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AT THE READY

DISASTER CHIEF CALLS FOR CONFIDENCE IN TSUNAMI-WARNING SYSTEM

Officials inspect the tsunami evacuation route in Kamala. Photo: Kamala Disaster Monitoring Centre

Eakkapop Thongtub
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A series of underwater earthquakes off the Andaman and Nicobar Islands last week has shaken local disaster officials in conducting a full review of the island's tsunami-warning system and the readiness of local officials to quickly evacuate risk areas in case the need arises.

Two tsunami-evacuation drills will be held on the island next Wednesday (July 20), Prapan Kanprasang, Director of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) Region 18 office, based in Phuket, told *The Phuket News* earlier this week.

One evacuation drill will be held

in Rawai, home to Nai Harn Beach, while the other will be held in Sakhu, south of Phuket International Airport, Mr Prapan said.

At time of press, Mr Prapan said details of the exact locations and times of the evacuation drills had yet to be confirmed.

Mr Prapan urged people to have confidence in officials' ability to warn local residents and tourists at the beaches of any impending tsunami with enough advance time to evacuate risk areas and make it to safety zones.

"We have 19 tsunami-warning towers along the coast in Phuket. In total there are 112 warning towers in coastal areas along the Andaman Coast," he said.

Officers had been dispatched to

test all 19 towers on the island to ensure they are functioning properly. Following an order from the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) in Bangkok last week, the towers are now tested at 8am each day by playing the national anthem.

Any towers with sirens found to be playing the national anthem at a less-than-desired volume will be rectified, Mr Prapan said.

Mr Prapan's call for confidence in the warning system comes as the two tsunami-warning buoys that Thailand has contributed to the Indian Ocean tsunami-warning network remain not functioning.

Station 23461, installed in the Andaman Sea approximately 340km from Phuket, stopped transmitting

data on June 9. The buoy is, or was, positioned halfway between the Thai coast and where the underwater earthquakes continued to rattle southeast of the Nicobar Islands last week.

Station 23401, installed in the Indian Ocean a distance of 965km west of Phuket, was discovered on Oct 22 last year to have slipped its mounting and had stopped transmitting data.

The NDWC is responsible for the maintenance and repair of both buoys, and has repeatedly announced that it will launch a mission to repair or replace the buoys in November, during the usual window for repair and maintenance once every two years.

Mr Prapan highlighted that Thailand's tsunami-warning system relied on the Indian Ocean Tsunami...

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Fears averted over starving show crocs



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Online learning enters a brave, new world



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Thai SEA Games stars awarded big cash prizes



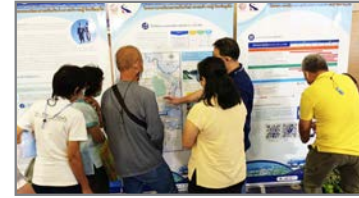
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News



EXAT advances with B30bn expressway > p4

Officials pitch Expo bid to consuls

The Phuket News
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Phuket Governor Narong Wo-onciew has called on embassy representatives and honorary consuls from 13 countries stationed in Phuket for their support in the bid for Phuket to host the World Specialised Expo 2028.

The call came at a meeting held last Friday (July 8), during which the consuls were given a two-hour briefing on the project, to be centred on the site of 141 rai at the northern end of the island.

Among the consuls present were representatives for Australia, Russia, Austria, Norway, France, Luxembourg, Chile and Mexico.

Also present were all three Phuket Vice Governors: Pichet Panapong, Amnuay Phinsuwan and Anupap Rodkwan Yodrabam.

"The main objectives of this meeting are to push for support to host the Specialised Expo 2028 of Phuket, Thailand, with the support of consulates and honorary consuls of various countries," Governor



Photo: PR Phuket

Narong said.

"We are requesting opinions and advice about the proposal to host Specialised Expo 2028 with representatives of TCEB [Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau] and the President of Phuket Tourist

Association [PTA]," he added.

PTA President Bhumikitti Ruktaengam also joined the meeting by video call to explain the bid.

The consuls were also briefed on the bid presented to the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE)

in Paris last month, and the upcoming inspection visit by a delegation of BIE representatives on July 25-29.

Governor Narong explained that the bid is being promoted through government public relations channels, and events including a charity

fun run will be held to help promote awareness of the bid.

Over the past two weeks, Phuket public relations channels have ramped up their public awareness campaign, posting notices and reports many times every day highlighting that the government has entered its bid, and calling on everyone to help support the bid.

"The aim is to highlight the benefits that Phuket and Thai residents will receive from hosting such events, especially in terms of economic recovery, the development of infrastructure and mass transportation in Phuket, which together will improve the quality of life both physically and mentally of the local people and corresponds to the theme of the Phuket bid, 'Future of Life: Living in Harmony, Sharing Prosperity,'" Governor Narong said.

"It is a good opportunity to make Phuket and Thailand better known, and also to promote opportunities for foreign investors to take advantage of the Specialised Expo event area after the event," he added.

Calls for confidence in tsunami-warning system, evacuation plans

Continued from page 1

...Detection Network, which the NDWC in Bangkok monitored closely.

"There are five channels through which official tsunami warnings are issued. One of them is a direct SMS service to inform the Governor's Office," he said.

The others are networks of groups including government officials and members of the public, with some of the groups including amateur radio operators.

The main warning system can issue warnings by cutting across television and radio broadcasts, Mr Prapan added.

The system is set not to activate automatically unless an earthquake of at least 7.8 magnitude is registered. The system can be overridden to issue manually activated warnings, he said.

Local officials have also been dispatched to ensure that tsunami-warning signs and evacuation route signs in their respective areas are in good condition, and that evacuation safety zones are in good, clean and clear

condition, ready for use, he added.

"Please do not panic, brothers and sisters. If the need arises, our system will immediately warn you," Mr Prapan said.

The system will give advance warning of at least 30 minutes up to about 1 hour and 45 minutes, he added.

"Everyone needs to know what to do if something happens, including in which direction you have to flee," Mr Prapan said.

"Please follow the warning signs or follow the map and rehearse evacuating to higher ground. And most importantly, do not take your luggage with you. Please stay away from the beach areas as far as possible," he advised.

Mr Prapan also called on people to not heed any posts online that do not cite official government notices or other substantiated sources. "Don't be fooled by news in the online media that may cause panic with no base and no origin," he said.

TREMORS SLOWING

The number of mild tremors



Officials inspect the tsunami evacuation route in Kamala.
Photo: Kamala Disaster Monitoring Centre

occurring southeast of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has slowed over the past week, according to the non-government Phuket Earthquake Monitoring and Surveillance Center, which also goes by the name 'PhuketSOS'.

The earthquake and tsunami watchdog reported more than 30 mild earthquakes ranging from 4.1 to 5.1 in magnitude in the 24 hours from Monday to Tuesday last week (July 4-5). The underwater earthquakes struck mainly in the area 400-550km northwest of Phuket, with many of the earthquakes occurring at a relatively shallow depth of 10km. Since then the underwater tremors have

slowed to only several a day, with no significant changes in magnitude.

Namom Thoongpoh, an observer who studied Geophysics/Seismology at Uppsala University in Sweden, pointed out on the PhuketSOS Facebook page last Saturday (July 8) that the area is well known for tremors, experiencing 343 tremors since 1970, with 80% of the tremors recorded at 4-5M in strength.

Since last weekend, PhuketSOS also started reporting earthquakes on Sumatra. The watchdog reported a 4.3-magnitude earthquake striking at a depth of 143km on land in northern Sumatra, some 615km southwest of

Phuket, at 4:03pm last Sunday (July 10).

ALERT APP

The Phuket branch of the DDPM-Phuket has called for people to register on a national disaster alert app for mobile phones so they can instantly receive warnings of any impending tsunami.

The app, called "Thai Disaster Alert", is available on Google Play and Apple's App Store.

The app has been in beta testing since Feb 1 this year.

The app functions are available in English, but the alerts and warnings are posted in Thai only. A translation app will translate the alerts and warnings into clear enough English to be understood.

On registering, people are asked to enter whether they are male or female, and their date of birth. They are also asked to select three provinces for which they want to receive instant notifications. Users are also asked to switch on location sharing.

"The operation of the application 'THAI DISASTER ALERT' will notify when the

province that the user has selected has a forecast of a disaster. The system will send a warning message to the user immediately in the form of a notification message on the smartphone screen which users can read a brief summary," the DDPM notice issued explained.

"But if you want to know the details more clearly, you can click to see details of the alarm notification in the various menus of the application.

"The system will keep an alert notification for users to view warning notifications issued in the past along with a menu that shows a map of Thailand for any areas at risk of disaster.

"If the user wants to change the province to receive notifications for, they are able to access those areas at any time.

"In addition, there is also a menu that shows hotline numbers of various agencies to facilitate contact in the event of an emergency or disaster in the area as well," the notice explained.

Concerns over 'starving crocs'

Officials inspect closed tourist venue after allegations posted online

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The owner and operator of a Phuket crocodile tourist attraction that was forced to close during the pandemic has refuted allegations that the crocodiles still on site are neglected to the point that they are starving and eating each other.

The response, supported by officers from the Department of Fisheries who have inspected the venue, Phuket Crocodile World on Chao Fa West Rd in Chalong, follows the allegation being posted online through TikTok, which also alleged that the crocodiles had been abandoned.

Sittiphon Muangsong of the Phuket Fisheries Office, inspecting the venue in person last Friday (July 7), explained that all crocodiles on site must be registered with his office.

The crocodile "farm" when opening some seven years ago had initially registered 32 crocodiles, of which four had died over the years.

The remaining 28 were not suffering in health, Mr



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub



Sittiphon said. "We can see they are not thin," he noted.

The allegation followed the operator posting online an open invitation for members of the public to come and see the crocodiles for free, despite the venue still being closed as a tourist attraction.

People were also invited to bring food for the crocodiles.

"Aunt Kaew", who still serves as the caretaker of the venue explained, "If no one comes to feed the crocodiles, the owner will bring the food himself. But now we think this

is better than the crocodiles staying alone, so we allow people to come and see them for free."

The venue is open from about 8-9am to about 5-6pm each day, but the lights are usually switched off to save money, "Aunt Kaew" added.

"If possible, I want a lot of people to come and see the crocodiles so they will not be lonely," she said.

Sakul Nganwiwatthaworn, owner of Phuket Crocodile World, said he understood why people might think that

the crocodiles had been abandoned, with the electricity at the site switched off, but refused the allegation that the crocodiles were being neglected.

"They are always fed and taken care of, but tourists come to see the state of the place and think of it as abandoned. We actually feed them regularly and regularly change the water," he said.

His caretaker, "Aunt Kaew", is in regular contact with Department of Fisheries officers, he added.

"We talk with the officers once a month, and officers often come and bring food," Mr Sakul explained.

"The crocodiles are not starving," Mr Sakul said.

However, Mr Sakul did offer the crocodiles as available for sale.

"The big ones cost about B10,000 each, and the small ones sell for B1,000 baht each. There are 28 crocodiles now. But if you don't want to buy one, you can save your money and come and see them for free," he added.

Mr Sittiphon of the Phuket Fisheries Office pointed out that he had asked Mr Sakul to improve safety at the venue by posting more signs to warn visitors of the crocodiles.

"If anyone comes to see the crocodiles they must contact the staff first for their own safety, otherwise it may be dangerous for them," he said.

"But if you look at the crocodile pond, they cannot escape. The area is in the right place and is stable and strong. Crocodiles cannot escape from here," he added.

Tourists injured as racing pickup hits taxi

TWO EGYPTIAN TOURISTS being taken to Phuket International Airport escaped serious injury last Sunday (July 10) when a pickup truck driven by a 26-year-old man overtaking another taxi on the Don Chom Thao Rd in Moo 4, Thepkasattri, was unable to move back into his own lane in time to avoid a collision with the taxi the tourists were travelling in.

Maj Col Wongsatorn Dulpareswor of the Thalang Police was called to the scene, some 500 metres from the Thalang Kung Pan Restaurant, at 10am.

Police and rescue workers arrived to find a white Phuket-registered Isuzu D-Max pickup truck half off the road with heavy impact damage to its left side.

The damage had been inflicted by a silver Toyota Altis taxi with heavy damage to its front still resting beside the pickup.

Further down the road was another taxi, a bronze-coloured Toyota Sienna with damage to the driver's door.

The pickup driver involved in the collision, Inyat



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Kendphet, 26, was described to be unconscious and in critical condition.

The two Egyptian tourists – a man and woman, both 26 years old – and their taxi driver, Polwat Chururang, 28, had suffered minor injuries to their foreheads.

Emergency medical staff performed first aid on the injured at the scene and rushed them to Thalang Hospital.

Peeraphon Thawornwee, 49, driver of the bronze-coloured Toyota Sienna taxi, said he was driving

along when three pickup trucks went to overtake him at speed. "They were driving very fast, not less than 100km/h," he said.

The third pickup truck was unable to pass his vehicle in time, and swerved into his driver's door. The pickup was then unable to get out of the path of the coming taxi, leading to the oncoming taxi slamming into the side of the pickup.

Police said they were continuing their investigation into the collision.

Eakkapop Thongtub



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B30bn expressway inches forward

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Surachet Laophulsuk, Governor of the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT), was in Phuket on July 4 to lead the first public feedback hearing on the plans to build the B30 billion Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu Expressway.

Mr Surachet explained that the public hearing was part of the feasibility study being conducted to assess “the suitability of engineering, economic impact, finance and environmental impact of the project”.

Joining Mr Surachet at the meeting, held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel in Phuket Town, was Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong, who presided over the opening of the event.

Also joining Mr Surachet were representatives from four private companies contracted to conduct the feasibility study: MA Consultants Co Ltd, Asian Generative Consultants Co Ltd, PSK Company Consultants Co Ltd and Pre Development Consultants Co Ltd.

The meeting was held specifically for representatives, including residents, from four subdistricts – Thepkasattri, Srisoonthorn, Kathu and Koh Kaew – to learn more about the project, Mr Surachet explained.

The results of the feedback and the preliminary and final designs of the expressway will be submitted to



Photo: PR Phuket

the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) as part of the project’s Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report, he added.

“In addition, EXAT will conduct a study and analyse the suitability of private investment projects as detailed in Article 22 of the Public-Private Partnership Act B.E. Investors (Market Sounding) of the Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu Expressway Project in Phuket Province,” Mr Surachet said.

“If the project proceeds on schedule, construction is expected to begin in December 2024 and the expressway

will be opened for service in December 2027, after a 15-month feasibility study plan,” he said.

Mr Surachet explained that the expressway is part of a two-project strategy that is aiming to connect the Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu Expressway to what he called the Kathu-Patong Expressway, known to most people as the Patong Tunnel project.

Reports of progress in the Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu Expressway over the past year have neglected to mention the cost of the project.

At last report, in March 2020,

construction of the expressway was estimated to cost B30 billion, equating to roughly B1.4bn per kilometre for the 22.4km route – a staggering increase on the purported figures from June 2017, which estimated the project costs at approximately B5.5bn.

When asked for a justification and breakdown on the increased costs, Phuket Chamber of Commerce (PCC) President Thanusak Phungdet confirmed to *The Phuket News* that B12bn is to be allocated for the actual construction costs and the remaining B18bn to be used to acquire the land for the project to be built.

Vachira continues walk-in COVID jabs

VACHIRA PHUKET HOSPITAL in Phuket Town is continuing its walk-in COVID vaccinations freely available to Thais and foreigners.

The vaccination injections are available for people receiving their first, second, third or fourth jab.

The vaccines being provided are Sinovac, AstraZeneca, Pfizer for children 5-11 years old and Pfizer for adults.

The jabs are being provided Monday-Friday, at the Khao Lan area at the hospital from 9am-11am and from 1pm-3pm.

In order to receive a vaccination jab, foreigners need to present only their passport, while Thais need to present only their government ID card.

The jabs being provided for the rest of the month are as follows:

- Monday, July 18: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)
- Tuesday, July 19: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)
- Wednesday, July 20: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)

Image: Vachira Phuket Hospital

- Thursday, July 21: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50), Pfizer (100), Pfizer for kids (50)

- Friday, July 22: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50), Pfizer (60), Pfizer for kids (50)

- Monday, July 25: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)

- Tuesday, July 26: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)

- Wednesday, July 27: Sinovac (50), AstraZeneca (50)

The Phuket News

Residential drug den raided

OFFICERS HAVE ARRESTED three men and seized 500 pills of methamphetamine (ya bah) after a tip-off posted online identified a house in Srisoonthorn that was openly used for engaging in the drug trade, Phuket Provincial Police have revealed.

The arrests followed a post July 4 identifying a house in Moo 4 Srisoonthorn where “drug trade” was obvious, Phuket Provincial Police announced in an unnamed statement issued on July 7.

“Are the police sympathetic or not?” the post said.

The post was brought to the attention of Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong, who ordered officers to investigate, said the statement.

Police raided the house, which was unregistered and without a house address number, on July 5. At the house, officers found three men, but no narcotics, the statement read.

However, two of the men confessed to police that they both used ya bah and crystal meth (ya ice), the statement explained.

Hence, all three were taken to



Maj Gen Sermphan. Photo: The Phuket News / file

Phuket Provincial Police’s drug-testing laboratory, where the three suspects underwent urine tests for drugs.

The two men who confessed both tested positive, while the third man tested negative.

The two men who tested positive were both charged, the statement confirmed. The third man was not.

However, police continued their investigation, which led to the arrest of a man in Tha Chatchai with 500 pills of ya bah, the statement noted.

The statement did not name any of the suspects involved.

Police are expanding their investigation into the drug network with the aim of making more arrests, the statement concluded. *The Phuket News*

TAT launches joint project on Phuket tourism big data

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is leading a special collaborative 'big data' project to help support tourism operators serving Phuket.

The project, titled the 'Tourism Data Intelligence Sandbox', was first announced by TAT Governor Yuthasak Supasorn at the Thailand Tourism Congress 2022 held at the Beyond Resort Kata Beach last month.

The cooperation agreement was signed by five parties at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Wichit on July 5.

Among the signatories were Nithi Siprae, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Deputy Governor for Digital Research and Development, and Tourism Council of Thailand (TCT) President Chamnan Srisawat, who also serves as President of the Thai Federation of Provincial Tourist Associations.

Representing Phuket were Phuket Tourist Association President Bhummikitti Ruktaengam and Vachira Phuket



Photo: PR Phuket

Hospital Director Dr Weerasak Lorthongkham.

"The pilot project builds on the Phuket Sandbox and Phuket Must Win projects and aims to develop big data of the tourism industry with the hope of creating a tourism information infrastructure to help business operators to evolve beyond the COVID-19 era," Mr Nithi said.

"It will be a good starting point for building Tourism Big Data of Thailand as Phuket is strong in both the public and private sectors and has a DEPA team [Digital Economy Promotion Agency] that truly

understands the tourism industry, as seen from the success of Phuket Sandbox project," he added.

Mr Bhummikitti noted, "Phuket has learned the importance of having clear, accurate and quick information in order to manage the situation, especially during the opening of Phuket during the Phuket Sandbox period.

"We have learned that the most important infrastructure in tourism management is having information related to tourism that is up to date so we can use the data to analyse the problem and predict the future

more effectively," he added.

"It is especially important to create an advantage against competition in the tourism industry with other countries. It is imperative to have information both inside and outside the country that can be analysed to assess the situation and forecast demand that is precise, pertinent and meets the needs of rapidly changing customer groups," Mr Bhummikitti said.

"In this regard, the start of the big data development project in tourism in Phuket as pilot project will be an important initiative in Thailand's tourism industry that can be used to expand the results of using the information for policymakers and business operators, as well as create a new cooperation framework for sharing information between agencies for the ability to manage work effectively," he concluded.

Vachira Director Dr Weerasak said the project would help improve the quality of life of local residents and help Phuket to become a quality tourist destination.



Photo: Kamala OrBorTor

Muslims across Phuket celebrate Eid al-Adha

MUSLIMS ACROSS Phuket celebrated Eid al-Adha, or Festival of the Sacrifice on Sunday (July 10). Eid al-Adha, the second and bigger of the two main holidays celebrated in Islam, honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah's command.

The holiday also marks the culmination of the hajj pilgrimage rites at Minā, Saudi Arabia, near Mecca.

In Kamala, observant Muslims joined religious activities at Kamala Mosque, where foreign tourists staying in the Kamala area also joined the festivities, reported the Kamala Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor).

Imam Wirayut Somsa led

the prayer ceremony, with Kamala OrBorTor Chief Jutha Dumlak and local councillors joining the activities.

"Eid al-Adha, also called 'Hari Raya Hajj', is a festive day of the year when Muslims travel to visit their parents, relatives and neighbours to apologise to each other for the past. It is a very happy day for everyone," Mr Jutha said.

"Muslims perform rituals in unison around the world and donate alms to the poor. The sacrifices will be slaughtered, and then the meat will be distributed as alms to the relatives and the poor. The animals used are camels, cows, and goats. It is to practice generosity to fellow human beings," he said.

The Phuket News

Sarasin Bridge jump prevented

A MAN WAS PREVENTED FROM jumping off the Sarasin Bridge last Friday (July 8).

Tha Chatchai Police reported they were informed at 1pm that a man had climbed the rail along the side of the bridge and was standing on the outside ledge, threatening to jump into the fast-moving water below.

Maj Somkiat Wan-Te of the Tha Chatchai Police and fellow officers responded to the call and soon arrived at the scene.

Also joining the ranks of those present to help the man were traffic police, local officials and volunteers from the Kusoldham Foundation, Thai Chatchai Police reported.

The man, later reported as "Mr Sakanan" (family name withheld), was eventually convinced to climb safely back onto the bridge, where he was taken into care.

Mr Sakanan was taken to Tha Chatchai Police Station, where at last report he waited for family members to come and collect him.

Police gave no indication what had motivated Mr Sakanan to threaten to jump from the bridge, which has become an icon for people finding themselves in tragic circumstances.

A 37-year-old woman from Wichit was rescued from the Chong Pak Phra canal separating Phuket from the mainland after she jumped from the Thao Thepkasattri Bridge leading onto the island in an apparent suicide bid on Feb 23.

"Now, she is in a better state of mind as she has since been in contact with her parents," police said after her rescue.

The woman's jump from that bridge



Photo: Tha Chatchai Police

came just two days after the 49th anniversary of Somsak Wanawornsukrak and Kanjana Sae- Ngho together ending their lives by jumping off the Sarasin Bridge after their families had forbidden them from seeing each other.

The tale of the star-crossed lovers has become modern Thai folklore, with the Sarasin Bridge today a popular site for Thai tourists to visit during trips to Phuket.

Phuket authorities have set up a 24-hour hotline to help people who have been impacted and are struggling due to fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hotline – Tel: 1300 – provides advice and coordinated assistance from a range of government departments and support agencies to those that have been affected in various ways by the pandemic, be it emotionally, mentally, financially or otherwise.

If you or anyone you know is in need of emotional support and counselling, please contact the Samaritans of Thailand at their 24-hour hotline 02-113-6789 (English & Thai) or the Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai). The Phuket News



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Throughout the last 20 years, accounting, tax, and business advisory firm HLB Phuket have assisted the business community throughout the region. The firm believes that now is the time to take the next step. HLB Phuket, now as BDO Phuket, is set to seize the opportunity and expand its services to help businesses in Phuket rise from the pandemic.

Uwe Heitmann, Managing Director of BDO in Phuket said, "I am delighted to be joining the BDO network, and to be able to expand our service offerings and cement our position as the leading professional service provider in Phuket."

The expectations and requirements of Phuket business owners when it comes to accounting services and business advisory has changed significantly over the



last few years, especially after the pandemic. In the past, most clients just required simple outsourcing services, but now clients require more advisory services, qualified tax advice, and assistance in mergers and acquisitions.

By joining the BDO network the firm will get greater access to specialist advisors particularly in tax advisory and transaction services including business restructuring to enhance the service offerings to their clients and the broader Phuket business community.

BDO Phuket's enhanced services will focus on tax advisory, consulting, and corporate finance services including restructuring. This will complement existing core offerings such as outsourced accounting including bookkeeping, tax compliance, payroll and CFO services.

Matthew Cutt, International Liaison Partner for BDO in Thailand said, "We recognize the opportunities in Phuket as the leading tourist destination in Thailand and the need to be able to offer local-

ized services which will be a key differentiator from our competitors. I am excited to be working closely with Uwe and his team to be able to leverage BDO's global reach into the local market."

As BDO Phuket, the firm has access to the combined expertise of BDO's Bangkok office and the worldwide network of BDO while at the same time familiar with the special requirements of the local business community through the 20 years of service in Phuket.

"We welcome Uwe and his team

into the BDO Family, as we continue to strive to make a difference to both our people and our clients," says Noel Ashpole, Managing Partner of BDO in Thailand.

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Hoteliers slam proposal for dual pricing

HOTELIERS HAVE EXPRESSED concerns about the government's plan to set dual pricing for foreign tourists and locals, saying the move is "impractical" and demanding the administration roll out effective promotions to spur tourism sentiment in an effort to increase room rates.

Government spokesperson Traisuree Taisaranakul on July 6 said hoteliers will be asked to implement a dual-tariff structure under which foreign tourists will be charged pre-pandemic prices, while discounted rates are maintained for locals.

The idea of dual pricing is impractical as room rates shift dynamically based on market conditions, said Marisa Sukosol Nunbhakdi, president of the Thai Hotels Association. Hotels in each tier also use different strategies to set prices, she said.

If demand increases to support hotel occupancy, then the rates will automatically increase, said Ms Marisa.

"Every hotelier would like to operate with higher and fair rates to gain a larger margin, but it is difficult to do so because of heated competition and oversupply. Operators have to use pricing strategy to gain cash flow," she added.

In addition to a tourism plan for the international market, the government can jointly conduct domestic campaigns with the association to offer special prices for Thais and increase domestic trips, she said.

Suksit Suvunditkul, President of the Thai Hotels Association's southern chapter, said it is common for hotels to offer discounted rates for Thai residents and normal rates for



Foreign passengers await instructions from hotel workers inside the arrival hall at Suvarnabhumi airport. Photo: Varuth Hirunyatheb / Bangkok Post

foreign visitors, but hoteliers cannot raise the prices to levels tallied in 2019 because demand is too weak.

The current room rates in Phuket are still 30-40% lower than rates in 2019 and a full recovery is not expected in the upcoming high season, he said.

Half of the hotels on the island remain closed, while the volume of tourists has rebounded to only 30% of the pre-COVID level, said Mr Suksit.

He said the government should urge hotel operators to focus on the domestic market as an increase in room rates could drive locals to travel overseas instead.

The "We Travel Together" hotel subsidy scheme needs to continue until the end of the year to maintain domestic tourism momentum, said Mr Suksit.

Responding to the dual pricing proposal, Charintip Tiayaphorn, President of the Tourism Council of Krabi, said this sensitive issue could create a negative tourism image because everyone needs to be treated equally and clear communication is essential. *Bangkok Post*

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Government boosts ties with both US and China

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

Thailand and the United States have agreed to strengthen cooperation and advance their partnership as both nations prepare to mark the 190th anniversary of their ties next year.

Trade and investment, climate change, clean energy, human trafficking and regional support and cooperation were among the top items discussed during a meeting between Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken last Sunday (July 10).

Blinken and Foreign Affairs Minister Don Pramudwinai signed two agreements to strengthen ties: the Thailand-United States Communique on Strategic Alliance and Partnership and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Promoting Supply Chain Resilience.

Blinken told the prime minister that the joint communique reaffirms the Thai-US alliance and he believes it will lay the foundations of relations



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (left) meets with Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha at Government House last Sunday (July 10). Photo: Government House

for the next 190 years.

He also stressed that Washington attaches great importance to tightening Thai relations and praised Prayut for Thailand's role in hosting Apec meetings.

Both countries hope benefits from the signing of the supply chain MoU will come to fruit soon especially in terms of expanded investments and those supporting the government's Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) economic model.

On human trafficking, the Thai government reaffirmed its commitment to deal with the issue and noted that it has

made it a national agenda item to curb the practice, while the US expressed admiration for the country's efforts in stamping out human trafficking.

The meeting came only days after Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi paid a two-day visit to Thailand, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs viewed as an opportunity to promote bilateral relations and scale up investment in the country.

Foreign Minister Don and Wang discussed a number of strategic issues including further connecting China to Thailand's Eastern Economic

Corridor (EEC) via Laos and China's Yunnan province.

This would allow Thailand to transport goods to Europe through China's International Land Sea Trade Corridor to promote trade and logistic connections to link China's Chongqing in the West to Singapore.

It was also confirmed that China has allowed Thai airlines to resume operations via three flights a week to China together with permission for Thai students to return to study in the country.

So far, 135 Thai students are in the process of returning to China and hopefully more will follow suit.

Don also urged Wang for cooperation in suppressing call centre scam gangs – which have caused widespread issues among people living in Thailand – by signing an MoU on cyber security.

There was also a discussion about safety standards to ensure exported fruit are not contaminated with COVID-19 as well as to improve service at Mohan border checkpoint in Yunnan, China.

Seven nations removed from COVID-19 watchlist

BANGKOK

THE MINISTRY OF Public Health has revoked its previous declaration of seven countries as COVID-19 danger zones, citing an improvement in the pandemic situation and the global vaccination coverage against coronavirus.

The decision to remove Italy, Iran, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Indonesia from the list of dangerous epidemic areas was reached at a meeting of the national committee on disease control held last Friday (July 8).

Signed by Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, the announcement was published in the Royal Gazette and came into effect last Saturday (July 9).

With the Omicron variant appearing to be far less virulent than its predecessors, from July 1 Thailand has eased most of its remaining COVID-19 restrictions.

Only a small number of imported infections have been detected among tens



Malaysian tourists at Thai customs in Sungai Kolok. Photo: AFP

of thousands of arrivals per day, said Dr Kiattiphum Wongrajit, permanent secretary for public health.

The seven countries' removal from the list was one of two key decisions made by the committee on Friday, he said.

The other was the declaration of monkeypox as Thailand's 56th communicable disease. However, no case of the disease has been detected in Thailand so far, he said.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 6,000 cases of monkeypox worldwide have been recorded across 58 countries.

Bangkok Post

Security in Thailand tightened after Abe's assassination

BANGKOK

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE tightening their security following the assassination of former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe by a disgruntled man at a political rally in the Nara prefecture last Friday (July 8).

The murder of Japan's best-known politician and longest-serving premier rattled the country and sent shockwaves around the world, particularly given the nation's low levels of violent crime and strict gun laws.

Abe, 67, died at a hospital in Kashiwara city, Nara, where he was receiving medical treatment after being shot twice by the attacker who used a handmade weapon.

Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, who is reportedly still using a bulletproof Benz S600 Guard sedan worth B19.5 million as his vehicle, was "very shocked" at Abe's death.

According to a source at a Thai security agency, agents are beefing up safety measures for the country's leaders, such as Gen Prayut and Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan, to prevent such an incident from happening.

National security is also expected to be intensified to anticipate incidents aimed at disrupting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in November.

Security protocols were beefed up to ensure safety during Sunday's meeting



Prayut Chan-o-cha and Shinzo Abe in 2015. Photo: AFP

between visiting United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Gen Prayut.

The premier's plans to survey the provinces next month will be halted as agents review safety measures, the security agency source said.

Meanwhile, Pol Gen Damrongsak Kitpipras, deputy chief of the national police, said safety protocols will be tightened to ensure the safety of the country's leaders.

The move can boost the confidence of VIP guests from foreign countries, he said, adding it will be put into action following an announcement.

"We must learn from previous lessons to ensure preparedness in handling uncertainty," he said.

Asked if the police have detected suspicious movements among foreign visitors, Pol Gen Damrongsak said they haven't.

For now, the priority is ensuring that this year's Apec summit is held smoothly, with tight security placed around invitees, he said. Bangkok Post

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Time to get Happy Jack

Amy Bensema
bensema.amy@gmail.com

An al fresco gastropub with a laid-back atmosphere, Happy Jack Rawai is popular for its selection of high quality grilled meats, homemade pastas, Belgian specialities and stacked burgers. With the tagline “Nice to meat you”, the restaurant is sure to please the palates of carnivores and foodies alike.

Dining at Happy Jack Rawai is a pleasant surprise. The day my dining partner and I popped in for lunch, we

were greeted by the kind owner backed by an arsenal of lovely, attentive staff. We chose a table, browsed the menu and dug right in! Our lunch consisted of Duck Liver Pate with fig compote, Pasta Bolognese with fresh scallops, and a massive Aussie Ribeye.

The Duck Liver Pate had an exceptional light and creamy flavour and it paired perfectly with fresh pieces of bread and the fig compote. The portion size of the starter is large enough to share with a few friends. Happy Jack Rawai make their own pasta in-house, and the noodles are divine. Our Pasta Bolognese with fresh scallops featured a

hearty, rich sauce which blended nicely with the sweetness of the scallops. The Aussie Ribeye was grilled to perfection. Served with grilled vegetables, the ribeye was salted at the table and melt-in-your-mouth tender. In all honesty, it was one of the best steaks I've ever eaten.

This was the first time I'd ever dined at Happy Jack Rawai, but it definitely won't be my last. The gastropub's menu also offers soups, salads, Thai food and desserts. I'm going to try the Pulled Pork Burger and the Chicken Stroganoff next time.

For those who enjoy an afternoon tippie, a complimentary bruschetta is served daily when ordering a drink between 4pm-7pm.

Located on the way to Nai Harn Beach, Happy Jack Rawai is open daily from 1:30pm until late. There's also a cigar shop and smoking lounge on the premises. Convenient motorbike parking is located in front of the restaurant with car parking available on the street. Reservations are not required; however if you plan on dining with a large group, they are recommended.

Opening times: Daily 1.30pm-Midnight
Reservation: Tel: 092-9656207

This article was first featured in the comprehensive Phuket dining guide 'Where to Eat in Phuket'.

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Brave New World?

ON CAMPUS

Krittat Phaisamran

Progress. Growth. Advancement. The three cornerstones of the modern economy. This is the land of Elon Musk, where a company's "judgement day" is decided on a tweet. Bitcoins, NFTs and the Metaverse; everything from money to how we interact are being revolutionised. Even education cannot escape these economic demands.

Meet online learning. Learn from anywhere just like you would in a classroom; live and interactive lessons are conducted by teachers in America to students in Fiji – its versatility is unparalleled. It's flexible and allows students to learn at their own pace, giving them the independence they so desperately lacked. It's a life-saver, providing a sanctuary for education to continue amidst a global pandemic, saving countless lives and ensuring the future. What's not to like? We are truly living in mankind's golden era.

But is it really like that?

Online learning comes with a slew of problems, brushed away by media hysteria and tangential reporting, all in the name of viewership figures. Online learning amplifies our innate and instinctive six of the seven deadly sins. Let me explain.

Sloth and gluttony are fairly obvious and literal. Laziness and complacency are reflected in the lack of effort that the students invest, while gluttony is shown in increased obesity rates. As students are left unmonitored, they are also left to make their own injudicious nutritional decisions – resorting to their



Online learning is opening new frontiers for students and teachers alike, but how we use it effectively is ultimately up to us. Photo: Unsplash / Compare Fibre

favourite "comfort foods" with depressing regularity.

The remaining four sins require a touch of creativity and a modicum of inference. Our inner wrath is unleashed as a result of our sedentary lifestyle; in doing nothing, our diminished self-worth projects itself in nihilistic misanthropy. I, for one, circumvented this by engaging in physical activities to stave off the darkness. Pride, a word with a multiplicity of – sometimes conflicting – connotations. In this context however, it is a negative, used to convey the fragile, superficial image of the youths. It takes just one innocuous third party comment to topple the house of cards. And what does this lead to? Silence and disengagement.

As the mics and cameras are turned off, secrecy, duplicity and ultimately cheating itself is made easy. Thus, we inevitably encounter both envy and lust, our two final guests to the table. Humans are, by nature,

competitive and students are no different – they lust to outdo each other. We look at our peers with envy while they, with devious jubilation, celebrate their near-perfect scores. This lust is only exacerbated by the presence of the seemingly-benign "study" sites, which are habitually used by many students – not to supplement learning, but to replace it. It's an open secret, the students know it and the teachers as well.

With online learning, teachers lack the authority and power to assert themselves, implement their rules, and claim dominance. A mere threat of sending a hastily-worded email to the parents is just not enough to keep the students in line.

The purpose of this article is neither to criticise the hardworking and punctilious teachers and students, whom I have the utmost respect for, nor to commend or uphold the centuries-old, highly-centralised and monopolistic educational system that is in critical need of a reform. My point is, when adopting new technologies, we must utilise our critical thinking skills to discern progress from the "Emperor's new clothes."

We are living in a Brave New World, where everything is rapidly changing. Technology might be ready, but are we?

NOTE: 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.

This article was featured in 'The Phuket Collegiate Magazine', the university magazine published by Milla Budiarto at PSU Phuket. For more information, visit: <https://www.phuket.psu.ac.th/en/magazine> or email: magazine@phuket.psu.ac.th.



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Answers below, centre

Medium

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

Across	Nehemiah	28. Put into service
1. Kingdom ruled by Herod	66. Le ____, city in Switzerland	again
6. Special disposition	67. Sticky sweetener: Var.	30. Ancient Celtic priest
10. Magazine for pool and spa pros	68. 2002 Robbie Williams single	31. Doodad
14. Reversed	69. Earth barrier	32. Old weapons
15. Tissue additive	70. Puff ____, old Combs nickname	34. Ozone depleter: Abbr.
16. Indigenous Brazilians		35. Skimmer, e.g.
17. Coveted response		36. Wife of Saturn
20. Transformers, e.g.	Down	39. Hops heater
21. Salon creation	1. Merely	40. Shavers
22. Failed to act	2. "Law ___ oneself"	41. Turkey part
23. 10-year-old, for one	3. Make-or-break time	46. Volatile liquid
26. Match	4. Brainiac	47. Foot pads
29. Tense	5. Combine	50. Bud Grace comic strip
33. It flows into the North Sea	6. Pirogue	51. Computer programmer
34. Chinese dynasty	7. Ice cream thickener	52. Mediocre
37. Torn comic?	8. Bath sponge	53. International language
38. Warm response	9. Bulgarian cash	54. One who takes orders
42. Long-eared beast	10. Habiliments	55. Sludge
43. Makes a scene?	11. Mouthful of tobacco	56. Oliver's request
44. Japanese cartoon art	12. ___ reflection	59. Unlikely candidate for prom king
45. Cleans, in a way	13. Isn't wrong?	60. "Phooey!"
48. Carpentry grooves	18. Italian ___	61. Make out
49. Religious instructor	19. Yemeni city	63. Priestly garb
54. Member of the Donner party?	24. Proceed	64. Leary dropped it
57. Cross	25. Scale	
58. Enough, for some	26. Capital of Pas-de-Calais	
62. Spirited responses	27. Hamlet's father, e.g.	
65. Book before		

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Phuket; 2) The centre of the Earth; 3) Pandas; 4) Fame; One Warhol = 15 minutes of fame; 5) 70 years or more.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Source: *Uberfacts*

ISLAND VIEW

Surin Beach. Photo by Istvan Gal

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

Sirimavo Bandaranaike is elected Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, becoming the world's first female head of government. *Source: Wikipedia*

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THU

21 JUL



Phuket International Women's Club

Please come and join our monthly lunch at Carpe Diem Beach Club, Bang Tao. Date: Thursday 21st July 11.30am for registration, 12pm for lunch. Cost is 900bht for members and 1,200bht for guests. All welcome but reservations are a must. Please contact Maggy Wigman at robmaggy@yahoo.com Maggy Wigman, robmaggy@yahoo.com

SUN

31 JUL



10th Anniversary of Phuket Drum Circle

The Phuket Drum Circle celebrates 10 years of age! It's about drumming and dancing on Sundays in Naiharn beach, always a free event. Join us on this unique occasion as we celebrate with Bubbles! After all, the Phuket Drum Circle has made history in Thailand and Asia as the only public drum circle with a 12-month calendar and a Facebook page. Marco Monti, marcomonti@yahoo.com

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5 AUG



Grow Boating Evening

We look forward to seeing you at the next Grow Boating Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar at the Phuket Boat Lagoon from 5pm on Friday the 5th of August. We are delighted to announce that our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Beef Bank. Newly opened in Phuket Boat Lagoon next to the Boardwalk Bistro they provide a delivery service in Phuket of authentic Japanese Sukiyaki and Shabu-Shabu using Japanese Wagyu beef. There will be a delicious finger food buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro for all attendees. Beef Bank will also have a special price promotion on their delicious beef and if you are still hungry then there will be burgers for just 100 baht. As always, all 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. A special thanks to our Media Partners The Phuket News, Live 89.5 Radio and Phuket News TV

THU

11 AUG



Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners hosted by AustCham

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 BDO Phuket, who provide outsourced accounting, outsourced admin, outsourced tax accounting, financial advice, and outsourced CFO services for businesses in Phuket. In conjunction with its fellow office in Bangkok the company also has access to Thai SEC registered auditors, leading tax advisors and advisory professionals, BDO Phuket serves clients from a wide range of industries, including but not limited to hospitality businesses, property developers, and boating & yachting. 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members.

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WINDOW

ON PHUKET

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Platini (left) and Blatter. Photo: AFP

Former world football bigwigs cleared of fraud

FOOTBALL

SEPP BLATTER AND Michel Platini, once the chiefs of world and European football, were acquitted last Friday (July 8) over a suspected fraudulent payment that shook the sport and torpedoed their time at the top.

Switzerland's Federal Criminal Court rejected the prosecution's request for a suspended prison sentence of a year and eight months, following a mammoth investigation that began in 2015 and lasted six years.

Former FIFA president Blatter, 86, and Platini, 67, were tried over a payment of 2 million Swiss francs (B73.4mn) in 2011 to Platini, who was then in charge of European football's governing body UEFA.

The former French football great "submitted to FIFA in 2011 an allegedly fictitious invoice for a (alleged) debt still existing for his activity as an adviser for FIFA in the years 1998 to 2002", according to the court.

Blatter insisted before the court that the pair had struck an oral "gentlemen's agreement", with some of Platini's remuneration to be paid at a later date when FIFA's fragile finances would allow it.

Both were accused of fraud and forgery of a document. Blatter was accused of misappropriation and criminal mismanagement, while Platini was accused of participating in those offences.

Blatter and Platini maintained their innocence throughout their trial, which ran June 8-22.

AFP

Leclerc ends drought with Austrian Grand Prix victory

FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato
michael@boxofneutrals.com

Charles Leclerc won his first race in more than three months by defeating Max Verstappen in a fraught finale to the Austrian Grand Prix on Sunday (July 10).

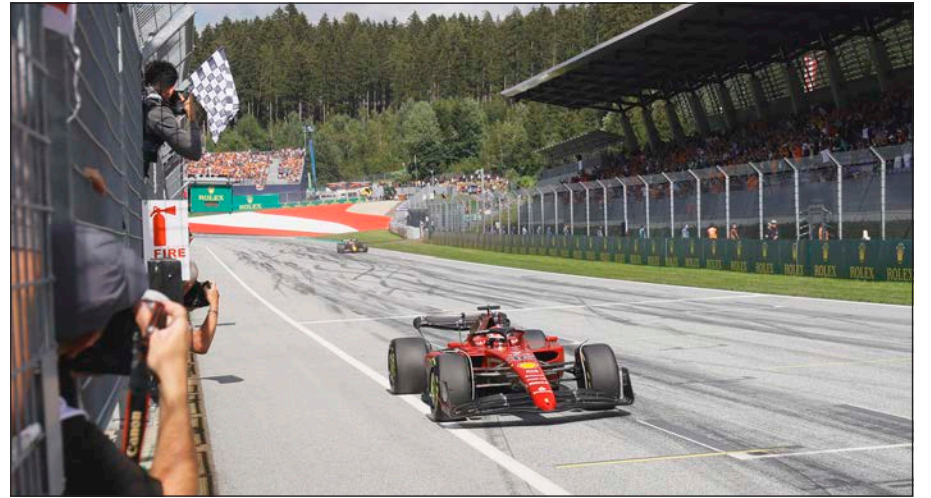
Leclerc was on track for a dominant victory after a late pit stop earned him a massive tyre advantage over Verstappen, and on lap 53 he swept into the lead and began building an advantage.

He was set to be followed by teammate Carlos Sainz to form what should have been a commanding Ferrari one-two, but on lap 57 of 71 the Spaniard's engine spectacularly exploded just as he launched a move on Verstappen to assume second place.

Sainz rolled into the uphill run-off zone at turn 4, but flames engulfed the back of the car before he could park it safely, and the SF-75 started rolling down the hill as he tried to jump from the cockpit.

Fortunately marshals were able to chock the wreckage and extinguish the fire in quick time, and Sainz was able to extricate himself unharmed.

A virtual safety car was called, and both Leclerc and Verstappen pitted for medium tyres for what became an 11-lap dash to the finish once the race resumed,



Leclerc crosses the finish line to win the Austrian Grand Prix. Photo: AFP

and without the need to preserve the rubber, the Red Bull Racing machine was able to start eating into the Ferrari's lead.

Making matters more difficult was a sticky throttle pedal in Leclerc's car, which was leaving his throttle open as wide as 20% when he came off the pedal, compromising his downshifts and curtailing his pace.

Despite some tense conversations with his engineer, the Monegasque was able to manage the situation to preserve a 1.5-second advantage at the flag and secure a badly needed victory.

"I definitely needed that one," he said. "The last five races have been incredibly difficult. To finally show we've got the pace in the car and we can do it is incredible."

Leclerc's points deficit has shrunk

to 38 points, down from 43, thanks to Verstappen scoring a bonus point for fastest lap in the final pursuit.

The Dutchman had started from pole and held the lead on the first lap, but Red Bull Racing switched him to a two-stop strategy early, foreseeing the high tyre wear that ultimately cost him victory.

Ferrari initially tried to stick with a single stop, but such was its advantage regardless of strategy that it was able to switch Leclerc and Sainz to a two-stop late and still have the pace to win comfortably.

With Sainz retired from the race, Lewis Hamilton finished in third place for Mercedes, up from eighth on the grid thanks to a long opening stint on medium tyres.

Djokovic wins seventh Wimbledon title

TENNIS

NOVAK DJOKOVIC WON a seventh Wimbledon title and 21st Grand Slam on Sunday (July 10) with a four-set triumph over Australia's Nick Kyrgios.

Top seed Djokovic won 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) to equal Pete Sampras's mark of seven titles at the All England Club and move within one of the men's record of eight held by Roger Federer.

The 35-year-old Serb is now one Slam ahead of Federer in the all-time race and just one behind Rafael Nadal's record of 22 majors.

"I'm lost for words for what this tournament and this trophy means to me," said Djokovic. "It always has been and will be the most special one in my heart."

Djokovic had endured a difficult year at the Slams.

His deportation from Australia over his coronavirus vaccination status was followed by a quarter-final loss to Nadal at the French Open.

His refusal to get vaccinated will bar him from



Djokovic celebrates with the trophy. Photo: AFP

flying to the United States next month for the US Open as things stand.

Djokovic could also miss the 2023 Australian Open as a consequence of having his visa cancelled in January.

In the women's singles final on Saturday, Russian-born Elena Rybakina powered back from a set down against Ons Jabeur to win the title, denying the Tunisian world number two the chance to make African tennis history.

Jabeur raced out of the blocks but the 17th seed regrouped and dropped just four more games after the first set on the way to a 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 victory.

Russian and Belarusian players were banned from Wimbledon this year following the invasion of Ukraine but Moscow-born Rybakina was able to play as she had switched her allegiance to Kazakhstan in 2018.

The 23-year-old, who had never previously progressed beyond the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam, said she had been "super nervous" before and during the match on a sun-baked Centre Court.

"I did not expect to be in the second week of a Grand Slam at Wimbledon," she said. "To be a winner is just amazing. I don't have the words to say how happy I am." AFP



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Thai SEA Games athletes receive B207mn prize money

SEA GAMES

The Phuket News
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A ceremony to recognise and celebrate Thailand's athletes who competed at the recent Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) was held last Wednesday (July 6) at Government House in Bangkok.

The ceremony, overseen by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Tourism and Sports Chote Trachu, saw a total of B207 million in prize money distributed to the athletes and their respective sports associations.

As per the National Sports Development Fund's SEA Games bonus scheme, a gold medal athlete receives B300,000, a silver medalist receives B150,000 and a bronze medalist B75,000.

With 11 nations competing at the 31st edition of the event held between May 12-23, which had been delayed a year due to COVID-19, Thailand finished in second place overall in the medal table where a total of



The Athletics Association of Thailand receive their prize money award of B18,900,000. Photo: Ministry of Tourism and Sports / Facebook

871 Thai athletes won 92 gold medals, 102 silver medals and 138 bronze medals. A total of 39 national sports associations received prize money at the ceremony as a result.

Among the leading prize winners was the Athletics Association of Thailand, who won 12 gold medals, 11 silver and 8 bronze and was awarded a total of B18,900,000.

The Badminton Association, who won 4 gold medals and 2 silver in Hanoi, was awarded B9,975,000, while the Thailand Takraw Association won 6 gold medals and was

awarded B19,980,000.

The Volleyball Association, winners of 2 gold medals and 1 silver in Hanoi, was awarded B8,580,000, the Taekwondo Sports Association received a total of B3,937,500 for its 12-medal haul while the Amateur Muay Thai Association was awarded B2,812,500 for winning 3 gold, 4 silver and 4 bronze.

Despite criticism as to whether it actually qualifies as a sport, the E-Sports Association of Thailand, which won 2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals, was awarded

B7,620,000.

The largest prize of B21,840,000 went to the Football Association of Thailand who won 2 silver medals as the men's and women's teams reached the finals in Hanoi only to both lose to the hosts Vietnam. The prize money was greater given the size of the respective squads in comparison to other sports.

Prayut thanked all of the athletes, coaches and associations for their commitment and performances during the event which, he said, brought great pride and happiness to the nation. "You are our pride," the prime minister said.

Also present at the ceremony were Deputy Prime Minister, Prawit Wongsuwan; Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Sports, Khampol Ouitayakul; Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Daranee Likhitworasak; Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Aran Boonchai; Director General of Physical Education, Santi Pawai and Sports Authority of Thailand Governor, Kongsak Yodmanee.



Photo: Bangkok Post

ONE Championship to host Muay Thai qualifiers

MMA

To ONE Thailand tournaments are as follows:

Women's atomweight quarter-finals: Pancake Ki-atthongyot v Kamlaipetch Por Phloenchit; Nongam Fairtex v Lommanee The Legend Arena; Celest Phuket Singha MuayThai (Australia) v Phetsinin Sor Phuangthong; and Thai Ngan Le (USA) v Duangdaonoi Looksaikongdin.

Men's flyweight quarter-finals: Starboy Petchkietphet v PhetSimok PK Saenchai; SonRak Sit PorJorWor (Myanmar) v Tiw Fairtex; Dedduanglek Tedet99 v Tapaonthong Singha Mawynn; Thai Sor Jor Piek Uthai v Moradokpetch Petchyindee.

Men's featherweight quarter-finals: Talaythong Sor Thanaphet v Yodphupha Tor Yotha; Kwangtung Realfighter v YodIQ PK Saenchai; Avatar Tor Morsi v Wanchalerm Nu-anthong Snooker; Wong Fei Hong (China) v Kannorasingh DNA Thailand. Bangkok Post

ONE CHAMPIONSHIP and Fairtex Fight Promotion have announced a long-term partnership to host three Muay Thai tournaments beginning on Aug 6.

Twenty-four male and female Muay Thai fighters in three weight classes will compete in the Fairtex Fight Road To ONE Thailand tournaments for a spot on ONE Championship's roster.

The winner of each division will also receive a ONE Championship contract worth US\$100,000 (B3.6 million), organisers said at a press conference last week.

The Fairtex Fight Road To ONE Thailand will broadcast from the iconic Lumpinee Stadium in Bangkok and air live on Channel 7HD with support of Tero Entertainment.

The quarter-finals for each of the three Fairtex Fight Road

Thai GP organisers expect 'great event'

MOTO GP

THE 2022 THAILAND Grand Prix motorcycling event will be another success, organisers said last Friday (July 8).

The third edition of the tournament will take place again at Chang International Circuit in Buri Ram province from Sept 30 to Oct 2.

It will be held under the theme "Thailand to the World" as organisers hope it will help promote the country.

Napintorn Srisunpang, vice minister for tourism and sports, told Friday's press conference that the Thailand Grand Prix will help the country earn income from a large number of tourists.

"It will be a great event," he said. "It will show to the world that Thais can organise a big event."

The first two Thailand Grand Prix editions were organised in 2018 and 2019. The event was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also at the press conference were Sports Authority



Photo: Ministry of Tourism and Sport Facebook

of Thailand Governor Kongsak Yodmanee, sponsors and Thai Moto2 rider Somkiat Chantira.

Organisers claimed Grand Stand tickets, priced at B4,000 each, were sold out in three minutes.

Honda's Marc Marquez of Spain is the only racer to have won the Thailand MotoGP.

The MotoGP season is taking a break and will resume at Silverstone next month.

Yamaha's Fabio Quartararo leads the championship

standings with 172 points, ahead of Aprilia's Aleix Espargaro who have 151 points.

Meanwhile, Idemitsu Honda Team Asia rider Somkiat will lead the Thai challenge in Moto2 in his home race.

The 23-year-old is the first Thai to win a race in the motorcycle world championships with his success in Indonesia earlier this year.

Tickets for the Thai MotoGP are available at 7-Eleven shops or www.allticket.com

Bangkok Post

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Sport



Wimbledon delight for Novak > p14

SIX APPEAL



Blue Tree debuts cricket sixes competition with a twist

Aqua Gym receiving their winners trophy. Photo: Ashan Fonseka

CRICKET

Neil Quail

A carnival atmosphere permeated the inaugural Blue Tree cricket sixes competition held on Sunday (July 10), with eight teams taking to the 'Blue Tree Oval', vying to become the tournament's first champions.

With a view to make the game more accessible to a larger audience and to encourage a greater degree of participation, tournament organiser Ashan Fonseka, a former professional from

Sri Lanka and Blue Tree lifeguard, batted up the idea of using a heavy tennis ball rather than the usual hard, leather-bound ball typically associated with the game.

Each game consisted of two 5-over innings with wide balls penalised with 4 runs to the batting side, but no extra ball. Wide balls were rebowled on the last ball of the 5th and final over of each innings and were added to the 4-run penalty. There was no LBW.

By 8:30am, the first of the round-robin games were underway, with Aqua Gym, Club Med, Patong Penguins, BlueTree, Panthers Unique

CC, and Island Boys all jockeying for position within their respective groups.

As the fixtures progressed, the two tournament favourites – Aqua Gym and Penguins – began to assert dominance, eventually with both teams making the semi-final berths, before Club Med and Island Boys joined them, ending the Panthers and BlueTree's efforts for the day.

The semi-finals eventually saw Aqua Gym and Patong Penguins emerge victorious to book their spots in the final.

Conditions throughout the day remained ideal for cricket, despite heavy rains

expected. Aqua Gym opened the final game's proceedings by sending Rishi and Manish Sadaranghani into open the batting for Aqua Gym.

Rishi was able to drive through the Penguin bowling, eventually retiring on 32, while Anil joined Manish to plough even further through the Penguins attack, and help their team post the tournament's highest innings score of 99 off five overs.

Requiring just under 20 per over, Penguins needed to be quick out of the blocks, but none of their usually reliable batting line-up could find their rhythm or range, falling well

short of the mark on 57 all out.

Aqua Gym captain, Rishi Sadaranghani extended his thanks and praise for the day's event on receiving the winner's trophy along with the award for player of the tournament.

"On behalf of all players from Aqua Gym, we would like to thank Blue Tree for putting up this amazing tennis ball tournament, we all thoroughly enjoyed this, thanks to all the management team and support staff," he said.

"It's great to see such events and getting different types of cricket formats on the island. Big thanks to you

for your full day on the field and your commentary and Raju doing the scoring.

"Thanks to Ashan Fonseka for making this happen at Blue Tree. Hope to see more sports events take place here at Blue Tree in future."

Manish was awarded the final's man of the match, while Club Med's Rajesh and Aqua Gym's Anil secured best batsman and bowler awards.

A second tournament is being discussed for later in the year – information will be made available via the BlueTree and ACG Facebook pages when this has been confirmed.

Rawai to host Woodball competition

WOODBALL

PHUKET IS GEARING UP TO host a Woodball tournament in Rawai next weekend (July 22-24) as part of efforts to grow the sport's popularity across the island.

The "Rawai-Phuket Open 2022" is scheduled to take place at a specially constructed arena at Rawai beach, Rawai Subdistrict Mayor Aroon Solos confirmed.

The competition is being organised by the Rawai Municipality and the Rawai Woodball Sports Committee as part of development

plans to raise the profile of the sport in Phuket and attract more participants.

A similar tournament was held in Patong when the "Woodball Thailand Championship" was held on April 22, inaugurated by the President of the Phuket Sports Association Thammawat Wongcharoenyot. The objective of the Patong tournament was to not only grow the popularity of the sport but also to help boost tourism, revitalise the local economy and promote a healthier, more active lifestyle among local residents.

It is hoped the Rawai tourna-

ment next weekend will prove similarly successful in achieving the same objectives.

"Woodball is a very popular sport nationally in Thailand," said Mr Aroon. "It is hoped that this competition, which will be held annually, can help develop the popularity of the sports locally and increase numbers of those participating. Our goal is to develop the standard of the sport to be able to compete at national level," he added.

Mr Aroon further explained that Woodball is accessible to all age groups and is therefore

an effective sport to encourage participation which can lead to a healthier lifestyle with improved mental and physical health among local residents.

"It is not a sport limited by age or fitness levels," he explained. "We therefore look forward to welcoming participants of all ages, from youngsters to the elderly."

Woodball is similar to croquet whereby a mallet is used to knock a hard wooden ball through designated gates. It can be played on grass, sand or indoors and the objective, similar to golf, is to achieve the lowest score using



Photo: PR Phuket

the least possible number of strokes.

It was incorporated as a sport into the program of the Asian Beach Games in 2008 and is gaining popularity across the entire Asia region. The International Woodball Federation is based in Taipei, Taiwan.

The Phuket News