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BOOZE RULES



Public health officers inspect a venue in Phuket Town to ensure full compliance with COVID-prevention measures. Photo: PPHO

POLICE CLAIM MORE THAN 3,000 VENUE RAIDS CONDUCTED IN CLAMPDOWN

The Phuket News
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Phuket police and health officials have ramped up their campaign to ensure venues across the island serving alcohol and providing live entertainment are in full compliance with COVID-prevention measures.

Phuket Provincial Police last Saturday (Dec 4) released a report claiming that officers had carried out more than 3,000 venue inspections since Nov 1, resulting in 32 arrests for breaking the provincial order regulating the sale of alcohol and COVID regulations prohibiting staff from having close contact with customers.

The report marked that last Saturday alone officers conducted 142 inspections of venues, resulting in four arrests: one in Muang District, two in Kamala and one in Wichit.

The report marked that the inspections and arrests were conducted specifically to enforce Phuket Provincial Order No. 7188/2564, “regarding measures to close the place or prohibit activities that are at risk of spreading disease” (COVID-19) and Phuket Provincial Order No. 7585/2564, which regulates the sale and consumption of alcohol across the island.

Under the provincial order which came into effect on Nov 16, restaurants and other “eateries” – that is, any venue with a permit to serve food, and if the venue also has a permit to sell alcohol – may serve alcohol from 11am to 2pm and from 5pm to 11pm only.

The subsequent revised order that came into effect on Nov 27 repeated the restricted alcohol serving times, but allowed for alcohol to be sold all night on New Year’s Eve, through to 6am New Year’s Day.

The report by Phuket Provincial Police issued last Saturday also noted that the provisions enforced in the campaign included those mandating that dancing remained prohibited, and that contact between singers,...

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Bicycling Baz gets powered up for E-biking



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Gazoo racing lights up streets at Saphan Hin



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News



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Venues targeted over COVID compliance

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...musicians and other performers with customers, or having performers sitting with customers, also remained prohibited.

The report marked that officers had inspected 3,760 venues from Nov 1 through Dec 4, resulting in police bringing charges against 32 people in 28 cases.

One of the cases involved gambling, in which three people were arrested at a venue in Patong, the report noted.

The remaining 27 cases and subsequent arrests were given as follows: Muang Phuket – 13 cases, 14 people arrested; Chalong – 1 case, 1 person arrested; Wichit – 2 cases, 2 people arrested; Patong – 6 cases, 6 people arrested; Thalang – 1 case, 1 person arrested; Kamala – 3 cases, 3 people arrested; and Kathu – 1 case, 2 people arrested.

Police did not name any of the venues caught breaking the COVID regulations, or name any of the people arrested, and photos of venues raided had their names obscured.

Meanwhile, officers from the Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO) have continued their campaign to ensure licensed venue operators are aware of the alcohol control laws in effect, and the COVID-prevention measures, which include that all staff must be vaccinated and must undergo an antigen test every seven days to confirm they are not infected with COVID-19.

In Patong, Mayor Chalerm-sak Maneesri has personally conducted his own inspections accompanied by health



Patong Mayor Chalerm-sak Maneesri inspects venues on Bangla Rd. Photo: PR Patong

officials to ensure venues along the popular Bangla Rd are complying with COVID protection measures.

Late last month several venues on Bangla Rd were ordered closed for intensive disinfecting after dozens of staff were confirmed infected. Mass testing of staff working at the venues continues on a weekly basis.

Phuket Governor has ensured that the penalty provisions have been included in the standing orders revised and re-issued every two weeks.

Any person who violates or fails to comply with the order may be charged under Section 51 of the Communicable Diseases Act 2015, which incurs a fine of up to B20,000, which includes those caught not wearing a face mask in a public area.

Any breach of the order may also constitute an offense under Section 52 of the Communicable Diseases Act, which may be punished by a fine of up to B100,000 or up to one year in prison, or both.

Offences against the order may also be punished under Section 18 of the Emergency Decree, which may incur punishment of up to two years' imprisonment, or a fine not exceeding B40,000, or both.

Shields up over Omicron

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Fears that tourists arriving from Africa had brought the Omicron variant of COVID-19 to Phuket sparked a search of the island last week as health officials brought in Phuket Immigration to help locate 130 tourists known to have entered Thailand through Phuket in late November.

Phuket Provincial Public Health Office Chief Dr Kusak Kiattikoon and Phuket Immigration Superintendent Col Thanet Sukchai brought the issue to the public's attention on Dec 2, when it was revealed that 126 arrivals from South Africa and four arrivals from Namibia had landed in Phuket from Nov 15-27.

Of the 130, 58 had already returned home, Dr Kusak said, adding that of the remaining 72 tourists still in Thailand, 57 were still in Phuket. Health officials had already located 17 of the 57 still on the island, he said.

"Health officers are now investigating those tourists and conducting contract tracing," Dr Kusak assured.

Just one day later (Dec 3), Phuket Immigration Chief Col Thanet confirmed that officers had located all but one of the tourists.

In presenting revised figures, Col Thanet said that 52 were still on the island. Of those, 26 had already stayed in Phuket more than 14 days without presenting any signs of infection. These 26 would not be tested again for COVID-19, he said.

All 130 arrivals who



A hotel staffer is asked to pass on the message that the tourists need to be tested. Photo: PR Phuket

landed in Phuket between Nov 15-27 tested negative for the virus after arriving in Phuket, he assured.

"There is still only one person who has not been recorded as travelling out of Phuket or moving anywhere else. Therefore, we have given his details to the Digital Ministry [Ministry of Digital Economy and Society] so they can check his location from the Mor Chana app," Col Thanet said last Friday.

"In this operation, officials consider this group of tourists as important people, so we have to understand and act well to tourists because these tourists are bringing income to the country.

"All officers have been ordered to act politely and provide good convenience to tourists," he said.

As a precaution, Col

Thanet, accompanied by Dr Onpat Kawanich, Head of the international infectious disease control checkpoint under the Phuket Port Authority, last Friday visited the hotels where the 17 tourists to be tested are staying.

Instead of speaking directly with the tourists, he passed the message on to hotel staff to inform the tourists that they were to be tested.

Hotel staff were to make the arrangements for the tourists to undergo the tests at the Central Floresta shopping mall on Monday or Tuesday (Dec 6-7).

However, through a notice issued on Monday, the PPHO presented figures that had been revised again, this time reporting that The report marked that 130 tourists had entered Thailand via Phuket

Airport between November 14 -27.

Of those, 45 had completed 14 days' stay in Phuket without any signs of infection.

Of the remaining 85, 41 had travelled back out of Thailand, and 28 had travelled to other provinces, the report added.

Only 12 tourists of concern were still in Phuket, the PPHO noted.

None of the tourists from South Africa and Namibia tested so far had tested positive for any form of COVID-19, the new PPHO report said.

Of those, six had already repeatedly tested negative for COVID-19. The remaining six had swab samples taken and the PPHO was awaiting the test results, the report added.

Additional reporting by Eakkapong Thongtub

Phuket sets scene for conference on UN peacekeeping missions

A HIGH-LEVEL SERIES OF talks regarding Thailand's role in the United Nations peacekeeping missions began in Phuket on Monday (Dec 6), with Royal Thai Army Chief of Staff Gen Nothapol Boonngam on the island to attend the 12-day event.

The series of talks, to be held Dec 6-17 at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia resort in Karon, is to focus on Thailand's support of the UN's development of its capacity for peacekeeping missions, and Thailand's role in

peacekeeping at an international level, said a government report of the meeting.

Rafael Barbieri from the UN Department of Peace Operations explained that the series of meetings followed PM Prayut Chan-o-cha's announced commitment to supporting UN peacekeeping operations at the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping held at the United Nations headquarters in New York on Sept 28, 2015.

"The seminar aims to develop the planning process of the United



Photo: PR Phuket

Nations and member countries in sending military and police forces to join peacekeeping missions in

various regions," said Major Gen Nattapon Saengchan, Director of the Thai military's Peace Center of Department of Military Operations.

Also present at the seminar on Monday were Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw, Vice Admiral Sompong Nakthong, Commander of the 3rd Naval Area Command, Pol Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong, Commander-in-Chief of Phuket Provincial Police, and Col Thoetsak Jaiaree of the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations in New York.

The event is being attended by 35 people from 22 United Nations member countries.

"It can be seen that throughout the past the relationship between the UN and Thailand has always been good and stable, leading to this seminar. This can be seen by obvious examples of strong ties in 2016-2017, which was the first time that Thailand had deployed military forces to assist in peace operations in Sudan," Mr Barbieri noted.

The Phuket News

Motorbike taxi driver killer slays third victim

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A killer out on bail for shooting dead two rival motorbike taxi drivers at Phuket Bus Terminal 2, north of Phuket Town, in January has struck again, shooting dead another motorbike taxi driver at the inter-provincial bus terminal late last Saturday night (Dec 4).

Police were called to the bus station at 10:30pm, where they were shown where the victim, Champa Wanchan, 54, was shot dead while sitting in a white plastic chair in the parking area for motorcycle taxis.

By the time police arrived, Mr Champa had been rushed to Mission Hospital Phuket, before being transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Officers, led by Col Bandit Khaosutham, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Police Investigation Division, found two bullet casings on the ground next to the blood-stained chair.

Somnuek Kongterm, a motorcycle taxi driver who



Wian Iadchuthong, 60, from Trang, back in police custody. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

witnessed the shooting, told police that Vean Aiadchuthong, well known at the bus station for shooting dead a rival motorbike taxi driver in January, arrived with his son and walked up to confront Mr Champa, who remained seated in his chair.

Only a few words were spoken before Vean pulled out a handgun and fired several times, shooting Mr Champa at close range. Mr Champa

was shot once in the chest and once in the right temple.

Vean's son ordered the people who witnessed the shooting to go back to their homes, before he and his father fled, Mr Somnuek said.

Phuket City Police confirmed they had Vean back in custody by about 11:30pm that same night after tracking him down to his residence near the old bus station on Phang Nga Rd in Phuket Town.

Vean, originally from Trang province and owner of car rental and tour company Wang Wiset Travel Service Co, was taken to Phuket City Police Station for processing.

He had been released on bail in April after shooting dead two men – Prakob Chuthong, 54, a resident of Pa Khlok, and Yod Sae Lee, 50, also from Trang – at the main bus terminal north of Phuket Town in January.

Vean had been released on bail so he could prepare his defence to the charges against him for the slayings, despite police confirming that he had initially confessed to the killings.

Mr Champa's 17-year-old daughter, Ms Wassana, said she had no idea what would have prompted Vean to kill her father.

People familiar with Vean and his two victims in January also said they were unaware of any conflict among the motorbike taxi drivers that would prompt the killings.

Many of the people at the bus station at the time described him as "a nice guy".



Photo: Nattapong Kongkim

Grab delivery driver killed as pickup hits motorbike

POLICE HAVE YET TO announce what led to an accident in Thalang early on Dec 1 that left a Grab motorbike delivery dead after a collision with a pickup truck.

Police were notified of the accident, near the Bangjo intersection, in Moo 4, Srisoonthorn, at 1am.

Officers arrived with the rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation to find the body of Thinapat Sung, 39, by the side of the road.

His heavily damaged red Phuket-registered Yamaha motorbike was lying on the road nearby.

The force of the impact left one of the motorbike's

wheels in the mud beside the road. The Grab food delivery bag that was fitted to the back of his motorbike was also left lying on the road.

Kanat Damkliang, 29, the driver of the blue Phuket-registered Isuzu pickup truck involved in the accident, was at the scene waiting for police.

Lt Col Pongpipat Khamchomphu, Deputy Chief (Investigation) of Thalang Police Station, said officers had surveyed the area where the accident occurred but had yet to draw any conclusions as to who may have been responsible for the collision.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Local residents left angry over Pfizer walk-in queue confusion

LOCAL RESIDENTS VOICED THEIR anger over the poor organisation of the walk-in Pfizer vaccinations at the Indoor Sports stadium at Saphan Hin on Dec 2.

Among the biggest concerns were that people were left standing outside for hours with no social distancing enforced while waiting to be told to enter the stadium.

When *The Phuket News* arrived at 11am, local residents were arguing with organisers, calling for them to better organise the waiting area outside the stadium.

Many of the people had been waiting outside the stadium since 5am, and some of the officers present were accused of letting foreigners jump the queue.

After much shouting at the officers and being told to calm down, the situation was resolved and the vaccinations continued to proceed.

One woman who asked to be called "Mrs Somjai" (not her real name), who had brought her daughter to be vaccinated, pointed out the poor organisation.

"The chair arrangement is without spacing. Temperature measurements are taken only before entering the building, and there seems to be no organisation of the queues at all. People are standing so close they are breathing on each other's necks," she said.

"And many of the people here have been standing outside in the sun for at least two hours," she added.

"The staff today are not as ready as they have been at other vaccination centres, which have been very orderly. When I took another daughter to be vaccinated at another centre,



An angry resident confronts an official over the queue conditions. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

I didn't see any problems. The queues were in an orderly manner, and it was very organized. But today the vaccination centre is not safe at all. There is actually a greater risk of spreading the coronavirus," Mrs Somjai said.

Chun Phromanong, 64, had been waiting in the queue since 7am. He was angered by a group of four to five foreigners with small children arriving and being ushered past the crowd into the stadium. He raised his concern with officials at the venue.

"I'm 64 years old and think about it, I can't go home and I have been here in the queue since 7am. There must be someone who has the power to fix this. Let's be clear about whether we have enough vaccine doses. If the vaccine runs out, it should be reported that it's gone because now more and more people are starting to come. Is there enough vaccine[doses]? They have to say so clearly," Mr Chun said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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TUE DEC 14



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Wind 14 m/s

WED DEC 15



High: +32°
Low: +26°

Wind 18 m/s

THU DEC 16



High: +32°
Low: +26°

Wind 18 m/s

Water machine parked in driveway

Eakkapop Thongtub
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Confusion over exactly who owns a plot of land has left an absent homeowner now in Germany with a bill of B50,000 to have a water-vending machine removed from in front of her house, despite the machine being installed in a drainage ditch which is supposed to be on public property administered by the local municipality and the machine now partly blocking her driveway.

The coin-operated water-vending machine was installed some two months ago, people living in the street, Baan Bang Whan Rd in Moo 1, Kamala, confirmed.

The water-vending machine is of the same type installed elsewhere by Kamala Tambon Administration Organisation (*OrBorTor*). The machine, branded "Freshy Drinking Water", is accompanied by a 500-litre tank



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

of drinking water for local residents to use.

The owner of the house, Waralak Fritze, 52, is currently staying in Germany, explained the housekeeper, who asked not to be named.

When the machine was first installed, she called to inform Ms Waralak, who then called the owner of the machine, whose mobile number is posted on the front of the machine.

"We have to give the machine owner B50,000 to

remove this machine," Ms Waralak said in a post online.

"The machine owner said they bought it from someone. It cost B35,000, but they said I have to pay B50,000 because it was bought a long time ago. Please help. Don't use your power over the people. Thank you," the housekeeper said.

With the village headman (*Phu Yai Baan*) of Baan Bang Wan, Moo 1, Kamala resigning on Nov 29, *The Phuket News* asked subdistrict headman (*Kamnan*) Wattanaphon

Sanae how the situation is to be resolved.

"I know the complaint... This has to be done right, and it is not appropriate to set up the machine blocking the entrance and exit of the house," he said.

"But if legally required, the owner of the house and the owner of the machine must bring the documents to verify who is correct," he added.

The issue involved the registered owner of the land on which the machine has been installed, which in this case is Mali Wandee, he noted.

Ms Mali said that all of the land in the past had no roads passing through it and was all the same plot of land.

"The land of the person who complained to the media is located in front of a public canal. Before the road was built across this land, the whole plot was divided into two parts, mostly in the mountains and the small part next to the public canal," she said.

Ms Mali explained that she invited "the foreigner" who owns the house to go halves in buying the small plot that once was beside the public canal, but now includes the area in front of the foreigner's house.

However, the foreigner declined, saying that the land on which the house was built was enough, she said.

"The land owner sold it to me for B50,000. I bought it alone and a community agency came to ask to set up that machine, so I allowed them to set it up and for them to pay for the electricity the machine uses. Therefore, the machine is not mine. In the past, this was a public canal near the fence of the foreigner's house," Mrs Mali said.

Meanwhile, Kamala *OrBorTor* has not publicly recognised or commented on the issue.

Chula Dumlak, voted in as president in the election late last month, has yet to be officially installed to take office.

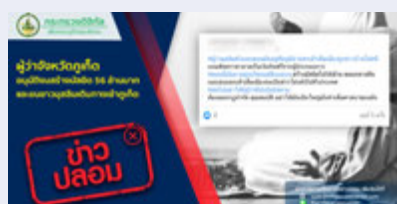
Fake news warning defends Governor

THE ANTI FAKE NEWS CENTER, operated by the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society: (MDES) has issued yet another fake news warning denying claims online that the Phuket Governor is smuggling illegal Muslim immigrants into Phuket and has allocated B56 million to building a mosque on the island.

The warning came last Sunday (Dec 5), and was shared by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department on Monday (Dec 6).

"According to the information published on the subject 'Phuket Governor Approved budget for building a mosque of 56 million baht and transporting Muslims to Phuket', the Anti-Fake News Center has conducted a fact check by Phuket Provincial Public Relations Office found that such issues is false information," said the notice.

"In the case of posting information indicating that a Muslim governor who pretends to be a Buddhist moved from Chaiphum to Phuket approved a budget of more than 56 million baht to build a mosque and bringing a large number of foreign Muslims into Phuket, the Phuket Public Relations Office has reviewed the post and clarified that It's not true at all.



The fake news warning issued again on Dec 5. Image: AFNC

"The governor of Phuket is a Buddhist. He has never approved a budget of 56 million baht to build a mosque and has never smuggled Muslims into Phuket in any way," the notice said.

"Therefore, people are asked not to trust such information and [we] ask for cooperation not to send or share such information on various social media channels. People can receive more information from the Phuket Public Relations Office posted through the website <https://pr.prd.go.th/phuket> or [they can] call 076-216118," the post added, using its standard reminder.

People were advised to report any reports or social media posts suspected of being "fake news".

The Anti Fake News Center issued an identical fake news warning in October, but has yet to make any mention of any legal action pending due to the claims being found to be false, now twice.

The Phuket News

Lucky licence plate fetches B1.42mn

ONE PHUKET LICENCE PLATE has been sold for B1.42 million at the recent Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) annual auction of "lucky numbers" for this year.

Licence plate Phuket "๗๓ 9999" (KhorKor 9999) fetched the top bid at the auction, which was held live online on Nov 27.

In total, 301 licence plates under the newly released ๗๓ series were sold, altogether fetching B24,396,501.

The total raised this year through this year's auction, held under the theme "Treasure of millionaire, Majestic and Twofold Luck", exceeded initial hopes to raise B15mn, PLTO Chief Jaturong Kaewkasi.

Also present for the run-up and the live auctions was former PLTO Chief Banyat Kantha, who now serves as Director of the Bureau of Registration and Tax at the Department of Land Transport.

The licence plates auctioned were for standard vehicles registered to carry not more than seven passengers, Mr Jaturong explained.

"The winning bidder, in addition to having the right to the registration number that they are interested in, is also supporting victims of road vehicle accidents as the proceeds from the auction will go to the Road Vehicle Safety Fund," he said.

The auction held last year, at the Royal Phuket City Hotel, was also broadcast online. The series of licence



One punter paid B1.42 million for Phuket licence plate ๗๓ 9999 (KhorKor 9999). Image: PLTO

plates featuring "KhorKor (๗๓)" saw 503 people bidding for their preferred licence plates, Mr Jaturong noted.

The top bid last year, also for the number 9999, was sold for B2.8mn, he said.

The second-most popular licence plate bid for was ๗๓ 1, which sold for B1.468mn, he added.

The auction last year raised B30.473mn in total, Mr Jaturon said.

The live auction held online in Phuket was just one of many held across the country. This year marked the 18th time the auctions had been held by the DLT to support the Road Vehicle Safety Fund. Details of the other auctions held can be found at www.tabienrod.com.

"So far the auctions have raised B324,482,355 for the Road Safety Fund," Mr Jaturong explained.

In the fiscal year 2021, Phuket Province received of B2.136mn in funding from the Road Safety Fund to organise activities to reduce road accidents, he said. *The Phuket News*

Airport under fire over noise

Residents accuse Airports of Thailand of delaying land buyouts

The Phuket News
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The Phuket branch of Airports of Thailand (AoT Phuket), which operates Phuket International Airport, has insisted that it is not ignoring or delaying compensation owed to local residents in the area over noise pollution.

A group of about 20 local residents gathered at the airport on Dec 2 to voice their dissatisfaction with the lack of progress by AoT Phuket in delivering compensation owed due to noise pollution from aircraft flying overhead.

Leading the gathering were local resident Songwit Winyupradit and Boonpaisan Boonsop, Village Headman (Phu Yai Baan) of Moo 1 Mai Khao.

The local residents at the airport represented Moo 1, Moo 4 and Moo 6 in Tambon Mai Khao, and Moo 6 Baan Laem Sai in Tambon Thep-krasattri.

The group delivered a formal request addressed to the Chairman of the Board of



Directors of Airports of Thailand Public Co Ltd, calling for the company to expedite payment owed to the villagers.

The letter pointed out that the compensation was to be paid out by 2022.

Manat Sotharat, Deputy Director of Operations and Maintenance at Phuket Airport, received the formal letter.

Local resident Mr Songwit said that AoT must comply with the environmental impact report submitted by AoT to

the Office of Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning among the supporting documents for approval for the construction and development of Phuket Airport.

"In the report, it was clearly stated that various operations must be completed before the airport can be opened in the development area, but it is now the end of 2021, and compensation still has yet to be paid to those affected by noise. Less than 50% of

people affected have received compensation," he said.

"In the past, the villagers took the view that the relevant agencies were trying to prolong the time taken. The implementation of the project [to resolve the issue] began without a specific timeline. As a result, the affected people have not yet been compensated for the many impacts that have occurred," Mr Songwit said.

"Therefore, I would like the relevant agencies to expedite the issue of compensation

to be completed as soon as possible, because the villagers suffered a lot from the noise. The affected villagers are those who live around the airport and lived there before the [larger] airport was built. Therefore, I would like to call on them to expedite the problem as soon as possible," he said.

Mr Songwit pointed out that AoT is going through the process of making offers to buy land from local residents affected. AoT has signed purchase agreements for 17 households, while three households are waiting for confirmation that AoT will agree to buy their land.

"Yet there are 30 more households still waiting to hear from the consulting company hired to conduct the land value appraisals," he said.

"In addition, there are at least 100 households affected [by the noise] but the owners do not have any land documents. They are still waiting for an answer and clarity about compensation," he said.

"If the committee considers the impact of noise of the people who live around Phuket Airport is not serious, and is in no rush to solve this problem, we ask for a change of thinking, because the villagers in the area have been severely affected and want the project to be completed by 2022," Mr Songwit said.

"We request an answer within seven days. If we still do not receive an answer, we will come back to request an answer again and again until the problem is solved," he said.

Mr Manat of Aot Phuket said, "In such a problem, Airports of Thailand is not reluctant to help the affected villagers, but the action in this matter must comply with the rules of the law and must follow due process.

"Villagers don't have to worry, AoT definitely has not abandoned them and has the budget to carry out this matter. After receiving this request from the villagers today, we will report this up the chain and inform management that villagers affected by the noise have submitted this letter."

Residents of Rassada tsunami village call to end prosecution against them

RESIDENTS OF THE SATHON PHO community in Rassada held a demonstration through the heart of Phuket Town on Nov 30, calling for the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO, or OrBorJor) to cease legal action against them to have them evicted from state land.

The group, numbering about 200 under the organisation of the Phuket Community Rights Network, submitted a formal written request for the PPAO to end prosecution against residents in the area.

The group massed in front of Phuket Provincial Hall on Narisorn Rd, where PPAO Deputy President Deputy President Thiwat Sidokub formally received the request.

Representing the group, Sinchai Ruphrojin, a member of the Phuket Community Rights Development Network and of the People for Justice Movement (PMove), explained that the area where the residents live was developed by the PPAO under the Baan Mankong project after the 2004 Asian Tsunami to give local residents a place to live.

Later in 2011, the land was deemed to be part of the "new Rassada Pier community", which is on land administered by the Ministry of Interior, he said.

The area was marked to be issued a special "community title deed", which PMove and the residents have long campaigned that the government uphold, he added.

"But the community title deed policy has been halted due to political problems," Mr Sinchai said.

In the meantime, with no residents in the village having any formal address, because the land is not registered by any formal title



The villagers staged their protest through the heart of Phuket Town. Photo: PR Phuket

deed, they were forced to pay higher prices for essential utilities including electricity supply, Mr Sinchai said.

Not having a formal address also affected many of the local residents' citizen rights under national government, and affected their access to national government services, he added.

"The community has not yet been able to enter into a lease agreement with the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation. The members of the group still insist on their original rights, but they don't have the money to build a house, especially during this COVID-19 crisis," Mr Sinchai said.

The formal request asked the PPAO to cease all legal action against the residents.

"Especially while the issue of the community title deed has yet to be resolved," Mr Sinchai noted.

PPAO Deputy Chief Mr Thiwat said the issue would be raised at the next PPAO council meeting on Dec 15.

The National Land Commission was expected to raise this issue at its meeting this week, Mr Thiwat also noted.

"We can resolve this issue together," he said.

The Phuket News



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Phuket Town

Phuket amid sports tourism push

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Tourism authorities have ramped up their push to promote Phuket as a sports tourism destination, with no less than three major events being held on the island over the past week.

The Asian Tour continued with the Laguna Phuket Championship last weekend, and the “Toyota Gazoo Racing Motorsport” street racing took to the streets at Saphan Hin (see p16 for both stories).

The “Sport Tourism @ Phuket” event opened also at Saphan Hin last Saturday (Dec 4) in the hope of inspiring more sporting events to be held on the island. The event comprises tournaments in six sports – beach football, futsal, beach volleyball, woodball, petanque and swimming – to be held through December.

“This is another type of tourism activity that is gaining popularity with both Thai and foreign tourists, who can travel to the Phuket area to enjoy. Phuket is ready to welcome athletes and tourists to come to Phuket to join and enjoy the events, and to help increase income for Phuket



The Golden Fly event in Patong brought world-class international athletes to the island. Photo: MOTs

Province,” said Vice Governor Pichet Panapong at the opening ceremony.

Bringing world-class international long jump and pole vault athletes to Phuket was the “Golden Fly Series Phuket 2021” held at Patong Beach last weekend.

Minister of Tourism and Sports Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn presided over the official opening on the Patong beach road last Saturday, joined by Kongsak Yodmanee, Governor of the Sports Authority of Thailand, and Phuket Governor

Narong Woonciew.

The Patong edition of the three-day event, which concluded last Sunday (Dec 5), attracted world class athletes from 30 countries.

Among the stars who took part were men’s long jump athletes Stelios Malakopoulos (GRE, Paralympic World Record Holder), Zark Visser (RSA, No. 3 World Ranking 2019), and Yaroslav Isachenko (UKR, National Champion 2020 and Balkan Champion 2019), and women’s long jump athletes Nastassia Myronchik-

Ivanova (BLR, No. 2 World Ranking 2020) and Violetta Razbeyko (ANA, Final World Championships U20 and European Championships U20 2021).

Competing in the men’s pole vault were Matt Ludwig of the USA (No. 3 World Ranking 2020 and a Tokyo Olympian) and Thai athlete Patsapong Amsam-Ang (3rd Asian Games 2018).

Women’s pole vault was contested by Holly Bradshaw (GBR, Bronze Medal Olympic Games Tokyo), Natalie Uy

(PHI, National Record holder) and Thai national Khabut Chonthicha (National Champion 2021).

“This world-class sporting event is being held for the first time in Asia to stimulate the economy and create tourism trends in Thailand and Phuket,” Mr Phiphat said.

“With the hope that the public will join the event and experience this kind of sport closely, to inspire Thai people to turn to exercise and lead to the development of an international athletics athlete,” he continued.

“It is also a good opportunity to awaken the trend of sports tourism and to promote the image of Thailand to tourists around the world, which shows the potential and readiness of the country in the hope of stimulating continually growth of the Thai tourism economy in response to the policy that sports can help restore the economy and society of Thailand in a sustainable way,” he said.

Phuket Governor Narong commented, “This helps to enhance a good image and build confidence in Thailand in managing the COVID-19 epidemic. It also shows the

potential of Phuket Province to host sporting events and other events in the future.”

Sports Authority of Thailand Governor Mr Kongsak explained to those present, “The Golden Fly Series is a world-class sporting event that has been held in many areas both inside and outside Europe. This year, Thailand is the host of the competition and has succeeded in meeting the targeted policy plans, which in addition to helping to raise the standards of national sports to international sports standards, also helps to stimulate the economy and tourism in the country through sports tourism.

“It also helps to build confidence in Thailand in the eyes of the world in controlling and managing the epidemic situation of COVID-19 effectively and with strict competition standards and disease prevention measures. This competition was successfully accomplished very well. On behalf of the Sports Authority of Thailand, I would like to thank Phuket, both the local government and private agencies, as well as Thai people and other supporters that have given great support to the management of the competition.”

Phuket to spend B113mn on Chalong Bay projects

THE PHUKET PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT has been approved to spend more than B298 million on local development projects, including B113mn on two projects supporting marine tourism in Chalong Bay. One of the projects is for more than B44mn to be spent on installing mooring buoys in Chalong Bay.

The budget figures were revealed during a meeting led by Paphasmon Amralikit, Inspector-General of the Prime Minister’s Office Government Inspectorate Area 6 office, in Phuket last Friday (Dec 3).

During the meeting Ms Paphasmon was briefed on 12 projects totalling B298.57mn for the fiscal year 2022 (Oct 1, 2021 - Sept 30, 2022) “in order to comply with the objectives and achieve the best benefits for the people”, noted a report by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

Ms Paphasmon said that the meeting was to consider supporting the budget for the operating expenses of the Phuket Provincial Corporate Governance Committee and the preparation of budget expenditure plans for the fiscal year 2022.

As such, the 12 projects that will be monitored, she said.

Before attending the meeting, Ms Paphasmon met with Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew to discuss government issues and the guidelines for monitoring the projects.

Ms Paphasmon said that the monitoring will include field visits to inspect and monitor the projects.

“They will focus on public relations work through social media so that people can get to



Tourists board a boat at Chalong Pier. Photo: TAC Phuket

know the project guidelines. This is to create an understanding between the government and the people and related agencies to be in the same direction and to create the participation of the people in monitoring various projects, so that the projects will bring the greatest benefit to the people according to the objectives laid down,” she said.

Among the projects to be monitored is the installation of a “management system” for Chalong Pier under a budget of B68.86mn, and a project to install mooring buoys “to organise the safety of tourists in Chalong Bay” under a budget of B44.61mn.

Two projects already announced to the public that will also be monitored is the B49.9mn baht to be spent on “to increase the potential of safety measures in Phuket tourist attractions” and B28mn to be spent on beautification project in Phuket Old Town to help boost tourism to the area.

The Phuket News

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'Don't panic over Omicron'

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Business leaders are urging the public not to panic over the discovery of Thailand's first Omicron coronavirus variant infection, saying a lockdown will spell disaster for the economy, which is still struggling to recover.

The chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries, Supant Mongkolsuthree, said on Monday (Dec 6) there is no need for the public and the government to panic over the new strain, as a lockdown will deal a serious blow to the Thai economy, which is just starting to show signs of rebounding.

"A lockdown is not the answer. We must figure out how to co-exist [with the virus]," he said, noting that the number of new cases is on the decline, with recoveries consistently outnumbering hospital admissions.

"The situation is starting to look up. During a recent trip to Phuket, local residents told me that things are finally improving," he said. "This means we are heading in the right direction. People



Officials in protective gear wait for arrivals at Suvarnabhumi airport in Samut Prakan on Dec 2. Photo: Wichan Charoenkiatpakul

should not panic, otherwise the economy will not survive."

The chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Sanan Angubolkul, agreed with Mr Supant, saying bringing back lockdowns will hurt Thailand's image internationally.

"It will scare off [tourists from] foreign countries, because Thailand had just lifted its lockdown," he said, adding Thais are "experienced" in protecting themselves against the virus.

"Don't worry too much. However, the 10 million Thais

who have yet to be vaccinated should get their shots quickly," he warned.

Thailand confirmed its first Omicron variant infection on Monday, after tests showed that the American businessman of Thai descent who tested positive for COVID-19 after arriving from Spain was infected by the heavily mutated variant.

The director-general of the Department of Medical Sciences (DMS) Supakit Sirilak, said RT-PCR tests confirmed that the 35-year-

old was infected with the Omicron variant.

According to the Department of Disease Control's director-general, Opas Karnkawinpong, the US citizen underwent RT-PCR testing in Spain on Nov 28, the result of which came back negative for COVID-19.

The next day, he flew to Dubai where he transited for nine hours before he left for Thailand on Nov 30, Dr Opas said.

He flew on Emirates flight EK372 from Dubai to Suvarnabhumi airport, during which he showed no symptoms, Dr Opas said, noting the man was inoculated with the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

However, the RT-PCR test taken right after the patient landed showed that he was infected with COVID-19, Dr Opas added.

The DMS is carrying out more tests, while the man is currently being treated at a hospital.

Dr Opas said that while the Omicron variant is more highly transmissible than other variants, most patients infected with the new strain show no symptoms or mild symptoms similar to flu.

New traffic offence points system in effect

NATIONWIDE

A NEW NATIONWIDE points system relating to traffic offences came into effect last Wednesday (Dec 1).

Initial enforcement will be focusing on delivery transport drivers and drivers of public transport vehicles only, including truck, van and motorbike delivery drivers as well as tuk-tuks, taxi, bus and passenger van drivers, the Land Transport Department said.

Drivers will initially be awarded 100 points with deductions of 10, 20 or 30 points for traffic violations depending on the severity of the offence.

Anyone who breaks the law and does not have any points left on their licence will have it suspended for 90 days. Two suspensions in three years will result in them losing their licence for 180 days.

Some offences will result in the immediate loss of all points they have left. These include the use of narcotics, using a suspended licence, harming others' safety or



Police check a truck driver at the island checkpoint. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

causing accidents that result in fatalities.

Drivers with deducted points can recover 50-100 points by joining two four-hour training sessions.

Their points will be returned on the day of the examination following the training. If they do not pass, they will be given three opportunities to take the test again within seven days. Drivers can attend one training session per year.

Those who wish to recover their points can file a complaint with transport offices across the country using their driving licences or ID cards.

These measures will not be applied to drivers of private cars for personal use and police will be responsible for enforcement of the new rules, the department said. *The Phuket News*

Can-do 'katoey' hopes to move past gender

NAKHON PHANOM

THE TERM "KATOEY" OR TRANSVESTITE may have been used as reference to Pitchaya Pocharasadorn for the wrong reason but it is what propelled her to a resounding victory in the Nov 28 tambon administrative organisation (TAO) election in Nakhon Phanom.

"I have to thank whoever tried to taunt me with that description," said the newly-elected chairman of the Tha Khor TAO who won 2,954 votes, defeating her predecessor by 1,510 votes, a significant win by TAO standards.

Ms Pitchaya, nicknamed "Panda", 47, has battled all her life to assert her identity as a proud katoey who can make a difference to local politics and be of service to communities.

Being branded a katoey was a test she could not afford to flunk. Opponents kept badgering her with suggestions that belittled the qualifications of a katoey as a local leader.

"I had to overcome the disparagement. It's a matter of flipping the coin and turning the negativity into energy to drive me forward," Ms Pitchaya said.

If critics tried to put her down with vulgarity, she'd match it with humility. "I'll lead the TAO with a glass half-full. I think I can get more input through listening," she said.

Ms Pitchaya is no novice in politics. Long before being swept into the TAO



Pitchaya Pocharasadorn (second left) chats with a resident while on TAO election campaign trail. Photo: Bangkok Post

chairmanship, she started as a public health volunteer in 2004 before rising to the top as tambon Tha Khor health volunteer chair.

Next, she was made inspector attached to the kamnan local leader, a post that lasted three years.

Throughout her stints as health volunteer and inspector, she learned first-hand about residents' needs and their grievances while becoming aware of every nook and cranny of local politics.

"A devoted politician needs to be accessible and dependable for the people and not take advantage of them," she said.

"Sexual orientation and biases aside, it's the perseverance and a proven dedication to serve folks that won the day.

Ms Pitchaya hoped her triumph in the polls would lend impetus to a growing collective force to shatter the glass ceiling that keeps LGBT people from rising through political echelons. *Bangkok Post*

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Royal Phuket Marina Full Moon Boat Rally

ADVERTORIAL

“There are literally hundreds of boats in Phuket’s Marinas that are rarely used,” says Gulu Lalvani, chairman of Royal Phuket Marina (RPM). He explains that while this may be partly because owners are overseas a lot of the time, it’s also because pulling together a group of like-minded people when the owner finds time to take the boat out for a day or two is not always easy.

So, engaging his passion for developing leisure boating in Phuket, Mr Lalvani set his RPM team to initiate the first ‘Royal Phuket Marina Full Moon Boat Rally’ – almost two years later than originally planned due to COVID-19 restrictions.

“The idea is that we at RPM take on the challenge of organising the itinerary and the social aspects of a weekend’s boating, offering owners a hassle-free opportunity to get out on the water, explore new destinations, get together socially with old, and make new, friends – and get the most out of their valuable leisure asset,” explains Mr Lalvani.

So, on November 20, following a scrumptious ‘bubbly’ breakfast/brunch at RPM Yacht Club’s ‘Isola Ristorante’, the fleet of 11 boats, ranging from a small day boat at 5.5 metres to the superyacht Demarest at 32.5 metres, and with a combined 90-plus happy boating enthusiasts on board, makes its way out of the marina for the inaugural rally and a glorious two days of island hopping.

The first stop on our itinerary is Racha Yai Island – arguably first among the many island jewels that are all just short cruise from almost anywhere on Phuket Island.

Batok Bay on Racha’s northwest coast, with its pristine white sand beach framed with coral on both sides, is our overnight anchorage. Home to the luxurious, award-winning resort The Racha, with its 85 ultra-luxe villas spread over 20 acres, this is a true tropical island utopia. After picking up our mooring, we head ashore through the crystal clear, aquamarine water. It doesn’t get better than this.

Racha Island also has two other bays – Siam Bay in the north and Ter Bay on the eastern coast. The latter serves as an alternative anchorage during the southwest monsoon season; the former does not make an ideal anchorage at any time.

Once ashore, we check in with The Racha’s super-friendly staff taking everything in their stride. Then everyone drifts off to swim in the welcoming waters of the bay, to soak in the expansive

pool with a glass of something congenial in hand, to explore the island’s cycle tracks with the resort’s free-to-use bikes – or just to chill out in the incredibly well-appointed villas designed to attract free independent travellers with a taste for the luxury lifestyle.

Come evening it’s time to get together again for sunset cocktails and a sumptuous buffet dinner, with DJ, an exotic fire show and free-flowing beverages. A wonderful opportunity for everyone to catch up with old friends and make new ones, regaling all with the requisite tall tales of yachting exploits.

Next morning means another fine bubbly breakfast followed by a late morning departure for the short hop to Banana Beach Club on Coral Island’s northeast shore. Here a late lunch to the combined sounds of DJ and walkabout saxophonist is followed by an opportunity to frolic in the inviting shallows, indulge in a beachside spa treatment, try out the club’s water toys, work out at the waterfront ‘jungle gym’ or just chill in the shade sipping a cold drink.

The last leg of the rally sees a leisurely cruise to Rang Noi Private Island for sunset cocktails and snacks and an opportunity to say our goodbyes before returning to Royal Phuket Marina.

Such was the enthusiasm for this inaugural event, that the dates for the next rally have already been announced. To make sure you don’t miss out, mark January 15-16 in your diary for the second ‘Royal Phuket Marina Full Moon Boat Rally’. More details will be announced soon. If you’d like to reserve your spot now, go to this link: <https://forms.gle/Z4wHLfaZuhSSLS2r5>.

Events like this don’t happen without the support of sponsors. Leading backers of the inaugural rally were Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and Demarest Clinic, with support from The Racha, Siam Adventure, Asia Global Yachting, Sala Phuket, Bangkok Hospital Phuket, Coca-Cola, Andaman Passion, SACG Jewelry, Suay Restaurant and Thong Dee Restaurant.

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BLAZING SADDLES

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If you Google “E-biking and the COVID pandemic” you’ll be deluged with over 160 million listings extolling the many superb benefits of adopting this mode of transport during the haunted days we presently inhabit. Another Google deluge you’ll frequently receive concerns the fact that we humans have only got until about next Wednesday to do something drastic about climate change and our addiction to carbonising our environment. So, in the grip of this pandemic which has made us realise that social-distancing, being fit and healthy, avoiding obesity and getting lots of fresh air and vitamin D, going out for a bit of a bike ride has become something of a “no-brainer”.

Additionally, cycling or walking rather than driving, is one of the biggest and simplest changes the average person can make to reduce their carbon footprint. While taking up cycling is now a hot topic worldwide, starting to do so with an E-bike is a much easier, safer way to join the arcane world of Lycra-Louts for the first time and see if it works for you.

Globally, E-bikes are now everywhere and during the pandemic sales increased 145%, more than double

the rate of classic bikes. In the USA, industry experts put the number of E-bikes brought home in 2020 somewhere around half a million and that growth doesn’t seem to be slowing with latest projections indicating that between 2020 and 2023, 130mn E-bikes will be sold worldwide.

In Phuket, the very obvious benefits of E-biking are even more relevant, because despite the rhetorical bleating of such vested interests as the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Phuket is NOT a “cycling-friendly” environment, featuring heat, hills and hazards in abundance. For the inexperienced cyclist who may be jumping onto the saddle while on holiday, cycling around Phuket can be a dangerous option and should be approached with caution and help from a locally-experienced cycling enterprise.

Enter, my friend Martin Brot, owner/operator of the famous Siam Bike Tours (www.siambiketours.com) based at Boat Avenue in Cherng Talay. Martin has been a renowned a leader and innovator in all things cycling-based in the Andaman since 2006, and so it’s no surprise that he has now added E-biking and several safe and highly enjoyable tours to his range of offerings, so that the average neophyte can try out cycling while in Phuket.

Siam Bike Tours offer a half-day tour with the latest state-of-the-art E-bikes starting at their offices at 9:15am. They ride in a group with a leader, gliding safely and serenely up the west



Photo: Siam Bike Tours

coast of Phuket along rural roads beside Bang Tao Beach and Laguna Golf course to the lovely Wat Mongkhon Wararam (Wat Nai Yang) temple complex and Sirinat National Park on the north-west coast of Phuket.

After a coffee break at Nai Yang Beach, they cycle past rubber trees, oil palm plantations, pineapple fields and small villages on the way to the Elephant Sanctuary Park, where the group even gets to feed the pachyderms! They also offer a second three-hour, half-day E-bike tour from the west to east coast across the island and back with a beachside coffee stop overlooking the glorious east coast and Phang Nga Bay.

While enjoying these tours, it is when you come to the first serious climb that the true magic of E-biking becomes apparent. You can do as much or as little of the tough climbing work as you wish by engaging the electric

motor to whatever degree you choose. Certainly, the scenery and the overall enjoyment of the experience is greatly enhanced by this adjunct to your own basic power of leg and lung, and of course having the electric motor backup allows inexperienced and less fit riders to confidently experience the joys of being outdoors cycling.

There’s also ample scientific evidence to show that E-bikes tend to encourage longer, more consistent rides over more challenging terrain than unassisted bikes, meaning that each rider tends to actually increase the amount of work they do on an E-bike compared to an unassisted bike.

The result is fitter, healthier, more regular riding... exactly what you want in the midst of a raging pandemic.

So, what are you waiting for? Give Martin and his team a call and get out there and remember... E-Zee does it!

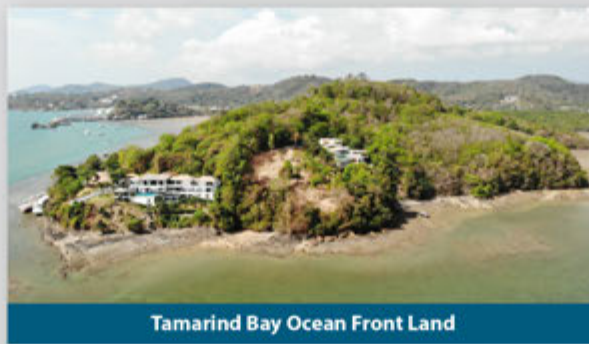
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POP QUIZ

1. Acrophobia is the fear of what?
2. In which year did *The Simpsons* air for the first time, as a "short" on The Tracey Ullman Show?
3. The Palace of the Lost City is a luxurious hotel complex in which luxury resort?
4. Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo and Thomas Bangalter are better known by what name?
5. What does a person with objectophilia suffer?

Answers below, centre

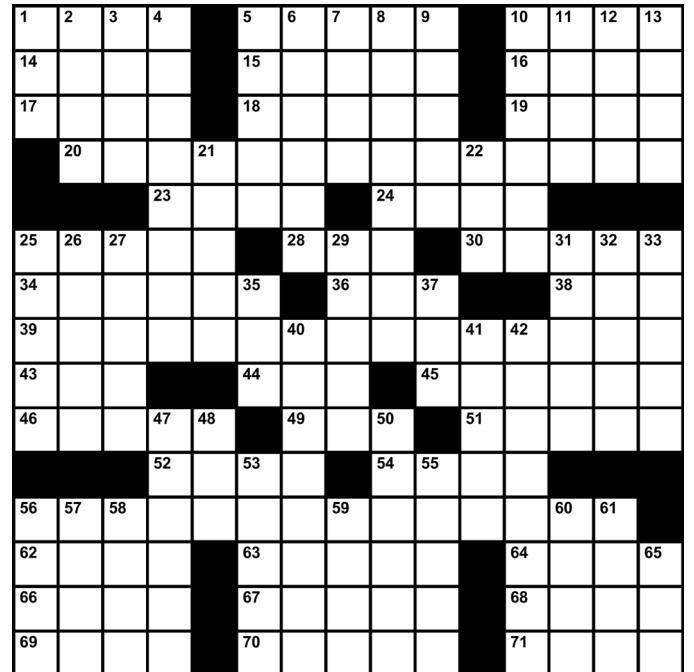
SUDOKU

Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across
1. Holy man
 5. Annoyances
 10. Like some columns
 14. Baker's need
 15. Fancy tie
 16. Stalactite site
 17. Sandwich bread
 18. Bathroom item
 19. Hands
 20. Indian restaurant fare
 23. Coarse file
 24. Disaster
 25. Fragrant oil
 28. Canal site
 30. Bloodstream fluid
 34. Start to like
 36. Miss-named?
 38. "___ Time transfigured me." - Yeats
 39. Fine produce
 43. Apply
 44. Flatter, in a way
 45. Building blocks
 46. Fine thread
 49. Polar worker
 51. Idiotic
 52. Gorbachev was its last leader (abbr.)
 54. Floating, perhaps
 56. Celebratory meal, probably
 62. Basil, e.g.
 63. Accustom
 64. Enthusiasm
 66. Advocate
 67. One who makes dreams come true
 68. Dead against
 69. Rude person
 70. Good point
 71. Bit of choreography
- Down
1. Chop (off)
 2. Tel ___
 3. Allot, with "out"
 4. Word riddles
 5. Yesteryears
 6. Break
 7. One who crosses the line?
 8. No charge on the bridge?
 9. It is best stainless
 10. Absorb
 11. Henry VIII's last wife
 12. Always
 13. Wet, as morning
 21. Third of nine
 22. Newspaper div.
 25. Bad
 26. Foot bones
 27. Genealogical diagrams
 29. Sweetheart
 31. Peach dessert
 32. Dress up
 33. Literature Nobel
 35. Lab eggs
 37. Flight board abbr.
 40. Table centerpieces
 41. Bye word
 42. Windfalls
 47. Felled trees
 48. Medium ability?
 50. Imaginary land of supernatural beings
 53. Goatlike antelope
 55. Precipitation
 56. Great Lakes fish
 57. Deli sandwich
 58. Jason's ship
 59. Women in habits
 60. Tiny payment
 61. Can't take
 65. Mouth piece



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Heights; 2) 1989 (Dec 17); 3) Sun City, South Africa; 4) Daft Punk; 5) A sexual attraction to buildings

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



GOT YOUR NUMBER

5

movies made by Steven Spielberg have made more than US\$500 million, after adjusting for inflation.

7

minutes is all it takes for the average person to fall asleep.

80

percent of a human body can be digested by maggots within one week.

18,000

years is how old a deep-sea sponge from the species *Monorhaphis chuni* can live.

2

billion

US dollars of mayonnaise is consumed in the US each year.

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW



Evening delight at Karon Beach. Photo by Cathy Bacorro

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

This week in history

Dec 10, 1932

Thailand becomes a constitutional monarchy. King Prajadhipok (Rama VII) signs The "Permanent" Constitution of the Kingdom of Siam on 10 December 1932.

Dec 11, 1998

Thai Airways Flight 261 crashes near Surat Thani Airport, killing 101. The pilot flying the Airbus A310-300 is thought to have suffered spatial disorientation.

Dec 12, 1098

First Crusade: Siege of Ma'arrat

al-Numan: Crusaders breach the town's walls and massacre about 20,000 inhabitants. After finding themselves with insufficient food, they reportedly resort to cannibalism.

Dec 13, 1577

Sir Francis Drake sets sail from Plymouth, England, on his round-the-world voyage.

Dec 14, 1911

Roald Amundsen's team, comprising himself, Olav Bjaaland, Helmer Hanssen, Sverre Hassel,



First page of the Thai Constitution of 1932.

and Oscar Wisting, becomes the first to reach the South Pole.

Dec 15, 2014

Gunman Man Haron Monis takes

18 hostages inside a café in Martin Place for 16 hours in Sydney. Monis and two hostages are killed when police raid the café the following morning.

Dec 16, 1930

Bank robber Herman Lamm – the "father of modern bank robberies" – and members of his crew are killed by a 200-strong posse following a botched bank robbery, in Clinton, Indiana. His gang made off with \$15,567 – equivalent to about \$223,118 today.

Source: *Wikipedia*

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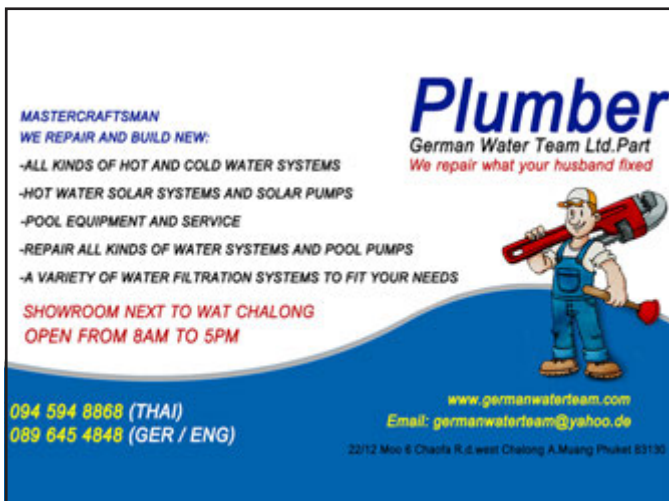


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11 DEC



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12 DEC



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15 DEC



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THU

16 DEC



Skal Phuket Christmas Luncheon

We are thrilled to invite you to our next event: Christmas Charity Luncheon at The Boathouse Kata on Thursday 16th December from 12.00-14.00. The Boathouse F&B team has kindly put together a superb menu with free flow selected beverages for the afternoon. Also, in the spirit of Christmas and to support those most needing our help in Phuket at this time, donations this year will be going to Skål Phuket's long-time charity partner, Phuket Sunshine Village. Please email secretary@skalphuket.org for further information.

FRI

17 DEC



Treasure Island the Panto

Theatrx presents, Treasure Island the Panto at the Junkyard Theatre. Three days only - Fri Dec 17 @ 6:30pm, Sat Dec 18 at 12 noon & 6:30pm, Sun Dec 19 at 12 noon & 6:30pm. "Early Bird" discounted ticket donation - children B600 & Adults B1,200 includes Tapas dinner and popcorn special. Proceeds to the Good Shepherd Phuket Town. Bookings - 089 874 2942.

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THU

23 DEC



Xmas Hospitality Golf Challenge 2021

The Xmas Hospitality Golf Challenge 2021 being held at Laguna Golf Phuket, a 12:30pm Shot Gun start, 4-ball Texas scramble. Teams of four players THB 18,000. Entry fee includes green fee, caddie fee, buggy, on-course refreshments, goodie bag and prize giving ceremony at O'Hara's Irish Bar. More info contact Mark on 061 486 6736 or mark.hio1211@gmail.com

SAT

25 DEC



Christmas Gala dinner at Cosmo

Enjoy the magic of Christmas whilst taking in the stunning view across Nai Harn Bay, over a sumptuous Buffet Dinner complete with all the trimmings at 7:30pm. South African singer - songwriter Eric Canham will entertain you with festive songs throughout the evening while Santa Claus and his helpers will greet children with gifts. THB 3,333 net per person. Children under 2 years eat free; from 2 up to 11 years at 50% off. Reservation, Cosmo at The Nai Harn Phuket, fbreservation@thenaiharn.com, 076 380 200

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ONE PHUKET PRESENTED A NIGHT AT THE POPRA

It was a musical rampage through the movies on Dec 4, 2021 at the Junkyard Theatre. A sell-out audience experienced some of the best musicians on Phuket belting out 34 classics, including *It's a Long Way to the Top* (from *School of Rock*), *I'm Still Standing* (*Rocket Man*), *Danger Zone* (*Top Gun*) and of course closing with *Time Warp* (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*). Congratulations for a fantastic evening goes to all involved – all the performers, Legend Music, PAPA, Vertigo Video, Junkyard Theatre and all the attendees. The substantial amount raised in support of One Phuket initiatives was inspiring and a great show of community spirit.





Kamolphu (centre) on the winner's podium. Photo: Radio Phuket Facebook

Phuket karting protege is on the right track

KARTING

LOOK OUT LEWIS HAMILTON and Max Verstappen as there is a new budding champion in the making in the guise of Phuket's own Kamolphu Anutchakun!

Young Kamolphu put in a dazzling winning performance at the recent Singha Kart Cup Championship Of Thailand 2021, held at the Bira Kart circuit in Chonburi on the weekend of Nov 19.

It might be a few more years until the young protege is competing at the top level seeing as he is only currently competing in the 7-8 age group in junior karting although he clearly has a bright future ahead of him.

Racing for Porsche Phuket, Kamolphu won the Singha

Rookie A class in the 7-8 year category on Nov 21 with a time of just over 14 minutes across 11 laps at a combined distance of 14.63km and an average speed of 65.91km/h.

As part of a field of 16 racers, he also won the fastest lap of the day with a time of 1:05.404.

Earlier in the weekend Kamolphu had won the warm up race and also finished fourth in the pre-final qualifying race.

The Singha Kart Cup is wholly supported by legendary F1 driver Kimi Raikkonen and strives to provide a platform to put youngsters onto the first rung of the racing ladder.

Young drivers like Kamolphu are proof that the ideals of the initiative in finding and nurturing racing stars of the future are certainly working.

The Phuket News

The winner takes it all

FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato
michael@boxofneutrals.com

You simply could not script it. After 21 rounds Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton are tied on points and brimming with animosity after a dynamite grand prix in Saudi Arabia last Sunday (Dec 5), and it's anyone's guess who's going to leave Abu Dhabi with the championship this weekend.

Hamilton needed to win in Saudi to set up a winner-takes-all final round. If Verstappen were to triumph, only a dramatic serving of misfortune could deny him the title.

Hamilton had it all to lose. Verstappen went all-out to deal the fatal blow.

The Dutchman's full-throated assault on the grand prix was evident in his supreme but ill-fated pole attempt when he locked up and in a moment of overconfidence slid into the barriers as he tried to power out.

But the race dealt Verstappen a second chance, a red flag gifting him a free pit stop that promoted him from third into the lead.

Hamilton was furious, and Verstappen now wielded the narrow circuit to his defensive advantage.

At the restart Hamilton launched down Verstappen's inside, but the Dutchman wasn't prepared to concede. He cut the chicane and rolled Hamilton wide, holding the lead by forcing the Mercedes to slow.

The pressure swelled again on lap



Verstappen and Hamilton battle it out in the Saudi Arabia grand prix last Sunday (Dec 5). Photo: AFP

37, when Hamilton latched onto the back of Verstappen on the run down to the critical first turn and swept around his outside.

The Briton was ahead, but Verstappen ran him deep to take them both off track, forcing Hamilton to pull out.

It was a trademark Verstappen move, the kind from which Hamilton has regularly withdrawn to avoid a crash. But with two races to go a season of pent-up frustration was ready to burst.

He tried to do it by hitting the brakes on the long back straight in an attempt to pick up the slipstream through the last corner and re-take the lead. But the closing speed at one of the fastest sections of track caught Hamilton off guard, and he ran into the back of the Bull.

It was the season's most bizarre flashpoint and served to underline the intensity of the unique championship fight – not the rules, not logic, not the potential presence of other cars could extract this battling pair from their own personal duel. The track may as well have belonged to them alone.

The animosity between the pair has never been higher, and with one race to go the permutations are simple: whoever finishes ahead in Abu Dhabi wins. If both fail to finish, Verstappen wins on count-back, and there's no doubt the Dutchman will wield this most slender advantage to his benefit in the fight of his life, debate about driving standard be damned.

It's the finale Formula One has always wanted. The winner takes it all.

Phuket News
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English Premier League Predictions

thephuketnews.com/predictions.php

Dechapol and Sapsiree make history

BADMINTON

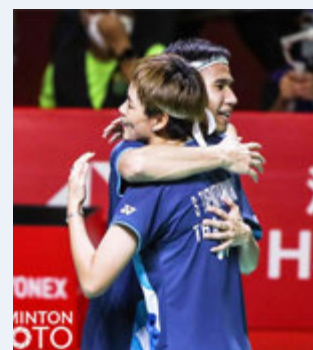
MIXED DOUBLES STARS Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai completed another season-ending hat-trick of titles by retaining their World Tour Finals crown in Bali last Sunday (Dec 5).

Having claimed three straight victories in Bangkok in January, the Thai world No.2 pair claimed another slice of badminton history with a 21-19, 21-11 victory over Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino of Japan.

They won the Indonesia Masters and the Indonesia Open before this week's finale and also claimed the Hylo Open in Germany prior to their trip to Bali.

Dechapol and Sapsiree made history early this year when they won the Yonex Thailand Open, the Toyota Thailand Open and the World Tour Finals to conclude the 2020 season in January. Last Sunday's victory saw the duo pocket US\$126,000 (approx B4,158,000).

"World Tour Finals



Dechapol and Sapsiree after their win at the BWF World Tour Finals. Photo: Badminton Association of Thailand

champion!!!! Words cannot describe how happy I am to have achieved this. TRIPLE CHAMPION here in Indonesia. This means the world to me, thank you everyone for all your support!," Sapsiree wrote on her Instagram.

However, Kunlavut Vitidsarn, another Thai playing in a final, was unable to pick up a second title for the Kingdom.

The 20-year-old rising star lost to world No.1 Viktor Axelsen of Denmark 12-21, 8-21 in the men's singles decider.

Axelsen, the Tokyo Olympic gold medallist,

proved too strong for Kunlavut, who was named the BWF most promising player last Friday, as the Dane wrapped up his second successive title in Bali in 43 minutes.

Axelsen was named the BWF male player of the year last Friday.

Earlier, An Se-Young secured the biggest title of her career with a 21-16, 21-12 win over Pusarla V Sindhu.

In the process, she became the first Korean women's singles player to win a season-ending championship, proving she is a rising powerhouse after claiming three back-to-back titles in Bali.

"It's been a tiring three weeks for me. I'm super glad to come away with three titles and I'm very happy about it. I'm really excited about the World Championships and I'm hoping to play without any injuries."

Kim So-Yeong and Kong Hee-Yong of South Korea took the women's doubles crown while the men's doubles title went to Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi of Japan.

Bangkok Post

Red Fred redemption as Ralf debuts with a victory

FOOTBALL

AFF

Ralf Rangnick won his first match as Manchester United interim manager last Sunday (Dec 5) but was given an early sight of the job that lies ahead of him to ensure the Red Devils do not miss out on the top four.

The high-energy style the 63-year-old has built his reputation on in German football was on show early on at Old Trafford, just days after his arrival to replace the sacked Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

But United struggled to maintain that intensity or break Palace down until midfielder Fred, often the scourge of criticism under Solskjaer, scored with a fine strike from outside the box 13 minutes from time.

A first home clean sheet of the season gives Rangnick a platform on which to build, but that was more due to the visitors' caution and a glaring miss from Jordan Ayew than great defending.

United are now sixth in the table after a second straight win, just three points behind fourth-placed West Ham, and have a run of enticing fixtures against Norwich, Brentford, Brighton, Newcastle and Burnley before the end of the year.

Elsewhere, Chelsea suffered just their second Premier League defeat of the season against West Ham and have now dropped points in three of their past five league games at a time when Manchester City



Manchester United midfielder Fred (right) was widely criticised under previous manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer but played a key role in the win last weekend by scoring a fine goal to win the game against Crystal Palace. Photo: AFP

and Liverpool have hit the accelerator.

The Stamford Bridge side are built of tough stuff under Thomas Tuchel and the game at the London Stadium was just the third time in 53 matches under the German that they had conceded more than once.

Tuchel will be concerned at the lack of goals from his main forwards, particularly the out-of-form Romelu Lukaku, who was used as a substitute at the London Stadium and has not scored since mid-September after a bright start at Stamford Bridge.

Defender Reece James and attacking midfielder Mason Mount are the club's top scorers this season, with five goals each in all competitions.

Chelsea's slip up allowed Manchester City to move to the top of the table courtesy of a 3-1 win at Watford with goals

from Raheem Sterling and a brace from Bernardo Silva. The latter's performance backed up manager Pep Guardiola's claim that he is the best player in the Premier League right now.

Earlier on Saturday, Divock Origi marked his 100th substitute appearance for Liverpool with the latest in his collection of crucial late goals.

Jurgen Klopp's men had dominated Wolves at Molineux but could not find a way through until the Belgian struck in the 94th minute, sparking scenes of delirium from the Liverpool bench.

Other memorable moments for Origi have included an 87th minute strike in the 2019 Champions League final win against Tottenham and a last-gasp winner in a 2018 derby against Everton.



Thailand's Pathompon Charoenrattanapirom, No.14, celebrates his goal with teammates. Photo: Bangkok Post

War Elephants off to a fine start at Suzuki Cup

FOOTBALL

THAILAND KICKED OFF their bid to wrest back the AFF Suzuki Cup title with a 2-0 victory over Timor Leste in Singapore last Sunday (Dec 5), which also gave their new coach Mano Polking a winning start to his tenure.

The War Elephants, who are seeking their sixth Asean title, were frustrated time and again by a stubborn Timor Leste defence before Pathompon Charoenrattanapirom and Supachok Sarachat struck in the second half to seal three points for the former champions.

Timor Leste sat deep in their own half and the Thais, skippered by veteran striker Teerasil Dangda, found it difficult to make inroads in the first half.

The War Elephants had the control of the ball but

their forwards were wayward whenever they got close to the Timor Leste goal.

The Thais' inability to find the net forced Mano into making a couple of substitutions after the break, sending in Pathompon and Thanawat Suengchitthawon.

The move paid off as Pathompon succeeded in breaking the deadlock, deftly bringing down a cross from Naruebodin Weerawatnodom before rifling the ball into the net in the 51st minute.

Naruebodin was the provider again and an acrobatic volley by Supachok on 81 minutes doubled the Thai lead, putting a comeback out of Timor Leste's reach.

Thailand's next game will be against arch-rivals Myanmar tomorrow (Dec 11).

The War Elephants are in Group A with hosts Singapore and the Philippines.

Bangkok Post



Xmas Hospitality Challenge 2021

PRESS RELEASE

THE 6TH ANNUAL CHARITY PHUKET Hospitality Challenge Golf Tournament will take place at Laguna Golf Phuket on Thursday 23rd December 2021. A very Special Xmas edition this year so we will see some rather unusual attire on the course for a change, and maybe Santa will be there too. The event sees Hospitality and Service Industry professionals from Phuket and surrounding areas come together at the award-winning Laguna Golf Phuket golf course. The atmosphere will be fun yet competitive, with teams battling for bragging rights as the best hospitality golfers in the region.

Being the only event of its kind, it is the ideal networking opportunity for local hoteliers, restaurateurs, landlords, club owners and others involved in the hospital-

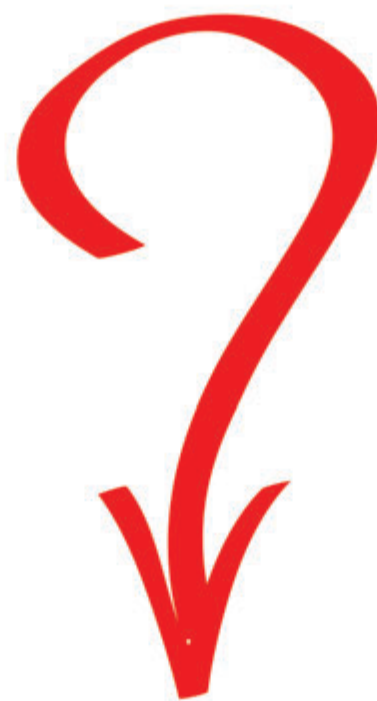
ity service industry to come together in a relaxed environment.

The organizer, Mark Cameron of Asean Events, said "We decided to try and get past the main opening of Thailand back at beginning of November and thought what better chance do we have than having a special one off Xmas edition of the event. This gives everyone time during the year to fly home to see families they haven't seen for a while and then get back over to Phuket for Xmas." As an end product of the event experience, we also raise funds for local children's charities." The Charity being supported is the Laguna Children's First Fund.

To register your team and/or interest in becoming a sponsor, please visit www.lagunagolf.com/phuket or email golf@lagunaphuket.com or mark.hio1211@gmail.com for more information.



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Phuket karting protege makes his mark > p14

PHACHARA WINS LAGUNA CHAMPIONSHIP

Thai secures maiden Asian Tour win in thrilling final day finale

Phachara with the winner's trophy.
Photo: Paul Lakatos / Asian Tour



GOLF

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Thailand's Phachara Khongwatmai finally secured his breakthrough maiden win on the Asian Tour last Sunday (Dec 5) when he claimed the US\$1million (B33mn) Laguna Phuket Championship after a gripping finish at Laguna Golf Phuket.

He holed a pressure-packed 12-foot par putt on the 18th to avoid a sudden-death play-off and beat countrymen Panuphol Pittayarat and Den-

wit Boriboonsub and Korean Bio Kim by a solitary shot.

Phachara, who first hit global headlines when he won a professional event aged 14, claimed the biggest tournament of his career so far after closing with an even-par 70 for a winning total of 10 under, on a difficult day when the wind speed reached 25-30km/h.

"I feel very happy, and very excited for this win. I have been waiting for about six years. Right now, it is my time, and I feel great," said 22-year-old Phachara – six-times a runner-up on the Asian Tour.

"Today was quite difficult because it was tough wind. I have never played this wind in Thailand before. Today was tough, and all about who can make the score. That last putt is my last chance for 18 holes but if I missed I knew I had another chance in a play-off. But I had that putt from that place before when I was here in quarantine."

The Thai star has won twice before on the Asian Development Tour, both in 2015, while it was back in 2013 he triumphed in the Singha Hua Hin Open as a 14-year-old amateur.

The tournament developed

into a two-horse race over the closing holes between Phachara and playing-partner Panuphol. The latter held the lead for much of day but bogeyed three holes in a row from the 13th.

A pivotal two-shot swing saw Phachara draw level with Panuphol on the par-five 14th, where Phachara made birdie while Panuphol bogey.

And Phachara moved one ahead on the following hole when he made par while Panuphol registered another bogey.

The momentum was in Phachara's favour but drama was soon to follow when he

three-putted 17, after missing a seven footer for par, to leave them both tied on 10 under playing the par-four 18th, with Kim, also playing in the group, one back.

In a nail-biting finale, Panuphol – whose approach shot landed 15 yards short – chipped to 15 feet but missed his attempt, while Kim's birdie putt from 22 feet also slipped past the hole.

Earlier, Phachara had to deal with a difficult 40-foot birdie putt, which sped past the cup to set up victory with the last roll of the dice.

Denwit, aged just 17, returned a 68, Panuphol 71,

and Bio a 72.

Bio, like Phachara was looking for his first Asian Tour win having led after each of the first three days and had started the final round with a one-shot advantage over his two playing partners.

But he got off to the worse start possible with four bogeys in the first five holes. He was out of contention for most of the day until presented with a chance to make extra time on 18.

The Asian Tour heads next to Singapore, where two 2020-21 season-ending events are being planned.

Toyota Gazoo motor racing hits the streets of Phuket Town

MOTOR SPORTS

THE TOYOTA GAZOO RACING competitors returned to Phuket last weekend for this year's edition of the "Toyota Gazoo Racing Motorsport" street racing expo.

Under the theme "Spirit to push the limits", four main races were held, with Mekratchakita Kalantanon outclassing her male rivals, taking 1st place in car 98 in the Toyota Vios One Make Race.

Puripat Vejwongsatechawat of Super Club Racing Team in car 99 placed second, followed by Adisak Tangpoolcharoen of B-quick Racing in car 26 and Bundit Laddayam of WISE & TKS Motorsport in car 19.

Khemarath Khonphutsa Buntham of the Auto Service Uttaradit Team in pickup 95 placed first in the locally popular Toyota Hilux Revo One Make Race, followed by Ekasit Namsangpha of Skzic Tunebyaot Racing Team in pickup 2 and Anivat Lom-mahaadthai of TMC-DRIVE68 BY WOOT BANG BON3 team in pickup 44.

Teerut Boonit of Super Club Racing Team claimed 1st place in car 7 in the Corolla Altis GR Sport One Make Race, with Pruthipong Leelanon of TMC-DRIVE68 BY WOOT BANG BON3 team placing second in car 68 and Pimpan Hongpan of Sittipol Group placing third in car 101.

Surasak Dagen of Nexster Rac-



Photo: PR Phuket

ing Team placed 4th in car 22 and Pure Hongpan of Sittipol Group placed fifth in car 100.

The racing got underway with the "Vios One Make Race Lady Cup" as a special on-the-day race not attributing any championship points.

Siripakorn Yayon in car 188 placed 1st, followed by Kamolchanok Boonkram of Sittipol Group

in car 199 and Saranya Kijwang of Nexster HGR Racing Team in car 126.

Present to get the weekend underway was Toyota Motor Thailand Co Ltd President Noriaki Yamashita and senior executives. Joining Mr Noriaki were Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew and Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO, or *OrBor-Jor*) President Rewat Areerob and Phuket Town Deputy Mayor Prasit Sinsaowapak.

Also present were Wiboonchai Na Ranong, Co-Chairman of Toyota Pearl Co Ltd, and Chaipat Na Ranong, Managing Director of Toyota Pearl Co Ltd, together with Trairat Kusuwan, Deputy Managing Director of Toyota

Phuket Motors Co Ltd, the sole distributor for Toyota in Phuket.

The "Toyota Gazoo Racing Motorsport 2021" racing expo, which tours the country as a championship, aims to highlight the potential of the cars and pickups racing, "which we can't see from normal driving in everyday life", Mr Noriaki said.

The motorsport expo also contributes to Toyota's goals to "Ever-Better Cars", he added, "with motorsport opening up a more in-depth perspective on automobile production."

"This initiative has inherited the DNA of motorsport to be passed on in the development of special models, especially in the GR Series models," Mr Noriaki said.

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