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An energy drink sits on a bar on Bangla Rd. Photo: The Phuket News

TOURISM FIGURES LOOK TO EASING OF ALCOHOL RESTRICTION AS GATEWAY TO BARS REOPENING

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Key tourism figures have welcomed the move to allow alcohol to be served and consumed in restaurants across the island, and to allow live music to be performed in venues, saying the easing of the restriction removes one of the barriers preventing tourists from coming to Phuket.

They also look to the measure, which came into effect last Friday (Oct 1) as a stepping stone towards allowing pubs and bars across the island to reopen.

Thanusak Phungdet, President of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce noted that the move to allow alcohol to be sold, even though only until 10pm, came after long-standing pressure from Phuket's business community.

Of note, in the end the easing of

the alcohol restriction came quickly. Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew sent a formal request on Sept 27, noting, "... as restaurants and food establishments in hotels and other food or beverage outlets serve Phuket Sandbox tourists, the tourists are affected. The service is inconsistent with the guidelines for promoting tourism in Phuket."

The formal written approval was received the next day.

"This has no effect on infections, and we have proved that there is no problem with the COVID-19 outbreak," Mr Thanusak said.

"Therefore, the CESA [Centre for Economic Situation Administration in Bangkok] and the government has allowed Phuket to sell alcohol until 10pm in various restaurants, and for live music featuring no more than five musicians to be performed under the DMHTTA measures.

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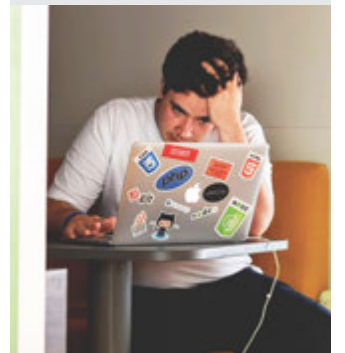
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News



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Slow start to Phuket reopening

The Phuket News

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The reopening of Phuket to allow domestic visitors onto the island got off to a slow start last Friday (Oct 1), with no surge in the number of vehicles and people wanting to come onto the island.

Officers manning the Phuket Check Point at Tha Chatchai have yet to report any people being refused entry to the province under the new conditions, which allow any domestic visitors who have been fully vaccinated and have tested negative for COVID-19 within seven days before arriving.

Only a handful of people presented themselves to be tested by antigen test kit (ATK), which is allowed for Phuket residents only under the new screening measures, which came into effect last Friday. It was not reported if any of the few entering the province tested positive.



Photo: PR Phuket

The rest of those arriving already had their paperwork ready, with most of those coming onto the island being regular delivery drivers and local residents.

Phuket officials over the previous week since announcing the new easing of entry requirements that came into effect last Friday had launched a campaign to inform people

of the relaxed measures – but explaining clearly, even in English, the requirements that are still in place.

In clarifying the new entry measures to officials on Sept

30, Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong confirmed that the Phuket Check Point will be open 24 hours a day again.

V/Gov Pichet also repeated that all people will be allowed onto the island as long as they have been fully vaccinated and can prove testing negative for COVID-19 by RT-PCR test or antigen test kit (ATK) no more than seven days before arrival.

Also allowed back into Phuket are people who have recovered from COVID-19 within the previous six months.

People who are registered on a house registration document (tabien baan) in Phuket may bring their own ATK that has been approved by the FDA and conduct the test at the checkpoint,

Officials will issue a document confirming the negative test result that can be used for seven days, V/Gov Pichet said.

“This will help reduce congestion at the checkpoint,”

he added.

Children under six years old are exempt from the vaccination and test requirements, as are emergency medical staff and rescue workers, and patients travelling in ambulances.

Children from 6-18 years of age who are not eligible for vaccination must be tested for COVID-19 by RT-PCR or antigen test method up to seven days prior to arrival, V/Gov Pichet said.

The same rules apply to those arriving in Phuket by sea transport, V/Gov Pichet added.

All arrivals must download and install the ‘Mor Chana’ app on their phones and have location sharing enabled at all times while on the island, V/Gov Pichet said.

All arrivals must also register their travel details through the gophuket.com web platform and be issued a QR code that they can show officials at the checkpoint on arrival.

Return of nightlife, entertainment boost hope for tourism

Continued from page 1

“The private sector and the Chamber of Commerce itself welcome this, and I think that tourists who come via the Phuket Sandbox project will be happy,” he added.

“Drinking [alcohol] at a hotel or in a restaurant is not an issue that causes any germs to spread. I think that the relaxation along with the current state of Phuket’s industry infrastructure and the Phuket Sandbox at this time means this would be very beneficial to Phuket,” Mr Thanusak said.

Kongsak Khoopongsakorn, President of the Thai Hotels Association Southern Chapter, believes that if the relaxation of the alcohol restriction for hotels and restaurants goes well, and the number of new COVID-19 infections on the island continues to fall, the move will lead to the reopening of pubs and bars in Phuket.

“It’s the nature of leisure travel. Tourists on vacation want to live and drink as usual. In the past we were not allowed to drink. We have complained a lot, with hotels, restaurants and tourists



Live music is now allowed. Photo: PR Phuket

deciding not to come. The regulation that prevented them from drinking was the main factor,” he said.

“Relaxing the restriction is a very good thing, but it should have been done a long time ago. We have been calling for it for two months, and we hope that it is the beginning of seeing travel return to normal,” he added.

“I understand that the many conditions that we have set can prevent COVID from spreading, but it also prevents tourists from coming,” Mr Kongsak said.

“If the authorities have sufficient statistics, numbers and academic

data to allow us to relax measures in every matter, we want the measures to be relaxed. Pubs and bars may be the next phase. Relaxing the alcohol restriction for restaurants and venues with live music is a starting point. If possible, there are no further outbreaks, pubs and bars in Phuket will be allowed to reopen in the next phase,” he said.

Weerawit Kruesombat, the chairman of Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA) who has long lambasted the alcohol restrictions and the forced continued ban on pubs and bars reopening, noted that of hundreds of venues on

Bangla Road, only a few locations are allowed to reopen.

However, even he welcomed the move. “Even if it’s only a small part, it’s a start, and that is good,” he said.

“The businesses that are currently open are the ones with permits to operate as restaurants, such as restaurants, but also pubs and bars that serve food, but those are the same ones that were previously allowed to operate by the [local] authorities, otherwise the business owners would not be able to go on,” Mr Weerawit explained.

“Now, the easing of the restrictions can help business owners to move forward. It’s better than not starting at all, even though it’s only until 10pm,” he added.

The Patong nightlife industry is doing its best to cooperate. All business operators and staff working on Bangla Rd were swab tested for COVID-19 before the easing of the alcohol restriction last Friday, he said.

“There will be follow-up swab tests every week, along with strict adherence to public health measures. Everyone is cooperating. Social distancing will be enforced and there are screening checkpoints

onto Bangla Rd to check tourists and staff coming to work,” he added.

“Don’t forget that almost two years ago, entertainment venue operators were hit the hardest. Therefore, everyone will try to be careful not to repeat it again. Because if it happens again, it wouldn’t be possible for us to go on,” he said.

Mr Weerawit pointed out that the Patong nightlife operators understood that large venues were still not allowed to open, and that venues were not allowed to sell alcohol late into the night.

“If they open and create a new cluster of infections, it’s not worth it. But we do ask the government to help this group of businesses,” he said.

“And last, don’t forget that Bangla Road is famous and Sandbox tourists who come here want to experience the atmosphere. Since the first day of relaxing the alcohol restriction we have seen a lot more foreign tourists coming to the area. It is considered an answer, maybe not a 100% answer, but it does also help tuk-tuk and taxi drivers, restaurant operators and various retail outlets. It does help them to earn more,” Mr Weerawit concluded.

Luxury resorts in land grabs

Trisara, Sripanwa resorts face having land documents revoked

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Luxury Phuket resorts Trisara and Sripanwa are facing legal action over illegally acquired land following the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) and the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) announcing the conclusion of their investigations last week.

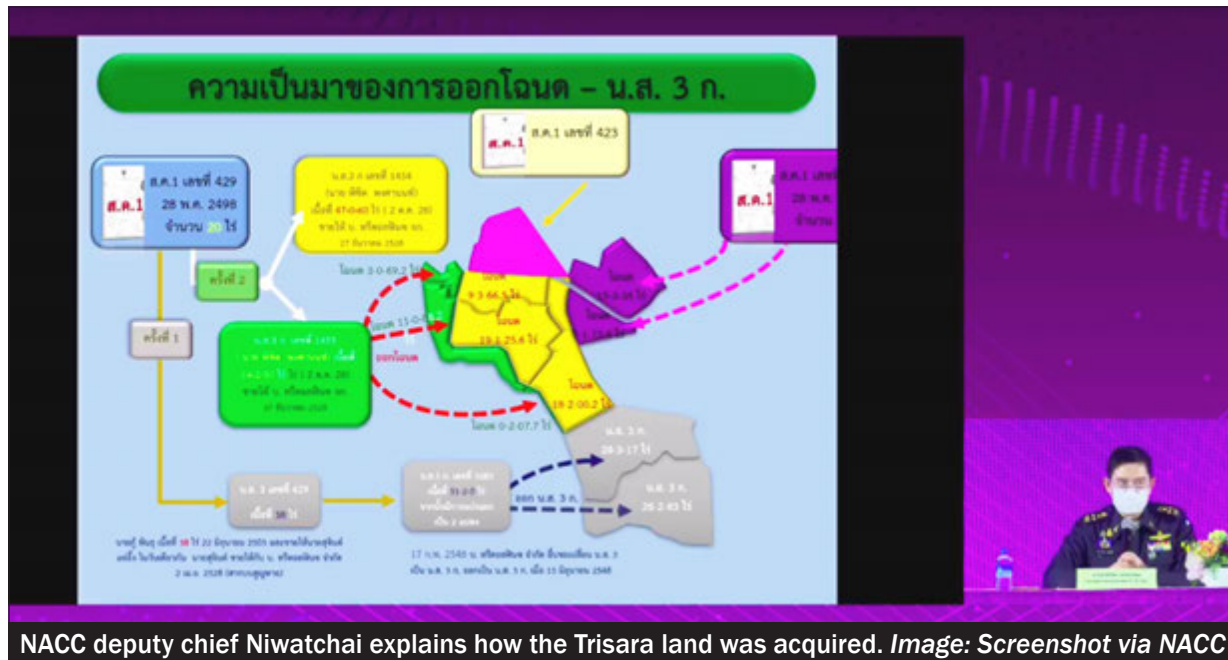
Niwatchai Kasemmongkol, Deputy Secretary-General of Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), explained that Three Dolphins Co Ltd had used the well-known “Flying SorKor 1” process to submit a SorKor 1 land use document for another plot of land to claim more than 40 rai adjacent to the land the company legitimately owns on Phuket’s west coast.

At a live press conference broadcast online, Mr Niwatchai and fellow NACC officers and expert land investigators specifically named Weerawat Janpen, who served as a Phuket Vice Governor at the time, as involved in approving the land transfer. Weerawat served as a Phuket Vice Governor in 2011.

The land illegally acquired is within the boundaries of Sirinath National Park and the adjoining Khao Ruak - Khao Muang national forest reserve, Mr Niwatchai said.

“The NACC has submitted a request to the relevant court to revoke the ownership rights,” he added.

Mr Janpen was just one of 29



NACC deputy chief Niwatchai explains how the Trisara land was acquired. Image: Screenshot via NACC

officials involved in the illegal issuing of the land documents, Mr Niwatchai explained.

The NACC is pursuing charges against 11 officials involved in the land grab, he said.

Compounding the illegality of the land grabs was that some of the plots acquired and built on has a slope of more than 35%, making any construction illegal, he added.

The SorKor 1 presented by Three Dolphins was used twice to claim different – and larger – parcels of land, the NACC panel explained.

In the first instance, the SorKor 1 land use document, originally issued for a land plot of 20 rai, was first converted to a NorSor 3 marked as covering 38 rai.

The NorSor 3 land document was then converted to two separate NorSor 3 Gor land documents for adjoining plots covering in total 51 rai.

The second instance the same SorKor 1 was used, it was presented to claim 14 rai with full ownership Chanote titles issued to the company, and it was presented to have a NorSor 3 Gor land use document issued covering a further more than 47 rai.

At this stage it is not exactly clear which land, if any, that the Trisara resort sits on is legal.

SRIPANWA

A separate investigation by the DSI into land plots occupied by the upscale Sripanwa resort, on

Phuket’s east coast, has found one plot deemed to have been illegally acquired through the illegal issuance of a NorSor 3 Gor land document.

The land covers 3 rai 3 ngan 35 square wah, which the Sri Panwa resort uses as the site for a swimming pool and covers land adjoining Panwa Beach, Mr Veera said in a post online citing the DSI report of its investigation, which he said he had now received.

“The land claimed is in a forest area under Section 4 of the Forest Act B.E. 2484,”

“The Department of Special Investigation has sent the investigation information to the Royal Forest Department to proceed in

accordance with its powers and duties,” Mr Veera noted.

The matter has also been sent to the NACC, the Department of Lands and the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) for further investigation, Mr Veera also said.

The NACC will pursue its own action against the officials involved, he added.

A request has been sent to the Land Department to revoke the document used to claim the land, he said.

Of note, the DSI has yet to post through its own channels the result of its investigation. However, Mr Veera posted a copy of the report in his post.

THE PEAKS

Meanwhile, Kata Beach Co Ltd, the owner of The Peak Residences, which has been ruled by the Supreme Court to be fully illegal, has asked permission from Karon Municipality to demolish the buildings.

“Last week, the company requested permission to operate the building,” Karon Mayor Jadet Wicharasorn, reported Isra News.

“The municipality has allowed the company or a subsidiary to demolish the entire buildings. The company will have to smash and remove all scrap materials from the forest area until the land is left to be able to plant trees to compensate for the original trees. The part is the duty of forest officials,” Mayor Jadet said.

Floods hike prices, COVID rules dampen spirits for muted Veg Fest



A small restaurant in front of Jui Tui Shrine in Phuket Town sits waiting for customers. Photo: PR Phuket

THE FALLOUT OF THE COVID-19 pandemic isn’t the only factor dampening spirits ahead of the Phuket Vegetarian Festival this year.

The recent flooding in large parts of the country, caused by devastating storms, has impacted the cost of vegetables with a rise of B10-20 per kilogram putting extra strain on vendors.

Heavy rainfall brought

about by the likes of tropical storm Dianmu has resulted in extensive flooding in many areas, especially in the north, northeastern and central regions which has left many agricultural crops and vegetables damaged or completely ruined. Added to this is the complexity of actually transporting vegetables from their source location which has further increased the cost.

The current typical cost of selected vegetables includes kale at B60 per kg, Guangdong vegetables at B35-40 per kg, Chinese morning glory B30-40 per kg, eggplant at B20-30 per kg, and celery at B110-130 per kg. However, vegetables like Krachai have seen a reduction in cost from B180 to B140 per kg.

The impact has been felt by market vendors ahead of the festival who have reported sluggish sales and a much more downbeat atmosphere. They also say COVID-19 has impacted sales as many people have been impacted negatively financially and far fewer people are getting involved as a result.

Meanwhile, preparations went ahead for the start of the festival, which began with the raising of the Go Teng police at participating shrines at sundown on Tuesday (Oct 5). All associated shrines were cleaned and sanitised, including all equipment used such as tables, lanterns, altars, as well as kitchen utensils such as spoons, plates, pots, pans and

other common-touch items.

It has also been confirmed that any visitors to the shrines during the festival must adhere to health and safety measures in place such as undergoing a temperature check and wearing facemasks at all times. Certain shrines, such as the Jui Tui Shrine on Ranong Rd in Phuket Town, are insisting that only those who have received COVID-19

vaccination will be permitted to enter and engage in any activities.

Jui Tui Shrine is considered the largest shrine in Phuket where usually the atmosphere is vibrant in the weeks leading up the festival with stalls lining the streets outside its gates. However, this year, the shrine has banned stalls on the street outside its gates due to concerns

over spreading COVID-19 which has contributed to a muted and sluggish atmosphere and pushed what business there is towards commercial shops. It was also confirmed that the procession of monks around the city will be done in cars this year as opposed to the usual walking parade, again due to health and safety concerns relating to COVID-19. *The Phuket News*

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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Wind 18 m/s

SUN OCT 10

High: +31°
Low: +26°

Wind 14 m/s

MON OCT 11

High: +30°
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Wind 18 m/s

TUE OCT 12

High: +29°
Low: +26°

Wind 18 m/s

WED OCT 13

High: +29°
Low: +25°

Wind 18 m/s

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High: +29°
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Wind 18 m/s

Couple nabbed for romance scams

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A Nigerian man and a Thai woman have been arrested in Phuket for their involvement in online 'romance scams' that saw their victims swindled out of at least B11 million.

The Nigerian national, named by police "Mr Abuchi Johnkennedy Onyenecherem", and Thai woman Ampha 'Pink' Phatthap, 26, were arrested at a rented room in Srisoonthorn, Thalang, on Sept 28, police reported on Sept 30.

Present for the arrests were officers from the Immigration Bureau and Chong Talay Police.

Of note, police gave an alternate name for "Mr Abuchi", that of "Mr Ikvgolam Joseph Chimemerim".

Ampha was already wanted on an outstanding warrant issued by Chonburi Provincial Court on Sept 27, police



Immigration officers raided the house in Srisoonthorn on Sept 28. Photo: Phuket Immigration

explained on Sept 30.

What was not explained was on which day Ampha and Mr Abuchi had entered Phuket, which at the time of their arrest remained under the tight entry provisions ex-

cluding entry to the province to all people except Sandbox tourists, emergency personnel, essential deliveries and people conducting urgent business on the island, such as attending court appointments or leav-

ing the island via the airport.

Regardless, officers explained that Ampha had created fake identities online, via Facebook, LINE and other online platforms, and deceived victims by enticing them into

a romantic relationship, and then having them send money to pay for living expenses, gifts or to send items back to them by post.

Ampha confessed that over six months she had tricked her victims into sending more than B11mn to a specified account. She was then instructed by a network in Bangkok to transfer the funds to other bank accounts.

Ampha also confessed she was paid for her role in the scams, police said.

As for 'Mr Abuchi', immigration officers said that he had been staying in the country illegally.

Police were now investigating him for his possible role in the romance scam, police said.

The pair were taken to Chong Talay Police Station and charged for the crimes police already have evidence for, police noted in their report.

More charges may be pending, they added.

Man escapes as car plunges into lake

A 23-YEAR-OLD MAN escaped from his car without injuries after it plunged into a tin mine lagoon in Koh Kaew last Sunday afternoon (Oct 3).

Capt Kruefa Phongsapan of the Phuket City Police said she was notified of the accident, on Route 3030, which joins Thepkasattri Rd in Koh Kaew with the northern area of Kathu, at 1:50pm.

Police and rescue workers arrived at the scene to find the driver Thanapoom Hukhiao, 23, a resident of Phuket Town, standing safely nearby.

Mr Thanapoom told police that he was driving to Koh Kaew to meet a friend when the front left wheel started shaking, causing him to lose control of the car, a Toyota Vios, which veered off the road and into the lagoon.

He managed to escape via the car door before the car sank, Mr Thanapoom said.

Mr Thanapoom said he believed he was saved by his amulet of Thao Wessuwan hanging around his neck, which he clutched while making his escape from the sinking wreck.

Rescue divers from the



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Kusoldharm Foundation took about 15 minutes to locate the sunken vehicle in the water, which ranged from three to five metres deep.

A white spoiler was found in the shallow water by the edge of the lake and the car's windscreen was broken, presumably by its impact with the water, Capt Kruefa said.

A tow truck team was called, who took more than two hours to retrieve the car from the water. The car was then taken to Phuket City Police Station.

Police have yet to conclude their investigation to determine whether Mr Thanapoom would face any charges, Capt Kruefa said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

MP Niphan Sirithorn (3rd from left) is greeted on arriving at Phuket Provincial Hall by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew (2nd from right). Photo: PR Phuket

Rising drug use in Phuket questions policy

RIISING DRUG USE ACROSS PHUKET has led to increased drug arrests over the past year, Niphan Sirithorn, chairman of the House of Representatives Anti-Money Laundering and Narcotics Commission, was told during his visit to Phuket on Sept 30.

Mr Niphan, an MP of the ruling Palang Pracharath Party from Trang province, was in Phuket to be briefed in person on the drugs situation in Phuket, at a meeting held at Phuket Provincial Hall led by Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Office (Palad) Anupap Yodkwan Yodrabham.

Mr Anupap said that the situation of the drug epidemic in Phuket during the 11 months of fiscal year 2021 (Oct 2020 - Sep 2021) saw increases in the number of drug arrests in Phuket for kratom, crystal meth (ya ice), methamphetamine (ya bah) and marijuana.

Ya ice was seized more than any other narcotic, Mr Niphan noted.

"Now the price has dropped, causing

more and more people to become addicts," Mr Niphan said.

"It has become increasingly popular among people of higher status and in the workforce in occupations with relatively high incomes," he added.

Amphetamine and marijuana use continued to spread, but had declined over the past year, Mr Niphan noted.

"The relevant agencies have continuously monitored, investigated and arrested [drug] sources to prevent the spread of drugs in the area," he continued.

The rising incidence of drug use has given the commission a reason to review its policy in the war on drugs, Mr Niphan noted.

"In this regard, the Commission has questioned the guidelines for the prevention and suppression of drugs, as well as exchanging information and expressing opinions in order to bring the information to be presented to relevant agencies to solve the problem," he said.

The Phuket News

Patong still queues for food

The Phuket News
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While tourism officials continue to tout the positive effects of the Phuket Sandbox tourism scheme, at last report claiming the project has helped to inject B2.25 billion into the economy, people in Patong continue to queue for food each day, with husband and wife Aland Tan and Sunee Koyoma continuing their efforts to help those who cannot afford to feed themselves.

Sunee is originally from Saraburi province but has lived in Phuket for the past 16 years. Aland is from Malaysia and has lived in Phuket now for seven years. In pre-COVID days, the couple ran a small restaurant in the beach resort town.

"The situation is bad, 90% of the shops and businesses are still shut down," Sunee explains.

"Many families staying in Patong have no work or only partial work. We see increased homelessness. We also give food to those sleeping on the streets now," she adds.

"We see familiar faces coming to collect our daily

food packets, and we get to know their stories. So many sad stories of financial stress, joblessness and having to stop work due to COVID. The least we can do is help with one hot meal a day," Sunee says.

The couple began their efforts to provide food to those in need through their project 'Hot Meals for All' in March last year.

"From last year we witnessed many shops, hotels and restaurants shutdown with many jobless people just lining up in the streets asking for food. My husband Aland and I were so saddened, seeing people line up in the street for food in the hot sun. We never see such things happen in Phuket, and we had nothing in our hand to give. But I can cook, so my husband called his pastor in Malaysia to sponsor 60 packets of hot meals for two weeks," Sunee recalls.

"Two weeks became five weeks and 60 packs grew to 200 packs a day, thanks to kind friends who saw our giving on Facebook. We are religious and we thank God for helping us find the money to serve food, but we give our meals freely to those in need and this is not tied to any



The queue for food provided by Aland and Sunee through their Hot Meals for All project stretches back every day. Photo: Hot meals for All

religious intentions."

Local residents and expats jump in to lend Sunee a hand. "We have a small group of rotating volunteers, most are expats living in Phuket. Our kitchen is able to pack close to 200 meals when we have at least two volunteers daily. It would be great to get a fixed set of volunteers that come in once a week as many hands make the packing go a lot quicker," Sunee notes.

The need to continue the food effort remains.

"We started serving hot meals last March 2020 and have been waiting for the economic situation to improve," Sunee adds.

"It has been 18 months now and our food lines are getting longer. We want to raise funding to cover serving meals until the end of the year, but it is likely the tourism will not recover in the near term so we must be prepared to continue raising money and serving meals next year. In a perfect world, we would not

have to do this work but until the economy improves, this is how we can help the local community," she says.

Not only does Sunee and her family tirelessly prepare daily hot meals Monday to Friday, they have also provided Survival Bags when finances allow.

Much of their efforts have been financed out of their personal savings, in addition to friends and family who have donated money to help keep their work going. However, to scale up the programme and serve more meals, more funding is needed.

Sunee is now raising a remaining B250,000 required to finance 15,000 hot meals until the end of the year. The project also aims to be eco-friendly, reducing single use plastic for more expensive paper packaging.

Funding for the entire project has been projected to cost B480,000. It costs B32 to make one pack of food. This includes food cost, paper packaging, utilities and gas. The target is to achieve 15,000 hot meals served by Dec 31.

The funding drive has been launched on the SimplyGiving web platform. So far many of

the donations to the cause are from Singapore.

"The donation drive was championed by one of our Singaporean volunteers. She approached many overseas persons who are homeowners in Phuket or have spent many holidays here and therefore they were very sympathetic to the cause. The donors come from all over the world," Sunee explains.

"The current round of funding started at the end of August (2021) and has already raised B250,000 separately through private donors but we need to open up the public funding sources to achieve our goals," she adds.

Meanwhile, the food lines daily snake around the block as hopefuls wait patiently in line to secure a food packet. There is not always one for everyone.

Updates on the Hot Meals for All food relief programme, visit <https://sideshowjudy.wixsite.com/hotmealsphuket>. To make a donation to support the effort visit the Hot Meals for All donations page on [SimplyGiving.com](https://www.simplygiving.com). Contact Aland and Sunee by email at: hotmealsphuket@icloud.com

Governor asks for Pfizer, Sinopharm to vaccinate all children aged 3-17

PHUKET GOVERNOR NARONG WOONCIW has requested that Phuket be provided vaccine doses to vaccinate children from 3 years old through age 17.

The request came in two official letters sent on Sept 28, one addressed to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Health, the other sent to the Ministry of Education.

In the letters, Governor Narong pointed out that Phuket was initially allocated Sinovac to vaccinate its residents in order to reopen the province to tourists under the Phuket Sandbox scheme, and allocated AstraZeneca to use as 'booster' shots to counter the spread of the Delta variant of the virus across the island.

However, he added, "One more factor that builds confidence for the people in Phuket is that the children would be more secure through receiving the vaccine."

Phuket has a total of 83,267 children aged 3-17 years old, with 49,937 of those aged 3-11 years old, and 33,330 aged 12-17 years old, Governor Narong noted.

His request was simple: "We therefore ask for support as follows:

Allocate Pfizer vaccine for children aged 12-17 years to Phuket Province, to start injections together with the control and maximum control (red and dark red) provinces on October 4, 2021

Allocate Sinopharm vaccine or other vaccines for children aged 3-11 years as soon as the FDA has approved the use of the vaccine in young children."

"Phuket Province [the provincial government] understands that when people in the province see comprehensive vaccination



A student in Bangkok receives a COVID vaccination. Photo: NBT World

has been received in all groups, this will enable them to build confidence among the people and the parents in returning to open teaching as usual, which resulted in parents being able to return to work in support of the Phuket Tourism Sandbox project effectively," Governor Narong explained.

The request follows the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) undertaking a pilot project, vaccinating 2,295 students in the risk group of those with any of seven diseases, among more than 5,000 students who have registered for inoculation.

The students, including 1,681 who received their first dose and 614 who received their second, were given the Pfizer vaccine at the Faculty of Medicine Vajira Hospital, Nawamintrathirathirak University. No side-effects were reported, said state news agency NNT.

Deputy Government Spokesperson Ratchada Thanadirek said the government is preparing to inoculate more than 4.5 million students aged 12-18 with the Pfizer vaccine. The Ministry of Education is currently surveying the number of students, with parental consent, before opening vaccine units for students in each province. *The Phuket News*



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Photo: Thai AirAsia

AirAsia to launch Phuket - Chiang Mai flights Oct 16

AIRASIA WILL RE-launch its Phuket - Chiang Mai flight service from Oct 16 as it resumes domestic flights to many destinations throughout the country this month.

On Oct 15, AirAsia will also resume flights from Don Mueang Airport to Phitsanulok, Nan, Loei, Sakon Nakhon, Surat Thani, Krabi and Trang along with regional connections Chiang Mai-Hua Hin, announced a release issued last Friday (Oct 1).

“These are in addition to the 11 routes brought back into operation earlier in September and bring the total route network for AirAsia in Thailand to 20 at present,” the release noted.

AirAsia Thailand CEO Santisuk Klongchaiya said this is in support of the Thai government’s policies to promote domestic tourism with improved health and safety measures.

The support should be a boon to the overall economy and help spread revenue generation opportunities across the nation. Thai AirAsia has expressed its full commitment to back these policies by expanding its domestic service and increasing the frequency of flights on high demand routes, he said.

“We saw an encouraging response across all of our routes in September, achieving a load factor average of 75-80% and goes up to 90-95% over the weekends, especially for flights to and from Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Hat Yai,” Mr Santisuk noted.

“With our guests now getting more familiar with the different travel requirements of each province, we believe tourism industry operators will begin to see a stronger recovery during the final quarter of this year,” he added. *The Phuket News*

Seven-day Sandbox now open to all countries

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has announced that from Oct 1 Thailand has lifted the listing of countries per the level of COVID-19 transmission risks for Sandbox tourists.

Now the seven-day stay for Sandbox tourists is open to visitors from any country in the world, the TAT has announced.

“This means Thailand is now welcoming travellers from any country in the world to the ‘Sandbox’ programme,” the TAT said in its announcement.

“More details on the situation under the reduced mandatory stay of seven days will be made available as soon as possible,” the TAT announcement said.

The TAT in a separated released also announced that under new quarantine regulations approved by the Royal Thai Government, fully vaccinated foreign tourists visiting Phuket, Surat Thani, Phang Nga and Krabi via the relevant Sandbox programmes can now stay for only seven days before being able to move on to other parts of Thailand.

The reduced quarantine time applies to those visiting under the ‘Sandbox’ programme to Phuket, Surat Thani (Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Ko Tao), Phang Nga (Khao Lak and Ko Yao) and Krabi (Koh Phi Phi, Koh Ngai and Railay Beach).



Now the seven-day stay for Sandbox tourists is open to visitors from any country in the world, the TAT has announced. *Image: TAT*

It also means that fully vaccinated tourists can now travel straight to the designated areas of Phang Nga and Krabi upon landing in Phuket, and stay there for seven days.

Details of travel requirements under the seven-day quarantine for fully vaccinated foreign tourists, as well as requirements for non-vaccinated or partially-vaccinated tourists under the 10-day quarantine for arrivals by air and 14-day quarantine for arrivals by land were announced through yet another release, explaining as follows:

7-DAY QUARANTINE

For travellers who have been fully vaccinated with a vaccine approved by Thailand’s Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) or the World Health Organisation (WHO) no less than 14 days before their travel date, they are required to present the vaccine certificate (either the original or a

printed copy) at the point of entry into Thailand.

During the quarantine, they are required to undergo two RT-PCR tests – first upon arrival on Day 0-1, and the second before finishing the quarantine period on Day 6-7.

10-DAY QUARANTINE

Travellers who have not been vaccinated, without a vaccine certificate, or partially vaccinated, and who arrive in Thailand by air will be required to enter a 10-day quarantine, and undergo two RT-PCR tests – first upon arrival on Day 0-1, and the second on Day 8-9.

14-DAY QUARANTINE

Travellers who have not been vaccinated, without a vaccine certificate, or partially vaccinated, and who arrive in Thailand by land will be required to enter a 14-day quarantine, and undergo two RT-PCR tests – first upon

arrival on Day 0-1, and the second on Day 12-13.

“In order to be eligible to enter in Thailand, vaccinated international travellers still need to have all of their advance arrangements in good order for arrival and entry,” the TAT advised.

“These include a valid visa or re-entry permit, a Certificate of Entry (COE) issued by the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate, a COVID-19 health insurance policy, confirmation of Alternative Quarantine (AQ) hotel booking, and a medical certificate with a RT-PCR laboratory result indicating that COVID-19 is not detected issued no more than 72 hours before departure,” it added.

“Interested vaccinated foreign tourists are recommended to enquire at the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate in their home country for more details,” the TAT noted in its release.

Outrigger announces management team for Thailand

OUTRIGGER HOSPITALITY Group has announced its senior management team that will open three resorts in Southern Thailand this high season.

Tony Pedroni, has been appointed Area General Manager, Thailand. He will be supported by Sergey Kutuzov, Area Director of Sales and Marketing, Thailand, and Leah Matters, General Manager, Outrigger Koh Samui Beach Resort.

They will be assisted by a dozen or so other managers, soon to be announced, many with area responsibilities in finance, security, HR, engineering and purchasing. The appointments come as Outrigger establishes its presence in three of the most sought-after beach locations in Asia.



High season return for (from left) Tony Pedroni, Leah Matters and Sergey Kutuzov as part of new Outrigger Hospitality Group appointments in Thailand.

Outrigger Khao Lak Beach Resort and Outrigger Surin Beach Resort in Phuket are scheduled to open Dec 15. Outrigger Koh Samui Beach Resort is scheduled to open on Lamai Beach before Easter 2022.

An Irish national with more than 30 years of professional experience, Tony Pedroni has enjoyed a career spanning seven countries

and three continents, spent largely with Marriott International and Outrigger Hospitality Group. Mr Pedroni is a graduate of the Swiss Hotel Management School HOSTA in Leysin, Switzerland.

Sergey Kutuzov’s hospitality career spans nine years in Thailand working with MINOR, Accor and Dusit and six years in Dubai, UAE,

working with Starwood and Accor. Mr Kutuzov’s career began in his hometown of St Petersburg, Russia, with Kempinski Grand Hotel Europe.

Mr Kutuzov holds a bachelor’s in physics from St Petersburg State University and is a school of management graduate from there as well.

Leah Matters has held senior roles with Outrigger in Australia and Thailand since 2008, notably as General Manager of Outrigger Twin Towns Resort and then Resort Manager of the former Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort, 2015-21. Ms Matters is particularly strong on guest satisfaction policy implementation and resort social media engagement.

“Our new team is a dynamic mix of experience and enthusiasm,” said Damian Clowes, Regional

Managing Director, Asia Pacific, for Outrigger Hospitality Group. “We aim to re-establish Outrigger among the top beach resorts in Thailand for families and couples.”

Mr Pedroni added that Outrigger has a history of higher than average guest satisfaction levels among its competitive set. This was evidenced by the previous Outrigger in Phuket’s inclusion in the TripAdvisor Hall of Fame for Excellence and other travel industry awards.

“Guest experience and satisfaction will once again be core deliverables at our new properties,” said Mr Pedroni.

Outrigger will shortly announce food and beverage concepts and room type options for its Khao Lak and Phuket properties ahead of their scheduled Dec 15 opening.

The Phuket News

'Tourism transformation fund' to collect B500 fee

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The Tourism and Sports Ministry is poised to start collecting a B500 tourism fee for a "tourism transformation fund" next year, with the budget following a co-payment model, it was confirmed last Sunday (Oct 3).

The Centre for Economic Situation Administration last week approved the creation of the fund, which is expected to subsidise projects that transform the industry, focusing on high-value and sustainable tourism.

Yuthasak Supasorn, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) governor, said the fee collection of B500 per person should start next year, with a target of B5 billion within the first year, assuming 10 million foreign arrivals in 2022.

The National Tourism Policy Committee already gave the nod to start the fund earlier this year, with a proposed fee of B300 per person.

Mr Yuthasak said the additional B200 will be earmarked



The fee collection should start next year, with the aim of collecting B5 billion within the first year. Photo: AFP

for projects initiated by the private sector, community enterprises, or social enterprises that would like to transform their business to meet the fund's strategy; helping the country restructure from mass tourism to high-value or a bio-, circular and green economic model; and environmentally concerned tourism.

"The projects should be co-creations and the government should use the fund to support projects that can create an economic impact," Mr Yuthasak said.

"The proportion of public-private financial support could

be 50:50, 60:40 or 70:30, depending on how much we want to make those projects happen," he added.

The fund is also meant to budget insurance and development projects for foreign visitors that require government initiatives rather than the private sector, including those needing matching grants from local administrations.

After the concept is approved, the Tourism and Sports Ministry and TAT are required to have discussions with related authorities about setting up the fund committee and funding mechanisms, such

as how to collect the fee from tourists.

"The additional cost won't have an impact on tourists as we want to focus on the quality market," said Mr Yuthasak.

"We hope this fund will support a national tourism makeover creating more safe and clean places."

He said the fund's objective is not to tackle the financial impact of the pandemic, but rather focus on long-term local economic growth.

Tourism operators raised concerns as the timeline may not be appropriate for an industry in dire need of recovery.

Marisa Sukosol Nunbhakdi, president of the Thai Hotels Association (THA), said the concept is promising, but there are uncertainties that could jeopardise the tourism situation.

Given that tourism operators are still struggling with a financial crisis, the co-payment for development or transformation projects using this fund may prevent many of them from taking part as they don't have sufficient cash to invest, she said.

Bangkok braces for floods

BANGKOK

RESIDENTS IN THE CAPITAL this week were warned to brace for floods and to move to higher ground as runoffs from the North joined the Chao Phraya River, with experts predicting the runoffs will raise the river level by as much as 50cm.

Bangkok Governor Aswin Kwanmuang inspected flood embankments along the Chao Phraya River last Sunday (Oct 3) and ordered the reinforcement of floodwalls from Rama 7 Bridge to Bang Na, approximately 78.95km long.

All the 97 water pumping stations along the riverbanks were also checked for readiness, with equipment and staff providing help 24 hours a day in case of an emergency.

The governor urged residents living in seven districts outside the Chao Phraya River embankment to move belongings to a higher place to minimize damage.

The Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) on Tuesday forecast heavy rains in 60% of areas in the northern, eastern and central regions throughout the last half of this week.

The floods in the North and



Bangkok Governor Aswin Kwanmuang inspects rising water levels on the Chao Phraya River. Photo: NNT

Central provinces have already caused widespread flooding across 29 provinces, with all districts in Phichit province declared flood disaster zones.

The Office of National Water Resources (ONWR) on Tuesday warned of extensive flooding in Bangkok, Pathum Thani and Nonthaburi from Oct 7-10.

The agency noted that increased water levels in the Chao Phraya Dam on Oct 1-5 "may affect those who live outside of the river's floodwalls".

The runoff from the North joining the Chao Phraya River was expected to see up to 3,150 cubic metres of water per second flow through the river and into the Gulf of Thailand from Oct 7-10.

The Phuket News

Government in talks for COVID pill

BANGKOK

THE GOVERNMENT IS IN TALKS with US drugmaker Merck & Co to purchase 200,000 courses of the company's experimental COVID-19 pill, an official said on Monday (Oct 4).

Many Asian countries are scrambling to lock in supplies of molnupiravir, the name of the oral anti-viral drug, after lagging behind Western nations during initial rollouts of vaccines.

South Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia have said they are already in preliminary purchase discussions with Merck, while the Philippines, which is running a trial on the pill, said it hopes that its domestic study will help it secure favourable procurement terms with the company.

Somsak Akksilp, director-general of the Department of Medical Services (DMS), confirmed Thailand is currently working on a purchase agreement for the drug which is designed to introduce errors into the genetic code of the virus, and would be the first oral antiviral medication for COVID-19.

Interim clinical trials have indicated it has the potential to halve both hospitalisations and deaths from the virus.

"We are now working on a purchasing agreement with Merck that is expected to be completed by this week... we have pre-booked 200,000 courses," Dr Somsak said.

He said the pills could arrive as soon as December, though the deal would be



The COVID-19 pill molnupiravir. Photo: AFP

subject to the pills' approval by both the United States Food and Drug Administration and its Thai equivalent.

The US company expects to produce 10 million courses of the treatment by the end of 2021 and has agreed a deal with the US government to supply 1.7mn courses at a price of US\$700 (about B23,600) per course.

However, officials have also said there will be tiered approach to pricing based on country income criteria.

According to a report in *The New York Times*, the Merck anti-viral drug is meant to be taken as four capsules twice a day for five days – a total of 40 pills over the course of treatment.

After such promising early trials, Merck and its partner Ridgeback Biotherapeutics LP said last Friday that it would now, in conjunction with the US Food and Drug Administration and foreign regulatory bodies, begin the process of gaining worldwide clearance for its use.

Bangkok Post

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EXPAT LIFE

Ged Hogg

I don't know about you but I can't keep up with today's technology. It was fine when I was living in Australia and working as a chef as I didn't need a lot of technology in my life, a cheap mobile phone that I could make the odd phone call and read the occasional email with and a small laptop computer, and that was about it. Even they were sometimes too confusing for me, but I had four children who were all computer literate and I could always ask them if I got into any difficulty.

When I retired to Thailand, I thought that everything would stay the same and I could breeze through life blissfully ignorant and unconcerned, about cyberspace, the world wide web, Bitcoin and social media and remain computer illiterate. Not so, as I foolishly decided to become an author which opened up a can of internet worms that I never knew existed.

I wrote my first book using Word on my laptop thinking that when the masterpiece was finished, I would just save it as a Word doc and send it to a lot of publishers and to Amazon Books.

I knew that when the publishers read it, they would realise my genius as the next John Grisham or Ernest Hemingway and they would immediately send one of their executives to Thailand to sign me up before one of their competitors beat them to it, and the book would eventually get published to rave reviews.

Over the next few months, one by one the publishers returned my manuscript telling me things like I needed to use 12-point type, serif font, double space, no extra space between paragraphs, only one space between sentences and indent each paragraph half inch and with setting a tab, not using several spaces... they may as well have been speaking Swahili.

Amazon told me that to publish my book with them I would have to download the Amazon/Kindle app (Kindle Create) to transfer the Word document to. But before doing that I would need to download a spell checker to check the grammar and text, then design a front and back cover with another app and any photos had to be at least 1,600 pixels width and 72 DPI... my internet nightmare had begun.

After many sleepless nights trolling through Google and YouTube for advice, I managed to do what the publishers and Amazon asked me to do and a few



Photo: Sara Kurfess / Unspalsh

months later my book was published. Not learning from my previous mistake, I decided that if I were going to be a successful author, I would need to have my own website, so figuratively speaking I reached for the tin-opener and opened up another can of internet worms.

Many more sleepless nights later and with my swear jar overflowing I finally managed to publish my website. A few weeks ago, with my 'Retire in Thailand' book selling well, I forgot about my previous foray into the cyber world and I decided to start my own YouTube channel on living in Thailand. I love traveling so the idea was, I would travel around Thailand and take videos of all of the beautiful towns, beaches and islands that the Land of Smiles is famous for. People who are interested in Thailand while sitting at home in towns like Wigan in Lancashire, Flint in Michigan or Wagga Wagga in New South Wales will then subscribe to view the video which would pay for my trip or even make me the next YouTube sensation.

I set up the channel on YouTube and surprisingly I found that the process was quite easy to do. After looking at a few tutorials about the content of a YouTube channel I decided that if I was going to be the next Cecil B DeMille, my phone camera was not going to be good enough, I was going to need a decent video camera. After doing some research and asking around I decided on the GoPro7 Siver and I placed my order with Lazada. A few days later it arrived and like a kid at Christmas I eagerly opened the box. Inside was a nice sleek if somewhat small camera, as when I was looking for what was the best camera to buy, I thought the smaller the camera, the easier it would be to operate... yeah right.

There were no instructions in the box, just a slip of paper telling me to log into the GoPro website and for me to then link up my new camera to the GoPro website and download the information... aarrgghh... pass me my swear jar. You sacrifice your life to raise and educate your kids but at times like this when you need them, they are nowhere to be found.

Another sore point with technology for me is because of all of this new technology no one talks anymore. I go out

for dinner and see couples with their children and each of the family are sitting staring into their mobile phones looking at Facebook, or Tik-Tok or on mini-iPad's playing games. I order my meal and when I want another drink or another bowl of rice, I can't get the waiters' attention as they are glued to their phones instead of looking up occasionally to see if any of their customers need any service. I have to wave my arms like I am doing a Mexican Wave to try to get them to notice me.

Walking down the street nearly everyone who walks by me are staring into their phones, it's like something from a zombie sci-fi movie or The Walking Dead. Then there's the 'Me generation', who spend their lives taking selfies or videos of themselves preening and pouting to send to their equally self-obsessed friends or to put on Instagram, Twitter or Tik-Tok. I remember growing up in a far distant time when there were no cell phones, internet or video games. A time when my friends called for me and I went out and we put down two jumpers for goalposts and played football in the street or went fishing for tiddlers or tadpoles in the beck and laughed and joked a lot.

When I see these young kids staring at their mobile phones I feel like screaming at them: 'Put your @!*\$?# phones down and get a life; you're only young once.' I guess that's why they are called cell phones, because many people today are prisoners of their own phones.

Originally from the UK, Ged moved to Australia in 1974. After travelling the world as a chef, he retired to Thailand in 2017 where he reinvented himself as an author and whenever COVID permits he travels extensively throughout Thailand and Southeast Asia.

To keep active and to pursue his love of travel Gerald has written two books in the 'Thai Died...' series of books, as well as five books in his 'Retirees Travel Guide Series'. All of his books are available on Amazon.

Ged also features his own YouTube channel ['Ged Hogg, Retiring Disgracefully In Thailand'] and writes a blog to help expats who may be thinking of making Thailand their home in retirement. See Ged's Thailand Blog at RetireInThailand.asia

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Suicide Squad goes cult classic

David Griffiths

The original *Suicide Squad* movie may have been much maligned, although the 'Director's Cut' version certainly didn't deserve to be, but it did show the world that DC did know how to mix their darkness with some good times and surprising humour. But like *Green Lantern* before it, it did split DC movie fans over whether it was a good or bad film, so much so that I doubt many people would have ever expected that there would be a follow-up film.

But here we are in 2021 and *The Suicide Squad* is back with Hollywood's 'he can make anything look cool' director James Gunn (*Guardians of the Galaxy*) at the helm and boy does he make a difference. Remember the long character introductions from the first film? Well Gunn doesn't do that here. Director Amanda Waller (Viola Davis – *The Help*) hastily puts together her squad which includes inmates like special force veterans Bloodsport (Idris Elba – *Thor: Ragnarok*) and Peacemaker (John Cena – *F9*), the mysterious Polka-Dot Man (David Dastmalchian – *Prisoners*), the sweet but dangerous Ratcatcher 2 (Daniela Melchior – *Massa Fresca*), the very familiar Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie – *Bombshell*), and then puts them in the safe hands of Colonel Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman – *RoboCop*) and sends them to a jungle trouble spot to bring down an evil regime and scientific experiment led by Thinker (Peter Capaldi – *Doctor Who*).

Gunn doesn't muck around here: he keeps the story to *The Suicide Squad* basic and simple, but it works. He engages his audience with amazing action sequences, actual characterisation and some pretty witty dialogue between the characters throughout the film. As a director Gunn also demands the at-



Margot Robbie in *The Suicide Squad* (2021). Image: IMDB

tention of the audience like a teacher whacking a table with a ruler by very quickly showing that not every character is going to make it through alive. In a twisted way he also makes these inmates likable so their deaths hit you like one of Peacemaker's specially designed exploding bullets.

Gunn doesn't only learn from past sins to make *The Suicide Squad* work, he also leans heavily on movies that have got it right over the years. At times during this film you can sense the throw-backs to films like *Rambo* or *Inglourious Basterds* while the whole feel of the squad at hand (and the film's poster) feels like it is inspired by famous war films like *The Dam Busters* or *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. Whatever the inspirations it certainly does work, because even when the heroes here are battling a giant starfish that wouldn't seem out of place in *Ghostbusters* it somehow all works.

Then there is the quirkiness to the film. Gunn reveals himself as a visionary here by throwing in little odd bits here and there, from interesting

forms of titling throughout the film to going inside the head of Harley Quinn during one of her fight sequences and showing that amidst all the violence Quinn is visualising flowers and petals instead of blood.

That leads us into the violence and action sequences throughout the film. Yes *The Suicide Squad* is insanely violent, if you can't stand seeing blood and brain splatter then this isn't the film for you, but even with that Gunn almost does it in a comical way. Like what was said earlier this film captures the darkness of a DC film but does it in a fun way. A great example early on in this film is Bloodsport and Peacemaker conducting a massacre of troops while 'competing' to see who has the better kill. Yes *The Suicide Squad* is a throwback to the violent action films of the '80s, but it is a hell of a fun ride as well.

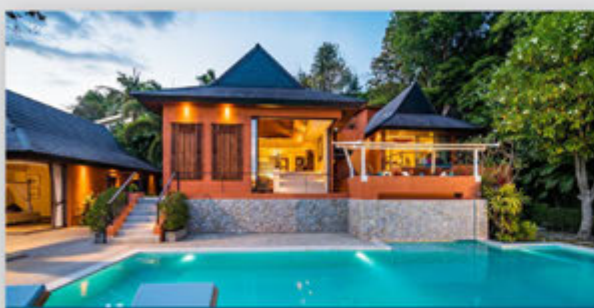
There is little doubt that *The Suicide Squad* is a crazy ride. Yet somehow among a storyline that involves a giant starfish, a confused Weasel (James Gunn), a man-eating shark who walks on land (Sylvester Stallone – *The Expendables*) and a cute waving rat called Sebastian the audience finds a group of characters that they care about enough to want to see them get through all of us. At the same time the filmmaker at hand knows how to deliver twists and turns that will shock and stun the audience while totally engrossing them in a completely crazy world and scenario. Take your hat off Mr. Gunn because you have delivered a cult classic here.

The Suicide Squad is showing in Phuket cinemas now. It is rated 15.

4/5 Stars

David Griffiths has been working as a film and music reviewer for over 20 years. That time has seen him work in radio, television and in print. You can follow him at www.facebook.com/subcultureentertainmentaus

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POP QUIZ

1. In the Star Wars movie *Solo*, how old is Chewbacca?
2. In electronics, what is a PCB?
3. Who was the first woman from a Scandinavian country to become world number one on the Women's Tennis Association Tour?
4. Who sang the 1990 club classic 'Groove is in the Heart'?
5. Original American colonist William Bradford was the first to call the passengers of the Mayflower what?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

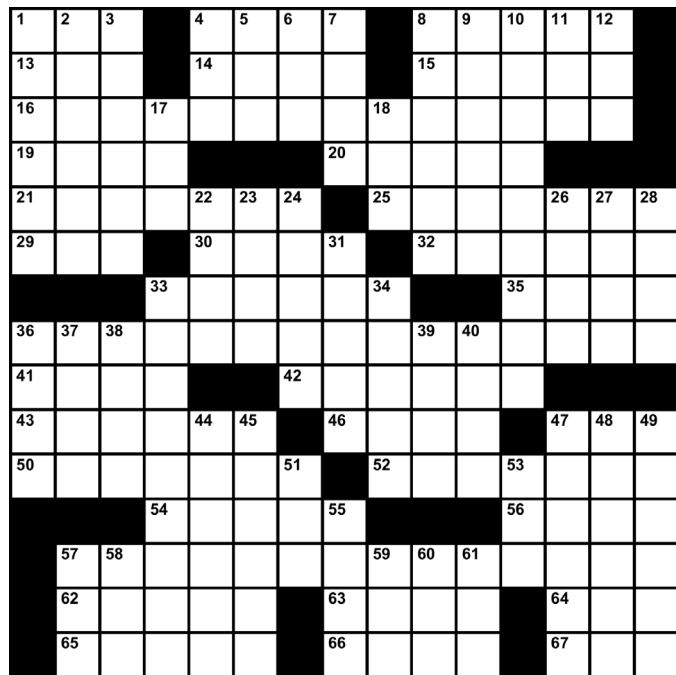
1. He, to Louis
4. Electrical resistance units
8. Aragorn's love in "The Lord of the Rings"
13. "Barbara ____" (Beach Boys classic)
14. "Check it out!"
15. A musical Judd
16. You can see yourself in it
19. "My word!"
20. Reliable, as a citizen
21. O.K.'s
25. Get nervous
29. Diaper wearer
30. "Pro" follower
32. Stop working
33. Belize neighbor
35. Around
36. Very small amount
41. Comportment
42. Head home
43. Con
46. Sub chaser
47. "Avatar" spec. effects
50. Boost
52. Polite response
54. Snacks in shells
56. N.Y.P.D. employee, abbr.
57. Walleye's habitat

Down

1. Cattle wrestler's need
2. Worldwide agency to preserve cultural property
3. Actually
4. "Bravo!"
5. Ad ____
6. Word, in Paris
7. Aspen runners
8. Fisherman
9. Plunder
10. Hippie festival
11. Mopey, like some rock music
12. Naught
17. Heavy-duty cleanser
18. "Hardly!"
22. Make ready, briefly
23. 2004 Queen

Latifah movie

24. Overcharge
26. Dublin's land
27. Major or Minor Bear
28. Agricultural worker
31. Cast member
33. Monk house
34. "I can hardly wait!"
36. Mideast ruler
37. Actress Merrill
38. Do followers
39. Convenience
40. Edible Andean tubers
44. Prickly plant
45. 32-card game
47. Lock sites
48. Rubber ring in the engine
49. Hold back
51. "Wham!"
53. "Thanks a ____!"
55. Makes the cut, in a way
57. Cabbage Patch Kids, once
58. Brazilian city, familiarly
59. "Jeopardy!" rarity
60. Apnea diagnoser, briefly
61. Abbr. after a name

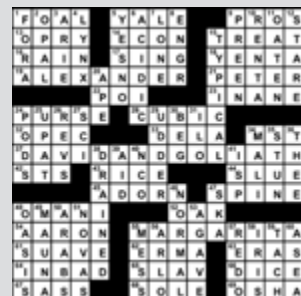


Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

- 1) 190 years old; 2) Printed circuit board; 3) Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark); 4) Dee-Lite; 5) Pilgrims

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

1.26

seconds is approximately how long it takes for a ray of moonlight to reach the Earth's surface.

5

different parts of your brain are used to understand and laugh at a joke.

30

different Batman logos have been used since 1940.

521

years is the half-life of DNA, which means that genetic material can't be recovered from dinosaurs and 'Jurassic Park' is impossible.

5.5 million

years ago, the Mediterranean Sea went completely dry.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Colouful Phuket. Photo by Klaus Zimmermann

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

This week in history

Oct 8, 1978

Australia's Ken Warby sets the current world water speed record of 317.6mph (511km/h) at Blowering Dam, Australia. There have only been two official attempts to break Ken Warby's record, both attempts resulted in the death of the driver.

Oct 9, 1967

A day after being captured, Marxist revolutionary Ernesto 'Che' Guevara is executed for attempting to incite a revolution in Bolivia.

Oct 10, 1897

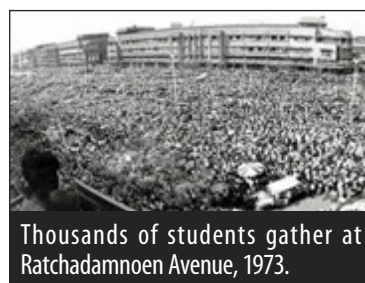
German chemist Felix Hoffmann discovers an improved way of synthesising acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin).

Oct 11, 1972

A race riot occurs on the US Navy aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* off the coast of Vietnam during Operation Linebacker.

Oct 12, 1810

First Oktoberfest: The Bavarian royalty invites the citizens



Thousands of students gather at Ratchadamnoen Avenue, 1973.

of Munich to join the celebration of the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen.

Oct 13, 2010

The mining accident in Copiapó, Chile, comes to an end as all 33 miners arrive at the surface after surviving a record 69 days underground awaiting rescue.

Oct 14, 1973

In the Thammasat student uprising over 100,000 people protest in Thailand against the Thanom military government, 77 are killed and 857 are injured by soldiers.

Source: Wikipedia

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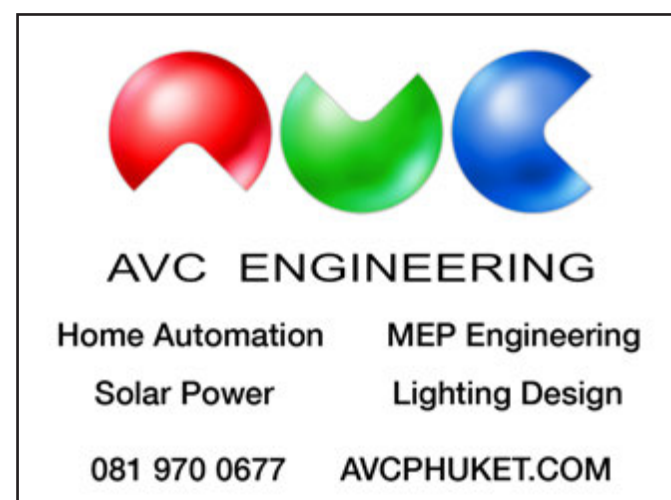
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Jason Beavan

Quarter-final heartbreak for Thailand's shuttlers

BADMINTON

SOUTH KOREA ELIMINATED Thailand 3-2 in the quarter-finals of the Sudirman Cup in Finland last Friday (Oct 1).

Lee So-Hee and Shin Seung-Chan sealed the winning point when they beat Jongkolphan Kittitharakul and Sapsiree Taerattanachai 21-11, 17-21, 21-19 in the women's doubles at the Energia Areena in Vantaa.

The South Korean duo, semi-finalists at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, edged past Thailand's makeshift pair in one hour and 30 minutes in the mixed team world championship postponed from last year.

Jongkolphan normally plays with Rawinda Prajongjai, while Sapsiree is a specialist in the mixed doubles.

Thailand took the lead when Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree beat Kim Wan-Ho and Kong Hee-Yong 21-9, 21-17 in the opening mixed doubles match.

In the men's singles, Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn lost to Heo Kwang-Hee 16-21, 21-7, 20-22 in one hour and 17 minutes.



Supak and Kittinupong. Photo: Bangkok Post

In the women's singles, Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong was defeated 21-18, 21-3 by An Se-Young.

In the men's doubles, Thailand's Supak Jomkoh and Kittinupong Kedren finished off Choi Sol-Gyu and Seo Seung-Jae 21-18, 24-22 in 48 minutes.

Thailand were without their top women's player Ratchanok Intanon whose mother passed away recently.

The Thais defeated India and Finland and lost to China in the group stage at Vantaa 2021.

Thailand reached the semi-finals in the previous edition in 2019 but lost 3-0 to China who went on to claim their 11th title in Nanning.

Thailand's best results in the biennial championship were in 2013, 2017 and 2019 when they won bronze medals after losing in the semi-finals.

Bangkok Post

War Elephants appoint Polking as new coach

FOOTBALL

Bangkok Post

Mano Polking has been appointed as coach of the national team, the Football Association of Thailand (FAT) announced on Sept 28.

The former coach of Thai League 1 side Bangkok United was handpicked by Thailand manager Nualphan Lamsam, who oversees the national men's senior and U23 sides.

The 45-year-old German, also known as Alexandre Polking, replaces Japanese coach Akira Nishino, who was sacked in July after the War Elephants were eliminated in the qualifying round for the 2022 World Cup.

Brazil-born Polking will be assisted by former Port coach Jadet Meelarp and former national women's team coach Nuengruethai Srathongwien.

Polking has previous experience with the Thai national team, having served as assistant coach from 2012-2013 under his German compatriot Winfried Schaefer.



Thailand coach Mano Polking during his spell at Bangkok United. Photo: PR

Polking, a former winger for Greek clubs Apol FC and Olympiacos Nicosia, began his managerial career in 2008 as assistant coach at the UAE's Al Ain and Azerbaijan's FC Baku before landing the role with the Thai national team.

He went on to coach several Thai clubs, including the now-defunct Army United, Suphanburi and Bangkok United.

Under Polking, Bangkok United finished second in Thai League 1 in 2016 and 2018 and were runners-up in

the FA Cup in 2017.

Polking's most recent job was at Vietnamese side Ho Chi Minh City.

His first task will be the AFF Suzuki Cup in December. The tournament has been postponed from last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"With the staff, the players, the board of directors [of the Football Association of Thailand] and especially the fans, I know that we can do it. We will focus and work hard from now on and let's fight to bring the Suzuki Cup back to

Thailand," said Polking on his appointment.

"Thailand is like my home and [I] love the people and the culture since I arrived eight years ago. Now I will give my best to justify the trust you're giving me," he added.

Terms of the contract were not disclosed but his long-term future with the national side may depend on the War Elephants' performance in the Suzuki Cup. "This is not a master plan and the results in the Suzuki Cup will prove his ability and determine his future with the national team," said Nualphan.

In the Suzuki Cup, Thailand are in Group A with Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei or Timor Leste.

Defending champions Vietnam will play Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos in Group B.

The Thais will open their campaign against Brunei or Timor Leste on Dec 5. The final is scheduled for Jan 1.

Thailand are the most successful nation in the Suzuki Cup with five wins, the last one coming in 2016.

Phuket News

English Premier League Predictions

thepuketnews.com/predictions.php

Phuket Sandbox hosts Expat Golf Tournament at Laguna

GOLF

THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF Thailand (TAT) in collaboration with the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) jointly organised the 'Amazing Thailand Expat Golf Tournament Series 2021' at the Laguna Golf Club in Phuket last Thursday (Sept 30).

The tournament was held during the ongoing 'Phuket Sandbox' programme that since 1 July has been welcoming fully vaccinated foreign tourists without the need to quarantine.

The 'Amazing Thailand Expat Golf Tournament Series 2021' was held in line with the Royal Thai Government's 'Stay Play Safe' policy and is an Amazing Thailand Safety and Health Administration (SHA)-certified event.

The 'Stay Play Safe' policy is a collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Public Health, and other tourism-related public and private organisations to build confidence in the health and safety measures that are in place to prevent and control COVID-19, and at the same time to provide valuable support for the economy.

Also organised according to Phuket provincial regulations and mandates for the 'new normal' format for golf tournaments, the event was divided into morning and afternoon sessions, thus limiting the number of golfers to 50 per session.



Montri Manator, Deputy Director of TAT (left), presents the winning prize to Bo Steiber who won the afternoon competition. Photo: Supplied

All golfers underwent COVID-19 testing procedures before joining.

The tournament's morning session was won by Bob Mather and the afternoon session won by Bo Steiber. Both were presented with their winning prizes by Montri Manator, Deputy Director of TAT.

The tournament was among the special golf tournaments organised by TAT this year to promote golfing experiences on offer in Thailand among expatriate residents. Other events have included The Minister Cup 2021 in April, and the 'All Thailand Golf Tour 2021' comprising eight events in Phuket which started with the Singha All-Thailand Championship 2021 from Sept 23-26 at the Blue Canyon Country Club, followed by the Singha Laguna Phuket Open 2021 from Oct 7-10 at the Laguna Golf Club.

The Phuket News

Ranieri appointed as new Hornets manager

FOOTBALL

AFP

Claudio Ranieri is back in the Premier League after being confirmed as Watford's new manager on Monday (Oct 4).

Former Chelsea boss Ranieri, who led Leicester to the Premier League title in 2016, agreed a two-year contract with the Hornets to replace the sacked Xisco Munoz.

"Watford FC is delighted to confirm the appointment of Claudio Ranieri as the club's new head coach, on a two-year contract," a statement on the club's website announced.

"The Italian arrives at Vicarage Road boasting a wealth of experience in charge of some of Europe's biggest clubs, with Premier League, Coppa Italia and Copa del Rey titles among his managerial highlights."

Ranieri, nicknamed the "Tinkerman" due to his penchant to constantly change his team line-up, takes over with Watford in 15th place in the Premier League after earning seven points from



Ranieri's greatest triumph came when he masterminded Leicester's stunning title success five years ago. Photo: AFP

their opening seven matches.

The 69-year-old Italian left Sampdoria at the end of last season and had been looking to return to the game since then.

Xisco had led Watford to promotion from the Championship last season, but he was axed on Sunday after only 10 months in charge.

Saturday's 1-0 defeat at Leeds prompted Watford's owners, the Pozzo family, to act, with the club claiming a "negative trend" in performances had convinced them to move on from Xisco.

"It's been a wonderful

journey and it concluded in a way that I neither expected or wished for," Munoz said on Twitter.

Ranieri is Watford's 13th permanent manager since the Pozzo family took control of the club in 2012 and the 17th new manager in just over 10 years.

He boasts a wealth of experience, with clubs such as Napoli, Fiorentina, Valencia, Juventus, Roma, Inter Milan and Atletico Madrid also on his CV.

Ranieri established Chelsea as a Champions League club

during his spell from 2000 to 2004, but he was axed by Roman Abramovich to make way for Jose Mourinho.

His greatest triumph came when he masterminded Leicester's stunning title success five years ago.

The Foxes were 5,000-1 outsiders and had battled relegation the season before Ranieri arrived in a move that was widely panned by pundits.

Despite Leicester's incredible success, he was sacked just nine months after the title glory following a poor run that left the club just outside the relegation zone.

Ranieri last worked in the Premier League during a brief stint at Fulham in 2018-19.

He lasted just 106 days at Fulham after being unable to steer them away from relegation trouble.

Watford's first match with Ranieri in charge will be against Liverpool at Vicarage Road on Oct 16.

Ranieri will be joined at Watford by Assistant Coaches Paolo Benetti and Carlo Corracchia, as well as Fitness Coach Carlo Spignoli.

Qatar to hold its first ever F1 Grand Prix

FORMULA ONE

QATAR WILL HOLD its first ever Formula One Grand Prix in November replacing the cancelled Australian GP, organisers announced last Thursday (Sept 30).

The race will take place at the Losail International Circuit north of Doha on Nov 21 and will form the first part of a Middle Eastern ending to the Formula One season as it will be followed by races in Saudi Arabia and the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Qatar has also signed a 10-year deal to host Formula One from 2023.

The Australian GP, traditionally a season-opener, was moved towards the end of the season in a bid to ensure it could go ahead in the light of COVID-19 restrictions. In spite of that, it was cancelled for a second year running.

"We are very pleased to welcome Qatar to the Formula 1 calendar this season and for the longer



The Losail International Circuit. Photo: AFP

term from 2023," said F1 President and CEO Stefano Domenicali.

"The huge effort from all the teams, F1 and the FIA has made it possible to deliver a 22 race calendar, something that is very impressive during a challenging year and something we can all be proud of."

The Losail Circuit opened in 2004 and has hosted Moto GP since then, under floodlights which will also be used for the Grand Prix.

In its statement, F1 said it would confirm the venue for the race in Qatar from 2023 onward at a later date, suggesting a possible change from Losail.

It is the latest sporting coup for gas-rich Qatar, which will host the football World Cup in 2022. AFP

Series levelled 2-2 at the ACG

CRICKET

Continued from page 16

...Craig Morgan joined Nishant Grover out in the middle as the pair looked to get the innings back on track with the former blasting a 6 off the final ball of the 20th over.

Two more boundaries from Morgan all but sealed a Penguin victory with the score now 146-3 and the Penguins needing just 14 from the final four overs.

There was to be some late entertainment however as Hamilton came into the attack and quickly troubled the batsmen. Morgan skied one straight up towards the covers where Manoj, taking the phrase 'head-the-ball' quite literally, misjudged the flight of the ball and used his skull to stop the ball instead of catching, much to the bemusement and horror of everyone at the ground.

With a quick check on the fielder's well-being complete, the final stages of the match resumed with Grover picking out Fonseka on the long-on boundary for a well-



Man of the Match Tony van Blerk at bat. Photo: Siri

made 26, the new signing proving to be a solid addition to the Penguins lineup, whilst Hamilton picked up a well-deserved wicket.

Raju would add 2 runs to the score before handing Flowers his third catch of the match from the bowling of Ali Khan. Morgan (45*) fittingly hit the winning runs two balls later to close the game out and ensure a mouthwatering game five with the scores now level at 2-2.

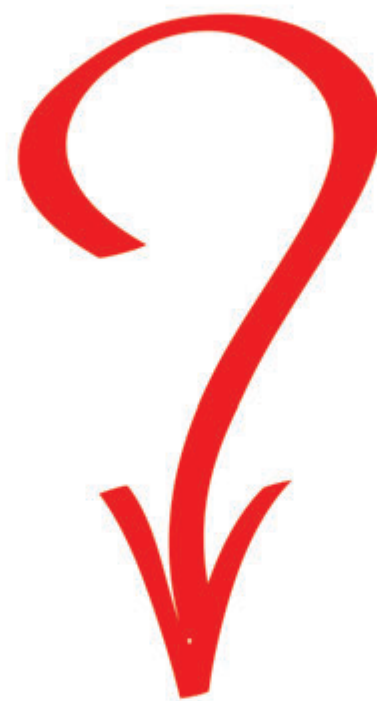
In a much-anticipated return to form, Tony Van Blerk edged out fellow teammates Raju and Morgan for

Man of the Match (MoM) after scoring 36 runs from 23 balls (included five 4s and one 6) and producing a tidy performance behind the stumps. Notably Seemant Raju had bowling figures of 3-29 from 5 overs and Craig Morgan, 45*(24), which included four 6s, would consider themselves unlucky to not pick up the MoM points while the season's leading wicket taker Saju Abraham also returned the impressive bowling figures of 1-8 from his three overs.

The series decider takes place this Sunday (Oct 10) at the ACG.



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Tinkerman back in the game > p15

PENGUINS STRIKE BACK

CRICKET

Curt Livermore

Clear blue skies and sunshine returned to the ACG once more on Sunday (Oct 3) providing perfect conditions for the crucial game four clash with the Thalang Cows holding a 2-1 lead over rivals the Patong Penguins.

Following a heavy defeat two weeks prior, the pressure was on the Penguins to deliver a much-improved performance if they were to have any hope of keeping the best-of-five (T25) series alive whilst the Thalang Cows looked to finish off the series in convincing style.

Perhaps sensing the Penguins were still battered and bruised from the mauling at the hands of Ali Khan two weeks earlier, it was little



The Cows' Guddu Manoj takes a knock to the head after he misjudged the flight of the ball. Thankfully he was OK. Photo: Siri

surprise when captain Joe Ninan sent his Cows out to bat first, ensuring Penguins would have to chase for the fourth consecutive game.

It was the aggressive duo of Ashan Fonseka and Sami

Pir who would take the early power-play encounter with the former crashing four boundaries by the end of the 5th over. However, Sajal Gaur held his nerve with a clever change of pace that saw Fonseka (31)

edge onto his stumps with the score at 43-1 after 6 overs.

After two tight overs in which just 3 runs were added to the total, Seemant Raju had Pir (9) trapped LBW. This brought Ali Khan to the

crease who immediately gave the Penguins a dreaded sense of deja vu after smashing just his second ball over the rope for 6. However, Khan fell in the very next delivery for 6 with the score now 57-3.

Flowers and Hamilton (14) then looked to rebuild the Cows innings with caution although the latter was caught by Raju off the bowling of Imtiyaz Mushtaq three balls before drinks.

Ninan (10) added some quick runs before some smart work behind the stumps from Anthony Van Blerk dismissed the captain off the bowling of Saju Abraham, then Flowers (19) skied one into the grateful hands of Livermore. Michael Rhys Thomas (3) and new recruit Simon Bailey (2) added to the score before Sameer Kahn (27) and Mayur Deuskar (13) combined for a 25-run partnership to achieve

a sub-par but defendable 159-7 from the allotted 25 overs.

In response, Van Blerk and Livermore got ahead of the required rate of just over a run a ball early with the former taking advantage of some loose power-play bowling before he was caught by Sameer Khan off the bowling of Guddu Manoj for 36, leaving the score on 53-1 after 6 overs.

Flowers then deceived Livermore (16) with a slower ball for a well taken caught and bowled, taking the score to 93-2 at drinks, with the Penguins now slightly behind the rate yet still confident of victory having a strong middle order waiting in the wings.

Mushtaq (15) would be Manoj's next victim as the batsman mistimed a shot into the safe hands of Flowers at mid-off in the first over after drinks. *Continued on page 15*

Where to eat in PHUKET



The November/December 2021 hard copy issue goes to print very soon

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