of the round.

"I was so proud of myself to win for the third time. It was quite a challenging day as I didn't make as many putts as I would want to," said Chanettee who has won five titles since January.

Her Thailand Mixed hat-trick of wins was achieved a week after she celebrated her fourth crown of the year in the Thai LPGA Tour event at Laem Chabang International Country Club on Apr 24.

Prior to that, she won the first two Thailand Mixed series in Cha-Am, Hat Yai and the LPGA Thailand National Qualifiers in Pattaya.

As the current leader on the Thailand TrustGolf Tour Order of Merit, Chanettee and No.2 Arpichaya Yubol have earned their spots at the Women's Scottish Open on July 28-31 at the Dundonald Links in Ayrshire, Scotland. Chanettee hopes to make the cut after failing to advance to



Chanettee Wannasaen with the Thailand Mixed trophy. Photo: Bangkok Post

the weekend rounds last year.

"The course is totally different from courses in Thailand. I really want to go back there to gain experience one more time and hopefully to make amends," said Chanettee from Chiang Mai.

Sangchai, the 2021 Thailand PGA Tour No.1, rallied from nine shots behind to reduce the gap to just three heading into the final hole. But it was too late for him to turn the situation around as he had to settle at second place with a final 66 and 11-under 273 total.

"I was trying to give it a fight but Chanettee was just too good. At least, I reached my goal by hitting under par on the final day," said Sangchai after his best finish on the TrustGolf Tour. *Bangkok Post*

Toffees secure win but remain in a sticky spot

FOOTBALL

AFP

Everton kept alive their hopes of Premier League survival by shocking Chelsea 1-0 on Sunday (May 1), as Arsenal maintained their two-point lead over Tottenham in the battle to qualify for next season's Champions League.

Everton's huge win at a raucous Goodison Park means Frank Lampard's side are just two points from safety and have a game in hand to come over Leeds and Burnley, the two sides immediately above them in the table.

The only goal arrived just a minute into the second half when Richarlison pressured Cesar Azpilicueta into losing possession and the Brazilian forward finished coolly from Demarai Gray's pass.

Former Chelsea boss Lampard, who took over from the unpopular Rafael Benitez at the end of January, has struggled to revive the fortunes of the Merseyside giants, who last played outside the top



Everton's Brazilian striker Richarlison (centre) celebrates his goal against Chelsea last Sunday (May 1). Photo: AFP

flight in the 1953/54 season.

But he was delighted with the passion shown by his players and the supporters.

"The fans are in the middle of this," he told Sky Sports. "They know that and understand it. They got behind us, were nicely aggressive – this place has to be a hard place to come."

Defeat leaves third-placed Chelsea still with work to do to seal their place in the Champions League next season.

Arsenal were 2-1 win-

ners at West Ham thanks to goals from both of their centre-backs Rob Holding and Gabriel Magalhaes. The win moved them back above Spurs, who earlier beat Leicester 3-1 thanks to a Harry Kane strike and a Son Heung-min double.

The battle for fourth could come down to a north London derby between Tottenham and Arsenal on May 12.

But Mikel Arteta's men will hope to extend their lead to five points this weekend when they host relegation-threatened Leeds, while Spurs

face a daunting trip to title-chasing Liverpool.

At the top of the table, Manchester City maintain a one-point lead over Liverpool with four games to go after they beat Leeds 4-0 last Saturday (Apr 30).

Goals from Rodri, Nathan Ake, Gabriel Jesus and Fernandinho made sure Pep Guardiola's team keep their destiny in their own hands.

"It's not about the pressure – it's simple," said Guardiola. "We have to win all our games to be champions. If we don't, Liverpool will be champions."

Liverpool had moved to the top of the table earlier in the day with a 1-0 win at Newcastle thanks to Naby Keita's first-half goal.

Elsewhere, Norwich are heading back to the Championship after just one season in the top flight after they were beaten 2-0 by Aston Villa.

Burnley's revival continued with a 2-1 win at Watford meaning they have now taken 10 points from a possible 12 since sacking long-serving boss Sean Dyche two weeks ago.

Kawin to lead Thai squad at SEA Games

FOOTBALL

EXPERIENCED GOAL-keeper Kawin Thamsatchanan will skipper the Thai men's team who will be bidding to wrest back the SEA Games crown in Vietnam this month.

The Football Association of Thailand (FAT) announced a 20-strong squad for the biennial tournament, which kicks off today (May 6) with the War Elephants taking on arch-rivals Malaysia in their Group B opener. The other teams in the pool are Cambodia, Laos and Singapore.

Worachit Kanitsribumphen and Weerathep Pomphan join Kawin as the three over-age players in the U23 squad that also includes foreign-based players Jonathan Khemdee (OB Odense), Benjamin Davis (Oxford United) and Chayapipat Suphannapeset (Estoril).

As some of the players reported for training last Sunday (May 1), team manager Nualphan Lamsam said the limited training time could have an impact



Thailand SEA Games players take part in a training session. Photo: Bangkok Post

on the Thai bid to win the coveted gold medal at the games.

Coach Mano Polking added: "We don't have much time to prepare for the SEA Games in a meaningful manner so basically we will be telling the players what we expect them to do in matches."

"I think senior players like Weerathep and Worachit, who understand the tactics well, can help us control the midfield."

Thailand are the most successful team in the competition with 16 titles to their name while Vietnam are the defending champions.

The War Elephants face Malaysia in their opening game tomorrow (May 7), kick-off at 7pm.

Bangkok Post

NEW NORMAL RIDE TOGETHER

PHUKET BIKE WEEK 2022 26th ANNIVERSARY

ภูเก็ตไบค์วีค 2565 ครั้งที่ 26

13-15 พฤษภาคม / MAY

เดอะเพลย์ยาร์ดภูเก็ต THE PLAYYARD PHUKET

076-352069, 076-530356

Phuket Bike Week

info@phuketbikeweek.com

WWW.PHUKETBIKEWEEK.COM

AQUELLA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Summer GOLF COURSE RENOVATION PROMOTIONS

30th April - 13th May 2022

1,500 THB for Thai Residents

1,450 THB for Aquella Club Card Holders

14th May - 31st May 2022

1,900 THB for Thai Residents

1,700 THB for Aquella Club Card Holders

✓ 18 hole green fee, inclusive of caddy, cart & 1 tray of driving range balls

✓ 1 complimentary voucher for Aquella Golf & Country Club, mini putt putt course

✓ 20% F&B discount on the day of play

✓ 10% Proshop discount on the day of play

+66 (0) 76 679 308

Golfreservations1@aquellagolf.com

www.AquellaGolf.com

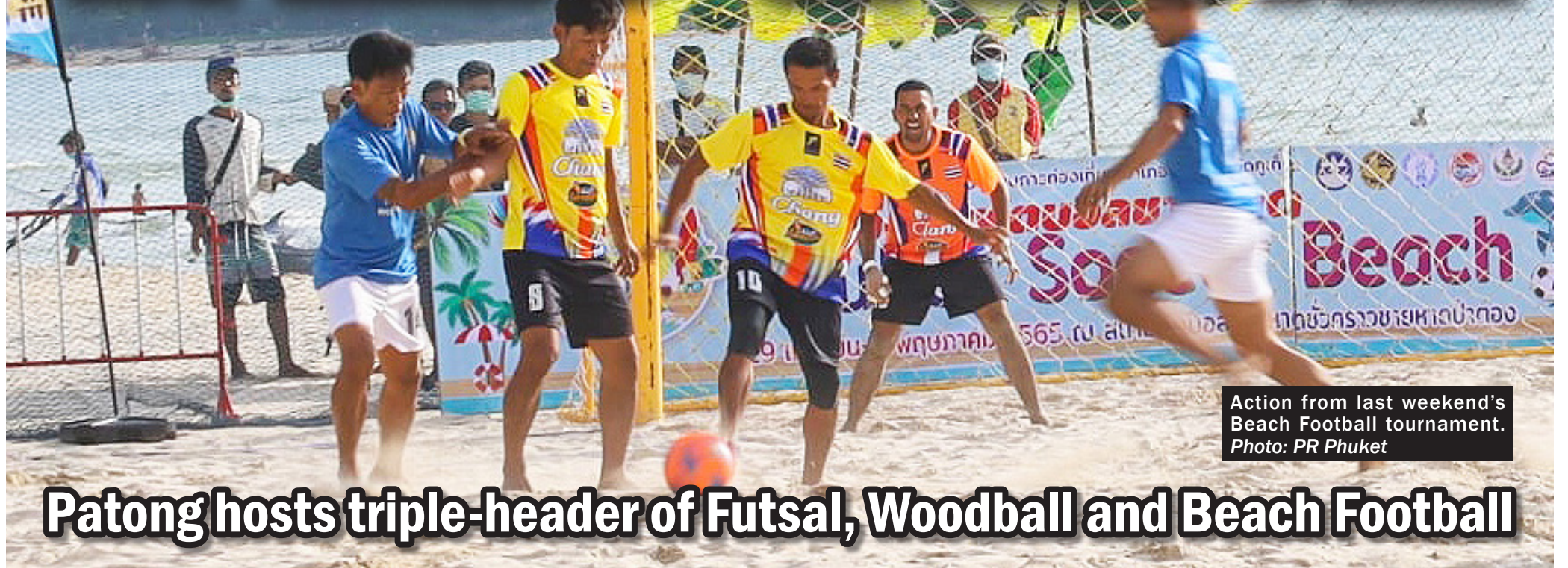
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Sport



War Elephants on SEA Games charge > p15

BALLS GALORE



Action from last weekend's Beach Football tournament.
Photo: PR Phuket

Patong hosts triple-header of Futsal, Woodball and Beach Football

ALL SPORTS

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Patong Beach hosted a beach football tournament last weekend (Apr 29 – May 1), the second in a series of three sports-themed competitions being staged in the area aimed at boosting tourism, revitalising the local economy and promoting a healthier, more active lifestyle among local residents.

The triple-header, organised by the Phuket Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, sees the sports of woodball, beach football and futsal

being played across three separate weekends at one of the island's most popular destinations.

Last Saturday and Sunday a total of 24 male and female 5-a-side teams took part in the "Phuket Soccer Beach" tournament at a temporary pitch constructed on Patong Beach. The teams were made up of players from all age groups from the general public, with play during the two-day tournament running from 10am until 10pm.

The opening ceremony, held at the temporary pitch on Patong beach around 4:30pm last Friday, was presided over by the President of the

Phuket Sports Association, Thammawat Wongchareonyot.

He was joined by Phuket Vice Governor Amnuay Pinsuwan; Phuket Provincial Palad Somprat Prap-songkram; Kathu District Chief Siwat Wangkunkul; Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) Phuket office Director Damrong Chaisena; Acting Phuket Tourism and Sports Representative of the Patong Development Foundation Chantana Siwakul, in addition to distinguished guests, athletes, team officials and the media.

Mr Amnuay explained that the three-event sport-ing initiative is part of an

economic stimulation and tourism revitalisation project overseen by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew that strives to use sports to help boost the local economy which is still reeling from the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms Chantana explained that the project had been partially funded by budget from the 'Phuket Provide' initiative which is tasked with organising sports-themed events to stimulate the local economy and boost local tourism, specifically within the Patong area on this occasion.

The activities it focuses on as part of this remit includes both popular and more tra-

ditional sports which are designed to encourage children and the elderly to exercise and pursue a healthy lifestyle, she added.

The "Woodball Thailand Championship" took place on Apr 22-24 and saw teams of all ages participating on the grass courts at Laem Petch football field opposite Loma Park in Patong. Woodball is a game similar to croquet which is extremely popular among all age groups in Thailand.

The third and final event is the "Phuket Soccer Futsal" competition which is taking place tomorrow and Sunday (May 7-8) on the clay courts at Laem Petch football field

in Patong between 10am and 10pm.

Participants competing across the three different sports across the three weekends are from the general public and divided into four categories: males under 60 years of age (60 teams in total), females under 60 years of age (30 teams in total), males over 60 years of age (12 teams in total) and females over 60 years of age (6 teams in total).

Spectators are welcome to come along and view the action this weekend and entry is free. All COVID-19 health and safety protocols are being adhered to, officials confirmed.

Phuket hosts major e-sports competition

ESPORTS

A TWO-DAY E-SPORTS COM-petition was held last weekend (Apr 29-30) in Phuket with a total prize pot of B60,000 and the opportunity for the winners to represent the province in national competition at stake.

Teams contested the Garena RoV online game at the Limelight Avenue Mall in Dibuk Rd, Muang, the first time the game has been organised as an official event in competition mode in Phuket.

The winning team who collected B30,000 and who will progress to the national format of the competi-tion was "REDKID7".

The runners-up were team "VK

Phayajeng" and team "Frustrated that it's difficult to apply for 30K money" who received B20,000 and B10,000 for second and third place respectively.

The competition was officially launched at the Limelight Avenue Mall around 10:30am last Friday (Apr 29) by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce Jurin Laksanawisit, who was joined by Rewat Arerob, President of Phuket Provincial Administrative Organi-sation (PPAO).

Mr Jurin explained the impor-tance of e-sports in Thailand and how the government is very much behind backing its development moving forward.

"The e-sports industry is grow-ing very fast, not only in Thailand

but on the global level," he said during his opening remarks.

"The current estimated value of the global e-sports market is more than B60 billion so it is a vi-able means of creating economic opportunity for the entire country.

"It provides an opportunity for the participants, or athletes, to forge their own career and become economically successful, which can naturally help their family and the broader community," Mr Jurin added.

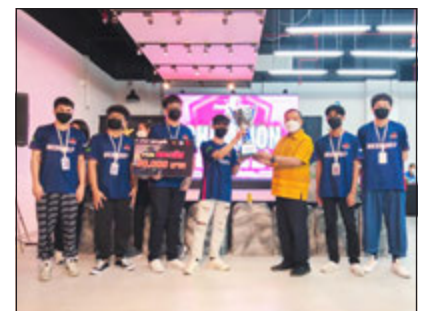
"One day, it may be common place for e-sports athletes to be traded in a similar vein to profes-sional footballers, where the player themselves retains an economic value and is regarded as an asset.

"The Ministry of Commerce

and the government therefore at-tach great importance to e-sports, a sport that is growing rapidly domestically and globally. There is an official esports Association of Thailand with has been in operation for around five years and has both amateur and professional esports athletes within its ranks. We are very proud that the 2021 ROV world champion is a team from Thailand."

Mr Rewat echoed the sentiments of Mr Jurin, agreeing that e-sports offers a genuine opportunity for children in Phuket to advance themselves and forge successful, and lucrative, careers.

"Previously, the general attitude to gaming was that it was a lazy past time that was ruining children's lives but since the Royal Gazette



The winning team 'REDKID7' with the trophy and winners cheque. Photo: Limelight Avenue Phuket Facebook

announced e-sports as a legal sport to compete in attitudes and opportunities have changed," Mr Rewat said.

This weekend's event came after it was announced last December that Phuket had been selected as the venue for an e-sports development centre to be established by leading e-sports gaming team NKT, located at the Par Phuket Hotel. *The Phuket News*