

**MP SIRA SURVIVES 'KATA CONDO COUP' > PAGE 2**

# FAR FROM OVER

## LOCAL TOURISM FIGURES SLAM CLAIM COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT 'WORST IS OVER'

A bar staffer on Bangla Rd holds a tray of free food given to those without any means of buying food for themselves. Photo: Tanyaluk Sakoot



**The Phuket News**  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

**K**ey tourism figures have outrightly dismissed the claim by a senior Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) marketing official that the “worst is over” for economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, with most agreeing that it will take a year for the island’s tourism industry to recover.

Tanes Petsuwan, TAT Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications, early this month called the current situation the “worst crisis in Thai tourism history”.

“I have been working for TAT for more than 30 years, during which we have faced many crises; such as, SARS, Bird Flu, MERS, the tsunami, even our own political crises, but we have seen nothing like this,” he

told a panel discussion on the future of Thai tourism held at The Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand (FCCT) on July 1.

Mr Tanes said it will be a long time before Thailand again chalks up the 2019 record visitor arrivals of nearly 40 million, but added that the crisis had created an opportunity for the Thai tourism industry to reform itself in preparation for the ‘new normal’.

“This is the best time to make it right,” he said. “We have to move away from quantity to quality.” Mr Tanes said.

However, he also said that the Thai tourism industry has passed its worst phase and is now set to make a slow and steady back to normalcy.

“Seriously? They’re dreaming. The worst for tourism is not over. We need to survive and restore the tourism industry, and that will take

about a year,” Weerawit Kreuasombat, President of the Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA) told *The Phuket News* this week.

“I think the person who said that is someone who stays in the office. They do not see what the reality is over here,” he added.

Mr Weerawit said that so far only 30-40% of the PEBA’s member businesses had reopened their doors since the ban on all pubs, bars and other entertainment venues was lifted on July 1.

Even then, he pointed out, “They have re-opened only because they are trying to survive, but there is not much income to cover their expenses. We need to be patient and survive.”

Bhuritt Maswongssa, General Manager of the Patong Resort Hotel and a key well-respected member of the Tourism Development Commit-

tee of the South Andaman Tourism Development Area under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, told *The Phuket News* blankly, “For the hotel industry, it is not over.”

“Many hotels are being sold, plus many hotel staff do not have a job. Tour companies are still closing, tour bus businesses are being sold and buses are being repossessed by finance companies,” he said.

“Even though there have been no new infections here, it does not mean the COVID-19 pandemic is over, because COVID-19 is still breaking out around the world. A second wave here is still possible

“It has not come back to normal yet. I think we have to be patient until next year,” he said.

Meanwhile, private efforts by local people continue to provide food and other basic necessities to those left...

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**Fantasy Island delivers dreams and nightmares**



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**Bottas wins big at bonkers Austrian restart**



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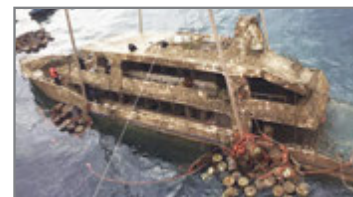


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## News



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# Court rules for MP Sira

## Move to oust MP over stance against Phuket condo project denied

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Bangkok MP Sira Jenjaka has been acquitted of allegations of “interfering with officials duties” over his campaign against The Peaks Residences condo project, which sits uncompleted on a steep hillside overlooking Kata Noi on Phuket’s west coast.

Seven out of eight Constitutional Court judges ruled that Mr Sira did not do any wrongdoing in his highlighting of the investigation into the project, which the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has now found through its own investigation is illegal.

A total of 57 MPs filed the request to terminate Mr Sira’s status as an MP as he stood accused of breaching Section 185 (1) of the Constitution, which bans any MP from interfering with officials performing their duties, reported *Post Today*.

The report did not note which



MP Sira (left) last year warned that he would request the Amlo to investigate the properties owned by and any financial transactions involving any officers related to The Peaks project. Photo: PR Dept

MPs signed the complaint against Mr Sira, who on Aug 19 last year challenged Phuket officials and police as to why no progress has been made in the investigation of The Peaks Residences condo project and why no offer of police protection had been made, despite a death threat made against him over his public stance against the project.

MP Sira in August last year said he had received a death threat for publicly revealing that the condominium project had its land ownership documents revoked by the court.

He also said that he had received a message claiming that two people had already died as a result of speaking out about the project.

Since then MP Sira has so far

held good to his promises to have the project thoroughly investigated by the DSI and to follow up with all investigative anti-corruption authorities, and to have charges brought against local officials for allowing the project.

He also came to Phuket to tell the Phuket Governor at the time, Phakaphong Tavipatana, directly, “I will also file a request with the Anti Money Laundering Office (Amlo) to investigate the properties owned by and any financial transactions involving any officers related to this project.”

The complaint filed with the Constitutional Court called for his termination as an MP under Section 101(7), which states that breach of Section 185 of the Constitution is grounds for termination from Membership of the House of Representatives.

Mr Sira, a Bangkok MP for the military-aligned Palang Pracharath Party, will maintain his status as an

MP, the Constitutional Court ruled.

The court in its ruling said that Mr Sira’s actions were only to make officials follow the law.

“As for making people angry, it may be because he disagreed with local officials and the workings of local police. When questioning the Karon Mayor, he just asked for information and clarification,” the court noted in handing down its ruling.

“Therefore, his actions are not considered as interfering, and his status as a Member of Parliament will continue,” the court noted.

“If anyone considers that his actions were impolite or inappropriate, they can proceed according to the law on Ethical Standards Act B.E. 2020,” the court added.

MP Sira thanked the judges for handing down a just verdict.

“I did not do anything wrong as I was accused. I will consult legal advice about what legal action can be taken against the MPs who filed the request,” he said.

## Tourism recovery expected to take a year

Continued from page 1

...without any income or any government support due to the crisis.

The “Feeding Friends Patong” campaign in Patong is continuing its efforts, and last Friday provided another 200 food bags to people in need, and the Help Phuket Today campaign has issued another urgent call for donations.

“We have fed over 340 families with the money we raised. We now have 273 families in desperate need of food on Coconut Island,” campaign organisers said in a Facebook post earlier this week.



Tanes Petsuwan, TAT Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications. Photo TAT

“On top of that so many people who worked directly or indirectly with the tourism industry are continuing to lose their jobs. We have seen kids picking through leaves for food – please, contribute and help these families.

“We have managed to make

food packs up now for B250 and each one will feed a family for a week. You can get them at the cashier at any Villa Market in Phuket. They will make them up and deliver them to us,” the post added.

“Thank you to everyone who has bought Lean on Me Food packs so far and a massive thank you to both the Phuket Academy of Performing Arts for the wonderful initiative and song, and to Villa Market for their constant support. We have so many more families in need – some in more desperate situations than before,” Help Phuket Today pointed out.



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# Phuket police transferred over illegal gambling dens

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The top five ranking police officers stationed with the Phuket City Police and the Thalang Police are under investigation for the lack of action taken after receiving reports of two illegal gambling dens, which were later raided by provincial officials.

Royal Thai Police deputy spokesman Col Krissana Phatthanacharoen said that the national police headquarters in Bangkok were notified of the raids on the two gambling dens, one in Phuket Town and another in Srisoonthorn, on June 30 that netted 87 people for illegal gambling.

Phuket Provincial Police Chief Maj Gen Rungrote Thakurapanyasiri has already ordered the top five high-ranking officers at both Phuket City Police Station and Thalang Police Station to be immediately transferred to Phuket Provincial Police Station while an investigation into the gambling dens is carried out, Col Krissana said.



Ten high-ranking Phuket police officers are under investigation for allowing the gambling dens to operate. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Col Krissana identified the positions of those transferred from each police station as the Commander, Deputy Commander of Crime Suppression, Deputy Commander of Investigation, Inspector General and Inquiry Inspector.

“Gen Rungrote has also set up a team of officers to investigate the work of those police about the two gambling venues,” he said.

“If it is found that there is fault by the relevant officers, they will be prosecuted strictly

according to the regulations,” he added.

Col Krissana also said that national police chief Gen Chakthip Chaijinda always reminded police in all areas to increase crime suppression and protection measures. “Do not ignore gambling, narcotics, human trafficking as well as wrongdoing under the Emergency Decree. Do not get involved in personal benefit,” he said.

“Police commanders must closely take care of their subordinates during both their

on-duty and off-duty time,” he added.

“As written in the Police Order no. 1212/2537, if any police action is found to be unlawful or corrupt, the officers must be prosecuted under the law and regulations strictly, without any exception,” Col Krissana assured.

“However, we have to wait for the result of the investigation to determine whether the police ignored the gambling venues or not, in order to be fair for everyone,” he said.



Ms Yanaphat claimed that she believed she hit a power pole, not a person. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

## Hit-and-run driver kills monk, surrenders to police

THE DRIVER WHO fled the scene after killing a Buddhist monk in Chalong last Saturday (July 4) has surrendered herself to police.

Lt Jaruwit Khuncharoen of the Chalong Police revealed that the driver – Yanaphat Sakulboonphanit, 35 – presented herself at the police station at 4:10pm that same day. Ms Yanaphat also brought her Phuket-registered Honda Mobilio car with visible damage sustained in the collision.

Ms Yanaphat admitted that she was the person involved in the accident,

but said that at that moment she believed she hit a power pole, not a person, and thus did not stop straightaway.

The woman said she presented herself to police right after learning she had killed someone.

Lt Jaruwit confirmed that Ms Yanaphat has been charged with reckless driving causing death or injury and fleeing the crime scene.

“We are still waiting for her alcohol test. If she tests positive, she will also be charged with drunk driving,” Lt Jaruwit added.

Eakkapop Thongtub

## Bars warned over health rules

AS SOME OF THE NIGHTLIFE VENUES along Bangla Rd ventured to reopen on July 1, public health officials in Patong have warned that pubs, bars and other entertainment venues in Phuket must comply with the full list of 18 rules specifically set out for entertainment venues.

Failure to do so will result in stern action, and the venue may be shut down, explained Sirawat Kriangkrai, of Patong Municipality’s Department of Public Health and Environment’s Sanitation Division.

“Some establishments have already reopened, and although those entertainment venues are already allowed to reopen, they still need to follow the CCSA’s rules,” he said.

Under the order, all pubs, bars and entertainment venues, including karaoke bars, must



Pubs, bars and clubs along Bangla Rd have been warned to comply with the COVID-prevention health rules or face being ordered to close. Photo: Patong Municipality

close at midnight. All other food and beverage vendors, such as restaurants, food courts and hotels, may continue operating after midnight, but must cease serving alcohol at midnight.

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## CONTACT US

editor@classactmedia.co.th 076 612 550

PURIYA BEAVAN  
EditorCHRIS HUSTED  
Executive Editor  
064 307 7408  
ahusted@classactmedia.co.thBEN TIREBUCK  
News / Sport Editor  
061 806 8132  
editor3@classactmedia.co.thTANYALUK 'MANGO'  
SAKOOT  
Reporter  
091 165 0260  
reporter2@classactmedia.co.thKHUNANYA 'FON'  
WANCHANWET  
Reporter  
091 165 0269  
reporter1@classactmedia.co.thKIATTIKUL 'JOM'  
CHUMANE  
Translator  
062 729 0270  
translator@classactmedia.co.thJASON BEAVAN  
General Manager  
066 479 7471  
gm@classactmedia.co.thSIRIPORN (NOK)  
SEANGMAS  
Sales Support  
066 479 7470  
sales@classactmedia.co.thKANOKWAN (MEO)  
RUNGSEANG  
Sales Representative  
066 754 1371  
sales1@classactmedia.co.thNIRAVIT 'MOS' VORAVANITCHA  
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Andreas Ruthe TCM Asia, Mr. Nano

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they are beautiful," he says.

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# Phoenix: Stranded and alone

## Two years after disaster kills 47 tourists, wreck stands forgotten

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Two years after the *Phoenix* tour boat overturned and sank in storm conditions south of Phuket, killing 47 Chinese tourists in Thailand's worst maritime disaster in modern times, the recovered wreck remains at Rattanachai Shipyard on the east side of Phuket Town, alone and forgotten.

Preecha Jaiart, who bought the *Phoenix* wreck at auction from the Anti-Money Laundering Office (Amlo) in August last year, told *The Phuket News* that he will conduct a merit-making ceremony this week to honour those who died in the disaster, which also included the death of 37-year-old Thai diver Niphat 'Joch' Kludnak, who collapsed and died after surfacing from a dive to the wreck some 45 metres below the surface.

The death of Mr Niphat brought the total number of people who died as a result of the disaster to 48.

The wreck remains at Rattanachai Shipyard, Mr Preecha confirmed on Monday (July 6) in a brief conversation with *The Phuket News*.

He noted that no one had approached him to buy the wreck, but declined to answer further



Preecha Jaiart, owner of the recovered wreck of the *Phoenix*, at Rattanachai Shipyard on the east side of Phuket Town, where the wreck remains today. Photo: Preecha Jaiart

questions, explaining that he was spending time with his family over the long weekend for the Asarnha Bucha and Khao Phansa Buddhist religious holidays.

Mr Preecha, who operates the Truck2hand.com website for selling secondhand heavy vehicles, including trucks, buses, vans and boats, bought the *Phoenix* wreck at auction from the Anti-Money Laundering Office (Amlo) for B905,000 with the aim

of restoring the boat and sending it back to the bottom of the sea where it originally sank as an underwater memorial.

However, Mr Preecha soon encountered a wall of bureaucracy preventing him from doing so. He has yet to reveal what his current plans for the wreck entail.

The sinking of the *Phoenix* spelled disaster for Thailand's tourism public image worldwide as images of

bodies being recovered and Chinese tourists still in shock and grief spun around the globe on social media, far beyond the influence of the Thai authorities to control.

Bookings by Chinese tourists to travel to Thailand plunged by more than 20% in the month after the disaster. Cancellations in Phuket were much higher.

Following the disaster on July 5, 2018, police raids led to the dis-

covery that the operators of the boat had laundered more than B1 billion. This led to the seizure of operators' assets, which were auctioned off by the Amlo.

Royal Thai Police Deputy Commander Gen Rungroj Sangkram, who was tasked with overseeing the investigation into the disaster, stood by his assurances that two officials at the Ship Standard Registration Bureau in Bangkok would face charges for their part in allowing the *Phoenix* to be approved to be put to sea.

However, Gen Rungroj declined to give details about any prosecutions conducted as a result of the police investigation.

The police investigation report was never made public.

"The police investigation into the *Phoenix* is completed. We did our job. Our job is done," Gen Rungroj said last year.

Immediately following the disaster, the Phuket Marine Office Chief at the time, Surat Sirisaiyat, was transferred to the post of Acting Chief of the Ayutthaya Marine Office.

In turn, the Chief of the Ayutthaya Marine Office, Wiwat Chitchertwong, was transferred to Director of the Phuket Marine Office, where he remains today.

## Turtle nest found at Thai Mueang

A NEST OF LEATHER-back turtle eggs found on Thai Mueang Beach, north of Phuket, is believed to have been laid by the same turtle that came ashore at Mai Khao Beach one week earlier.

Officers at the Khao Lampi – Hat Thai Mueang National Park were clearing trash from Thai Mueang Beach on June 29 when they found turtle tracks on the sand, said Prarop Plangngarn, Chief of Phuket Marine National Park Operation Center 2.

Just like the tracks found at Mai Khao Beach on June



Officers confirmed eggs had been laid, but then left the nest in place. Photo: Phuket Marine National Park Operation Center 2

28, the tracks measured 170cm across, with the shell drag marks measuring 60cm across.

Officers finally located the nest some 80cm deep in the

sand about 18 metres from the waterline on July 1, and excavated only enough sand to confirm there were eggs in the nest, Mr Prarop said.

"We have not counted how many eggs there are, as we are not moving the nest. Officers have placed an enclosure around the nest to protect it from predators and installed a barrier to protect it from waves," he explained.

"National park officers will arrange staff to monitor the nest until the eggs hatch," he added.

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# Solving Phuket's water woes



## SUSTAINABLY YOURS

Palmer Owyong

Last week we looked at the current water-supply crisis facing Phuket and explored how other places dealt with the problem, notably Israel, which has successfully transformed itself from a country perpetually facing a water crisis to one that even has developed its water-use strategies to become an international trade competitive advantage. Here, in Part II of this special report, we look at applying those strategies specifically to Phuket.

### Applying Solutions to Phuket

To solve Phuket's water crisis, we first need to understand that we don't have a water shortage problem; we have an overconsumption problem. The average Thai uses 220 litres of water per day, while the average Israeli uses 137 litres. In 2018 Cape Town, South Africa came so close to running out of water that citizens were limited to 50 litres per day. If Phuket doesn't want to be forced to adopt such extreme measures, it needs to learn how to use water more efficiently.

### Conservation Through Education

The average Israeli uses almost 40% less water daily than the average Thai,



Phuket has enough water, it is how we are using that water that is causing a recurring crisis. Photo: Tanyaluk Sakoot

because they are taught "Don't Waste a Drop" from the time they are 3 or 4 years old. Since they start so young these lessons stay with them for a life-time. The government also constantly reminds them of the value of water with advertising campaigns that reminds citizens to "Save Water Save Life," and to "Only Use What You Need."

Phuket could adopt a similar strategy by teaching children and placing advertisements on billboards and social

media about the importance of water. It could encourage businesses and individuals to save water by taking shorter showers, installing low-flow shower-heads and grey water recycling systems and only watering their gardens during the evenings or early mornings.

One of the most significant things that Phuketians can do to save water is to reduce their meat consumption. Just eating 100 grammes less beef per week would save 1,500 litres of water, 100 grammes less pork would save 598 litres and chicken 432 litres.

### Modernise Agriculture

Thailand is the second-largest exporter of rice in the world and uses 70% of its fresh water for agriculture. Rice is one of the most water-intensive crops requiring between 2,500 to 5,000 liters per kilo. It also has one of the highest CO2 footprints because the conventional technique encourages the growth of nitrous oxide or methane-producing bacteria, both of which are powerful greenhouse gases.

To reduce water consumption, rice farmers could apply drip irrigation to their crops. Netafim, an Israeli company does this and uses 70% less water, has increased yields by up to 50%, has reduced methane gas emissions almost to zero, while producing a healthier rice that has 90% less arsenic.

Farmers could also experiment with

hydroponics, aquaponics or aeroponics. While these systems are more complicated and expensive, they reduce water consumption by 80 to 90% and instead of using soil uses a nutrient-rich water or mist, which reduces land use.

Since they grow the crops in a greenhouse, it eliminates the need for pesticides or fertilisers, which means there would be no water pollution from runoff.

Since they can build these systems almost anywhere; on rooftops, in buildings, or in shipping containers, farmers can grow the food locally, thus lowering their CO2 footprint, while ensuring food security.

In the coming years climate change and the subsequent droughts and floods will force Phuket to modernise its agricultural system whether it wants to or not.

### Water Catchments and Recycling Waste Water

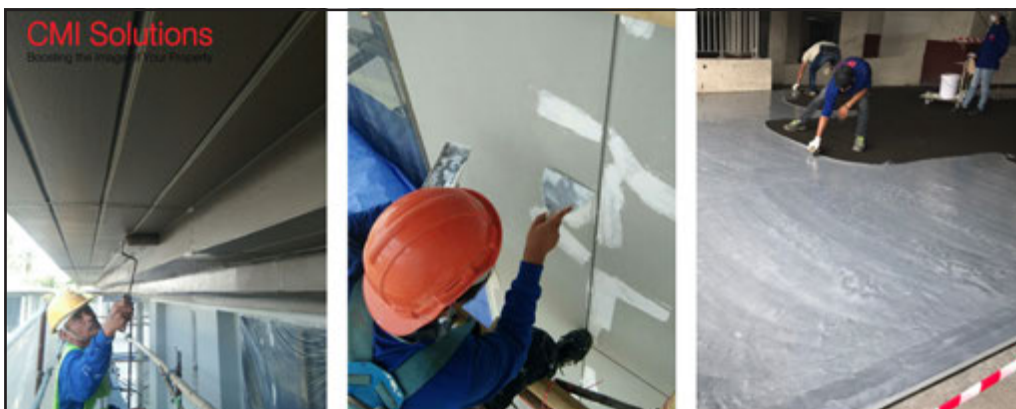
Conservation and modernising the agricultural systems alone would likely make up for the annual 32mn m3 water deficit. However, if it didn't, Phuket could increase the number of water catchments on the island and build a wastewater-treatment plant. This facility would cost between B500mn to B1 billion. Not an insignificant amount of money, but far less than the current B3.5bn proposed water pipeline to Phang Nga.

### Conclusions

Phuket needs to stop thinking about the water crisis as a single problem with a single solution. Rather, it needs to take a multi-faceted approach that gets to the root cause of the issue, namely the inefficient use of water. Rather than implementing expensive projects that won't work in the long term, the island should look to Israel for educational and technological innovations to reduce its per capita water footprint.

Not only are these solutions more cost effective, but they will also address other environmental issues such as pesticide and fertilizer pollution, while helping Phuket to prepare for the inevitable challenges that will come from climate change.

*Palmer Owyong is an environmental activist working with the Kamala Green Club and the Global Sustainability Hub.*



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# Fantasy Island: Dreams and nightmares



Portia Doubleday and Lucy Hale in *Fantasy Island* (2020). Photo: IMDB

David Griffiths

It is always a weird feeling when you like a film that other people seem to dislike. You always feel like you want to defend the film to the hilt, but the same time you can't help but wonder if you are horribly wrong. The best way to look at it is that you like what you like and as long as you like it it doesn't really matter what others think.

This happened with me when it came to Blumhouse Productions reworking of *Fantasy Island*. I am not going to say it is the film of the year or one of the best horror films ever made, but if you're looking for a horror film that will entertain you for a couple of hours then this film will not disappoint.

For anyone who watched the original *Fantasy Island* television series the concept here may be a little strange. *Fantasy Island* never traditionally had a horror feel to it, but here director Jeff

Wadlow (*Truth or Dare*) and his team give the story a warm welcome into the Blumhouse horror universe.

The film centres around the mystical island run by Mr Roarke (Michael Pena – *Ant-Man*). It is an island where people go to live out their fantasies and the latest group to have arrived includes jaded youngster Melanie Cole (Lucy Hale – *Pretty Little Liars*), who dreams about getting revenge on those who bullied her at school, and two brothers Patrick Sullivan (Austin Stowell – *Whiplash*) and Brax Weaver (Jimmy O. Yang – *Crazy Rich Asians*), who dream of living the life of the rich and famous.

It is here where the film first runs into its major hurdle. The list of characters above could have almost filled this page. There is also Maggie Q (*Divergent*), and a wannabe soldier who wants to learn about his father, and a crazy man who seems to appear out of nowhere but wants to warn everybody about the dangers of the island... and even then that

isn't everyone. There are just way too many characters in this film, at times it is difficult to keep track of who is where.

Yet, when the film keeps to its horror roots it is ten times the film it is when it tries to do things a little bit differently. There are scenes that depict Melanie getting revenge on a high-school bully that is reminiscent of a *Saw* movie. It is scenes like this where the film is its best.

Meanwhile, Michael Pena is perfectly cast as Mr Roarke, and no, he is not playing a character that is meant to represent *Tattoo*, the role made famous by Herve Villechaize in the original television series.

Also shining in their roles are Austin Stowell and Jimmy O. Yang, who bring their A-Games to a film that you wouldn't expect it in. Last but not least there is the amazing performance of Lucy Hale, rightfully now considered one of the best up-and-coming actresses in Hollywood.



*Fantasy Island* does have some major weaknesses but there are times throughout the film where it is a genuine popcorn horror that has the ability to entertain its audience. While one of the weaker Blumhouse films from recent years, it is still certainly a film that is worth a look.

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](http://www.facebook.com/subcultureentertainmentaus)



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## POP QUIZ

1. Name the three types of triangles
2. What is Tom Cruise's real name?
3. Which Benedictine monk is credited with inventing champagne?
4. According to superstition, if you spill salt, over which shoulder should you throw a pinch?
5. The "double-yellow dot" ball is competition standard in which sport?

Answers below, centre

## SUDOKU

Medium

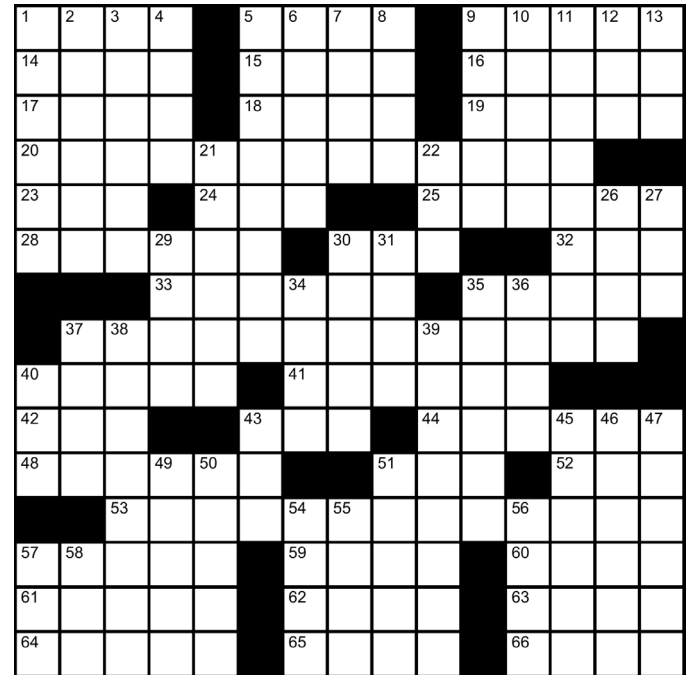
2		9		7		4		5
				3		5		
5				1		9		8
		5				7		
	6						1	
		1				9		
7			4		1			3
			6		7			
1		3		9		6		7

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

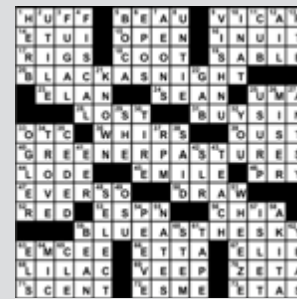
- Across**
1. 60s rock group, with Corner
  5. Slight
  9. Partition
  14. Lion's beard?
  15. Type of insurance for owners
  16. Pointed arch
  17. Nose out
  18. Tapi endings
  19. Rich tapestry
  20. Place for pessimists
  23. Virgo mo.
  24. Cries at a circus
  25. Keen
  28. Swimmer's gear
  30. Banned pesticide, for short
  32. "Star-Spangled Banner" preposition
  33. Tongue
  35. Conundrum
  37. Invest in a risky fashion
  40. Witch
  41. Bean
  42. Greyhound, e.g.
  43. Magazine revenue source
  44. Come back again
  48. Go up and down
  51. Supporting
  52. Grassy area
  53. Investing term
- Down**
1. Cells in the sea?
  2. Improvised
  3. Captivate
  4. At no point in time, contraction
  5. Native American people
  6. Scottish water areas
  7. Mosque V.I.P.
  8. City in Arizona
  9. Drenches
  10. Wading bird
  11. Great musicians
  12. "Desperate Housewives" actress, first name
  13. Court matter
  21. A chemical salt
  22. Deserter
  26. Romeo or Juliet
  27. Blunder
  29. Distinctive flair
  30. Beach sights
  31. Angry outburst
  34. Investor's alternative
  35. Inquisitive people
  36. Look at flirtatiously
  37. Constant
  38. Flower starts
  39. Belladonna poison
  40. ABC's rival
  43. Amazement
  45. Plant
  46. Fertility goddess
  47. American sharpshooter
  49. Driving hazard
  50. Common carriers
  51. Flute player
  54. Consider, with on
  55. Cover up
  56. Legal wrong
  57. PC component, for short
  58. Delicacy

## Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1. Equilateral, isosceles, scalene; 2) Thomas Cruise Mapother IV; 3) Dom Perignon; 4) Left (Where the Devil lurks); 5) Squash



## Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

15

percent of women in the US send themselves flowers on Valentine's Day.

20

percent of passengers on commercial airplanes would develop respiratory infections within a week of flying, according to a world health survey before the COVID-19 outbreak.

85

years is how long the letters Q, W, and X were illegal in Turkey.

1,000

words per minute is how fast the human brain can read.

1.8 million

dollars a year is how much the US Government spends on printing documents.

Source: Uberfacts

## ISLAND VIEW



The Eye of Monkey. Photo: Tony Edwards

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to [exeditor@classactmedia.co.th](mailto:exeditor@classactmedia.co.th)

## This week in history

July 10, 1985

The Greenpeace vessel Rainbow Warrior is bombed and sunk in Auckland harbour by French DGSE agents, killing Fernando Pereira.

July 11, 1405

Ming admiral Zheng He sets sail to explore the world for the first time.

July 12, 1806

Sixteen German imperial states leave the Holy Roman Empire and form the Confederation of the Rhine.

July 13, 1923

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



The Rainbow Warrior at Marsden Wharf, Auckland, after the bombing of July 10, 1985. Photo: New Zealand Govt

July 14, 1789

French Revolution: Citizens

of Paris storm the Bastille.

July 15, 2006

Twitter is launched, becoming one of the largest social media platforms in the world.

July 16, 1935

The world's first parking meter is installed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Source: Wikipedia



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### All you can eat Sunday Roast Buffet

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### All you can eat BBQ Ribs night

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# Bottas triumphs in F1 return

## Penalty sees Hamilton slip off podium in eventful Austrian GP

### FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato

Valtteri Bottas survived an Austrian Grand Prix of high attrition to claim the first win of the 2020 Formula One season last Sunday (July 5).

The Finn led every lap, but his race was far from easy. The Grand Prix featured three safety car interventions and only 11 finishers at the chequered flag, and Bottas had to manage "critical" gearbox issues that prevented him from exploiting the full performance of his car.

He also had to absorb pressure from teammate Lewis Hamilton in the middle part of the race, though the Briton's threat faded a little past half distance after becoming afflicted with similar reliability problems.

Hamilton came under fire late from a resurgent Alex Albon, who used substantially fresher tyres equipped during the late second safety car to launch an ambitious move around the outside of the Mercedes at turn four on lap 59.

But the two made contact, the Briton understeering into the Thai and pushing him into the gravel, from where he tumbled down the order.

Hamilton was adjudged the guilty



Valtteri Bottas celebrates after winning the Austrian Grand Prix, the first race of the 2020 F1 season. Photo: AFP

party by the stewards and handed a five-second penalty, blowing open the battle for the podium.

Max Verstappen should have been perfectly positioned to capitalise, but the Dutchman, winner of the 2019 Austrian Grand Prix, had retired on lap 11 with electronics problems in

his Honda power unit.

Three teams entered the battle. Racing Point's Sergio Perez was the incumbent ahead of McLaren duo Lando Norris and Carlos Sainz, but Ferrari's Charles Leclerc made himself the unlikely recipient of second place.

The final podium place boiled down to a fight between Hamilton, weighed down by his penalty; Perez, who was struggling with his tyres; and Norris, who was trying to follow Leclerc up the road.

The Briton seized the initiative, muscling past Perez on the apex

of turn three before setting the fastest lap of the race on the final tour, just slipping inside Hamilton's penalty window by less than 0.2 seconds and promoting himself to third place in the process.

### Fortunate Vettel

Sainz finished fifth behind the penalised Hamilton after slipping past Perez after his teammate. Perez was himself later penalised five seconds for speeding in the pit lane, but the Mexican was far enough ahead of the rest of the field to maintain sixth.

Pierre Gasly finished seventh for AlphaTauri, fending off Renault's Esteban Ocon, the pair separated by 0.774 seconds at the flag.

Antonio Giovinazzi finished ninth ahead of Sebastian Vettel, who was fortunate to score the final point of the race after crashing with Carlos Sainz at the first safety car resumption in a botched overtaking attempt at turn three that sent him tumbling to the back of the field.

Debutant Nicholas Latifi was the final driver to see the flag in his Williams. AlphaTauri's Daniil Kvyat and Red Bull Racing's Alex Albon were classified in 12th and 13th despite both failing to make the finish, the former for a delaminated rear tyre and the latter with a loss of power.

## Fox in the box Vardy joins 100 club

### FOOTBALL

BRENDAN RODGERS says Jamie Vardy's decision to stay at Leicester has cemented his legacy at the King Power Stadium after the striker joined the Premier League's "100 club".

The striker turned down the chance to join Arsenal in 2016, just weeks after spearheading the Foxes' Premier League title success.

Other members of that Leicester team including N'Golo Kante, Riyad Mahrez and Danny Drinkwater made big-money moves.

Last Saturday (July 4) Vardy, 33, scored his 100th Premier League goal, 206 games after becoming the first £1 million (B39mn) signing from a non-league club (Fleetwood Town) when he joined Leicester in 2012.

Of the 29 players to have become Premier League centurions, only Ian Wright (28 years 286 days) made his debut in the competition at an older age than Vardy (27 years 232 days).



Vardy is now on 101 Premier League goals. Photo: AFP

"I think as things stand he's a legend here now and for the rest of his time at the club," said Leicester manager Rodgers.

"It's hard to knock players if they do want to move on because their careers are so short but he's obviously felt really comfortable.

"He's found a real home here. He is adored by the supporters, they absolutely love him."

Vardy scored twice in the Foxes' 3-0 win against Crystal Palace, reaching the 100 milestone with the first of those goals.

### 'Remarkable'

Meanwhile, Rodgers has heaped praise on his squad and backs them for a top four finish despite a late-season wobble.

"What the players have done has been remarkable," he said.

"There's no doubt, we have shown over 33 games our talent. OK, we're maybe missing some players but as a squad we're very focused and we'll fight to the final whistle," he added.

"The league is so competitive and for us to be amongst it shows the level of performance." AFP

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