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ARMS DEALER



A selection of the weapons seized during the raid at the house in Kathu on Monday (Nov 7).
Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

NEW ZEALAND EXPAT ARRESTED OVER HOARD OF HOMEMADE WEAPONS

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

A 62-year-old New Zealand man has been arrested after officers raided his home in Kathu on Monday (Nov 7) and found him in possession of a horde of homemade firearms, including war weapons, and explosives.

The man, Gareth Alan Davies, was taken into custody after officers raided his home in Soi Bae Hua, near the

Prince of Songkla University Phuket campus in Moo 1, Kathu.

Officers found seven long-barreled firearms, including ones each in an AK and an M16 design, both described as weapons of war. A further 19 handguns were discovered along with what police described as 11 explosive devices and a large number of bullets and cartridges of various sizes.

Davies was taken to Kathu Police Station for further questioning and to be charged with illegal possession of

firearms, ammunition and explosives, police said.

Present immediately after the raid was Region 8 Police Commander Pol Lt Gen Surapong Thanomjit along with Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw.

Lt Gen Surapong explained that the arrest followed a tip-off to police, obtained through a complaint filed with Phuket Provincial Court.

Davies, a retired mechanical engineer, sold the firearms and devices

online, Lt Gen Surapong said.

“The person arrested was an engineer with knowledge of mechanics and could make certain devices, such as components of firearms and firearms that registrars will not issue a licence for,” he said.

“Seven of the rifles, the 19 handguns and some parts were made by the arrested himself, and there were five to six bombs. He [Davies] said they were just for his collection, but the accumulation of this many firearms is

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Phuket XI tame Lion City touring team at the ACG



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PATRICK
CHANTHAM



PATRICK CHANTHAM HAIR LAB, BOAT AVENUE LAGUNA PHUKET
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execeditor@classactmedia.co.th

News



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Expat sold guns online

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...forbidden by law," Lt Gen Surapong said.

Davies operated as an intermediary in weapons trade, often buying and selling items online, Lt Gen Surapong said.

A team of forensic investigators will inspect the house to determine whether the modification or production of any weapons was conducted on site, he said.

"It is believed to be because there is a silencer among the items found," he said.

Davies had been living in Thailand for 23 years. Born in November 1959, he turned 63 years old on Wednesday, officers told *The Phuket News*.

He last entered Thailand through Suvarnabhumi Airport on Feb 11, 2010, and his most recent permit to stay was issued through the Phitsanulok Immigration Office, which allowed him to stay in Thailand until Nov 24, 2023.

Davies was not on any entry blacklist or watchlist, officers said.

He lived with his Thai wife, Pannee Chanbamrung, for 20 years. Ms Pannee passed away in 2017, when she was 60.

Davies had been left unable to walk without a brace following a motorcycle accident when he was young, officers explained.

Before his retirement about 10 years ago, he worked as a drilling rig engineer in Southern Thailand. The work, which involved scuba diving, had exacerbated his inability to walk.

He received regular treatment at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, which had an ambulance pick him up and drop him off at his house, officers said.

Governor Narong said the



New Zealand national Gareth Davies (right) pictured during the raid in Kathu on Monday. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

raid was part of the national crackdown on illicit firearms. Police are to continue with their operations for the cause, he said.

The crackdown on weapons is part of the current war on drugs, Governor Narong said. However, according to one official report, he said that treatment centres were being established for those caught involved with drug use.

The raid on Monday followed another raid by Region 8 Police in Kathu reported by local Thai news on Nov 1. The raid was carried out at a home described as a B30 million luxury house at Boutique Golf Villa 4 in Moo 7, Kathu.

The raid netted 18 items which were described as "most of the firearms were BB guns", and included ammunition. Officers arrested one woman, named as "Ms Sapaworn", age 29, for possession of firearms without a permit.

According to a local news report, police were alerted to the cache after the woman's Chinese husband boasted about the collection on social media.

Of note, while the arrest of Davies on Monday was widely reported by Phuket police and local government public relations channels, the raid involving the Chinese husband was not.

Prab pushes for new road up Patong Hill

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Thai nationals and Phuket expats alike have been invited to support the construction of an alternative road up the Kathu side of Patong Hill from Patong Go-Kart to the Chao Pho Suea Shrine.

When finished, the route is expected to facilitate traveling to Patong and back while the main road is being repaired.

The appeal for donations was initially posted on Patong Development Foundation's Facebook page last week, and on Nov 4 received some notable support by being shared by Phuket Info Center, a Facebook page operated by the Phuket Governor's Office and used for important public announcements.

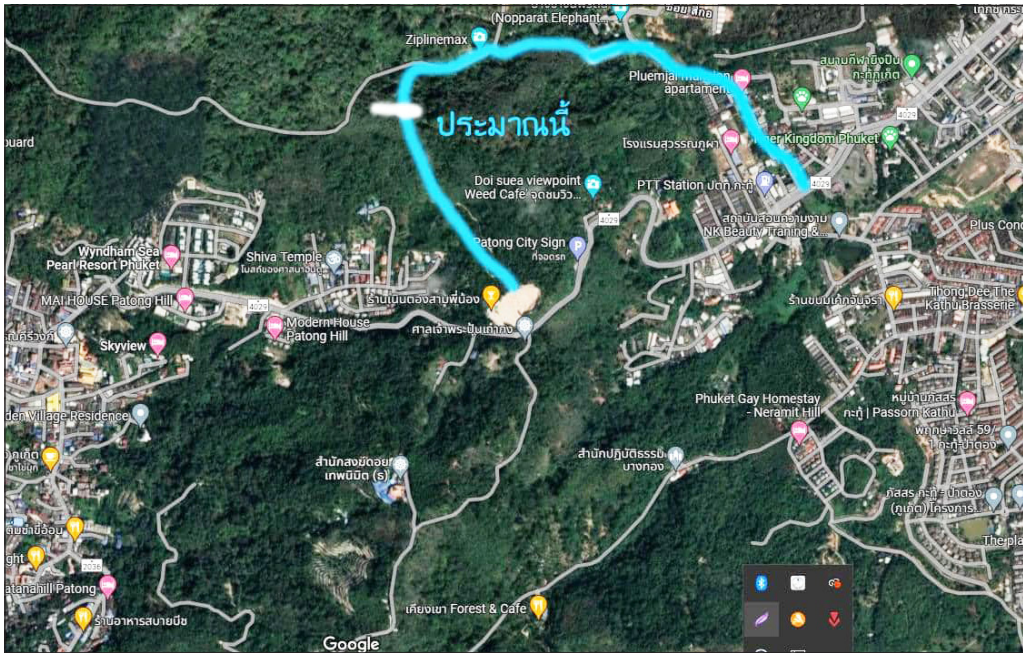
"Because this land is owned by the private sector, not by the government, the government's money cannot be used to repair or build this road. Therefore, the private sector asks for donations for the construction of the road to facilitate travel for people and tourists," the Patong Development Foundation said in its publication in English.

Donations for the construction of the alternative route to the top of Patong Hill can be sent directly into the foundations' bank account. Details are as follows:

Account Name: Foundation Patong Development

Account No. 837-0-18479-0 (Krungthai Bank)

The Patong Development Foundation, founded by Patong prominent business person Preechawude 'Prab' Keesin, has already itself donated



Work on the road is already steaming ahead. Photo: PR Phuket

B300,000 to the government to facilitate the creation of the alternative road.

The initial budget and land for construction were provided by Tiger Kingdom Phuket and Mr Prab personally as well as other people "through Bangla Road Entertainment Entrepreneurs Club and the Patong Development Foundation", Mr Preechawude explained.

The alternative route is to start across from the Patong Go-Kart Speedway on Phra

Baramee Rd in Kathu and go up to the Chao Pho Suea Shrine at the top of the hill.

The road will be about 2.5 kilometres long. Construction is expected to be completed within two weeks. Then the road will be open for public use, though at least part of it will be running through privately owned land.

"We are now entering the high season, when businesses in the Patong area and the local economy are expected to be

active again after having to stagnate until the town almost became abandoned during the COVID-19 crisis," Mr Preechawude said, explaining his reasons.

"Patong can't miss this opportunity. This year's high season is everyone's hope... This alternate road is like seizing an 'opportunity' that is slipping away, to get it back into our hands again," he added.

Mr Preechawude became the first prominent business figure to publicly draw attention to the possible threats to the future of Patong's economic recovery after the collapse of the main road over Patong Hill on Oct 19.

As of Tuesday (Nov 8), only motorcycles were allowed to travel from Kathu past the damaged section of the road to Patong. All other vehicles had to go either through Karon or through Kamala with both routes suffering from heavy traffic congestion.

Officials consider reopening bypass lanes

PHUKET OFFICIALS are considering whether to reopen the northbound lanes on the bypass road past the site of the two small landslides last month now that the buildings of the abandoned hotel at the site have been razed.

Demolition of the incomplete hotel, which has loomed dangerously atop

a steep slope beside the road for the past 30 years, began on Oct 29.

The owner of the structures agreed to have the incomplete buildings removed after two landslides, one on Oct 19 and another on Oct 20, sent mud, dirt and trees across the road amid torrential rainfall experienced across the island.

The northbound lanes of

the bypass road past the site were closed for safety, and have remained closed.

Contractors assured that the experienced team would ensure that no debris would cause a hazard by falling onto the road below while the demolition work continued. They upheld that promise despite continuing light rain and some heavy showers during

the demolition period.

The demolition crew made good progress and remained on track to complete the demolition within the proposed 15-day timeframe.

Demolition of the main building was completed last Saturday (Nov 4). Only a secondary smaller building remained, which was demolished by day's end on Monday.



Photo: Phuket Info Center

The site will be inspected to assess the level of safety to determine whether to reopen

the traffic lanes past the site, officials have confirmed.

The Phuket News

Patong Hill reopens downhill

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The road over Patong Hill has reopened to allow cars, vans, pickups and other “small vehicles” to travel eastbound from Patong to Kathu after a two-hour “trial period” last Friday (Nov 4).

Traffic started slowly flowing down Patong Hill, towards Kathu only, from midday, with officers stringent that vehicles move slowly and are well spaced apart. At time of press, officials had not reported any incidents resulting from the limited reopening of the road.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew announced that the road would reopen after meeting with officials at the landslide site last Thursday night (Nov 3).

“Small vehicles, from cars to vans to pickup trucks, are allowed to take the downward path from Patong to Kathu, starting at noon on November 4, to alleviate the initial suffering for the people,” Governor Narong said.

The downhill lane first opened to selected small vehicles at 10am as a “trial period”, before the lane was opened “for real use” from midday.



Photo: Phuket Info Center

Governor Narong said experts had examined the soil strength at the site and advised that it was safe to open the downhill lane to small vehicles.

“The engineering team found that the strength of the soil layer of the downhill lane from Patong to Kathu was strong enough to allow four-wheeled cars and vans to pass through because that lane is far

[enough] from the landslide,” Governor Narong said.

“As for the uphill lane from Kathu to Patong, that still has to stay closed because there are machines that are accelerating [the work] to improve the road, and because the assessment of the soil strength has found that it is not as strong as the other side,” he said.

“As for motorcycles, they

can continue to use the way both up and down [the hill] as usual,” he added.

“If tests later find that the soil layer is strong enough and can support the weight of traffic, we will allow cars to pass both up and down the hill,” he said.

Governor Narong urged motorists using the road to exercise caution.

“It is being opened to

use to alleviate the initial difficulties. It is not yet open for regular traffic, and work is continuing to repair the broken road. Therefore people must be careful in using the road as much as possible,” he said.

The reopening of the one downhill lane to small vehicles past the landslide site followed an expert from Kasetsart University assuring that it was safe to do so despite recent rains.

The move to allow the road to partially reopen also came on the same day a heavy rain weather warning was issued for Phuket.

The assurance came via an update posted by the Phuket branch of Radio Thailand last Saturday (Nov 5), reporting on an inspection of the site led by Kathu District Chief Siwat Rawangkul.

The inspection was conducted to assess the level of safety at the landslide site, some 500 metres downhill from the Patong City sign, in order to determine whether to continue to allow motorbikes and cars travelling past the site.

Motorbikes have been allowed to travel up and down the hill since Oct 27.

Cars, vans and pickup trucks have been allowed to travel down the hill only, from Patong to Kathu, since Nov 4.

At the time of press, cars, vans and pickup trucks were still not allowed to travel westbound up the hill from Kathu to Patong as it had not yet been deemed safe enough.

Dr Aphinit Chotisangkat, a professor of geology at Kasetsart University, reported that the water pressure in the soil at the site had not increased, indicating that it was still safe for small vehicles to use the road, said the report.

The contractor hired is continuing to address the landslide site itself, bringing backfilled rock and compacted soil to the area to strengthen the embankment.

“If there is no heavy rain or any unforeseen obstacles to carrying out the repairs, progress in repairing the road will continue as planned,” said the report.

In the days after the landslide, Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew said the repairs were hoped to be completed by mid-December.

Officials are continuing to monitor the site for safety, the report assured.

Greek suspect arrested in Athens for Phuket murder

GREEK NATIONAL DIMITRIOS Chairopoulos, wanted for the murder of local beautician Niramon Aewkaew in Phuket in 2019, has been arrested, reports Greek media.

Chairopoulos, now 46, was arrested in Athens on Oct 27, reports the *Greek City Times*.

Without specifically naming Chairopoulos, the report said he was “said to be the one who in February 2019, murdered his 43-year-old wife of Niramon ‘Bea’ Aewkaew in Phuket.”

The report included photos of Chairopoulos and Ms Niramon.

Chairopoulos was arrested by a team of police officers of the Athens Security Sub-Directorate, the newspaper reported.

No other details of his arrest were explained.

Cherng Talay Police requested an Interpol Red Notice be issued for Chairopoulos after officers learned that he had already fled the country before the warrant for his arrest had been issued on Feb 18, 2019.

Chairopoulos boarded Emirates Flight EK0379 to Dubai, departing Phuket at 2am, on Feb 14 – the same night that Ms Niramon, 43, originally from Phatthalung, is believed to have been murdered.

Her body was found by her sister two days later. She had been battered to death.

When Ms Niramon’s body was discovered, her hands and feet were still bound



Dimitrios Chairopoulos. Photo: Royal Thai Police Immigration Bureau / file

and she had a black cloth stuffed into her mouth.

Cherng Talay Police on Feb 20 requested for Interpol to issue a Red Notice for the arrest of Chairopoulos.

“The request for the Royal Thai Police to ask Interpol to issue a Red Notice for the arrest of Chairopoulos is still in process with Royal Thai Police,” Cherng Talay Police Chief Col Akkanit Danpitaksan told *The Phuket News* at the time.

“It is taking a long time because it must pass the workings of Foreign Affairs Division of the Royal Thai Police and the public prosecutor. It is their duty to respond to this case,” was all Col Akkanit could offer to explain the delay.

“We have done our job already. We have concluded our investigation and sent all the information to the Royal Thai Police headquarters in Bangkok,” he added.

If Chairopoulos were arrested outside Thailand, police would seek extradition, Col Akkanit assured. *The Phuket News*

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CONTACT US

editor@classactmedia.co.th 076 612 550

PURIYA BEAVAN
EditorCHRIS HUSTED
Executive Editor
084 307 7408
execeditor@classactmedia.co.thBEN TIREBUCK
News / Sport Editor
061 806 8132
editor3@classactmedia.co.thCHUTHARAT 'UM' PLERIN
Thai Editor
088 766 1615
thai@classactmedia.co.thJASON BEAVAN
General Manager
086 479 7471
gm@classactmedia.co.thSIRIPORN (NOK) SEANGMAS
Sales Support
086 479 7470
sales@classactmedia.co.thNIRAVIT 'MOS' VORAVANITCHA
THANAPONG 'OAK' KHAO-AMPHAIPHAN
Graphic designersThe Phuket News
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Wind 4 m/s

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Low: +27°

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THU NOVEMBER 17



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Wind 4 m/s

Three killed, two injured in Rawai

Eakkapop Thongtub
editor@classactmedia.co.th

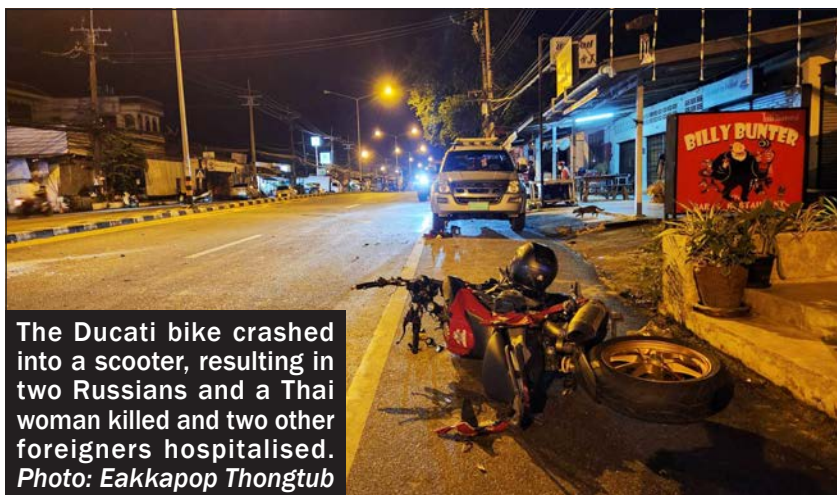
Two Russian nationals and a Thai woman died in a road accident in Rawai early last Friday morning (Nov 4). Two other foreigners were taken to hospital with injuries, yet at time of press there had been no update on their condition.

Lt Col Prasit Ra-ob the Chalong Police was notified of the accident on Wiset Rd at around 3.30am.

Having arrived at the scene in front of the Rawai branch of the Siam Commercial Bank, near the southern end of the road, police officers and rescue workers found two damaged motorcycles and a damaged taxi on the northbound side of the road.

Four people, one Thai national and three foreigners, required medical attention and were rushed to hospitals. One foreigner was reported as dead at the scene.

Having questioned witnesses, police officers said that a red Ducati motorcycle was moving at speed from Rawai Pier towards Chalong and crashed first into a Yamaha Filano scooter with three people on it and then into a parked Isuzu MU-7 taxi.



The Ducati bike crashed into a scooter, resulting in two Russians and a Thai woman killed and two other foreigners hospitalised. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

The Ducati rider, who died at the scene, was identified as a 35-year-old Russian national Aleksey Viktorovich Tunin, from Moscow.

A 29-year-old Russian woman, Valentina Romanova Romantsova from Voronezh, was riding pillion on the motorbike. She was taken to Dibuk Hospital and later pronounced dead.

The two foreign males and the Thai female who were riding the Yamaha Filano scooter sustained injuries and were taken to Chalong Hospital for treatment. The 26-year-old woman was transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital but died later.

Police officers at last report were continuing to investigate the cause of the accident, which included questioning witnesses and checking CCTV footage from the area.

SINGAPOREAN KILLED

The accident in Rawai followed a 29-year-old Singaporean man dying after he lost control of the motorbike he was riding on the coastal road south of Kamala and crashed head-on into an oncoming six-wheeled truck on Nov 3.

Kamala Police Deputy Chief Lt Col Atcha Yatiwat said his officers were

notified of the accident at 11:45am. Officers arrived to find the red Honda Click 125 motorbike stuck under a Hino truck.

The Singaporean man was unconscious and unresponsive, and presumed dead, at the scene. Kusoldharm foundation rescue workers transported his body to Patong Hospital.

Police withheld the man's name pending his next of kin being notified, but was later named by media in Singapore as Cai Man Zong.

Phuket officers did confirm that his passenger, Singaporean national Natalie Yi, also 29, suffered internal injuries in the accident. Paramedics from Kamala Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor) rushed her to Patong Hospital for treatment.

The driver of the truck, who police have yet to name, told officers that he was unable to avoid the collision. He was rounding the curve when he saw the motorbike swerve into his lane and crash into the front of the truck.

Following their initial investigation, officers said that they believed that the Singaporean man was unfamiliar with the road and lost control of the motorbike while navigating the curve.

Suicide death certificate recycled for confirmation of marriage form

A THALANG OFFICIAL has apologised for his office re-using the back of a suicide death certificate to print an official confirmation of marriage document that was to be used for a visa application.

Wisut Romin, head of the Thalang District Registration and Card section at the Thalang District Office made the apology on Nov 3, after details of the incident were posted on social media.

Mr Wisut explained that his office for years had been reusing printed paper as an "energy-saving measure according to the government policy".

He said the document printed was not a marriage certificate, as reported on some websites.

The document printed was an official confirmation of marriage, known by its document designation KorRor.2.

The document was intended to be used to support an application for a visa application to study abroad, Mr Wisut said.

However, in re-using previously printed sheets of paper, the KorRor.2 was printed on



Photo: PR Phuket

the back of a death certificate, Mr Wisut said.

The death certificate printed was issued on Feb 19 last year for a suicide, confirming the cause of death as asphyxiation by hanging, Mr Wisut confirmed.

"The Thalang District Registrar's Office apologises for the mistake in this matter. We are ready to confirm that this will not happen again, and we have urged the officers to check the documents every time before giving them to the public," Mr Wisut said.

The Phuket News

More Layan Beach venues removed by police

OFFICIALS DESCENDED ON a section of Layan Beach last week after they discovered a number of food and beverage outlets were still operating illegally despite a recent eviction drive.

Police officers visited the site at Leyppang Beach around 4:30pm on Nov 2, said a report, which noted the officers were acting under the instruction of Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw, Deputy Governor Anupap Rodkwan Yodrabam, Chief Administrative Officer of the Phuket Provincial Office (Palad) Somprat Prabsongkhram, Thalang District Chief Bancha Thanu-in and Thalang District Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Panjapong Boonchan.

They discovered three separate outlets that were providing food and beverages to tourists, in addition to providing the tourists with beach chairs, sunbeds and umbrellas.

Two individuals who identified themselves as owners of two of the venues were subsequently arrested for selling alcoholic beverages without permission and for contravening Section 9(1)/2 of the the Land Code 1954, Section 54/3 of the Forest Act 1941, and Section 99 of the Enhancement and Conservation of Forest Quality Act B.E. 1992.

Police then proceeded to confiscate items from the venues such as tables, chairs and sunbeds. Police also warned that all building structures at the site would be demolished in due course.

Officials believed they had demol-



Photo: PR Phuket

ished the last remaining illegal beachfront buildings on some 178 rai of state land at the Layan Beach site estimated to be worth over B10 billion on Sept 30.

The Department of Special Investigations (DSI) originally served eviction notices in 2017 after the Supreme Court ruled that the occupiers were illegally encroaching on state land. Several 'final warnings had been made since then, with the last eviction notice served on Sept 12, 2022.

The encroachers were ordered to vacate the plots by Sept 30 or else officials would remove their buildings for them.

The three venues operating last week were therefore deemed to be doing so illegally and in violation of the Supreme Court order.

Several signs posted at Layan Beach claiming that ownership of the land was still in dispute under a case being heard in court were removed on Oct 26.

The Phuket News

Ao Kung Marina still in hot water

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Many local residents have attended yet another public hearing on the controversial Ao Kung Marina project, calling for more details of what measures were being taken to prevent environmental degradation of the area.

Enrich Consultants Co Ltd held the public meeting at the Supalai Scenic Bay Resort & Spa in Ao Por, near Ao Kung, Pa Khlok, on Phuket's north-east coast, on Nov 2.

Local residents expressed their continuing concern about the impact on the local marine ecosystem and called for clear support measures, said an official report of the meeting.

The project, located in Baan Ao Kung, Moo 9, Pa Khlok, will be located on nine plots of land covering an area in total of about 30 rai, all owned by the project owner, the consultants explained.

The project site will cover an area with a radius of at least five kilometres around the main project site, comprising areas within Tambon Pa Khlok and even reaching into Tambon Thepkrasattri.



Photo: PR Phuket

The marina will have a semicircular concave mooring basin covering approximately 35,059.67 square metres, or 71.96% of the total project area, the meeting was told.

The mooring basin will have a depth of about eight metres. The basin will include the marina area and mooring buoys which altogether will be able to accommodate 75 boats.

A channel about 20 metres

wide will be required to allow boats to access the marina.

Trees will be planted along the fence line of the project to improve the landscape and provide a buffer area to prevent potential impacts on neighbouring communities, the consultants explained.

However, public opinion expressed at the meeting focussed on the impact the marina project will have on

local fishermen, as many of the local residents rely on fishing as their main source of income.

Preventing the effects of wastewater from the project, especially activities arising from ship repairs, and including the release of oil and harmful chemicals into the local environment, were also key points asked during the proceedings.

The consultants were asked

to have people clarify more details about the various aspects of the construction of the project and its ongoing operations once built.

The B450 million "Ao Kung Marina and Sports Complex" project has faced concerted opposition from local residents for years.

Local conservationists in February petitioned Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew

to carefully reconsider the outcome of a public meeting held where a majority of local residents, mostly fishermen, reportedly voted to approve dredging in the bay.

The call raised serious concerns about how that meeting was called and who specifically were asked to attend to cast their votes.

In 2018, the local environmental conservation group won a reprieve against the construction of a B450 million "Ao Kung Marina and Sports Complex" to be built at the bay, after Seaview Land Co Ltd, acting on behalf of Enrich Consultants Co Ltd, retracted its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) application.

The retraction followed Norraphat Plodthong, Phuket Governor at the time, calling for a new public hearing to be held on the project after dire concerns were raised over the devastating effect dredging a channel there may have on an aquatic field of corals nearby.

Ao Kung is home to a large reef comprising a variety of different corals. The small island in the bay features so much coral that it is called Koh Hei, literally 'Coral Island'.

Military conscripts ship out

IT WAS AN EMOTIONAL day for many families at Saphan Hin on Nov 1 as 194 young men who had been conscripted for military service shipped out.

Present to give the recruits their orders was Col Narongchai Akkarakan, the military's Recruiting Officer for Phuket, joined by personnel from the 2nd Regimental Squadron.

The conscripts lined up and were processed one by one at the sports centre.

Those selected to serve in the Royal Thai Army will be stationed with the 41st Military Circle at Camp Wachirawut in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, or with the 46th Military Circle in Pattani, Col Narongchai said.

The remainder will join the ranks of the Royal Thai Navy and the Royal Thai Air Force, he added.

In total, 194 conscripts presented themselves for duty, Col Narongchai noted.

Eight conscripts did not present themselves, he confirmed.

The new recruits who shipped out were selected during the conscription



Phuket conscripts ship out at Saphan Hin on Nov 1. Photo: PR Phuket

round held in Phuket in April.

The famous "lucky draw" of mandatory military service for men over 21 years old sees those who draw a 'bai daeng' (red card) entered into the Armed Forces to serve with either the Army, Air Force or Navy for up to two years. Those who draw a 'bai dum' (black card) are exempt from conscription.

During the conscription rounds in Phuket in April, many of the young men called up to take part in the "lottery" volunteered for national service. By volunteering, a conscript may appeal to serve a reduced term.

While those who have not graduated from high school are required to serve two years regardless of whether they volunteer, high school graduates who volunteer are required to serve only one year.

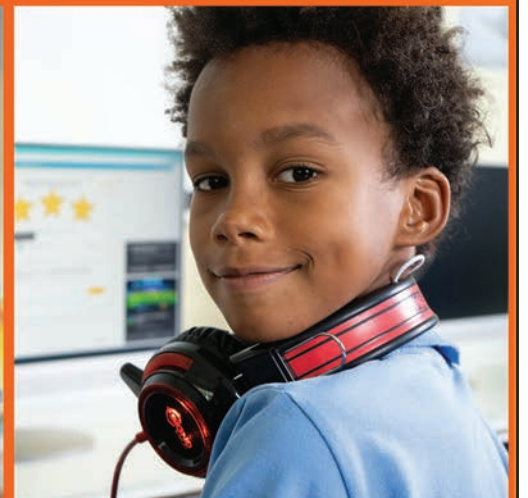
In comparison, high school graduates who draw 'bai daeng' (red cards) are required to serve two years. Similarly, those with an associate degree or higher who volunteer are required to serve for only six months.

University students can request to defer their conscription service until they have graduated or reached 26 years of age.

The Phuket News

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Bid for Expo 2028 trumps all

Mega-projects touted at Andaman Provinces economic confab

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

All the multi-billion-baht major road projects in Phuket will not be brought forward to help alleviate the traffic woes caused by the landslide on Patong Hill, according to the Andaman Provinces economic meeting held in Phuket last week.

The meeting, held on Nov 4 at the Auditorium at the Phuket Provincial Administration Center that is home to Provincial Hall, saw governors and other senior officials from six provinces – Krabi, Trang, Phang Nga, Phuket, Ranong and Satun – discuss strategies to economically develop the Andaman coast region following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Representing Phuket was Governor Narong Woonciew, while former Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada attended as the current Governor of Phang Nga.

Representing the private sector were Salil Totubthieng, Chairman of the Thai Chamber of Commerce's Southern



Photo: PR Phuket

Andaman Province Group; Adisorn Tan-engchuan, Advisor to the President of the Federation of Thai Industries; and Watthana Ruengsamut, Advisor to the Federation of Thai Tourism Council.

Placed at the top of the agenda was that Thailand was to make its second presentation in its bid for Phuket to host World Specialised Expo 2028 on Nov 25-29.

In accordance with the

Prime Minister's directive to drive the development of southern provinces on the Andaman coast, all sectors were encouraged to support Phuket and Thailand to host this event, noted an official report of the meeting.

However, the Phuket Mass Transit System Project (light rail) is continuing according to its normal schedule, the meeting was told.

A detailed and appropri-

ateness review study that began in June is being revised and will continue through to April 2023. The project will be open to bids under terms in accordance with the Joint Venture Act from May 2023 to April 2024. The selection process for the contract tenders will be conducted from May 2024 to June 2025.

Actual construction is scheduled to begin from July 2025 and continue through to

November 2027. The light rail is currently scheduled to begin service in December 2027.

Meanwhile, the Muang-Koh Kaew-Kathu Expressway project is progressing with officials from Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT) meeting council members of the Kathu, Srisoonthorn and Koh Kaew local administration organisations in August.

The meeting resulted in EXAT being approved to use protected forest land for the project, which will see a 30-kilometre motorway built from Muang Mai to Kathu.

The project, at last report to cost B30 billion, is currently in the process of review studies to assess its feasibility in terms of engineering, economics, finance and environmental impact, the meeting was told. A detailed framework of the project is being drafted, work on which commenced on April 1 this year.

The Kathu-Patong Expressway Project, better known as the Patong Tunnel project, is currently undergoing the process of the contract tenders being drafted, a pro-

cess that began in July and is to conclude this month.

Bids for the project will open in December, with the period for submitting proposals closing in March 2023, the meeting was told.

The project for years has been scheduled for construction to start in 2023, with construction scheduled to be complete by 2027.

The meeting last week gave no indication that timeline will be brought forward.

Other projects touted at the meeting included the Andaman International Health Center, already approved by Cabinet to cost B5.11bn. Construction is expected to start next year, with the project scheduled for completion also by 2027.

Also listed by mention only in the official report were that progress reports were given on the Andaman Smart City project, the Sport City project and the bid to host the 2025 SEA Games in the southern provinces along the Andaman Coast.

No details of those projects were provided.

More airlines return to Phuket

LOT POLISH AIRLINES Flight LO6193 from Warsaw Chopin Airport landed in Phuket on Monday (Nov 7), bringing 252 more visitors to Phuket.

The flight, operated by a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, touched down at 12:03pm, reported Airports of Thailand Phuket branch (AoT Phuket).

Monchai Tanode, General Manager of Phuket International Airport was joined by Nanthasiri Ronnasiri, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office, and a host of airport staff to welcome the arrivals at Gate 11 of the International Terminal.

The flight was reported to be an "inaugural flight of LOT Polish Airlines", but a schedule of subsequent continuing flights was not announced. LOT Airlines previously flew direct flights from Warsaw to Phuket before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The arrival from the Polish capital marked the continuing resumption of direct international flights to Phuket.



Photo: AoT Phuket

The inaugural flight by Qanot Sharq Airlines from the Uzbekistan capital Tashkent landed in Phuket last Thursday (Nov 3), bringing a total of 238 passengers onboard.

This followed the inaugural flight of IKAR Airlines from Moscow landing in Phuket on Oct 30, marking the resumption of direct charter flights from the Russian capital.

Russia's largest airline and flag carrier Aeroflot resumed its services into

Phuket direct from Moscow later that same day, with its first flight since March touching down at 9:20pm.

Thailand is on track to surpass its 2022 target of attracting 10 million foreign visitors, with tourist arrivals totalling 7.56mn as of Oct 30, reported Government Spokesperson Anucha Burapachaisri.

At least 1.5mn visitors are expected each month during the remainder of the year, he said.

The Phuket News

TAT inks airline deals to lure Americans

THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF Thailand (TAT) is hoping to welcome at least 1 million tourists from the US next year after securing partnerships with Delta Air Lines and Korean Air to bring travellers from 17 gateway cities across the country.

As Thailand does not have a flag carrier that can offer direct flights from the US, the agency turned to international airlines to bring tourists here, said TAT Governor Yuthasak Supasorn.

TAT hosted a business-to-business (B2B) meeting on Nov 3 for 50 travel agents from around the US to meet Thai tourism operators in Bangkok, part of a nine-day familiarisation trip.

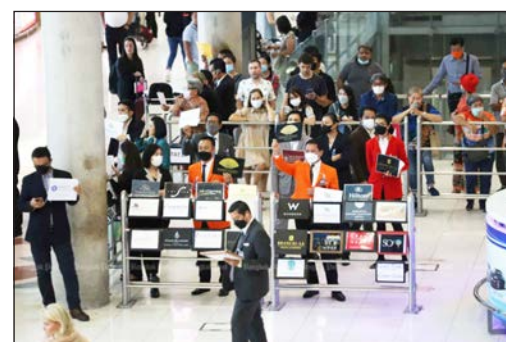
The B2B meeting aimed to increase visitor numbers from North American markets. Other joint sessions with local operators were held in Chiang Mai, Ayutthaya and Phuket.

"Americans in general have a strong desire to come to Asia," said Akinori Yokosawa, manager of international speciality sales at Delta Air Lines.

He said Delta has 17 flights per day from the US to South Korea, of which five connect in Thailand each day, comprising three via Bangkok, and one each to Chiang Mai and Phuket.

Average airfares could be 30% higher than in 2019, but load factors for these flights have already hit 95%. Most passengers are leisure travellers, who are at 75% of 2019 levels, while corporate customers are at 50%.

Mr Yokosawa said with China, a popular destination for Americans, still closed, demand has pivoted to Thailand, a top destination in Southeast Asia. The strong US dollar has also helped American travellers stay longer, for an



People wait for arrivals at Suvarnabhumi airport on Nov 3. Photo: Varuth Hirunyatheb / Bangkok Post

average of 10 days.

Atthawish Supaka, senior sales manager at the Renaissance Pattaya Resort and Spa, said tourists from the US ranked among the top five source markets for the hotel's guests. The property is run by Marriott, a well-known brand in the US.

Most of the guests were couples on honeymoon and families who booked more than seven nights, often opting for all-inclusive packages.

Melissa Barkalow, a US-based travel consultant at World Travel Service, which offers customised, high-end tours, said she is looking for new destinations in Thailand and Asia because 95% of her tours currently go to Europe.

Ms Barkalow said food, culture and temples are attractive to American travellers.

The estimated price for an eight-day trip to Thailand would be around US\$10,000 (B377,000), according to the agency.

From January to September this year, 225,909 American and 39,950 Canadian tourists came to Thailand. Bangkok Post

Government U-turns on foreign owned land plan

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government is reportedly backing down from its plan to allow wealthy foreigners to purchase up to one rai of land for residential purposes in return for investments, after the proposal drew fierce criticism.

Chayawut Chanthorn, director of the Department of Land, said on Monday (Nov 7) that Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan had approved the withdrawal of the Interior Ministry's draft regulation on land ownership by foreigners.

The draft regulation, which was approved in principle by the Cabinet last month, allows four groups of well-to-do foreigners with a long-term resident visa to buy up to one rai of land for residential purposes, if they invest at least B40 million in the country for at least three years.

However, the policy, which is aimed at attracting more foreign investments to the country, has drawn flak from



The Thai government's proposal to sell land to foreigners has received much criticism. Photo: Bangkok Post

critics who accused the government of "selling off" the country.

Mr Chayawut said the Interior Ministry submitted a letter to Gen Prawit last week seeking to withdraw the proposal, and that Prawit endorsed the request on Monday before it was forwarded to the Cabinet's secretariat.

"The ministry decided to withdraw the draft regulation due to widespread public concerns and if the Cabinet agrees with the decision, the

ministry will take the chance to review it and decide if it will continue with or drop the proposal," he said.

According to Chayawut, the ministry's 2002 regulation on land ownership by foreigners would remain intact if the revised regulation was dropped.

Chayawut's remarks followed media reports that Interior Minister Anupong Paojinda would ask the Cabinet to withdraw the draft regulation on land ownership.

Gen Anupong had told the House of Representatives last week that the land policy could still be scrapped if there were serious public concerns.

A source at Government House said Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha was deeply concerned by the criticisms and that it was highly likely that the draft regulation would be ditched altogether.

Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Minister Supattana Pongthorn said on Monday that if the public disagrees with the policy, the government will listen to their concerns.

"If people feel uncomfortable about it and the regulation has to be withdrawn, so be it. The public should take their time because it is just an option," he said.

Mr Supattana said the government understood the public's concerns and is willing to make improvements.

He also played down concerns about the impact of the policy U-turn, saying the government will do its best to explain the issue to foreign investors.



Photo: Bangkok Post

Speed pill prices plunge to B2 each

BANGKOK

METHAMPHETAMINE pills, which cost as much as B300 apiece in Thailand just a few years ago, can now be had for as little as B2 each, say police who arrested a drug suspect in Lop Buri.

The revelation followed a sting operation on Nov 3 in which undercover officers in Muang district paid a 24-year-old dealer B4,000 and received a plastic bag containing 2,000 speed pills in return.

Prices of methamphetamine have been plunging in light of the "extreme volumes" being produced in the region, most of it in lawless pockets of Myanmar, according to the United Nations Office on

Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In a report released in June this year, the agency said that more than 1 billion methamphetamine tablets were seized in East and Southeast Asia in 2021.

"Organised crime syndicates and armed groups have exploited the pandemic and political instability in the Golden Triangle and border areas of Myanmar to expand production the past year," said Jeremy Douglas, the UNODC regional representative based in Bangkok.

"There are very few drug labs found in the region outside the Triangle anymore, the supply continues to surge, and governments and agencies continue to report the same source." Bangkok Post

Thailand more than '90% ready' to host Apec Summit

BANGKOK

THAILAND IS MORE THAN 90% ready to host the 29th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Bangkok on Nov 18-19, government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri said on Monday (Nov 7).

All aspects of the summit, including the grand reception, meeting venues, discussion topics, gala dinner, souvenirs and special programmes for Apec leaders' spouses, are more than 90% ready for the event, Mr Anucha said.

Security measures, meanwhile, are fully in place in the city and to be implemented with drills conducted as part of the preparations for the summit.

The exercises have met the expectations of the security teams of the Apec nations who have checked on the measures ahead of the event.

The government has a wide range of Apec information for the more than 2,000 international media workers who will cover the summit, so as to help ensure worldwide publicity.

Prior to the event, Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha will be attending the Asean Summit in Cambodia on Nov 10-13, before taking part in a meeting and negotiations with China, South Korea, Japan, India, Australia, the US, Canada and the United Nations.

Prayut is also due to meet with leaders



A robot displaying the 2022 Apec Summit logo. Photo: Nutthawat Wicheanbut

of East Asian nations and other Asean parties including parliaments, youth delegates, and businesses, said Mr Anucha.

During the Apec summit in Bangkok, Thailand will be showcasing its bio-circular-green (BCG) economic model, in addition to the main theme of the summit, which is "Open. Connect. Balance."

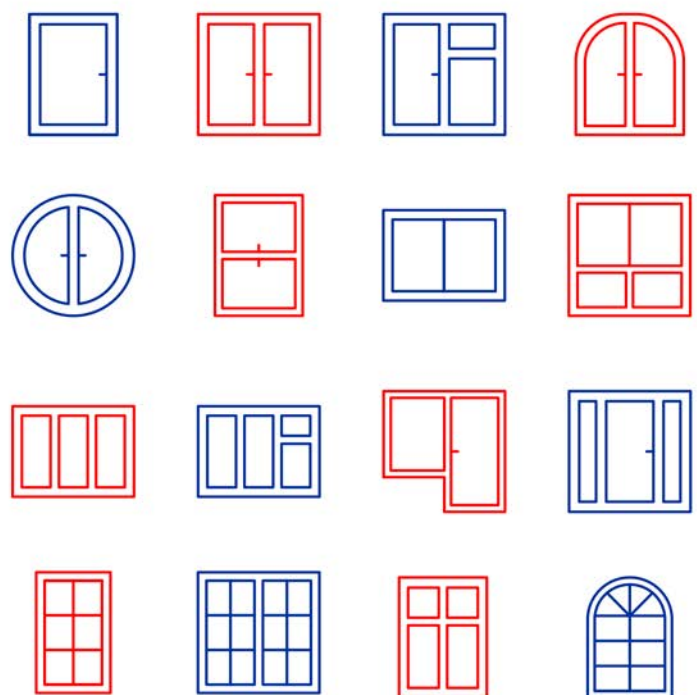
Fifteen Apec economies have confirmed their leaders will be attending the summit in person, while five nations – the US, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico and Taiwan – will send a representative.

As for Russia, an invitation has been sent to President Vladimir Putin to attend though no word back has been received, said Mr Anucha.

The summit is an ideal opportunity for leaders to engage in person as they have been unable to meet over the past three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he added. Bangkok Post



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'Bros' gives romantic comedy a new view

David Griffiths

It is always interesting to see the reaction when something 'new' lands at the cinema. Most movie fans will have by now heard about director Nicholas Stoller (*Forgetting Sarah Marshall*) tackling what many consider to be one of Hollywood's final taboos – a homosexual romantic comedy with the new film 'Bros'.

To many serious film and television lovers this might be a complete surprise that such a film could still be considered a taboo today, especially given the success of TV shows such as *Queer As Folk* and *The L Word*. Even films such as *Chasing Amy* and *Love, Simon* have shown over the years that homosexual relationships can be brought to the screen in a serious way without being treated in a derogatory or dismissive way.

Having said that, *Bros* takes that general idea and amps it up to 10 with nearly all the cast and crew being LGBTQ+, but of course the most important question about the film remains – does it work and is it going to be an enjoyable experience for the audience watching it? And the answer to that is: if you like a laugh out loud comedy, then sure it certainly ticks all the boxes.

Plot-wise the film follows the out and very judgemental Bobby (Billy Eichner – *The Lion King*), who hides

his fear of commitment behind a facade of saying that 'nobody is right for him'. Then one night while out a club he meets the physically alluring Aaron (Luke Macfarlane – *Brothers & Sisters*), who covers up his own commitment phobia with frequent sexual liaisons with different guys.

When the pair first meet they decide they 'clash' and refuse to admit their attraction for each other. Bobby becomes his judgemental self and tries to bury himself with his work of creating a LGBTQ+ museum while Aaron tries to end every date by encouraging Bobby to see other men with him. Unlike Bobby though, Aaron doesn't have work he can escape into, because as it turns out he loathes his job.

When all is said and done with *Bros*, what works most with the film is that Stoller and Eichner have created likable characters that an audience can't help but 'barrack' for while also making this one of the funniest films anyone will see in 2022. The film itself doesn't stray too far from the typical rom-com formula, and like most of these kinds of films Bobby may be set up to be slightly annoying, but at the same time he has enough redeeming qualities to make him an audience favourite – think Phoebe from *Friends*. It also possibly helps that he is given many of the funnier lines throughout the film.

Also helping the film to tell its story



is the fact that Stoller is a mature enough director/screenwriter to know when to rein in the comedy and let the heart of the film shine through. There are more serious scenes throughout the film, and let's be honest, some of those are completely heart-breaking as they often revolve around characters being left heartbroken because it seems that there is no way that they can overcome the phobias that they suffer from. Jokes aside, this is very much a film that centres around two characters too afraid to achieve their dreams... and that is a lesson that everyone can learn from.

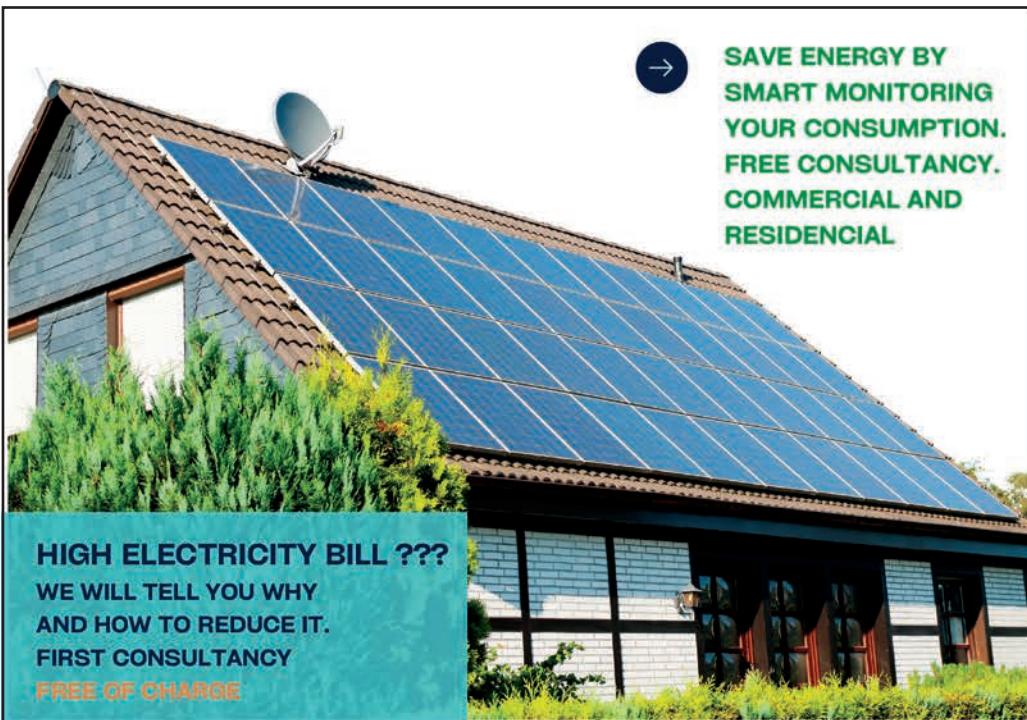
One of the biggest things that many will take away from this film though is just how good Eichner and Macfarlane are throughout the film. Eichner shows that he is a comedic actor that deserves to be named among the best in the busi-

ness while Macfarlane shows that he is a better actor than a lot of the Hall-mark films that his career has been made up from so far.

If you are a lover of a good rom-com or even just comedy itself, then *Bros* is a film that you need to check out. Sure it may be breaking down walls or even being considered a game-changer in Hollywood, but at the end of the day when you go to see a comedy all you want to do is laugh... and *Bros* will deliver those by the bucket load.

3.5/5 Stars

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



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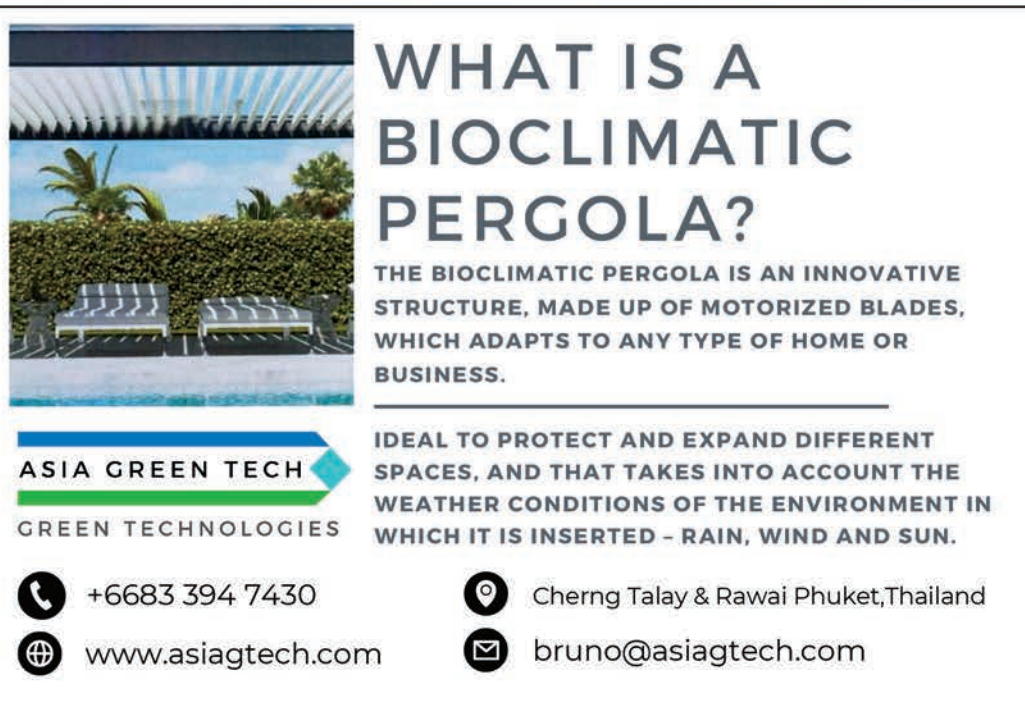
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A vision for sustainable aquaculture

ON CAMPUS

Milla Budiarto

Jitti Intaracharoen, or 'Ko Mhai', witnessed the economic devastation in his community on Koh Maphrao during the pandemic. As a Phuketian and Chairman of the Koh Prao Mangrove Forest Community Enterprise Group – a part of the Small and Micro Community Enterprise (SMCE) self-reliance program – he wanted to help his people have a sustainable income.

The group comprises 22 local community members who have a common way of life in aquaculture conservation on Koh Maphrao (Coconut Island), located off Phuket's east coast.

Equipped with his educational background in Forestry Science from Kasetsart University and Public Administration from the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), expertise in the field of aquaculture and brackish water aquatic animals, business acumen recognised by the Office of SMEs Promotion (OSMEP), and his family's over 50 years of experience in marine aquatic farming, Ko Mhai decided to build a platform off the Phuket side of Koh Maphrao to sustainably cultivate marine animals. He named this Intara Farm and opened it in September 2020.

Thus far, Intara Farm is the only black salmon farm in Phuket. It is built on a three rai floating platform that is flanked by mangrove forests, designed for a sustainable aquaculture in Sapam Bay, a five-minute longtail boat ride from Laem Hin Pier. Intara Farm is more than just a sustainable aquaculture farm, it offers enriching leisure and learning activities, and also operates a farm-to-table seafood restaurant, where all the fresh ingredients come directly from the farm.



Photo: Intara farm / Facebook

New Beginning, New Hope

The pandemic hit Phuket's tourism and hospitality industry the hardest, crippling the economy and leaving thousands of people without livelihoods. Many local fishermen were unable to sell their daily catch as many hotels and restaurants were ordered to close indefinitely. The sudden surge of people entering the fishing and agricultural industry only exacerbated the already saturated market.

In response, Ko Mhai bought the local fishermen's catch at standard market prices to avoid the collapse of the fish market and placed them in his farm to be conserved and cultivated sustainably. He implemented research-based methodologies that rely on nature as much as possible without using chemicals. He also applied mixed-cultivation for diversification in case of low market demand. This decision helped generate income for many people in his community.

Intara Farm also wants to create a fun and educational ecotourism site where people can learn about sustainable aquaculture, explore the surrounding flora and mangrove forests, experience the way of life of the local community, engage in environmental-friendly social and leisure activities around the farm, and also taste some delectable fresh seafood at its restaurant.

Charting the Path

Ko Mhai is a hands-on entrepreneur who is not afraid of getting his hands dirty, literally and figuratively. He is always around, doing anything everywhere, so much so that you'd never guess he's the owner of the farm. Though he doesn't speak English that well, that doesn't stop him from passionately sharing his vast knowledge of the flora and fauna in and around the farm, with the help of an equally enthusiastic English-speaking local tour guide named Mayya, who graduated from the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus (PSU Phuket).

Visitors to Intara Farm can walk around the farm to see and feed all kinds of marine life, learn about a few aquatic animals and pearl cultivation in depth, go kayaking along the nature trail, participate in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities such as beach garbage collection on Coconut Island and mangrove tree-planting, make tie-dyed shirt using natural colour from the mangrove bark, release aquatic animals to the sea, and feast on some of the freshest seafood around.

Of course with a stunning backdrop and charming architecture, Intara Farm is definitely instagramable. So if you want to have a wholesome ecotourism experience and support the local community, Intara Farm is the place for you, hands down.

NOTE: This article was featured in 'The Phuket Collegiate Magazine', the university magazine published by Milla Budiarto at PSU Phuket. The opinion expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of PSU Phuket and its employees or official policies. For more information, visit: <https://www.phuket.psu.ac.th/en/magazine> or email: milla.budiarto@gmail.com



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POP QUIZ

- Where on the human body do you find deltoids?
- Doing so in 2011, what is the most recent country to join the United Nations?
- What is the length of Thailand in kilometres?
- Which American novel is J. D. Salinger famous for?
- How many attempts were made to assassinate Fidel Castro, according to his security team?

Answers below, centre

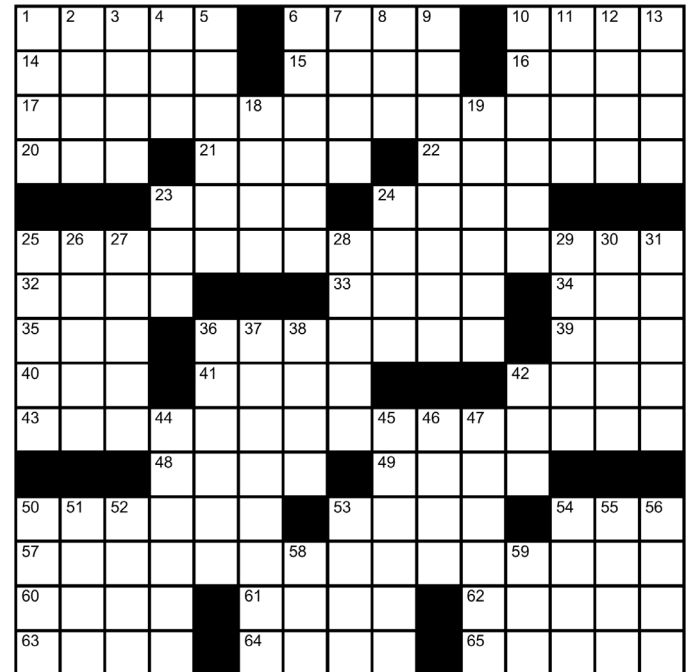
SUDOKU

Easy

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

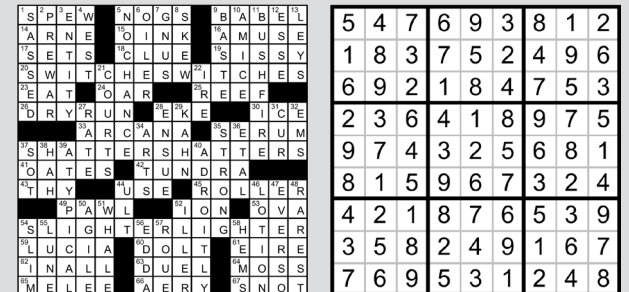
Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
- Gaugin subjects, often
 - Actor Gooding, Jr.
 - Indian dish ingredient
 - Dead to the world
 - Load
 - Odd, spelled oddly
 - Place on the field
 - Wilbur's home
 - This and that
 - Orient
 - Popeyed
 - Dizygotic ____
 - Unexpressed
 - Lap, as a wave
 - The Old Sod
 - Gloaming
 - "____ over!"
 - Surveyed
 - Body part
 - Known formerly as
 - Kind of shell
 - With the bow, in music
 - On the job
 - Made like
 - Panegyryze
 - Leader born in
- Down**
- Lagerl f
 - Newton, e.g.
 - Controvert
 - Shortly before?
 - Larry, for one
 - Guarantee, in a way
 - Remarkably
 - Sticker
 - So to speak
 - Sign of summer
 - Patch up
 - Proof word
 - Appraiser
 - Arctic sight
 - Sent
- Georgia**
- Isles
 - Daft
 - Last stop
 - God offended by Daphnis
 - Foreign pen pal
 - Oil holder
 - Refuses to
 - Soaks, as flax
 - Glower
- 23. Wow**
- 24. Weak**
- 25. Buckwheat pancakes**
- 26. No longer on the plate**
- 27. Tube**
- 28. Part of a joint**
- 29. Kind of jacket**
- 30. Boot**
- 31. ____ Rebellion**
- 36. Enter**
- 37. Schedule**
- 38. Like gastric juice**
- 42. Elaborate**
- 44. Most sound**
- 45. In groups**
- 46. Word of honor**
- 47. Friction matches**
- 50. Hasenpfeffer, e.g.**
- 51. National park acronym**
- 52. Interminable time**
- 53. Throw ____**
- 54. Japanese soup**
- 55. All over**
- 56. Compaq competitor**
- 58. Crater on Mars**
- 59. Fond du ____, Wis.**



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

out of every 17 Samoan residents is a registered rugby player.

42.2

minutes is how long it would take to fall through Earth if you could dig a hole straight through it.

3,106

is how many carats The Cullinan Diamond, the largest diamond ever found, has.

100,000

US dollars a year is the minimum a hot dog vendor must pay to operate in Central Park.

178 million

is how many Line users there were globally last year, down from 194mn at the beginning of 2019.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Patong sculpture contest (2019). Photo by David Samuelson

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

This week in history

November 11, 1869

The Victorian Aboriginal Protection Act is enacted in Australia, giving the government control of indigenous people's residence, employment and marriage.

November 12, 1970

Oregon Highway Division attempts to destroy a beached whale with explosives, leading to the infamous "exploding whale" incident.

November 13, 2015

A set of coordinated terror attacks in Paris, including multiple shootings, explosions and a hostage crisis, kill 138 people, including seven attackers, and injure 368.



Nellie Bly.

November 14, 1889

Pioneering female journalist Nellie Bly (aka Elizabeth Cochrane) begins a successful attempt to travel around the world in less than 80 days. She completes the journey in 72 days, faster than the fictional Phileas Fogg.

November 15, 1933

Thailand has its first election. There are no political parties, so all candidates run as independents.

November 16, 1938

LSD is first synthesised by Swiss scientist Albert Hofmann from ergotamine at the Sandoz Laboratories in Basel.

November 17, 1603

English explorer, writer and courtier Sir Walter Raleigh goes on trial for treason. He is later imprisoned in the Tower of London.

Source: Wikipedia

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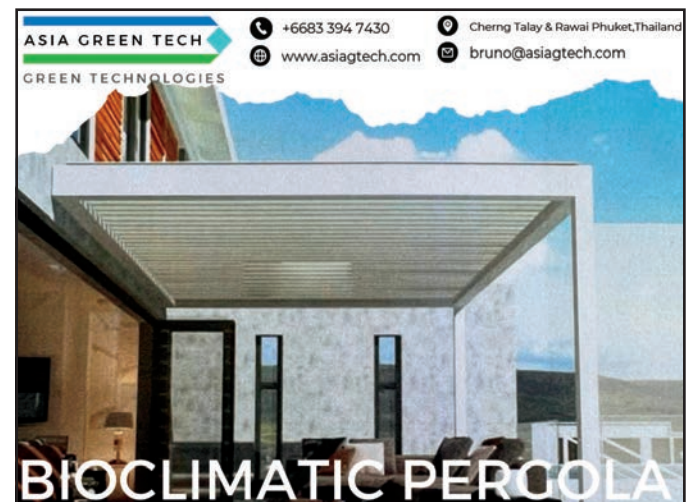
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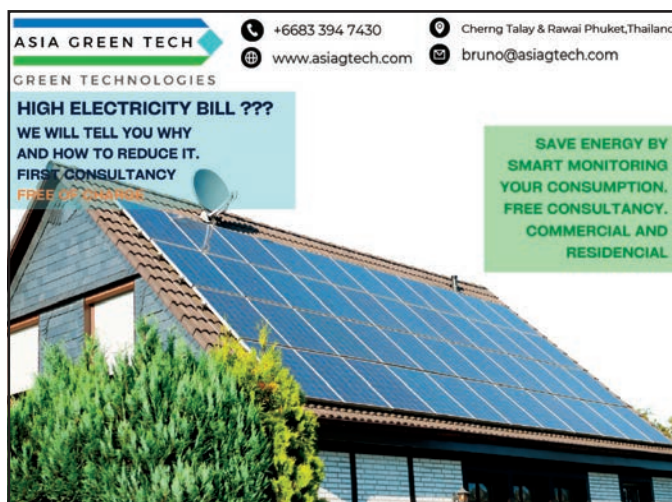
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11 NOV



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WED

16 NOV



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FRI

18 NOV



AustCham Thailand Business Briefing

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC), Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), Phuket Chamber of Commerce and Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, invite you to join us for Business Briefing on "The future of Recreational and Medical Cannabis in the Tourism Sector", Friday 18 November 2022 , from 17.00 - 18.00 hrs. The future of Recreational and Medical Cannabis in the Tourism Sector Will cannabis be a high or just a bad trip for Thailand's tourism sector? This talk will highlight topics to gain practical insight about operating a medical cannabis business focused on tourism in Thailand. Topics include: Marketing and pitch deck considerations for start-ups. Changes to the Cannabis and Hemp Act and how they will affect businesses in the sector. The future of medical cannabis in Asia. Speakers: Dr. Paul Crosio, a Partner at Silk Legal who was recently recognised as one of the Top 200 Global Cannabis Lawyers of 2022. Diego Sala, Managing Director of Siam Trade Development specialises in regulated

activities surrounding cannabis products, dietary supplements, and medical devices. Free of charge for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. For registration code for Australian Alumni members, please contact AustCham team at 02 109 9616 or email to office@ austchamthailand.com



Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners hosted by AustCham

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC), Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), Phuket Chamber of Commerce and Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, invite you to join us for Phuket Sundowners at SAii Laguna Phuket, on Friday 18 November 2022, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. Join us for a wonderful night of making new connections and catching up with familiar faces in the Australian-Thai business community. As well as, getting to know and learn from our corporate sponsors Silk Legal, a boutique law firm based that specializes in commercial transaction, foreign direct investment, technology, blockchain and artificial intelligence. 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members 900 THB for non-members. For registration code for Australian Alumni members, please contact AustCham team at 02 109 9616 or email to office@austchamthailand.com

WED

23 NOV




An evening with Paul Gazza Gascoigne

A living LEGEND and arguable one of the greatest football players of all time, GAZZA is coming to Phuket

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SILVER STARS NIGHT AT SUAY PORTO

Glitz and glamour washed over Suay Porto de Phuket on Wednesday, November 2. A sell-out special dinner, 60 guests, with drinks pairing, live music from Moody Paul followed by DJ and dancers. Service, venue, food and beverages were what you expect from Chef Noi and his team at Suay, outstanding.



GROW BOATING EVENING

Another great evening held at the Isola restaurant at the Royal Phuket Marina on Friday, November 4, with drinks sponsor for the evening Seam Upholstery, an independent Southeast-Asia-based upholsterer and soft furnishings expert. Hope to see you at the next event on December 2.



TV celebs to support local school charity football match

FOOTBALL

A CHARITY FOOTBALL match has been confirmed involving celebrities from Thai TV to help support a building repair project at Baan Laem Sai School in Thalang.

The match, which marks the 49th year anniversary of the school in Thepkasatti, is set to take place at 4pm on Sunday (Nov 13) at Thanyapura Sports & Health Resort in Thalang.

The home team representing Phuket will be made up of players from selected businesses and organisations across the island, while the away team will field a number of celebrities from Thai Channel 7 HD, including Aof Chanaphon, Boom Kitkong, Big Kritsada, Ta Natthakorn, Taiphon Takphet, Aun Akkara-

pat and Mai Nonthaphan.

Funds raised from ticket sales will go towards building repair works needed at the school such as roofs, floors and classrooms. Additionally, the landscape surrounding the school will also be improved, organisers confirmed.

Tickets are priced at B200 and B500 and can be acquired from Baan Laem Sai School directly or by calling 081-7376884 / 088-1547153 or 076-621787.

Should anyone wish to donate to support the project who is unable to attend the match in person then this can be done via the following deposit account: Government Savings Bank, Thalang Branch, No. 020 3929 7560 1. Account name: Fundraising project for school building repair Baan Laem Sai School. *The Phuket News*

Put the brakes on ambitious expansion, say F1 chiefs

FORMULA ONE

AFP

After a period of rapid growth F1 needs to slam on the brakes and avoid the temptation to add yet more races to its record-sized calendar, two team principals have said.

Haas team principal Guenther Steiner warned F1 bosses that there was a danger of “hitting a cliff and falling down” if the sport did not consolidate on a period of impressive global growth.

The booming F1 circuit will expand to 24 races next season with three races in the United States as Las Vegas joins the party along with Austin and Miami while the Chinese and Qatar races are due to return after short-term absences.

“I think we need stabilization in my opinion. The amount of races... don’t do more, stabilize where we are now,” Steiner said on Nov 5.

“Twenty-four races is enough at the moment in my opinion.”

Williams team principal Jost Capito agreed and said



F1 has 24 races scheduled next season. Photo: AFP

that even with this season’s calendar, the strain is being felt with the Brazil and Abu Dhabi races still to be run.

“With 22 races this year and 24 races next year, it is a big change. I think 24 is a lot for the teams, when you see now towards the last races you see that the teams are getting tired, exhausted and looking forward to the end of the season. I think in the moment it is a big step to go to 24,” he added.

Steiner said that the boom the sport has enjoyed since

being purchased by American company Liberty Media and then cashing in on a hugely successful Netflix ‘Drive to Survive’ series, needs to be protected.

“How we ramped it up, it is amazing, but we cannot keep going like this, it has just never happened before, so we need to be careful that we are not ramping up and then fall down. We don’t want to go up and up and then hit a cliff and fall down,” he said.

But F1 CEO Stefano Domenicali was in no mood for

talk of easing off on growth.

“We don’t need to slow down. I think in the U.S, we are just scratching the surface of what we can do. We need to focus on future growth.

“Just a couple of years ago, people were saying F1 is on a downward slope but I am very happy that is that is not the case.

“Twenty-four races – it’s a lot. Could be less. Could be more. But that is what we as a business are ready to propose to fans. We need to be proud of what we have done,” he said.

England and New Zealand in Women’s Rugby World Cup final showdown

RUGBY

ENGLAND AND NEW Zealand won gripping semi-finals in Auckland last Saturday (Nov 5) to set up a women’s Rugby World Cup decider between the two top-ranked teams tomorrow (Nov 12).

Top seeds England absorbed a fierce challenge from Canada to prevail 26-19 before the defending champion Black Ferns delighted their Eden Park home crowd with a 25-24 defeat of France.

Both matches were decided in the dying moments, bringing to life a tournament that had largely been dominated by mismatches, including four lopsided quarter-finals last week.

New Zealand’s win was the most pulsating, only sealed when French fly-half Caroline Drouin missed a relatively simple penalty kick at goal with 30 seconds left on the clock.

It hands the Black Ferns a chance to clinch a sixth



England’s defence stops Canada’s Elissa Alarie (centre). Photo: AFP

title in the ninth edition of the tournament.

They will, however, need to topple two-time champions England, who have become the world’s leading team since adopting a professional women’s structure in 2019.

The Red Roses are on a 30-match winning streak, although that was severely challenged by the third-ranked Canucks, who threatened to pull off a major upset.

“It went right down to the wire and I’m so proud of the way the team dug in at the end,” England captain

Sarah Hunter said.

“For the rugby fans out there, that was a great showcase of what the women’s game is all about.”

New Zealand co-captain Ruahei Demant said her players felt like they were riding a wave of national support and hoped Eden Park would be sold out tomorrow.

“I don’t think people realise what a difference it makes out there on the field,” she said.

“People are coming to support women, and women’s rugby, like never before.” *AFP*

Bagnaia wins MotoGP title

MOTO GP

FRANCESCO BAGNAIA CLAIMED the MotoGP crown in the season-ending Valencia Grand Prix last Sunday (Nov 6) to pull off the greatest title turnaround in the championship’s history.

The Ducati rider, who trailed outgoing champion Fabio Quartararo by 91 points mid-season, completed his astonishing comeback with a ninth place behind race winner Alex Rins.

“World champion – it sounds good,” beamed Bagnaia, known as ‘Pecco’.

“That was the hardest race of my life. I was struggling. My aim was to be in the top five, but I started to struggle after a few laps, but the most important thing is we are world champions,” the 25-year-old added.

Among those rushing to congratulate him was his mentor, Italian motorcycling legend Valentino Rossi, the last Italian to win the MotoGP title in 2009.

Also on hand was Giacomo Agostini, who was the last Italian to take the championship on an Italian bike 50 years ago.

Ducati’s last world championship came back in 2007 courtesy of Casey Stoner.

Back in June, Quartararo looked sure to defend his crown after success on his Yamaha in Germany.

His subsequent collapse was painful for his fans as Bagnaia reeled in the Frenchman with the help of four consecutive wins to take a 23-point lead going into the season finale in Spain.

That left the French rider needing to win, and Bagnaia finish out of the top 14, to



Ducati’s Francesco Bagnaia celebrates his title win in Valencia. Photo: AFP

retain his crown, a mission that was to prove impossible.

Quartararo could only muster fourth behind Rins, who was supplying Suzuki with a fairytale result in their MotoGP swansong with the Japanese constructor pulling the plug on their MotoGP involvement.

“We couldn’t sign off any better than this,” said Rins.

“I’m so proud, I’ve learned so much with Suzuki and now I’m going to start a new chapter (with Honda-LCR next season),” he added.

KTM’s South African rider Brad Binder and pole-sitter Jorge Martin, a Spaniard on a Ducati Pramac, completed the podium.

Bagnaia, the Moto2 champion in 2018, sealed his first MotoGP championship 17 points clear of Quartararo on 265 points after a tense deciding leg of the 20-race season. Enea Bastianini, on a Ducati-satellite bike, finished third in the standings.

The Italian’s triumph sparked ecstatic celebrations at the circuit and in the square of his home town Chivasso, which turned Ducati-red with flares and flags. *AFP*

Gunners keep firing to stay top after late Man City win

FOOTBALL

AFP

Arsenal registered a big 1-0 win at Chelsea last Sunday (Nov 6) to dispel doubts over their Premier League title credentials and go top of the table again.

Gabriel Magalhaes bundled in Bukayo Saka's corner for the only goal at Stamford Bridge, but the slender margin of victory was the very least Arsenal deserved.

Chelsea offered barely anything going forward as they slipped to back-to-back Premier League defeats for the first time in two years.

Manchester City had moved to the top after a late 2-1 win against Fulham on Saturday, only for the Gunners to reclaim top spot and extend their lead to two points with their win 24 hours later.

"For such a young team, the maturity, the composure they showed, the resilience and courage to play how we wanted to play was phenomenal to do it against these kind of players," said a proud Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta.



Arsenal's William Saliba celebrates teammate Gabriel Magalhaes' winner at Chelsea. Photo: AFP

City saw off a plucky Fulham side thanks to Erling Haaland, who stepped off the substitute's bench to score a stoppage-time penalty.

It was the Norwegian's 23rd goal in 16 competitive City appearances and came after his side had played for an hour with 10 men after defender Joao Cancelo had been sent off in the first half.

Newcastle United moved up to third-place with an emphatic 4-1 win at Southampton.

Miguel Almiron contin-

ued his stunning form with a seventh goal in as many games to open the scoring in sodden conditions at St. Mary's, before further goals from Chris Wood, Joe Willock and Bruno Guimaraes completed the rout.

Following the defeat Southampton confirmed they had parted ways with manager Ralph Hasenhüttel, thus ending his four-year tenure.

Elsewhere, Mohamed Salah's first-half double secured a first away league win

of the season for Liverpool as they beat Tottenham 2-1.

Jürgen Klopp's side had slipped down to 10th in the table before kick-off after consecutive defeats to Nottingham Forest and Leeds but managed to overcome the hosts and inflict a third defeat in four league games for Antonio Conte's side.

New Aston Villa boss Unai Emery had a debut to remember as his side blew away Manchester United 3-1 thanks to goals from Lucas Digne, Leon Bailey and Jacob Ramsey at Villa Park.

Michael Olise struck the winner for Crystal Palace deep into stoppage time as a 2-1 win at West Ham lifted the Eagles up to 10th and Leeds came from 1-3 down to win a thrilling encounter against Bournemouth 4-3.

Leicester moved out of the relegation zone with a 2-0 win at Everton, bottom-of-the-table Nottingham Forest drew 2-2 with Brentford and Brighton beat Wolves 3-2 at Molineux just hours after the struggling hosts appointed Julen Lopetegui as their new manager.



Yordan Alvarez. Photo: AFP

Astros defeat Phillies to win second World Series title

BASEBALL

YORDAN ALVAREZ smashed a three-run homer as the Houston Astros captured their second World Series in six seasons last Saturday (Nov 5) with a 4-1 victory over the Philadelphia Phillies.

The Cuban slugger's sixth-inning blast off Phillies relief pitcher Jose Alvarado gave Houston the lead for good as the Astros took Major League Baseball's best-of-seven championship final four games to two.

"It was amazing. When I was rounding second base I felt the whole stadium moving," Alvarez said afterwards.

The Astros, in their fourth World Series in six seasons and fifth overall, won their only prior title in 2017, but many MLB fans regard that effort as tainted.

An investigation revealed an electronic sign stealing system by the Astros, who used cameras in 2017 and 2018 to swipe signs from rivals, players and staff banging on drums to signal Houston batters what pitch was coming.

The Astros lost their next two World Series appearances, to Washington in 2019 and Atlanta last year.

But this year's lineup, including five players from the 2017 roster, delivered a heart-warming title run for the manager who helped the Astros move beyond the scandal, 73-year-old Dusty Baker, the oldest manager in World Series history.

It was the first World Series title as a manager for Baker after 25 seasons as an MLB bench boss, although he won a title as a player with the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1981.

AFP

World Cup broadcast in limbo

FOOTBALL

THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING and Telecommunication Commission (NBTC) has said it is waiting for a budget report from the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) about purchasing the rights to broadcast the 2022 FIFA World Cup, leaving the domestic broadcasting of the event in doubt.

Trairat Viriyasirikul, acting secretary-general of the NBTC, said if budget documents had not been given to the NBTC board members by Wednesday (Nov 9), the commission may need to hold an urgent meeting to consider purchasing the broadcasting rights as the event starts on Nov 20.

Mr Trairat said the NBTC is only acting as the provider of the budget for the broadcasting rights. The period of negotiation with FIFA World Cup representatives will be up to the SAT, he said.

SAT governor Kongsak Yodmanee, however, has said that the required budget documents were sent to



Photo: AFP

the NBTC last Thursday (Nov 3).

He also explained that the SAT is continuing to negotiate for a more reasonable price for the World Cup broadcasting rights for Thailand.

An NBTC source earlier told Isra News Agency that during an NBTC board meeting on Oct 28, Sarana Boonbaichaiyapruk, chairman of the board, proposed drawing B1.6 billion from the NBTC's research and development fund to buy the broadcasting rights.

Mr Kongsak said that after gaining the budget approval, SAT and NBTC would need to sign an MoU before purchasing the broad-

casting rights.

He said arrangements would be finished before the first day of the tournament.

Mr Kongsak added that the conditions released by the NBTC would determine how many public channels would be able to broadcast the matches.

Local fans have expressed concern that no broadcasters in Thailand have shown sufficient interest in securing the rights to air the matches as the event nears.

The 2022 World Cup in Qatar will be held from Nov 20 until Dec 18, with some 32 teams contesting a total of 64 matches.

Bangkok Post



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Sport



Thai World Cup TV hopes in doubt > p15

LIONS TAMED



Tour team from Lion City tamed by Phuket cricketers

The British High Commission Cricket Club of Singapore touring team line up at the ACG prior to the start of the three-match series. Photo: Ashan Fonseka

CRICKET

Curt Livermore

The Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) in Thalang welcomed players from the British High Commission Cricket Club of Singapore (BHC) last weekend (Nov 4-6) for a three-match series against a Phuket Cricket Club select XI (PCG XI).

The home side ultimately emerged victorious by a 2-1 margin after securing a series victory over the first two games before the visitors hit back with a convincing win on the final day.

Friday's series opener, a 25-over game, saw BHC captain Tim Underwood win the toss and elect to bat. However,

it was the home side who exhibited fine early form as they claimed 8 wickets for just 58 runs by the 15th over.

Tom Fisher (23*) then produced a handy counter-attack which included a pair of sixes before the PCG XI wrapped up the innings in the 17th over.

Any illusions on the home side's behalf that requiring just 80 runs to win was an easy task were quickly quashed with an excellent bowling display that saw just 11 runs on the board after 5 overs.

A 39-run partnership between Michael Rhys-Thomas (13) and captain Curt Livermore (31*) steadied the ship somewhat over the next 10 overs before the former was removed. This sparked a middle order collapse as a further

3 wickets fell for just 18 runs before Oliver Fitch (9*) hit the winning runs with 2 overs to spare, securing a nervy 4-wicket victory for his side.

Day two saw the PCG XI bat first in another 25-over encounter and establish a much improved start as Manish (16) and Simon Wetherell (32) hit an opening stand of 61 before the latter was bowled in the 9th over.

Another collapse then ensued as a further 4 wickets fell for just 20 runs over the next 8 overs, until Fitch (44*) picked up where he left off the previous day, combining with Abu Bakar Siddique (26*) for an impressive 70-run partnership to post 151-5 within their allotted 25 overs.

In reply, BHC reached 60-2

by the 9th over, with Fisher hitting a brisk 37 before being run out.

As the PCG XI upped the ante the score reached 97-8 by the 18th over and, despite a defiant knock from Freddie Travers (42), the visitors ultimately fell just 13 runs to mean a series defeat.

HOSTILE OPENING

Looking to avoid a whitewash on day three's 20-over contest, BHC summoned an excellent bowling performance to dismiss the home side for just 57 inside 13 overs, with Mayur Deuskar (13) the only batter to reach double figures.

In reply Jagsir Brar picked up 2 wickets for just 2 runs in a hostile opening over before striking again to leave BHC

in serious trouble on 8-4 after 3 overs.

However, solid knocks from Ric Corbett (19) and Hobbs (16) respectively soon killed the fielding side's momentum as the visitors finished on a high with a 3-wicket win.

The post match presentations followed where the PCG XI awarded Adrian Ashman their bowler of the series for returns of 4-12 from 7 overs over the 3 games, while Freddie Travers was selected best batter after a near match-winning 42 from 36 in the second game. Other performances of note included Patrick Eastwood's returns of 4-20 from 8 overs as well as Tim Underwood's 4-51 from 13 overs.

Tom Fisher picked up the

Mamma Mia restaurant man of the series award, kindly presented by owner Seemant Raju, for his combined efforts of 60 runs and 3 wickets over the course of the weekend.

Livermore, Wetherell and Brar were named PCG XI men of the match by BHC for their respective efforts.

Phuket Cricket would like to thank BHC for a memorable visit over the weekend and hope to welcome them back to the ACG in the near future.

The touring season continues this weekend (Nov 12-13) with the Singapore Cricket Club taking on the PCG XI in a two-match series. If you would like to get involved in cricket on the island please visit the ACG or Phuket Cricket Facebook pages.

Podium finish for Phuket athletes at Powerman Malaysia Championship

DUATHLON

TWO PHUKET-BASED TRIATHLETES had cause for celebration after they won medals in their respective age categories at the Powerman Malaysia Championship, held at Dataran Putrajaya, Malaysia between Oct 28-30.

Ricky Ekarat Pantip, who is a head triathlon coach based out of Blue Tree Phuket, competed in the individual short-distance race in the 35-39 age category, which comprised a 5km run, a 30km cycle and another 5km run to the finish line.



Thawatchai (left) and Ricky show off their medals. Photo: The Sport Association of Phuket

Displaying fine form across all three disciplines, Ricky managed to secure the gold medal, the fifth time he has done so at the event.

Following Ricky's triumph,

there was further reason for celebration as Phuket-based athlete Thawatchai Aemaot (aka 'Gift') finished in third-place in the 25-29 age group for the individual short-distance race.

It was the first ever podium finish for Thawatchai, who is trained by coach Ricky at Blue Tree Phuket.

The 17th annual edition of the event, a leg on the Powerman Asia 2022 Championship, took place at Dataran Putrajaya between Oct 28-30 and saw over 4,400 athletes from over 35 countries register to participate.

The Powerman Asia Championship is considered Asia's largest and most prestigious duathlon event, which was awarded the Best Duathlon Race in the 2019 Best Races awards by online triathlon magazine *AsiaTRI*.

Recognised by the International Triathlon Union (ITU), Powerman Malaysia has achieved the prestigious title of the world's largest duathlon, surpassing the London Duathlon.

The event is also a sanctioned Middle Distance Championship in the 10-60-10km category by the

Asian Triathlon Confederation (ASTC).

Open to male and female athletes, age-defined categories include Individual Classic (10-60-10km), Individual Short (5-30-5km), Team Relay Classic (10-60-10km), Team Relay Short (5-30-5km), the newly created Powerteens for 13-17 year olds (2-8-2km) and Powerkids, including for 9-12 year olds (1-4-1km) and 5-8 year olds (0.5-1-0.5km).

It was the first time the event had been held since 2019 due to repeated postponements brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

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