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GANG LIFE



An officers inspects the scene of the salying. Photo: Chalong Police

MEMBER OF NOTORIOUS INDIAN GANG SLAIN IN HAIL OF BULLETS IN RAWAI

Eakkapop Thongtub
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Police on Tuesday this week ramped up their hunt for two men who gunned down a known member of a notorious Indian gang at a beachfront resort in Rawai last Friday (Feb 4).

Twenty teams of officers had been deployed in the search for the killers, who police said on Monday were still believed to be in Phuket, or at least still in Thailand.

The men are wanted for shooting dead Jimi Sandhu, known by his nickname “Jimi Slice” for the scar across his right cheek.

Sandhu was a known member of the “United Nations” gang, which operates in Canada. He moved from India to Canada when he was just 7 years old, reported the *Vancouver Sun*, which broke the news that Jimi Sandhu was the man slain in the attack, citing “several sources”.

However, Sandhu was stripped of his Canadian citizenship and deported in 2016 due to his involvement in criminal activity, the newspaper



Image: CCTV via Phuket police

reported, and which Phuket police later said that Canadian police had confirmed.

Chalong Police were first alerted to Sandhu’s slaying last Saturday morning when a maid arrived to clean his rented villa at The Beach Front Hotel on Wiset Rd, Rawai. The maid found Sandhu’s bullet-riddled body face-up beside his rented red MG car parked outside the villa.

Sandhu had been shot at least 10 times at close range. Officers recovered 14 9mm and seven .38-calibre bullets

and bullet casings from the scene.

Inside the villa, which Sandhu rented for B100,000 a month, officers found brand-name handbags worth hundreds of millions of baht and three Apple mobile phones.

Officers also found two forms of ID, neither identifying him as Jimi Sandhu. One form of ID was a Canadian passport, issued in Saskatoon, for Mandeep Singh, 31, born in Chennai, India. The other was a Quebec driver’s licence issued to Amarjit Singh Sindhu, 33, registered

as living at an address in Montreal.

National police chief Gen Suwat Jangyodsuk arrived in Phuket on Monday to be briefed, and to brief the public, on progress in the case.

After the meeting, senior provincial police figures said the killing likely stemmed from conflicts between rival gangs. Region 8 Police Commander Lt Gen Ampol Buaraporn said Sandhu was wanted by Indian authorities for alleged drug trafficking.

The United Nations gang was known to be involved in the drug trade, human trafficking and other violent crimes. Rival gang members frequently taunt each other online over the demise of their counterparts, police said.

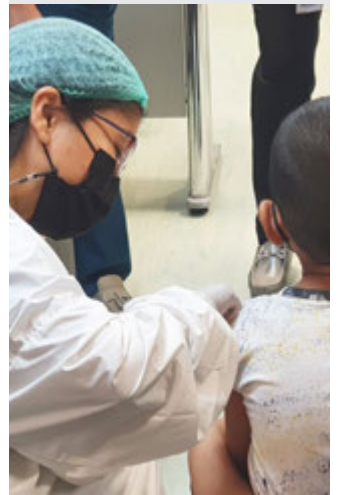
The two suspects were likely to be foreign nationals. They were recorded carrying out the attack on CCTV security footage.

The men are first seen walking into the resort villa area just after 9pm last Friday wearing matching hoodies and face masks.

Sandhu pulled up outside his villa just after 10:30pm. The two men are seen sneaking out from behind...

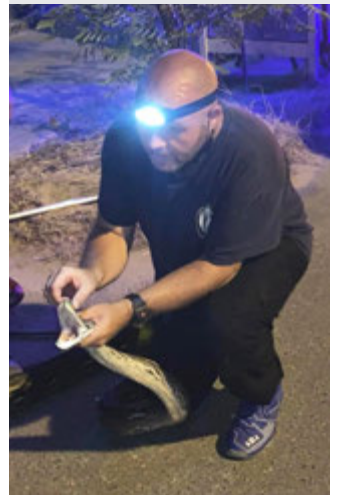
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Police, PLTO target local taxi drivers

The Phuket News

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Senior police are accompanying officers from the Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) in visiting local taxi ranks in tourist areas across the island to “ask for understanding” in allowing other taxi drivers to pick up customers.

The visits began in Soi Ta-iad, Chalong, on Feb 2, where officers led by Col Jirasak Siamsak, a Deputy Commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, spoke with drivers at a taxi rank on the street.

Soi Ta-iad is well known for its Muay Thai and MMA training camps, and fitness centres, that are popular with general tourists as well as professional fighters.

Joining Col Jirasak were PLTO Chief Policy Specialist Kornpitak Assanasuwan and officers from the Chalong Police.

“From talking to the local taxi drivers on Soi Ta-iad, they understand and are ready to cooperate with government agencies,” Col Jirasak told *The Phuket News* on Feb 3.

“This is a good way for all parties to solve problems together to prevent problems from recurring. After this, PLTO officers and Phuket



Col Jirasak Siamsak, Deputy Commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, speaks with one of the taxi drivers on Soi Ta-iad, Chalong. Photo: PR Phuket

Provincial Police will go to other areas to make local taxi drivers understand the hailing of other cars [through apps],” he said.

Col Jirasak made specific mention of the issue of Grab and Bolt drivers declining to pick up passengers from locations where there already is a taxi rank with drivers waiting for customers, as highlighted

by the now widely reported incident in Kamala on Jan 28, which saw a taxi driver being caught on video berating a Thai tourist and his girlfriend in Kamala over the driver being called a cheat.

One of the tourists was Kevin Phol, son of online celebrity “SuperdocYo”. Mr Phol posted the videos online, which soon went viral across

Thai social media platforms.

While much of the focus was on the B600 fare offered to the couple from Kamala to Patong, central to the furore was that the tourist couple had no choice but to hire the driver presented to them as he was “next in the queue”. The driver, Jetsada Kahapana, operated a 10-seater VIP minivan.

The couple tried to hire a Grab driver through a phone app, but the driver told the couple that he would not pick the couple up from their location, in front of Cafe Del Mar in Kamala, due to fear of reprisal attacks by the taxi drivers who provide services from the taxi rank in front of the club.

“Local taxi queues will be organised at various points throughout Phuket along with providing a history of the car owner and the number of cars that are serviced,” Col Jirasak said.

“There have been claims that they [Grab/Bolt drivers] cannot come to pick up passengers because there is already a queue for local taxis at that location,” he added.

Col Jirasak also noted that there is currently only one phone app registered to allow passengers to book taxi services, the local-government-endorsed Hello Phuket Service app.

“Currently, there is only one application that has been properly licensed that can be used to call a Phuket taxi, Hello Phuket Service, and the fares are not much different from local taxis in the area. Other applications are still in the process of waiting to be certified properly,” he said.

Hunt for killers continues as police befuddled by fake IDs

Continued from page 1

...some bushes and remaining out of sight behind another parked car as they approached. As Sandhu exited his car and turned around, the two men quickly moved toward him, each with a handgun blazing.

The men are seen continuing to shoot Sandhu at close range while he was on the ground, while they are standing over him.

The men were recorded by CCTV in the area fleeing the scene, including down a dark alley and along the sand on the Rawai beachfront, hiding from plain sight behind buildings.

National police chief Gen Suwat on Monday said police were still investigating the passport Sandhu used to enter the country, which is believed to have been counterfeit.

Gen Suwat defended Thai authorities for not identifying Sandhu as he entered the country.

A person having several



National police chief Pol Gen Suwat Jangyodsuk in Phuket on Monday (Feb 7). Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

passports is not illegal, Gen Suwat said.

However, biometrics should have raised the alarm, identifying Sandhu, he added.

Police are “confident” that Sandhu, or “Singh” (as Gen Suwat continued to call him), had entered the country on Jan 27 was accurate, Gen Suwat said.

Pol Col Kritsana Pattanacharoen, deputy spokesman for the Royal Thai Police, later said officers were working closely with Canadian authorities on the investigation and that Sandhu had entered Thailand on Jan 27 via a private plane.

“He entered Thailand on January 27 and stayed at a first

hotel, then moved to a second hotel, where he was killed,” Gen Suwat said.

“It has now been reviewed and no country has ever sent us an arrest warrant for this person. This includes no Red Notices,” Gen Suwat said, not clearly specifying whether he was referring to the Sandhu or the identity of Mandeep Singh.

“We are now co-ordinating with the Canadian Police and Indian police in exchanging information. We must follow the evidence to determine whether the passport itself is fake, or whether false information was provided to obtain a genuine passport,” he added.

“If you ask Canada, they say that the passport is genuine, but that false information was presented to obtain a genuine passport. The Thai authorities have no way of knowing. No system in the world can tell,” he said.

Biometric passports would be the only way to truly identify a person, Gen Suwat said.

LIFE OF CRIME

According to the *Vancouver Sun*, which has reported Sandhu’s activities extensively throughout his criminal career, Sandhu had been a member of the United Nations, a criminal gang active in the Pacific coast province of British Columbia.

Rivals in the Brothers Keepers gang “were post-

ing insults and taunts on social media when the news broke” of Sandhu’s death, the newspaper said.

Sandhu was born in India and moved to Canada as a 7-year-old and grew up with relatives in Abbotsford, near Vancouver. After getting caught up in gang life and convicted of serious assaults in 2010 and 2012, he faced deportation, the *Sun* said.

He was deported in early 2016 and two years later news emerged that he had been arrested in India and charged with operating a large ketamine factory. After he was released on bail, he disappeared and was believed to have been travelling between Dubai and Southeast Asia ever since, the newspaper said.

At his immigration hearing in 2015, the *Sun* said, Sandhu acknowledged the risk of gang life:

“I know that path is either go to jail or you die,” he said.

Pfizer jabs for kids begin

The Phuket News
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Vaccination injections for children 5-11 years old began at Vachira Phuket Hospital last Friday (Feb 4), with children deemed to be at risk of developing serious infections of COVID-19 given priority.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panaphong said the goal was to provide injections to 100 children a day.

The vaccine being administered to children is a diluted version of the Pfizer vaccine, identified by the orange lid on the vial, he noted.

"One vial of the vaccine will be able to provide 10 injections because children of this age need only a small amount, just 0.2 millilitres per person," Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Weerasak Lorthongkham said.

Dr Weerasak urged parents to feel reassured about having their children vaccinated.

"For vaccinating children, the safety and efficiency of the vaccines is the top priority that Phuket officials considered," he said.

Children with congenital



Children aged 5-11 years started receiving Pfizer vaccination injections at Vachira Phuket Hospital last Friday (Feb 4). Photo: PR Phuket

illness and those who have already recovered from being infected with COVID-19 may experience some serious symptoms, he said.

"Some children, after recovering from [being infected with the] coronavirus, will develop inflammation of the blood vessels in different parts of their body. These symptoms

occur in children who were not vaccinated when they became infected with COVID," he said.

"According to current data, we do not find inflammation of the blood vessels in children who have been vaccinated and then become infected, but it has been found in children who were not vaccinated and then became infected," he added.

"It [inflammation of the blood vessels] has also been found among children with congenital diseases who became infected with COVID-19. These children have needed treatment in the ICU," Dr Weerasak explained.

"I hope that this information will help parents decide whether or not to let their chil-

dren be vaccinated," he said.

Dr Witita Jang-iam, Deputy Director of Vachira Phuket Hospital, noted, "Phuket has received 1,950 doses of vaccine, but children in the target group number more than 30,000. It is necessary to select children who are at risk, who belong to the group of seven recognised diseases, to receive the vaccine first.

"The risk groups include children with heart disease, kidney disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, Down syndrome and children requiring frequent medical treatment. It is estimated there are around 2,000 to 3,000 such children in Phuket," Dr Witita said.

"These children will be among the first to be vaccinated," she confirmed.

While higher at-risk children will be vaccinated first, more vaccine doses for children will arrive each week, Dr Witita assured.

"The general children [not among the 'at-risk' group] will be vaccinated after the at-risk children have been vaccinated," Dr Witita said.

"This first group of children [deemed as at-risk] have been given their vaccination

injections here at the hospital in case a child has any side effects after the injection," Dr Witita noted.

"For the rest of the children we may set up a new injection site outside the hospital," she added.

Speaking before the rollout of vaccination injections last Friday, Dr Witita noted, "The vaccine will be able to build immunity quite well in the first dose. Research studies have shown that after the first injection, the child has relatively good immunity, almost 90%.

"Children aged 5-11 years will be able to receive the second injection two months after receiving the first dose," she added.

Dr Witita noted that children who are sick or have just recovered from an illness before being vaccinated may not build good immunity against COVID-19.

"Children should be observed after receiving the vaccination injection. If the develop any unusual conditions such as difficulty breathing or a rash, they should be brought immediately to a hospital," she said.

Some COVID tourists exempt from quarantine

SANDBOX TOURISTS WHO TEST positive for COVID-19 on landing because they still have high levels of the virus in their system after recovering from being infected do not need to observe the mandatory 10-day isolation in Phuket if they are asymptomatic.

The Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) announced the measure in a notice marked as the "Past Infection" Guideline for Sandbox Travelers.

The notice, which was provided to *The Phuket News*, is marked "Updated on 3 February 2022".

However, Phuket officials have yet to publicly announce the measure through the usual government channels.

"Sandbox Travelers who test positive for COVID-19 in Phuket but were infected before arriving into Thailand can be considered for 'no quarantine' or 'isolation'," the notice explains, in English.

In order to be eligible for exemption of the quarantine or isolation measures, travellers must satisfy three criteria:

1. They must be asymptomatic.
2. Their CT level from the RT-PCR test in Phuket must be more than 30 in both genes.
3. They must provide a medical certificate to prove their COVID-19 infection within the last three months.

All three criteria must be met in full for travellers to qualify for the exemption, the notice said clearly.

"If the above criteria are not met, you must be quarantined or isolated for 10 days



Image: PPHO

from the first day of your RT-PCR positive test," the notice confirmed.

The notice explained that to apply for the quarantine exemption travellers must submit the medical certificate of their past infection to the hotel where they are booked to stay after arriving.

"Submit a lab result in Phuket that shows your 'CT' more than 30. The SHA Plus Manager of your hotel must keep records of your documents for future reference with the Phuket Provincial Health Office.

"If you are able to present the above documents, you will be released," the PPHO assured.

Of note, while the notice is clearly marked to apply to Sandbox tourists, it has yet to be confirmed that the exemption also applies to Test & Go tourists.

The Phuket News



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Wind 7 m/s

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Wind 7 m/s

TUE FEB 15

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Low: +25°

Wind 4 m/s

WED FEB 16

High: +33°
Low: +25°

Wind 4 m/s

THU FEB 17

High: +33°
Low: +25°

Wind 4 m/s

Foreigner caught stealing taxi cash

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A foreign man has avoided being charged with theft after he was caught stealing B3,600 from an independent taxi driver operating via the inDriver app while the driver stepped out of the car to go to the toilet.

The taxi driver, Somphas Jindawong, 49, explained that the theft occurred after he picked up three passengers – two men and one woman, all foreigners – from a villa in Soi Pattana in the Saiyuan area in Rawai at about 3am on Jan 30.

The trio had booked Mr Somphas to take them to a condo, also in Rawai, for a fare of B150.

"I took them to the condo, but only two passengers got out of the car. The third passenger, a dark-skinned man, asked to be dropped off at another condo, near Central shopping mall. I agreed for a fare of B200," said Mr Somphas, who is originally from Nakhon Sri Thammarat but who has been working as a taxi driver in Phuket for 10 years.

However, Mr Somphas explained that he needed to urinate, and had

stopped the car at a quiet location to relieve himself.

"I dropped the man off and then went home to bed," he said.

About 9am the next day (Monday, Jan 31), Mr Somphas discovered that B3,600 cash that was in the centre console between the two front seats was missing.

Unknowingly for the foreign man, Mr Somphas's car has a camera inside the cab, which recorded the foreign man taking the money and putting it in his pocket while Mr Somphas was beside the road emptying his bladder.

Mr Somphas reported the theft to

Chalong Police and provided the video footage of the foreign man taking the money.

He also contacted the woman who had booked the cab, and subsequently contacted the foreign man, who initially refused to present himself at the police station.

However, the man changed his mind after Tourist Police were also contacted, who instructed Mr Somphas to let the Chalong Police handle the matter.

"The man at first still denied that he stole the money, but then admitted that he did after seeing the video

footage showing him take it," Mr Somphas said.

In the end, Mr Somphas was handed back B4,000: the B3,600 originally stolen and B400 for the trouble caused.

Mr Somphas urged other drivers to be careful about the money they keep unattended in the car.

"As a driver, all I want to do is provide the best service to my passengers. I keep the cash there so I can easily give the change to the passengers," Mr Somphas said.

"I never thought that a passenger would steal my money like this," he said.



A camera inside the taxi recorded the foreigner stealing the cash while Mr Somphas was out of the vehicle. Images: Somphas Jindawong



Gov Narong meets the residents at the new Provincial Hall on Feb 3. Photo: PR Phuket

Trouble at Phanason Grand Ville

A GROUP OF DISGRUNTLED residents at the Phanason Grand Ville housing estate in Bang Jo, Srisoonthorn, gathered in front of the new Phuket Provincial Hall on Feb 3 to protest ongoing problems at the housing development.

The residents explained that the problems ran the gamut from waste collection, security systems and land allocation to even water and power supply.

One of the critical issues is the long-standing unresolved problem of ensuring water supply.

"Deceived us for six years, good things we never get," said one sign. "Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew please help us," said another.

Other signs read: "We have been

tricked into selling our house without water sources for 6 years"; "The groundwater that was claimed by the neighbours of the village"; "Water is life, have you never thought that or you were foolish?" and "Enough with deceptive promises".

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew exited the main building to hear the group's complaints first hand.

He also received in person a formal written request for government assistance in resolving the ongoing issues.

Governor Narong said the matter would be handed over to the Phuket Provincial Office of the Ombudsman, and assured that the relevant government agencies would be called in to investigate the problems.

The Phuket News

Man launched out of car in high-speed wipeout

THREE PEOPLE WERE INJURED when a car wiped out at high speed on Thepkasattri Rd early last Sunday morning (Feb 6), including one man whose head struck a pot plant on the footpath after he was launched out of the car in the impact.

Lt Col Sanit Nukong, Deputy Chief of the Thalang Police, was notified of the accident, on Thepkasattri Rd northbound in front of the Yamaha motorcycle dealership some 500 metres south of the Heroines Monument, at 1:30am.

Police and rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Foundation and from the Srisoonthorn Municipality Rescue Unit arrived to find a yellow, Bangkok-registered Honda Jazz car heavily damaged on the footpath beside a power pole.

The car's engine and front axle were found on the road about 50 metres away beside the central reservation.

Three people, two males and one female, were in the car at the time of the accident, reported Lt Col Sanit.

The driver, Nuttapon Mowdee, had suffered chest and head injuries.

His front-seat passenger Sunisa Theparat suffered injuries to her left leg.

Siriwat Phumirak was seriously injured. His head hit a pot plant in front of the motorcycle shop after he was launched out of the car in



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

the impact.

An ambulance rushed the three Thalang Hospital.

A witness to the accident told police that the car was being driven at high speed from Phuket Town heading to Ban Pasak in Cherno Talay when the accident happened, Lt Col Sanit reported.

Nuttapon lost control of the car on the curve. The car hit the roadside guardrail, spun, hit the guardrail on the central reservation, kept spinning, then hit the power pole.

The wreck was taken to Thalang Police Station while police continue their investigation into the accident, before moving forward with legal proceedings, Lt Col Sanit said.

Srisoonthorn Municipality was called to have workers bring lime and sand to cover the engine oil across the road to prevent further accidents, he added. Eakkapop Thongtub

Reward inspires police to nab Euro-cash thief

The Phuket News
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Police last Saturday (Feb 5) arrested a man for the theft of €4,900 (about B182,400) from a Greek tourist's car late last month.

Kanaphong Sakorncharoen, 24, from Udon Thani, was placed under arrest in front of a Tops convenience store in Soi Pramote, off Chao Fa West Rd in Chalong, at about 5pm.

Officers presented Kanaphong with a warrant for his arrest for stealing 47 €100 banknotes and one €200 banknote from a rented Nissan March in the car park of the Kata Ocean View Residence condo project.

The car had been rented from the condo management by a Greek family on holiday staying at the condo.

Alexandros 'Alex' Alexiadis, arrived in Phuket on Dec 26 with his wife Lesia and their three children: 14-year-old son Illia; 11-year-old daughter Liza; and their youngest, 5-year-old daughter Vasiliki. The money stolen was



Kanaphong was arrested last Saturday (Feb 5). Photo: Phuket Police

to be relied on for the duration of their stay in Phuket. The family are due to fly home on Feb 25.

Alex reported the theft after discovering the cash had been stolen from the car on Jan 25, but received no updates on whether any action had been taken until Tourist Police became involved five days later.

After Alex announced that he was offering €1,000 reward for the money to be returned in full, or 20% if returned in part, all police left into action.

Karon Police Chief Col Teerawat Liamsuwan assigned

a Deputy Superintendent to oversee the investigation. Forensic officers checked the car for DNA evidence and fingerprints, while officers from all different branches of the police joined the efforts. Even Immigration officers assisted, with officers questioning local currency exchange booths in the area.

Officers finally tracked Kanaphong down through CCTV, and took him to Karon Police Station to be charged last Saturday.

Officers seized as evidence from him €500 in cash, a Phuket-registered Honda

Scoopy motorcycle used to flee the scene, a black hoodie, trousers and Fila sneakers worn by Kanaphong on the day of the theft.

Kanaphong admitted to committing the crime. He said that he noticed an unlocked car in the parking lot, got inside it and escaped with the cash found in the vehicle.

He said he exchanged most of the money "for spending, until €500 was left".

It is not clear if Kanaphong has already spent the rest of the cash, or if some money is still intact in Thai baht.

Alex told *The Phuket News* on Tuesday that police had informed him that in order for him to recover the money stolen, Alex had to file a formal complaint and begin legal proceedings against Kanaphong.

Alex and his family did receive good news on Feb 2 with a donation of B51,000 from an anonymous donor who had learned of the family's plight through the Knights Border Facebook page, a community group for people associated with police.

Firefighters remain on watch in Nai Harn

RAWAI MUNICIPALITY firefighters on Monday (Feb 7) were maintaining a close watch on the area at Laem Krathing that caught ablaze last Saturday to ensure no further outbreaks of wildfires on the steep slopes.

Access to the rocky peninsula at the tip of Laem Krathing, popular with visitors, had been closed off to prevent any tourists from being trapped by fire, reported Rawai Mayor Aroon Soros.

Personnel from the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command were dispatched last Saturday to rescue 16 Thai and foreign tourists who had become trapped on the rocks, unable to return to safety due to the fire crossing the access road to the popular viewpoint.

A special operations unit with rubber dinghies was deployed, and the tourists were safely recovered and transferred to a Rawai Municipality speedboat.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw was informed of the situation and co-ordinated the Navy rescue effort, and arrived at Nai Harn in person to ensure the tourists' safety.

Firefighters returned to the area last Sunday morning and



The fire razed some 50 rai on the steep peninsula. Photo: PR Phuket

found that most of the fire had burned itself out, razing some 50 rai of land in the process.

Nevertheless, the fire teams doused the smaller continuing brush fires to contain any further spread, with special attention given to preventing the fire from getting any closer to a nearby resort, Mayor Aroon said.

A small fire break was created to protect some local houses, he added.

Firefighters reported that they had yet to confirm the cause of the fire, Mayor Aroon confirmed.

"As for what started the fire, there are only two possible causes. One is the hot weather and dry grass leading to the fire starting naturally. The other is a discarded cigarette butt," he said.

The Phuket News

Plenty of water for the dry season

DESPITE PHUKET RECORDING less-than-average rainfall throughout last year, there is still plenty of water in the island's three main reservoirs to safely supply tourists and residents on the island throughout the coming dry season, Phuket Vice Governor Anuphap Rodkwan Yodrabum said on Feb 3.

Mr Anuphap made the announcement at a meeting at the Phuket Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office (DDPM-Phuket) at the new Phuket Provincial Hall, joined by DDPM-Phuket Chief Udomporn Kan.

"In summary, the average rainfall was less [than usual] in 2021, but the three main reservoirs revealed still have a lot of water. Therefore, this period as we enter the dry season, the problem of water shortages is not a concern," Mr Anuphap said.

Sophol Namnoi of the Phuket office of the Royal Irrigation Department, reported the current water levels at the island's three main reservoirs, as follows:

Bang Wad Reservoir (Kathu): 9.07 million cubic metres (88.9% of 10.22mn m3 capacity)

Bang Neow Dum Reservoir (Srisoonthorn): 6.58mn m3 (91.5% of 7.18mn m3 capacity)

Khlong Kata Reservoir (Chalong): 3.96mn m3 (95.6% of 4.14mn m3 capacity)

However, Vice Governor Anuphap noted, "Although this situation is unlikely to be a problem this year, plans need to be made to prepare for drought to prevent water shortages in Phuket."

Before being promoted to Phuket Vice



Plans still need to be made to prevent future water shortages, Mr Anuphap said. Photo: PR Phuket

Governor earlier this month, Mr Anuphap served for years in Phuket as the Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad).

He was on the island to witness first-hand the severe water shortages the island suffered in 2019, when the Army was called in to truck water to Phuket from neighbouring provinces, and Mr Anuphap was on the island during the water shortage in 2020.

Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan travelled to Phuket in person in November 2020 to order the Office of National Water Resources (ONWR) to investigate and expedite projects to resolve Phuket's recurring water shortage crisis, including to instigate progress in the much-delayed mains supply pipeline from Phang Nga.

The Phuket News

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The long arm of the Australian taxman

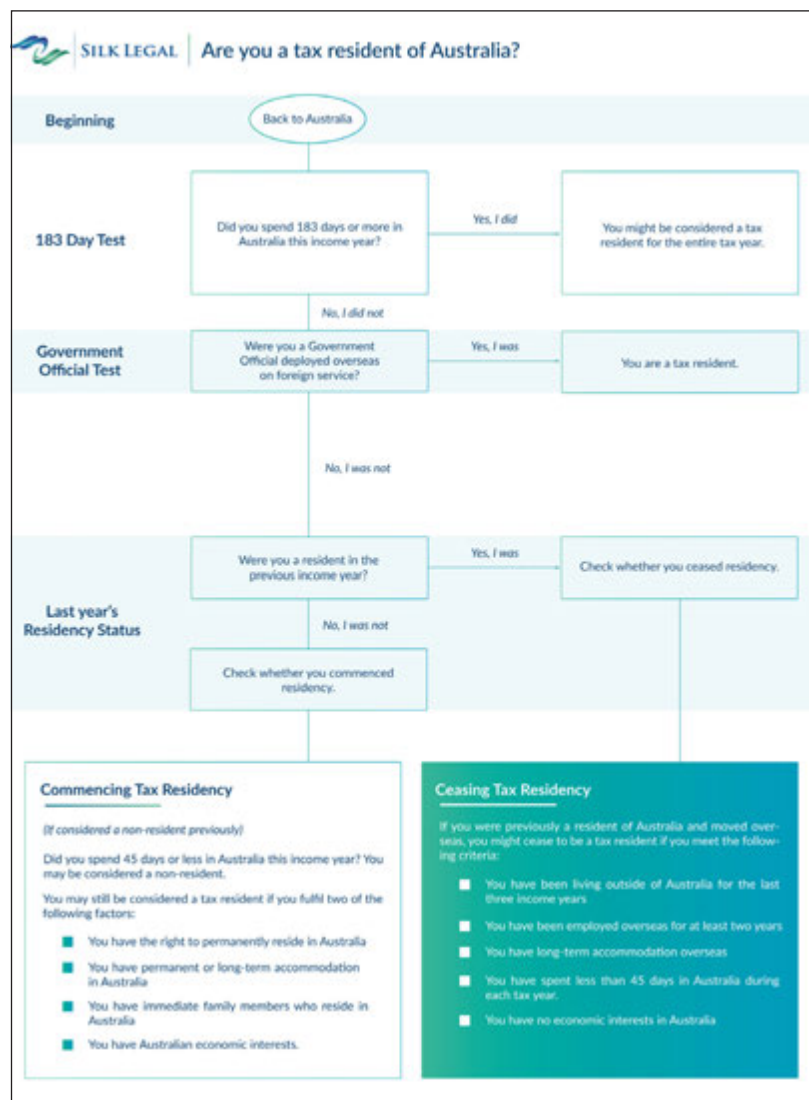
LEGAL MATTERS

For many, escaping the high tax rate in Australia is another advantage of living in the Land of Smiles. However, escaping tax in Australia just got a lot harder. The Australian Government announced late last year that it would “modernise” the individual tax residency provisions in the 2021-22 Federal Budget to refocus on physical presence, Australian connections, and other objective criteria.

The Australian Government is planning to introduce a “bright line” test as the primary test for residency and tax. This means if an individual spends 183 days or more in Australia, they will automatically be considered a tax resident of Australia and taxed in Australia on your global income.

Currently, you are not considered a tax resident of Australia if you can show that you “usual[ly]” live outside Australia, even if you spend more than a total of 183 days in Australia in any one tax year. But this isn’t the end to the changes.

The taxman can apply a secondary test to see if you should be taxed in Australia based upon residence, house ownership, family location and other economic interests. The government’s new proposal makes your tax status change a more



gradual process and needs to be proven over a few years.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Changing tax residency affects your

income tax and capital gains tax (CGT) liabilities. If you become an Australian tax resident, even by mistaking the new rules, you will probably be taxable on your

worldwide income. If you bought your dream condo in Phuket, be careful. You may be deemed to have disposed of non-TAP assets at market value when they cease to be Australian residents. This may lead to an Australian CGT liability.

You can elect for this CGT event not to apply, but this means that the asset is “stuck” within the Australian tax net until sold or you regain your Australian tax residency status.

Similarly, if you have ownership of foreign companies, partnership or trusts (e.g., a Thai company holding property), this could impact the residency status of these foreign companies or trusts. For example, if you have set up a family discretionary trust this could be taxed as residents of Australia if any trustee is a resident in Australia at any time during an income year.

LEAVING THE TAXMAN BEHIND

If you convince the taxman that you are a foreign resident, then generally you will only be taxed on your Australian income. Some of your Australian income may also be taxed at a concessional rate (e.g., interest earned in Australia is only subject to a 10% final withholding tax).

Generally, if you leave Australia then you need to spend less

than 45 days in the current income year in Australia and less than a total of 45 days in Australia in each of the two preceding income years to be considered a foreign tax resident.

If you move offshore for employment, another rule called the “employment test” applies.

Be careful about what you wish for because if the taxman agrees, you are now a foreign resident, and under the new Australian proposals you will lose your entitlement to the tax-free threshold, 50% CGT discount, and main residence exemption.

If you plan to come to Australia for extended holidays, you may want to think twice if you wish to still be treated as a foreign resident for Australian taxes in the future.

Australian expats should be aware that the proposed changes have not yet been legislated. Although it seems likely they will come into effect from July 1, 2022, you need to plan for this change and not be caught with an expensive tax bill.

By Dr Paul Crosio / Silk Legal
Paul Crosio is a Partner at Silk Legal & founding partner of Silk Advisory. He is a practicing Australian lawyer with over two decades of corporate experience in turn-around management in Thailand and abroad.



The streets of Phuket Town were empty over Chinese New Year. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

A hollow Chinese New Year

LOCAL THAI-CHINESE RESIDENTS in Phuket Town quietly honoured the first day of the Lunar New Year on Feb 1 by visiting shrines to perform blessing ceremonies and pray for good tidings in the Chinese New Year.

Unlike previous years, the shrines in Phuket Town, including the usually bustling Pud Jor Shrine, were relatively quiet with few visitors.

“Many people stopped working to hang out, increase happiness and rest so that throughout the year there are only good things and happy things for the family,” noted an official report by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department.

However, photos provided told

a different story, with very few people turning out to mark the new year.

The streets of Phuket Town remained nigh desolate throughout the week leading up to Chinese New Year. Noticeably absent were even Thai domestic tourists.

Vendors at the Phuket City Municipality Fresh Market 1 on Ranong Rd reported very slow sales over the weekend. The days leading up to Chinese New Year are traditionally busy, with ethnic Chinese residents buying flowers and fruit for offerings at shrines and extra food for large family gatherings.

This year, people bought only what they needed, vendors reported. *The Phuket News*

Sandbox, Test & Go generate B32bn

A TOTAL OF 272,621 TOURISTS in total arrived in Phuket through the Phuket Sandbox and Test & Go entry schemes combined from July 1, 2021, to Feb 1, 2022, resulting in an estimated B14 billion in direct spending and generating an B32bn for the economy, Phuket officials have announced.

On average tourists stayed eight nights per person, spending approximately B55,000 per person, Vice Governor Pichet Panapong reported on Feb 3.

The figures were delivered as part of provincial officials’ progress report presented to the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) by teleconference.

V/Gov Pichet also gave a breakdown of the number of arrivals who have entered Thailand through the Phuket Sandbox and Test & Go schemes since Nov 1.

As of Feb 3, a total of 120,371 people had arrived in Phuket under the Phuket Sandbox scheme since Nov 1, a further 96,841 had arrived under the Test & Go scheme and 588 had arrived to enter the Alternative Quarantine system.

Of the arrivals, 40,309 were Russian nationals, 20,702 were German, 16,096 were UK nationals, 11,743 were from Sweden and 10,365 were from France.

Thais accounted for only 8,749 of those who had arrived in Phuket since Nov 1, notes the latest report



Tourists arrive at Phuket airport. Photo: TAC Phuket

by Phuket Immigration.

“In the field of medical and public health readiness, Phuket has launched the country’s first central service platform, POCC Home Isolation,” Vice Governor Pichet reported.

The ‘POCC Home Isolation’ platform, which calls itself “Phuket Organization COVID Care”, is part of the national “One province, One Hospital” policy which labels itself as “with an emphasis on communication and understanding to local people about Omicron.”

“People who are infected but not with serious symptoms can be treated at home. People can contact the hospital via Facebook: POCC or the POCC hotline 1131 to ensure

universal access to appropriate care,” V/Gov Pichet said.

Phuket residents are now almost 100% vaccinated, he added, with 88.42% of the target 547,584 people to be vaccinated having received their first dose, 85.62% of the target receiving their second dose, 56.02% of the target number receiving their third dose and 19.51% of the target number now having received a fourth injection.

“Now Phuket is accelerating the building of group immunity by accelerating campaigns for people to vaccinate the fourth dose injection by registering via the PhuketMustWin website,” he added.

The Phuket News

Tour bubble plan in works

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government will open discussions to set up travel bubbles with China and Malaysia this month to attract more foreign visitors, following the resumption of the Test & Go scheme on Feb 1.

Government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said on Monday (Feb 7) authorities will discuss the details of a possible travel bubble agreement with China's minister for culture and tourism. Talks will also be held with Malaysia later this month.

The number of visitors allowed to visit Thailand under the travel bubble arrangement will be capped, and their movements will also be limited to certain areas in an effort to prevent fresh COVID-19 outbreaks.

Under the new travel bubble arrangements, tourists won't have to quarantine upon arrival, but their entry will be subject to special protocols which regulate the kind of visa they can use to come in, where they can stay and which flights to take.



Tourists check in for departure at Suvarnabhumi airport in Samut Prakan province on Jan 31, the eve of the Test & Go entry scheme's resumption. Photo: Wichan Charoenkiatpakul

"The prime minister is confident that Thailand will remain one of the world's top tourist destinations despite the pandemic, and the government will support efforts to revitalise tourism with an emphasis on public health and safety," Thanakorn said.

The Association of Thai Travel Agents (Atta) had previously said that international arrivals may exceed 5 million this year if the government launches travel bubbles with

Asian countries, as the Test & Go scheme alone won't be enough to attract tourists who still have to quarantine upon returning.

Thanakorn added that the Ministry of Tourism and Sports predicted that the number of visitors under the scheme will rise to 60,000 between this month and next month, which is the country's peak tourism period.

Preparations have been made to welcome tourists with

the Visit Thailand Year 2022 campaign rolled out to promote tourism.

The spokesman added that Prayut will chair a meeting of the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) today (Feb 11) to consider the easing of more virus curbs so more activities can resume.

Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said that the Public Health Ministry won't propose the lifting of all virus restrictions at the meeting, as daily infection figures remain high.

However, the ministry will change the way it reports infection numbers, so people can go about their daily lives without too much worry, Anutin said, before stressing that daily reports will still be based on facts.

He said that even though daily infection figures have soared to more than 10,000, the number of deaths remain low.

"About 80% [of those who died] were not vaccinated, or belonged to at-risk groups, such as people with underlying health problems," he said.

Anutin also said that about 85% of those who tested positive for COVID are asymptomatic, and most are self-isolating at home.

No legal obligation to wear face masks, says Anutin

BANGKOK

THAILAND'S PUBLIC Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has confirmed that there are no laws forcing people to wear face masks, but he also sought cooperation from all parties, including Thai citizens and overseas tourists, in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Concerning warnings from the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) that people might be fined for not wearing a face mask, Anutin stated that the Ministry of Public Health and related agencies have not reported this and the matter is still under consideration.

Anutin stated that the suggestion is beneficial as the most effective prevention protocol, but it should first be evaluated by all parties, emphasising that enforcement is unnecessary if everyone cooperates in adhering to the prevention measures, the report said.

"He is concerned, however, about some international tourists who do not wear face masks while in Thailand and stated that the ministry will discuss the problem with the



Anutin. Photo: NNT

CCSA," state news agency NNT reported last Thursday (Feb 3).

"He understands that the practice may not be used in other countries, but he encourages them [the tourists] to comply with the country's public health regulations," the report added.

When asked if stricter measures would be enforced after infection cases reached 10,000, Anutin responded that the situation is still within the Department of Disease Control's epidemiological scenarios, with severe cases not increasing and more people getting vaccinated, and that adjustments will not be made at this time.

Nonetheless, he asked all parties to be cautious and work together to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 infections. NNT

Saudi crown prince to visit 'this year'

BANGKOK

THE CROWN PRINCE OF SAUDI Arabia, His Royal Highness Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, will visit Thailand once the government finishes the roadmap to restarting bilateral cooperation between the two kingdoms, Foreign Affairs Minister Don Pramudwinai said on Monday (Feb 7).

The roadmap will prioritise cooperation in certain areas, in particular energy and labour, Don said.

The remarks were made in response to an enquiry by Senator Jadet Insawang in parliament on the restoration of working ties between the two countries, which followed Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha's visit to Riyadh on Jan 25.

The Saudi crown prince will pay Thailand a visit likely towards the end of the year.

During the visit, he will sign a framework agreement on the implementation of bilateral cooperation in various sectors, Don said, adding the visit will set the tone for the future relationship between Thailand and Saudi Arabia.

He said the Foreign Ministry is coordinating with Saudi officials to determine what will go on the agenda for the next bilateral talks.

After Prayut met the Saudi crown prince in Riyadh, he urged government officials in both Thailand and Saudi Arabia to move quickly to turn words into action. Cooperation in some sectors could begin in two months, but more complex agreements



Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha (left) meets Prince Mohammed bin Salman at Al Yamamah Palace in Saudi Arabia on Jan 25. Photo: Government House

might take up to six months to implement, he said.

Don said a priority is to find an ambassador to fill the post in Riyadh, which has been vacant for three decades due to strained ties between the two nations.

Saudi Arabia downgraded diplomatic ties with Thailand and adopted a number of measures after the murder of Saudi diplomats and the disappearance of a Saudi businessman in Bangkok following the theft of Saudi state gems in 1989.

These included replacing the head of its diplomatic mission with a charge d'affaires, prohibiting Saudi Arabian nationals from travelling to Thailand, and stopping Thai workers from being employed in the Middle East nation.

Separately, members of the Thai Chamber of Commerce met on Monday to discuss trips to Saudi Arabia starting from Feb 25.

Bangkok Post

VALENTINE'S ROMANTIC DINNER

Spoil your loved one this Valentine's Day for a truly unique experience watching the dramatic sunset during dinner over the Andaman Sea at The Nai Harn.

Listen to romantic sounds, indulge in scrumptious culinary delights and sip on carefully selected beverage either at Cosmo Restaurant or under the stars at the pool deck.

South African singer-songwriter Eric Canham will entertain you with Romantic song throughout the evening.

At the pool deck (limited tables only)
THB 8,500 net per person (Food and beverage pairing available only)

At Cosmo Restaurant
THB 5,500 net per person (food only)

Monday, 14th February 2022
7:00 pm.

Advanced reservations are recommended.
Please call +66 07638 0200 or email fbreservation@thenaiharn.com

Finding a safe space

By Milla Budiarto

Where do Phuket expat women turn to when they experience emotional or mental health distress? Of course, it goes without saying that if one experiences an urgent mental health anguish, one should seek professional help immediately. But what about those who are enduring personal struggles and looking for support with their mental health?

Sure, some women can talk to their circle of friends in Phuket, back home or elsewhere – but let's face it, not everyone has the privilege of having a supportive circle of friends who have the capacity to listen with empathy and free of judgement. Talking about emotional and mental health issues can be intimidating and nerve-racking as it puts the person in a vulnerable position. So, who can one turn to?

In my 10 years of living in Phuket as an expat, I have not come across any support groups for emotional and mental health on the island; perhaps I did not look hard enough for one. This begs the question, why should one search high and low to find a local support group? In contrast, a simple Google search for AA, NA, and CA meetings in Phuket and you can easily locate one nearby – no muss, no fuss.

According to Mind's Side by Side



Photo: APG Graphics / Pexels

Research Consortium (2017) Developing Peer Support in the Community: a Toolkit, based on research undertaken by St George's, University of London, the McPin Foundation, and the London School of Economics, "peer support happens when people who have similar experiences of mental health difficulties, trauma, or other forms of social or emotional distress come together to support each other."

A peer support group offers a safe space for the participants to freely and authentically express themselves, without fear of judgement. Participants are able to talk about their personal issues and experiences with other participants who truly understand what they're going through and share insights that can only come from firsthand experience.

A peer support group is born

As one of the administrators of the Phuket Women's Collective Facebook Group – an English-language closed group for those who identify as a woman (cisgender, transgender or non-binary) living in and around Phuket – I have noticed an uptick in the number of mental health-related questions being asked by some women in the group in the past few months. It became apparent that a support system for emotional and mental well-being for women is much needed.

On Jan 15, the Phuket Women's Peer Support Group for Emotional and Mental Health met for the very first time. The peer support group is co-facilitated by a mental health advocate with firsthand experience and a coun-

sellor with a degree in psychology. The support group aims to create a safe, positive and supportive environment for women who need to talk about their personal issues, experiences and struggles without judgement.

Privacy and confidentiality are at the core of the support group. This means that what people say and who comes remains private. Anything said in the room will not be repeated or discussed at another time or place. Simply put, "What you say in the room, stays in the room." The peer support group believes that sharing experiences and exchanging coping strategies will allow participants to give and receive support from each other. By doing so, participants can feel less alone or isolated.

The peer support group meets every two weeks on Saturday from 10:30am to midday at the Endless Summer store and coffee shop, in a Sino-Portuguese mansion on Yaowarat Rd, in the heart of Phuket Town. Although there is no cost for attending, participants are encouraged to help support the local business – which has kindly provided the space – by buying one of the refreshing beverages on the menu.

The peer support group is open to all English-speaking women – expats and locals alike. Reservation to attend is preferred as space is limited to 10 people. For enquiries or reservations, email: phuketwomengroup@gmail.com.



International Women's Day Lunch 2022

#BreaktheBias

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Tuesday 8th March 2022**

9:00-10:30 Walk the Walk
11:00-2:30 Talk the Talk and Lunch
1,000 baht NET

Contact Donna: lunch@classactmedia.co.th
or Tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org



Nita crowned Miss Thailand

Manita 'Nita' Duangkham Farmer, 25, who was born and raised in Phuket, has been crowned Miss Thailand 2022.

Miss Manita was bestowed the title at the grand finale of the Miss Thailand 2022 pageant held at the CentralWorld Live venue in Bangkok last Sunday night (Feb 6).

Present to crown Miss Manita the 53rd Miss Thailand winner was Miss Thailand 2021 Nattapat 'May' Pongpraphan.

Miss Manita bested 24 other contestants to win the title. Anphat Pitiprajakwat of Nakhon Pathom placed 1st runner-up, Vanida Rose of Bangkok placed 2nd runner-up, Athicha Rennie of Kanchanaburi placed 3rd runner-up and Sornson Wittayaruengsuk of Bangkok placed 4th runner-up.

A Thai-American with a first-class honours bachelor's degree Faculty of Communication Arts from Bangkok University International College, Miss Manita is a sales manager and a volunteer teacher as a special lecturer promoting the use of English for communication at Wat Bang-phai-nat School in Bang Len, Nakhon Pathom.

Phuket residents might remember that Miss Manita placed first runner-up in Miss Grand Phuket 2017.

Miss Manita also participated in the Miss World Thailand pageant in 2018. She lost 40kg to enter the pageant. Manita used to weigh 90kg.

Although she did not win, placing in the Top 12, she continued to strive to exercise and take care of herself, Miss Manita explained in her video interview to viewers of the pageant.



Manita 'Nita' Duangkham Farmer, a 25-year-old Thai-American born and raised in Phuket, has been crowned Miss Thailand 2022. Photo: Miss Thailand 2022

Miss Manita credited her win to strong support from Phuket and her experience as a volunteer teacher. Her passion matched the concept of this year's competition, "Revival of the Original", allowing her to win the crown, she said.

"If children have good teaching materials and have access to the Internet, they will have more opportunities to develop themselves, not just learn in the school area. Children will have more ideas and be able to bring knowledge back to develop their homeland," Miss Manita said.

Miss Manita also noted that while she is of two nationalities through her parentage, she is also of two cultures within Thailand. Her mother is from Chiang Mai, but Manita grew up in Phuket.

Yet being a child of two worlds does continue to present its challenges, she said.

"No matter what country we are from, we should be more focused on what culture we grow up in, rather than race," she said, in fluent Thai.

The Phuket News

Wrangling for a good cause

The Phuket News

editor1@classactmedia.co.th

A volunteer by the name of Vincent Modell has been serving the community of Phuket for more than eight years in various voluntary roles from the Region 8 Police Volunteer to a first responder with the Thai Rescue Ambulance Service. He is a local resident of Phuket that has given his time and resources to help the community, in any way that he has been able to do so – but most people probably know him as “the snake guy”.

During the past five years, Vincent has been on call to remove snakes from all over Phuket, up to date he has successfully rescued more than 230 snakes, including monocled cobras, king cobras and pythons. He has rescued snakes from houses, gardens, cars, motorcycles and so many other places.

Explaining how he became “the snake guy”, Vincent said, “It was probably four or five years ago. I was on duty with the Thai Rescue Ambulance and we were dispatched to a building in Patong.

“I asked what we were going to and after a few minutes it became

clear we were going to capture a large snake. This was my first time dealing with a snake and I was petrified, at the back following the Thai crew into the building.

“The snake was a reticulated python – very defensive, but non venomous. This is the longest type of snake in the world!” he pointed out.

“At this point I decided that I needed to learn about snakes. I needed education about these amazing creatures. I have spent the past three to four years learning about snake behaviour, understanding the most common snakes to be called to in Phuket.

“I have studied monocled cobras, king cobras and pythons. These three types are the most common I deal with. Approximately 100 of the snakes I have rescued have been monocled cobras,” Vincent explained.

Times have changed, and Vincent is no longer at the back of the team entering a building to catch a snake. He is now the go-to guy.

“Now it’s a different story. The Thai crew where possible will call me in to deal with any snakes that need rescuing, simply because where possible I will use snake hooks and tools that cause little or no problems to the snakes that I rescue,” Vincent said.



Vincent Modell, Phuket's own snake wrangler.

“I do not fear snakes, most people. I have gained respect for them, and with respect it is much easier to work with them,” he added.

Vincent has just launched a registered charity here in Phuket called “Animal Care” to provide help to animals in need.

“Our plan is for the charity to provide rescue services specifically for animals in Phuket. We obviously specialise in snake rescues, but want to use our resources to help other organisations,” Vincent explained.

“Most recently we were called by Hug Me Vet Hospital to help recover a deceased street dog from a sewer. Our training and resources made it possible to recover the dog and allow it to be buried by the nice local lady who fed him,” he noted.

“Our volunteers will be trained to deal with various animals to make the

rescues safer for the rescuers, but more importantly safer for the animals involved.

“We also plan to teach and train rescue departments locally how to deal with snakes in a safe but careful way to avoid any injury to the rescuer or snakes,” he added.

Vincent has paid for the costs related to setting up the foundation, but the group needs to have B500,000 in the charity’s account as part of the requirements for all new charities in Thailand.

“We do need people’s help, by making a donation or help with fundraising for our cause,” he said.

“We have approximately 45 days to get these funds into our account. We will continue to serve our community the best we can, it just makes it a whole lot easier,” Vincent added.

If you can help, call Vincent on 080-8648092.

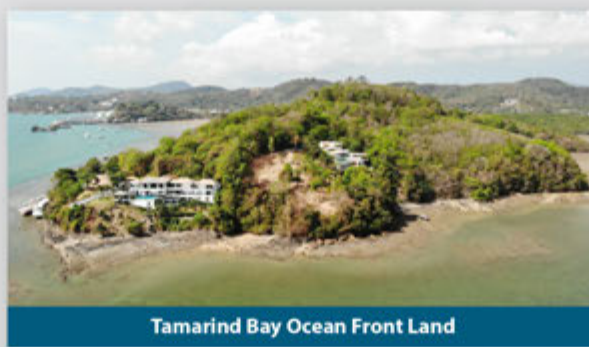
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POP QUIZ

1. The reign of Queen Victoria ended on which date?
2. Allodoxaphobia is the fear of what?
3. What do the two masks of modern theatre represent?
4. What was the second *Thor* movie, released in 2013, called?
5. What was the name of the South Korean ferry that sank in 2014, killing more than 300 people, mostly school children?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

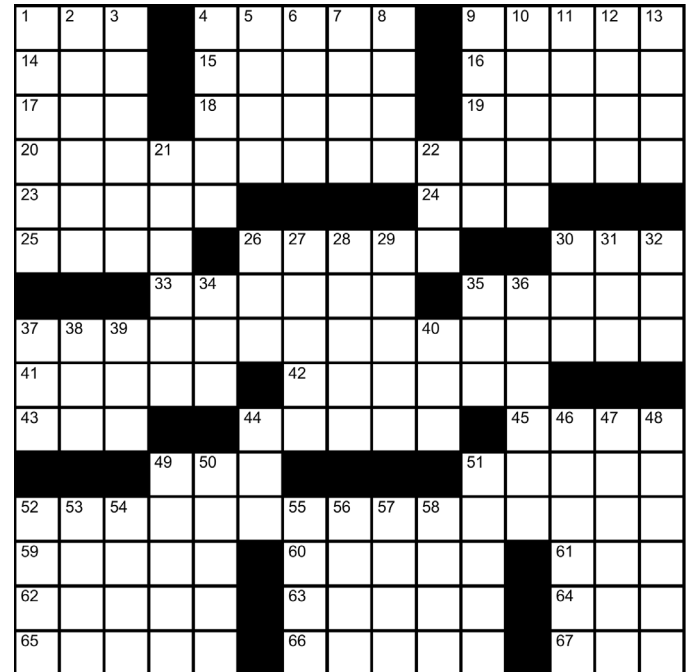
- Across

 1. Measure
 4. Belt the ____
 9. Iota
 14. Old NOW cause
 15. Come from behind
 16. Certain student
 17. Deck (out)
 18. Succeed
 19. Bad loan
 20. "Audition" et al.
 23. Jack
 24. Thumbs down
 25. "The ____ of Night" (old soap)
 26. Ever, old style
 30. Start of a giggle
 33. Echo
 35. Thirst
 37. Gardner tomes
 41. Monastic officer
 42. Apprehensive
 43. Econ. figure
 44. Scratch
 45. Some auction bids
 49. Enzyme ending
 51. Acquiesce
 52. "Angela's Ashes" et al.
 59. 1935 Triple Crown winner
 60. Capital of Ecuador
- Down

 1. Move
 2. Roughly
 3. Disheveled
 4. Cousin of a loon
 5. Doctor Who villainess, with "the"
 6. Not to mention
 7. Ballyhoo
 8. Ogler
 9. Tope
 10. Like some mothers-in-law
 11. Needle holder
 12. Wrap up
 13. Florida has them
 21. Wear oneself out
 22. Whichever
 26. Visa statement abbr.
 27. Long-tailed primate
28. Detroit's county
 29. Befuddled
 30. Skater Babilonia
 31. "____ Time transfigured me": Yeats
 32. Dash widths
 34. Suffix with pamphlet
 35. Survey choice
 36. Decorative plant
 37. Car ad abbr.
 38. Samovar
 39. Van Winkle
 40. Little 'un
 44. Vereen
 46. Prayer
 47. Mock
 48. Sonnet section
 49. Son of Jacob
 50. Takes off
 51. Lifeless, old-style
 52. Cookers
 53. Utter
 54. Eastern music
 55. Prefix with plane
 56. Break in the action
 57. Series opener?
 58. Greek letters

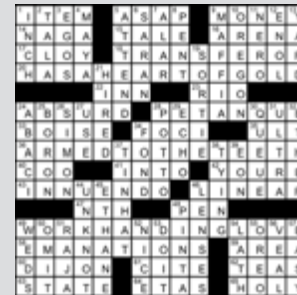
Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

(1) January 22, 1901; (2) Other people's opinions; (3) Comedy (Thalia) and Tragedy (Melpomene); (4) Thor: The Dark World; (5) Sewol



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

0.00025

percent of the richest Americans have more wealth than the bottom 150 million, according to research from the University of California, Berkeley.

2

percent of people in the world have naturally red hair.

26

minutes is how long the average man can last before getting bored during a shopping trip with their wife or girlfriend, according to a UK study.

30,000

dollars a year was the average annual salary of a 'water slide tester' in the US before the pandemic.

1.1

million

is how many mosquitoes would be needed, in a swarm sucking at the same time, to drain all the blood from an adult human.

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW



Overlooking Kata Noi Bay. Photo by Sutharat Khaodee

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

This week in history

Feb 11, 1990

Buster Douglas, a 42:1 underdog, knocks out Mike Tyson in 10 rounds in Tokyo to win boxing's world Heavyweight title.

Feb 12, 1947

The largest observed iron meteorite until that time creates an impact crater in Sikhote-Alin, in the Soviet Union. An estimated 70 tonnes (metric tons) of material survived the fiery passage through the atmosphere

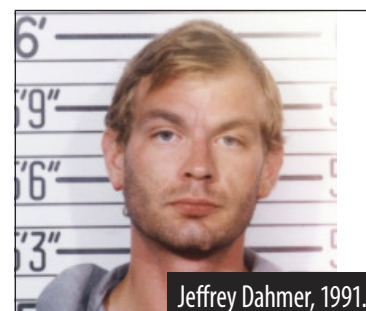
and reached the Earth.

Feb 13, 1981

A series of sewer explosions destroys more than two miles of streets in Louisville, Kentucky. The Louisville sewer explosions.

Feb 14, 2005

YouTube is launched by a group of college students, eventually becoming the largest video sharing website in the world and a main source for viral videos.



Jeffrey Dahmer, 1991.

Feb 15, 1992

Serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, who raped, murdered and dismembered 17 men and boys from 1978 to 1991, is

sentenced to life in prison.

Feb 16, 1959

Fidel Castro becomes Premier of Cuba after dictator Fulgen- cio Batista was overthrown on January 1.

Feb 17, 1863

A group of citizens of Geneva founded an International Committee for Relief to the Wounded, which later became known as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Source: *Wikipedia*

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Skål Phuket Dinner at Blue Tree

Dear Members, Colleagues, & Friends of Skål Phuket You are invited to join us for the 1st Skål Phuket Dinner of 2022 at Blue Tree Phuket from 18.00-22.00. Guest speakers include Daniel Steinke, Managing Director of Blue Tree Phuket & Bart Duykers, Area Director of BB&B Thailand. Become a member and connect with the biggest Travel & Tourism professional network. Being part of Skål Thailand offers you a wide range of benefits. 080 376 7130 , contact@skalphuket.org



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The Grow Boating Networking Evening for March 2022

We would like to invite you to join us for the next Grow Boating Evening which will be held at the Sea Breeze at the Royal Phuket Marina on Friday the 4th of March from 5pm. It is with great pleasure that we announce that the Thailand Yacht Show have very generously agreed to be the drinks sponsor for Grow Boating for the next 12 months, which saves us having to worry about finding a sponsor each time, so do come along and enjoy their hospitality! There will be a delicious light buffet for all attendees and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to growboatingphuket@gmail.com Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See www.thepuketnews.com



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6 PM onwards: All you can eat BBQ buffet cooked to order. Beef, Pork, Chicken, Burgers, Ribs Sausages, Fish, Prawns & Squids, salad buffet and veggies, Choice of potatoes, cold and hot sauces, Bread, Buns & garlic bread. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 395 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 195 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

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GROW BOATING NETWORKING EVENT FEB 2022

Another great Grow Boating networking event on Feb 4, 2022. Thanks to the Thailand Yacht Show for sponsoring the drinks, Boardwalk Bistro for the venue and staff and Phuket Boat Lagoon for sponsoring the burgers and music. Looking forward to seeing you all again on Mar 4 at RPM where Thailand Yacht Show will again sponsor, as they will for all Grow Boating events for the next 12 months.





A proud man of the match Mayur Deuskar shows off his score at the ACG. Photo: Michael Flowers

Batting master class from Deuskar at ACG

CRICKET

Continued from page 15

...with the left-hand right-hand combination.

With the partnership nearing 100 and 64 runs required from 42 balls with 7 wickets in hand, victory appeared attainable before Kahn produced a 'laser beam' yorker to uproot Morgan's stumps.

Flowers then grabbed his third dismissal as wicket keeper Mudasir Rehman caught Raju 1 (4), leaving the Penguins precariously poised at 5-161 after 19.3 overs.

Opening bowler Sami Pir returned to the attack and his

first ball was a ripper, flicking Robertson's 51 (39) bails at pace, a key breakthrough leaving the tail exposed.

Pir then quickly claimed 2 more wickets as Gaur 0 (1) and Livermore 2 (2) fell before MRT took the final wicket of Mir 14 (14) to leave the Penguins 21 runs short of the Cows total.

Pir (5 overs 3-30) and Flowers (5 overs 3-41) were the pick of the Cows' bowlers and the Hugo Hub Umpire Ashan Fonseka duly awarded Deuskar Man of the Match honours.

Anyone interested in getting involved please contact Phuket Cricket or the ACG on Facebook.

France top Six Nations as Ireland's Hansen shines

RUGBY

AFP

France team manager Raphael Ibanez said Gabin Villiere was a "warrior" after the winger scored three times as the Six Nations contenders beat Italy 37-10 in Paris last Sunday (Feb 5) to move top of the table.

Player of the match Villiere, who featured in the French third-tier just four years ago, took his tally to six tries in nine matches for France, who go above Ireland on points difference after the opening weekend.

"Gabin's performance was exceptional. His warrior state of mind is an example to his team-mates," Ibanez told reporters.

Italy lost for a record-extending 33rd consecutive time in the tournament despite leading early in the first half thanks to debutant Tommaso Menoncello's effort.

France, captained by Antoine Dupont for the first time since the scrum-half was crowned world player of



Gabin Villiere dives across the line to score a try in France's 37-10 Six Nations win against Italy last Sunday (Feb 5). Photo: AFP

the year in December, took a grip on proceedings nine minutes later as Anthony Jelonec opened his international account.

France continued to dominate despite the testing weather after the interval and Villiere deservedly claimed a second try after 48 minutes.

Villiere's fellow winger Damian Penaud claimed the fourth try before the man of the moment claimed the necessary points to send them above next weekend's visitors, Ireland, with his third try, 70

seconds into additional time.

Ireland defeated Wales 29-7 at Lansdowne Road with Mack Hansen the star of the show.

Hansen decided he would never make the grade as an electrician in Australia but judging by his man of the match Test debut for Ireland on Saturday, he is set to light up the international stage for years to come.

The 23-year-old Australia-born wing – whose mother was born in Ireland before emigrating – came close to

scoring a try inside the first three minutes.

He then provided the pass to his Connacht team-mate Bundee Aki to score Ireland's first try a minute later.

Whilst his fellow wing Andrew Conway was to score a brace of tries, Hansen was everywhere, popping up in the middle of the pitch and on the opposite wing.

The former Brumbies player fully justified Ireland coach Andy Farrell's decision to blood him at a packed Lansdowne Road.

With Jacob Stockdale and James Lowe injured, Farrell opted to go with him just months into his spell at Connacht rather than the more experienced Jordan Larmour.

"He (Farrell) said something to me that really stuck," said Hansen. "He said, 'if you can't be yourself, there's no point putting on the jersey'."

"When Andy says something like that it sticks with you. Just go out there and enjoy yourself, that's all you do at the end of the day."

Elsewhere, Scotland defeated England 20-17 in the Calcutta Cup at Murrayfield.

Kiwi golden girl Zoi makes history

WINTER OLYMPICS

"SUPER-PROUD" SNOWBOARDER Zoi Sadowski Synnott made history for New Zealand after winning their first ever Winter Olympics gold medal last Sunday (Feb 5).

Despite gusty winds which forced the men's downhill skiing to be postponed, the 20-year-old Sadowski Synnott held her nerve to take the women's snowboard slopestyle title with the last run of the competition and make history.

"Honestly it's absolute disbelief but it probably means more to me to win New Zealand's first Winter Olympic gold," said Sadowski Synnott, who was born in Sydney and moved to New Zealand when she was six.

"It makes me super proud to be a Kiwi." Sadowski Synnott, who spent COVID lockdown back in New Zealand jumping on a trampoline to help her aerial awareness, launched into a massive jump with her final trick to earn a winning score of 92.88.

She was mobbed at the finish by American Julia Marino, who was relegated into silver with 87.68, and bronze medallist Tess Coady of Australia.

New Zealand had previously won one silver and two bronze medals at the Winter Olympics – including a third-place finish for Sadowski Synnott in the Big Air competition at the 2018 Pyeongchang Games.

Elsewhere, Max Parrot, who three years ago was in hospital fighting cancer, won



Zoi Sadowski Synnott poses with her historic medal. Photo: AFP

the men's snowboard slopestyle gold on Monday (Feb 7).

The Canadian, who said chemotherapy left him "at zero percent" when he was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma in 2018, beat 17-year-old Chinese home favourite Su Yiming to win gold with a score of 90.96.

"Exactly three years ago I was lying in a hospital and I had no energy, no muscles, no cardio," said the 27-year-old Parrot.

"It was the hardest moment of my life and to be standing here three years later at the Olympics again, doing my passion, laying down the best run I've ever done and winning gold – it's insane.

"I used to take life for granted and I don't any more. Every time I strap my feet on my snowboard, I appreciate it so much more than before." AFP

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Non-league teams deliver FA Cup drama and upsets

FOOTBALL

AFP

Boreham Wood boss Luke Garrard hailed his “incredible” non-league minnows after they shocked Championship side Bournemouth with a 1-0 win in the FA Cup fourth round last Sunday (Feb 5).

Mark Ricketts’ first half goal at Dean Court sent Boreham Wood into the fifth round for the first time as they demonstrated the FA Cup’s renowned knack for producing stunning upsets.

Boreham Wood, currently in fifth place in the fifth tier National League, are the lowest ranked team left in the competition. Their chairman Danny Hunter had to remortgage his house to help the club keep going during the coronavirus lockdown.

But Bournemouth, third in the Championship, paid the price for a lethargic display that suggested they were prioritising their push for promotion back to the Premier League.

Boreham Wood, yet to



Boreham Wood's Mark Ricketts (centre) celebrates with teammates after scoring against Bournemouth. Photo: AFP

concede a goal in this season's FA Cup, will face Frank Lampard's Everton in the last 16 at Goodison Park after the Toffees beat Brentford 4-1 in Lampard's debut game.

Boreham Wood's emotional journey from the brink of financial ruin to FA Cup glory reduced Garrard to tears of joy during the post-match celebrations.

“I’m on top of the world, the emotions at the minute are incredible. I’m going to get emotional, they are unbelievable these boys,” Garrard said.

“We rode our luck. To go

and finish that and have the scenes we did towards the end was incredible.

“I love Frank Lampard. To be able to pit my wits against him, it hasn’t sunk in yet.”

On Saturday non-league Kidderminster Harriers came within seconds of knocking out West Ham before eventually losing in extra-time.

Sixth-tier Kidderminster sit 113 places below West Ham, who are pushing for a place in next season's Champions League.

But the minnows defied that vast gap with a heroic dis-

play that underlined why the FA Cup remains so enthralling for football romantics.

Kidderminster were good value for Alex Penny's early goal at Aggborough, the defender smashing home after West Ham failed to deal with Omari Sterling's free-kick.

Moments away from a stunning exit, David Moyes' men were saved by Declan Rice as the England midfielder charged forward in the first minute of stoppage time, cut inside and fired into the roof of the net.

A penalty shootout was looming in extra time until Jarrod Bowen tapped home from close range with virtually the last kick to finally end Kidderminster's brave challenge.

Chelsea also needed extra time to see off lower league opposition after Plymouth missed a late penalty in the Blues' 2-1 win at Stamford Bridge.

Holders Leicester City were thrashed 4-1 by Championship side Nottingham Forest and Manchester United lost in a penalty shoot-out to Middlesbrough.

Senegal crowned African champions

FOOTBALL

DAKAR EXPLODED WITH joy at the final whistle last Sunday (Feb 5) as Sadio Mane's Senegal beat Mohamed Salah's Egypt for their first ever Africa Cup of Nations crown.

“African champions. What a game! What a team! You did it. Beautiful moment of football, beautiful moment of communion and national pride. Congratulations to our heroes,” Senegalese President Macky Sall tweeted after the Lions' win.

Sall declared Monday a national holiday to celebrate the “brilliant victory.”

Dakar erupted when Liverpool star Mane scored the decisive penalty to give Senegal a 4-2 shoot-out win after the final finished goalless at the end of extra time.

Mane had missed a penalty during normal time when his shot was saved by Egypt goalkeeper Mohamed Abou Gabal in just the seventh minute of the match.

The tense shoot-out saw some anxious supporters in tears and even unable to watch



Senegal players celebrate their final win. Photo: AFP

the screen until Mane's strike ensured Senegal as African champions.

Hundreds of supporters in Senegal jerseys flocked to Independence Square, near the presidential palace in the heart of Dakar, to celebrate.

The square vibrated to the sound of car horns, vuvuzelas, whistles and firecrackers.

A festive atmosphere spread across the capital, with national flags hung from buildings, on vehicles and sidewalks.

At the massive African Renaissance Monument which towers above the capital from a hill overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, dozens of fans hugged each other amid bonfires after the victory.

“I’m happy. It’s the best day of my life,” 25-year-old Modou Ba, a car washer, said after the match.. AFP

F1 teams set to unveil radical new look

FORMULA ONE

FANS WONDERING HOW THE COMING season will unfold when the cars start racing in Bahrain on March 20 will be trying to look past the paint and the drivers but, due to rule changes in the sport, can expect a different look.

“The cars are going to look very different this year,” Mike Elliott, the technical director of world champion constructors Mercedes, told his team web site recently.

Some changes, however, will be invisible. “The cutting-edge turbo-hybrid engines” will have “more standardised parts plus use 10% biofuel,” explained the F1 site, boasting that it already had the “most efficient engines ever created.”

The most noticeable change will be the fatter tyres, now 18 inches rather than 13 inches, but the most far-reaching will be in another, more localised, environmental battle: against dirty air.

F1 had become a victim of its own cutting-edge technology as changes to improve aerodynamics and downforce increased the turbulence that causes cars close behind to lose grip on corners and overheat.

This years rules are a complete “reset” said Red Bull.

“It’d be easier to detail which parts of the aero rules aren’t changing, because there aren’t any,” stated the Red Bull web site.

F1 called the changes “a new aerodynamic philosophy aimed at helping cars



Max Verstappen driving the 2021 Red Bull Racing car. Photo: AFP

follow each other much closer through the corners without losing downforce.”

“Racing will be less predictable, more spectacular and drivers will be able to race each other harder than ever.”

The changes, including ramped up chassis safety rules, means the minimum weight will increase from 752kg to 790kg

“The new car is a big unit,” said Red Bull.

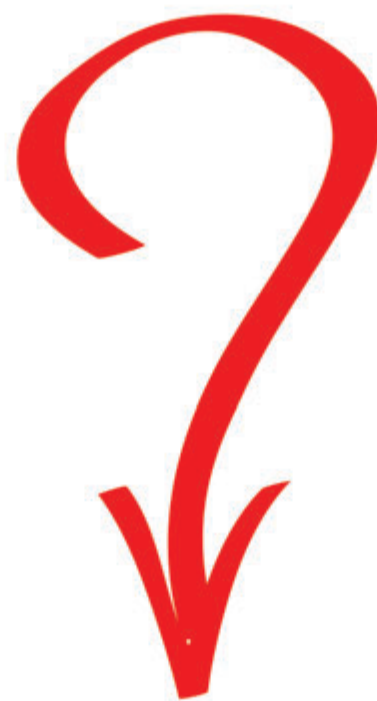
Red Bull was set to showcase its new RB18 model on Wednesday (Feb 9). Mercedes unveil their W13 model on Feb 18, with speculation that the Silver Arrows will drop the black paint that driver Lewis Hamilton favours.

Last Saturday, Lewis Hamilton seemed to answer questions about whether he will return to seek revenge on Verstappen.

He tweeted a photo of himself, on what looked like the rim of the Grand Canyon, with the caption: “I’ve been gone. Now I’m back!” AFP



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BRILLIANT DEUSKAR INSPIRES COWS WIN

Man of the match Mayur Deuskar celebrates his 97 not out which helped the Thalang Cows to victory in Game 1 of the PenCow Cup. Photo: Michael Flowers

CRICKET

Michael Flowers

The Thalang Cows won the opening match of the six-game mixed format series 'PenCow Cup' in a highly competitive 25-over clash at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) against inter-island rivals the Patong Penguins last Sunday (Feb 6).

Sameer Kahn and Michael Rhys Thomas (MRT) opened for the Cows, aiming to blunt the dangerous bowling attack of Penguins' Captain Jason

Robertson and Waseem Mir (on loan to the Cows for the series).

The ploy provided some success before a rising delivery from Mir was fended by MRT 5 (11) from outside off stump to the safe-handed Manish Sadarangani at backward point with the score at 1-21 after 3.5 overs.

Joe Ninan and S.Khan then combined for a solid 54-run partnership before the latter was bowled by Penguin leg-spinner Curt Livermore for 33 runs, leaving the the score at 2-75 after 12 overs.

The in-form Mayur Deuskar, who has been steadily moving up the batting order in recent matches, was the next in to bat and made an immediate impact, playing an array of competent shots all around the ground.

Deuskar and Ninan combined to build a solid platform, reaching 103-2 after 15 overs. Unfortunately, Ninan was punished in the 18th over when he was caught at the long-on boundary by Rishi Sadarangani off the bowling of Seemant Raju.

The devastating Ali Kahn

0 (4) was the next man in and the Cows had high hopes he would be the player to push the score beyond 200. However, he hasn't quite been the same of late after breaking his heavy weapon a few matches back and got into a complete tangle with M Sadarangani before popping one up into the safe hands of Robertson at cover.

Manoj Kumar Yadav 6* (13) joined Deuskar with the latter continuing to smash the bowlers to all parts of the ground.

On 97* (46) with 3 balls remaining and on strike, Deuskar

looked set to achieve his maiden ton but some fierce short pitched bowling proved too good for him as the final balls of the innings passed with no runs scored leaving the Cows with an above par 212/4 from their 25 overs.

Tony Van Blerk and M Sadarangani began the run chase well before Van Blerk slashed at a wide delivery for MRT to take a sharp catch at deep gully from the pacy bowling of Yasir Yahya, with the score at 1-28 after 3.3 overs.

The hard-hitting Rishi Sadarangani was promoted

up the order to join his cousin and the pair put on 20 runs together before Flowers trapped M Sadarangani 10 (19) LBW with the final ball of the over to reduce the Penguins to 2-48.

Craig Morgan was next to the crease although the partnership only lasted 9 balls as Flowers struck again with R Sadarangani holing out to Yahya at long on, the Penguins struggling at 3-64 after 8.3 overs.

Robertson then combined excellently with Morgan, the duo frustrating the bowlers...

Continued on page 14

Blow to Thailand as IOC drops two big sports

OLYMPICS

THAILAND'S BID FOR FURTHER Olympic glory could suffer a blow as boxing and weightlifting have been dropped from the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved a programme of 28 sports with a "strong focus on youth" last Thursday (Feb 3). Modern pentathlon also has not been included on the initial programme for the LA 2028 Games.

Skateboarding, sport climbing

and surfing have been included and LA will be able to propose additional sports in 2023.

Boxing, weightlifting and modern pentathlon could be added to the programme next year if they successfully demonstrate they have addressed issues within their sports.

Boxing's international federation, AIBA, must show it has addressed concerns around the sport's governance and the integrity of its refereeing and judging processes.

Last September an independent investigation found a system to

manipulate the outcome of boxing matches by officials was in place at the 2016 Olympics.

Weightlifting must address the historic issue of doping within the sport, while modern pentathlon must finalise its replacement of show jumping, while increasing its appeal to young people.

Boxing and weightlifting are Thailand's most successful sports at the Olympics. The country has won 15 medals in boxing (four gold, four silver and seven bronze) and 14 in weightlifting (five, two and seven). The other six medals

were won by taekwondo athletes.

Taekwondo champion Panipak Wongpattanakit and third-placed boxer Sudaporn Seesondee were Thailand's only medallists at Tokyo 2020.

The Thai Amateur Weightlifting Association was suspended from taking part in last year's Tokyo Olympics after a number of its athletes tested positive for banned substances.

However, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) removed Thailand from the non-compliance list last Friday (Feb 4), confirm-



Thai boxer Sudaporn Seesondee (right) in action at the Tokyo Olympics. Photo: Bangkok Post

ing the action taken by the Doping Control Agency of Thailand means it is now in full compliance with the World Anti-Doping Code 2021.

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