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GRASS FED



Marine biologists appraise a planting at Rawai Pier. Photo: DMCR

RAWAI EXPERIMENT HELPS TO YIELD FOOD FOR DUGONGS

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

An experiment in Rawai to grow marine plants as a substitute for seagrass for dugongs for feed on is showing positive results, reports the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR).

A dugong has been found eating the plants grown at the experiment plot.

The teams ran their experiments at two locations – one beside Rawai Pier in Phuket, the other at Koh Libong in Trang – from Nov 2-8, the DMCR said in a report online.

“To support dugongs facing food shortages due to limited seagrass, the DMCR, along with the Andaman Sea Marine and Coastal Resources Research Center (AMCR) and the Institute for Marine and Coastal Resources Research and Development (IMRD), has created additional food plots for them. The food plots, set up from Nov 2-8, 2024, included seagrass substitutes such as Chinese kale, morning glory, Chinese cabbage, and kelp,” the DMCR explained.

In response to seagrass degradation near Rawai Pier, where dugongs have been seen in the area, four test

plots were set up along each side of the pier at low tide, close to the original seagrass area where dugongs often feed.

Each plot is one square metre in size, making a total of four plots. Each plot contains a different type of vegetable to see which ones the dugongs might prefer.

During high tide, drones were used to monitor whether any dugongs came to feed. Initially, one dugong was observed in the area, but it did not feed from any of the test plots.

However, good news was soon to come.

“By the morning of Nov 8, dugongs had come to eat from these plots, with a new feeding area prepared from 7:30 to 9am. While waiting for the tide to rise, a dugong named ‘Big White Back’ was observed eating from the plot,” the DMCR reported.

“However, because the water was murky, researchers couldn’t monitor it by drone and had to dive to check. They found that ‘Big White Back’ had consumed most of the supplementary foods, leaving only water hyacinth, which dugongs generally do not eat,” the DMCR added.

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Crime blitz ahead of Loy Krathong

The Phuket News
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Police and other local law-enforcement authorities have launched a major crime suppression operation in a bid to ensure public safety during the Loy Krathong Festival, to be observed across the country today (Nov 15).

The campaign was officially launched on Nov 8 at Phuket City Police Station, with Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum presiding over the ceremony.

He was joined by Pol Col Thirawat Liamsuwan, Deputy Commander of Phuket Provincial Police, along with officers from various agencies, including the Phuket Provincial Police, the Investigation Division of Region 8 Police, Tourist Police, Marine

Police, Highway Police, as well as military officers, administrative personnel, volunteers and other relevant agencies.

Present to affirm joining the campaign were officers from the Volunteer Defence Corps, better known as the OrSor.

The campaign was to officially continue until yesterday (Nov 14), Pol Maj Gen Sinlert said.

The campaign aims to crack down on criminal activity and provide a secure environment for both residents and tourists visiting the island for the festival.

“The Loi Krathong Festival, which will take place on November 15, 2024, is one of Thailand’s most celebrated holidays, attracting thousands of visitors to Phuket each year,” Pol Maj Gen Sinlert noted.

“Authorities are working



Photo: PR Phuket

to ensure that attendees can enjoy the festivities in a safe environment free from the threat of criminal activity.

The crime suppression operation is focused on addressing a range of threats, including illegal firearms, explosives, drugs, and suspects with outstanding arrest warrants.

“Officials are also targeting other criminal offences that could disrupt

public safety,” he added.

Pol Maj Gen Sinlert explained that the goal of the campaign was to eliminate opportunities for criminal groups to cause harm, while fostering public confidence in the security of their personal safety and property.

“By coordinating efforts across multiple agencies, we aim to prevent violent incidents and ensure smooth

traffic flow during the festival,” he said

“This operation will be conducted with careful, thorough, and meticulous tactics to maximise effectiveness and maintain public order,” he concluded.

GET READY

While local police were readying for Loy Krathong, Phuket Tourist Police launched a multi-agency campaign to boost safety for tourists ahead of the coming tourism high season.

The coordinated effort includes officers from the Marine Police, Phuket Provincial Police, Phuket Marine Office and other related agencies, explained an official release announcing the campaign.

The campaign, created under the instruction of national Tourist Police commander Pol Lt Gen Saksira Pueak-am, aligns with the government’s

policy to bolster tourist safety and confidence, the release added.

To launch the campaign, Pol Maj Gen Phoppchon Chakkaphak, Commander of Tourist Police Division 3, alongside other top officials convened at Ratsada Pier on Nov 6 to assess and enhance readiness measures.

Among the key actions to be taken in the name of the campaign, police officials and representatives from the various agencies will discuss with key figures in the tourism industry strategies for tourist care and safety throughout the high season.

Further, more than 1,000 employees and boat service providers in the tourism sector will undergo urine and drug testing as part of an initiative to improve service standards and ensure a safe environment, the official release confirmed.

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Dugongs get a helping hand

Continued from page 1

Research shows that in addition to seagrass, dugongs are now eating more seaweed, likely due to the scarcity of seagrass, the DMCR explained.

“Studies of dead dugongs’ stomach contents this year have found increased seaweed, indicating that dugongs in the Andaman Sea are adapting to some extent. However, while seaweed may supplement their diet, it cannot fully replace seagrass as a primary food source,” the agency said in its report.

“International reports also suggest that seaweed found in dugong faeces might have been ingested intentionally or accidentally. During food shortages, seaweed or certain vegetables might serve as alternative food sources, as their nutritional content is similar to seagrass. In aquariums abroad, dugongs are often fed vegetables as a substitute for seagrass,” the report explained.

DMCR Director-General Pinsak Suraswadi explained the recent discovery of dugong carcasses washing ashore. He noted that many of these dugongs lacked sufficient food, which weakened their physical condition and ultimately led to their death. Most carcasses were found in areas where seagrass, their primary food source, is in serious decline.

“Through ongoing monitoring of seagrass in the lower Andaman Sea – especially in Krabi, Trang and Satun provinces, which are key dugong habitats – we’ve observed a continuing decrease in both seagrass area and coverage.

“Cogon grass is deteriorating, with



Photo: DMCR

short, brittle and dry leaves, and some roots are even rotting. Additionally, other seagrass species like kaffir lime, round-leaf sedge, and turtle sedge have seen significant losses in area and coverage. Overall, more than 24,000 rai (approximately 9,500 acres) of seagrass areas are in poor condition, with recovery still uncertain,” Mr Pinsak said.

The good news follows a spate of dugong deaths late last month, with 10 dead dugongs discovered along the Andaman coast within a few weeks. Three dugongs were found dead in Phuket coastal waters within nine days.

Dr Thon Thamrongnawasawat, a marine ecosystem expert from Kasetsart University, said that global warming has become a significant threat to dugongs. Some 70 of them have died in just 22 months, exceeding the prior average of 20.25 per year.

Dr Thon estimated that only a few dozen dugongs will remain in the Andaman Sea in five to eight years.

Motorbike taxi drivers rapped

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Yet another Patong motorbike taxi driver has been charged for violence after he was caught on video slapping another motorbike rider across the face with force in Soi Saensabai.

The video spread across local social media channels, spurring many comments about the behaviour of Patong motorbike taxi drivers.

Patong Police has reported that the motorbike taxi driver, named in their report only as 'Mr Patiwat', was brought in to Patong Police Station for questioning at about about 7pm on Nov 6.

Patiwat admitted to being the man seen in the video, and admitted to punching the motorbike rider in the head.

He told the police the incident was caused by a traffic accident, Patong Police reported.

"Police officers therefore recorded the personal history and tested Mr Patiwat for drugs in order to proceed with legal action,"



Photo: Chalermpong Saengdee / Facebook

Patong Police said in their report.

The result of the drug test was not reported.

SCHOOLED

The video stirred more outrage online just two days after dozens of Patong motorbike taxi drivers were ordered by Patong Police Chief Pol Col Chalermchai Hirasawat to join a meeting on Nov 5 so that police could explain to them what behaviour was deemed to be appropriate.

The meeting followed a slew of violent incidents involving Patong motorbike taxi drivers throughout the year, and was instigated by yet another video circulating on social media, this one showing two drivers at a queue at the end of Bangla

Rd sitting and drinking alcohol while waiting for customers.

Pol Col Chalermchai ordered the meeting after being informed of the video, Patong Police reported.

The two motorbike taxi drivers seen in the video – identified by police as 'Mr Chanachai', who was wearing shorts, and 'Mr Jirawich', wearing a red hat – were specifically called in to discuss the matter.

Police questioned them about the situation, emphasising that such behaviour reflects poorly on the image of motorcycle taxi drivers in Patong.

The drivers were warned not to repeat the incident, and a record of the incident was created. Both drivers underwent drug tests, which

returned negative results.

The two men were also tested for drugs. The results were negative.

During the meeting, led by senior Patong Police officers and Phuket MP Chalermpong Saengdee, police guided the drivers on the legal standards and appropriate conduct expected in their profession to foster a positive image and ensure tourists feel confident using their services.

"The meeting aimed to establish guidelines for organising public motorcycle taxi queues in Soi Bangla in line with legal requirements," said an official report of the meeting.

Officers urged people to use the 'Pineapple Eyes' LINE group to monitor and report drivers without licences.

The Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) is also to provide special training and guidance on how to be 'good hosts'.

The motorbike taxi drivers were also encouraged to support officials in promoting a positive image of Phuket as a tourist destination.

Armed drug dealer arrested driving taxi

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED a 30-year-old man driving a registered metered taxi for illegal possession of methamphetamine pills (ya bah) and crystal meth (ya ice), and a loaded firearm.

Officers stopped and arrested Jakkrit Kongsawat at the Thalang Intersection, in the heart of Thalang Town, Thalang Police reported.

The time and date of his arrest was not included in the brief report.

Jakkrit, a resident of Moo 1, Thepkasattri, was found with 363 ya bah pills, 72.3 grammes of ya ice and a Smith & Wesson .38-calibre revolver loaded with four bullets, said police.

During the arrest, police also seized a digital scale, 11 resealable plastic bags, three sets of drug paraphernalia and a brown leather pistol holster.

Not included in the report was any mention of a subsequent search of Jakkrit's place of accommodation, as evidenced in photos of his arrest.

Officers also seized the yellow-red Toyota taxi and



Photo: Thalang Police

Jakkrit's black Oppo mobile phone, police confirmed.

Jakkrit now faces charges of illegal possession of a Category 1 narcotic for sale without permission, illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition and carrying a firearm in a public place without permission or reasonable cause, police confirmed

Jakkrit was also charged with operating a vehicle while under the influence of methamphetamine.

Police did not confirm whether Jakkrit was a registered taxi driver, or was just driving the taxi car for personal reasons at the time of his arrest.

Eakkapop Thongtub

'Green plate' taxis demand right to use apps

TENSIONS ARE RISING among Phuket's 'green plate' taxi drivers after recent fines penalised them B2,000 each time for accepting fares through ride-hailing apps.

Drivers convened at Saphan Hin's central stage parking lot on Nov 5 to call for a revision of laws that would allow them to continue accepting jobs electronically, a practice that had become common during the COVID-19 tourism crackdown, national state news agency NNT reported five days later, on Nov 10.

Of note, the national news agency NNT reported in full a very brief post online by NBT Phuket, also posted online on Nov 10, while the NBT Phuket report did not directly share many of the details of its own story.

'Green plate' taxis, typically used for tourist and business transport services, turned to app-based job acceptance as a way to sustain income after pandemic restrictions hurt tourism, said the NNT report.

However, recent police actions have targeted



Photo: NBT Phuket

drivers who continued using apps, sparking frustration and calls for change among the drivers, the report added.

Prasert Khemmanuwong, representing Phuket's 'green plate' taxi drivers, said that app-based job acceptance had become a key source of income.

He described the fines as "distressing", noting that drivers have relied on app-based fares since COVID-19 severely affected regular business.

"We are calling for legal amendments that will let us work through apps as before, or at least a temporary halt on fines while we await these changes," Mr Prasert said. "This is about enabling green plate drivers to earn a living without fear of penalties."

Responding to the drivers' demands, Atcha Buachan, Chief of the

Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO), explained that current regulations do not permit green plate cars to accept jobs through apps.

Instead, green plate taxis must be specifically registered for tourism or business transport, which prohibits app-based services.

He advised that drivers interested in app-based work should register their vehicles as 'Type 18', a designation allowing electronic hire services legally.

As discussions continue, green plate drivers are calling on provincial authorities to consider their livelihoods and provide a feasible pathway for continuing app-based services within the law, concluded the report.

According to the latest notice issued by the PLTO, on Oct 24, ride-hailing apps Hello Phuket, Grab, AirAsia Super App, Robinhood, Bonku, Asia Cab, Bolt and inDriver are legal to use in Thailand.

Maxim remains listed as 'uncertified' by the Department of Land Transport for legal use in the country.

The Phuket News



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Gang held for crypto extortion

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Police have arrested four foreign suspects in the armed holdup of a Ukrainian in Phuket that saw him threatened with a hammer unless he transferred US\$250,000 (B8.56 million) in 'Tether' crypto currency.

Pol Maj Gen Sinlert Sukhum, Commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, held a press conference at the Investigation Division of the Phuket Provincial Police on Monday (Nov 11) to announce the arrests.

The four men were arrested at a hotel in Khok Kloi, Takua Pa District, Phang Nga, north of Phuket at about 1am Monday.

Joining the efforts to track down and arrest the men were officers from Phuket Provincial Police working with Region 8 Police, Tourist Police and Immigration Police, Pol Maj Gen Sinlert explained.

The men were specifically identified as: Arman Grigoryan, 21, Armenian nationality; Alfred Chernyshuk, 18, Ukrainian; Ruslan Musaiev, 22, Ukrainian; and Maras Antroy, 21, Russian nationality.

The victim, 23-year-old Ukrainian tourist Viacheslav Leibov, reported the incident to Kamala Police at about 10:45pm on Nov 8. According to Mr Leibov, the robbery took place earlier that night.

Mr Leibov said he was invited



Photo: Phuket Provincial Police

by his friend, Alfred Chernyshuk, an 18-year-old Ukrainian, to his accommodation. Upon arrival, Mr Leibov was greeted by an Armenian national, 21-year-old Arman Grigoryan, who escorted him to the room where the assault occurred.

While conversing on the room's balcony, Mr Leibov stepped into the bathroom, where he encountered two unknown men. They forcibly covered his face and then, together with Grigoryan, tied Mr Leibov's hands and feet using rope and cable ties.

Grigoryan then reportedly threatened Mr Leibov, demanding a transfer of US\$500,000 of the cryptocurrency 'Tether' (also

known as 'USDT'), or he would "break his fingers". Grigoryan was allegedly armed with a hammer, while another assailant wielded a long knife.

Mr Leibov apparently was able to negotiate with the assailants, ultimately agreeing to transfer US\$250,000. Once the funds were confirmed, the suspects tied Mr Leibov to the bed, warning him not to report the incident.

After the gang fled, Mr Leibov managed to free himself and immediately alerted the accommodation's front desk. Through the front desk records, he learned the identities of the assailants.

In an effort to track down the suspects, Mr Leibov reportedly

searched for them at Phuket airport but was unsuccessful. He returned home and later filed an official complaint, fearing further consequences but determined to seek justice.

"When I saw the suspects leave the room, I tried to untie the rope, which took about five minutes. After freeing myself, I went downstairs to the reception area on the first floor, where I asked the staff to take a photo of the tenants' passports. That's when I learned the room was rented by two people, Arman Grigoryan and Alfred Chernyshuk," Mr Leibov said.

After obtaining court-issued arrest warrants, police discovered that the suspects had fled to Phang Nga Province. They were subsequently apprehended and questioned, and all four suspects are now in custody, Pol Maj Gen Sinlert said on Monday.

All four now face a charge of "robbery with weapons, jointly detaining others, or doing anything to deprive others of their physical freedom and let that other person do something for the perpetrator or another person."

Authorities revealed that some of the stolen funds had been transferred internationally, though a portion remains under investigation.

The suspects entered Thailand on tourist visas, with the Armenian suspect holding a 15-day visa and the others 90-day visas, Maj Gen Sinlert confirmed.

Brits charged for hooning on motorbikes

NINE BRITISH MEN HAVE been arrested and fined for hooning on motorbikes after reports of reckless driving and causing a disturbance in Rawai.

Local residents reported the antics of the British tourists to the 191 police hotline at 1:04am on Nov 7, Chalong Police reported last Saturday (Nov 9).

Police were told that a group of foreign men were driving recklessly on Khok San Rd toward Saiyuan Rd.

Witnesses reported the loud revving of engines and disruptive driving that inconvenienced nearby residents.

The next day (Nov 8), Chalong Police had tracked down the group of nine Brits, who had rented motorbikes in Patong.

"They were therefore invited to meet with the investigation officer to proceed with legal



Photo: Chalong Police

action," said the notice by Chalong Police.

The nine were brought in to acknowledge charges related to public disturbance and dangerous driving.

Police inspected the personal documents of each man and verified the registration papers for their motorcycles, Chalong Police added.

Following the investigation, officers issued fines to each individual and recorded their details for future reference, Chalong Police confirmed.

The Phuket News

B800mn fraud suspect nabbed in Wichit

OFFICERS FROM THE Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) have arrested a suspect found hiding in Phuket who was involved in a large-scale investment scam that defrauded over B800 million from Thai and foreign investors.

CIB officers working with officers from the Highway Police Division apprehend the suspect, identified as 'Mr Natdech', at an abandoned house in Wichit, the CIB reported.

The exact location of Natdech's arrest was not reported.

The arrest followed an investigation into complaints filed with the CIB's Technology Crime Suppression Division, which reported a complex scheme luring victims through a Facebook page promising lucrative investments in Thai and foreign stocks.

To build credibility, the fraudsters allegedly impersonated well-known figures in the stock market and invited victims to join



Photo: CIB

a VIP LINE group. In the group, members received purportedly "confidential" stock tips and saw initial profits through a fake investment app, which allowed them to withdraw small amounts to build trust. As victims transferred larger sums, however, their funds became inaccessible.

Investigators estimate that over 50 people fell prey to the scheme, which involved Thai and foreign perpetrators, including Chinese and Malaysians. The amount of money circulated among the scammers reportedly exceeded B5 billion.

Police have sought and secured arrest warrants for more than 50 individuals involved.

The Phuket News

PPAO election goes ahead

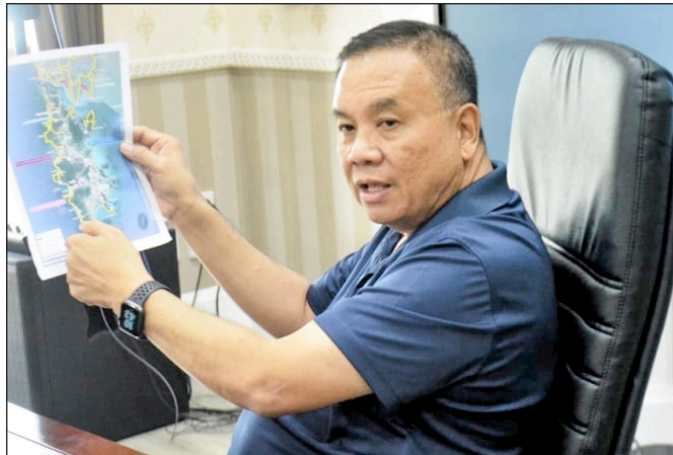
The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Phuket office of the Election Commission (PEC) has confirmed that the election for the new president and council members of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO) will be held on Saturday, Feb 1, 2025.

Parit Wacharasindhu, a People's Party member of the House of Representatives, has already noted that the election being held on a Saturday might affect voters.

However, Mr Parit explained that by law elections must be held within 45 days of the current incumbents' term in office expiring. This year, the 45th day falls on the Sunday. Hence the election must be held on the Saturday, Mr Parit said, the PEC explained in its announcement.

"The reason the Election Commission did not set the election date for Sunday, Jan 26, 2025 is because there must be an announcement of the new electoral districts for members of the provincial administrative



organisations in 76 provinces, and there is a period for candidates to go to the area to create understanding with the people and campaign for the election," the notice read.

The run-up to the election must also allow the Election Commission time to comply with election law, such as checking the qualifications and disqualifications of candidates, and determining the rights of candidates, the notice added.

"And this election is a nationwide election with approximately 90,000 polling stations that must send ballot boxes to the locations specified by the provincial administrative

organisations. If it exceeds the aforementioned time, it may not be in accordance with the Local Government Election Act B.E. 2562," the notice continued.

Candidates will be allowed to register for the election from Dec 23-27.

"The election director of the provincial administrative organisation must check the qualifications and prohibited characteristics of candidates within seven days from the closing date of applications (Jan 3, 2025)," the notice confirmed.

The PEC must publicly post the list of vetted candidates by Jan 6.

PEC Director Onphin Achivasuk confirmed in August that there will be 24

PPAO electoral districts across Phuket. The breakdown includes 14 voting districts in Mueang Phuket District, seven in Thalang District and three in Kathu District.

The current terms of the elected members of the PPAO Council and the PPAO President will end on Dec 19, 2024.

Current PPAO President Rewat Areerob, representing the 'Phuket Yatdai Party', was elected to office in the PPAO election held on Dec 20, 2020.

In total, the Phuket Yatdai Party secured 20 of the 24 seats available on the PPAO Council, while the Khon Baan Rao Party secured three seats, and the Gao Na Party secured just one seat.

In accordance with election law in Thailand, there will be a 24-ban on the sale of alcohol for the election. The ban will be in effect from 6pm the day before the election (Jan 31) through to 6pm the day of the election (Feb 1).

The ban applies to all people in the country. Those caught violating the ban can face a result in a fine of up to B10,000 or even up to six months in jail, or both.



Photo: Phuket City Municipality

Officials race to expand landfills

PHUKET CITY MUNICIPALITY is accelerating efforts to expand landfill sites at Saphan Hin as waste volumes surge beyond the current disposal capacity.

Deputy Mayor Suphot La-onghphet visited landfill sites 4 and 5 at the Phuket Provincial Solid Waste Disposal Center on Monday (Nov 11) to oversee progress on waste management strategies aimed at addressing the island's escalating waste crisis.

The adjustments involve redirecting excess waste from the now-overflowing landfill 3 to newly designated landfills 4 and 5.

Officials have been instructed to fast-track the expansion of both pits, with a targeted completion date of this Friday (Nov 15), before shutting down landfill 3 to prevent worsen-

ing odour issues from the accumulating waste.

Deputy Mayor Suphot noted that waste from local government bodies and businesses across Phuket is pouring in at roughly 1,400 tonnes a day.

However, the island's single incinerator can only burn 700 tonnes per day, resulting in an overflow of around 400-500 tonnes sent to landfills – beyond their current capacity, Deputy Mayor Suphot noted.

The rise in waste is attributed to Phuket's growing tourism sector and the expansion of local businesses and households.

Deputy Mayor Suphot is urging residents and visitors to reduce waste at the source, especially by separating organic waste, to alleviate pressure on the incinerator and landfills. *The Phuket News*

Facial recognition launches at airport

PHUKET GOVERNOR Sophon Suwannarat arrived at Phuket International Airport last week to confirm the use of facial recognition to streamline passenger processing and reduce wait times.

Phuket International Airport launched the new system for domestic passengers on Nov 1, and the new biometric system will come into use for international passengers from Dec 1, Phuket airport General Manager Monchai Tanode confirmed.

The new Automated Biometric Identification System is being rolled out at all six airports in Thailand operated by Airports of Thailand (AoT). Mr Monchai said in a release by AoT Phuket.

In addition to Phuket airport, AoT operates Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai, Mae Fah Luang Chiang Rai and Hat Yai airports.

The system employs advanced facial recognition technology to verify passengers' identities, creating a smoother experience for travellers at various stages of their journey, Mr Mon-



Photo: PR Phuket

chai explained during the Governor's visit on Nov 8.

The new system allows passengers to register in one of two ways: either by notifying airline staff at the check-in counter, who will use a ticket scanner to enter passengers' data, or by using the airport's automatic self-check-in machines.

Once registered, passengers' facial data is securely stored in the form of a 'Token' and used solely for the current journey.

"Passengers using this system can skip the traditional ID check at several key points, including automated baggage loading, identification verification, and boarding gates. This eliminates the need to present an ID card, passport, or boarding pass,

speeding up the entire airport experience," he said.

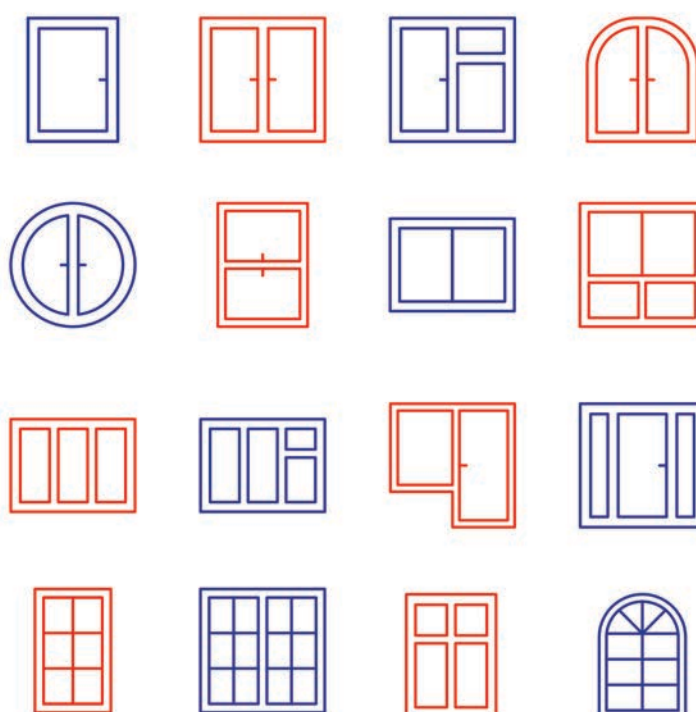
Passengers registering via self-check-in must use a Smart Card ID or passport, while those registering at airline counters may use any government-issued ID recognized by the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand.

For minors, compliance with Thailand's Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) requires parental consent for children under 10 years old, while those over 10 may register independently.

"AoT has pledged to continue enhancing its facilities with modern, efficient technologies to provide a convenient, high-quality travel experience for all passengers," Mr Monchai said. *The Phuket News*



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Thailand eyes Euro tourists

Bangkok Post

Thailand is targeting 8 million European tourists next year, contributing to a new high of 11mn long-haul visitors, as the Tourism and Sports Ministry pledges to expedite efforts with airlines and ambassadors for a full international flight resumption.

“The future of Thai tourism is bright, dynamic and full of opportunities. We are investing in infrastructure, streamlining the visa process and creating new products and services to ensure that Thailand remains at the forefront of global tourism,” Tourism and Sports Minister Sorawong Thienthong said at the World Travel Market (WTM) 2024, one of the largest tourism trade shows, held in London on Nov 5-7.

Mr Sorawong said that after the event he will invite foreign ambassadors to Thailand, focusing on major markets such as the UK, Germany, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, along with airline representatives, to discuss flights and pre-



The Tourism Authority of Thailand booth at the World Travel Market (WTM) 2024, one of the largest global tourism trade shows in London. Photo: Bangkok Post

paration for 2025, especially during the high season.

He said his ministry will collaborate with other ministries such as the Transport Ministry and the Finance Ministry for subsidy programmes, such as fuel price and tax reductions for airlines.

This year, Thailand expects to welcome 9.6mn long-haul tourists, including 7.3mn from Europe, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

With 11mn long-haul

tourists next year, its revenue should exceed B896 billion, sharing 40% of the overall B2.2 trillion in foreign receipts.

Some 42 tourism operators joined the TAT pavilion at the WTM, to attract the UK, European and other long-haul markets. The TAT estimates at least 950 business appointments during the event, generating over B898mn.

Princess Ubolratana also attended the event to promote Thailand's soft power and sustainable tourism.

RETURN OF GROWTH

Nithi Subhongsang, managing director of Nutty's Adventures, a Thai destination management company, said European tourists are the main clients of the company, particularly small tour groups, seeking local experiences and responsible tourism travel.

Mr Nithi said the company's revenue should recover to 80% of the pre-pandemic level this year, driven by strong demand from Europe,

although high inflation and geopolitical tensions remain challenges for this market.

He said the government should ensure continuity of policies, including sustainable tourism, and ensure second-tier cities emerge in order to distribute income to local communities and prevent overtourism in key destinations.

Sam Collins, product manager for Far East of Best at Travel, a luxury outbound tour operator in the UK, said Thailand is known for its warm hospitality as well as affordability.

Last year, over 4,000 tourists from the UK visited Thailand via the company, generating over £8mn (B351,775,614). Thailand was the third biggest destination for UK visitors, or roughly 15%, following the Maldives and Dubai.

Targeting luxury tour groups, Thailand already has high class hotels and beautiful destinations, said Mr Collins.

He said tourists nowadays want to explore less-crowded sites, such as Koh Lipe, Koh Samet, Koh

Tao and Khao Lak, shifting away from major cities like Phuket, Samui and Krabi.

He said the Thai government should invest more in transportation between cities, particularly railways, as well as support carriers to increase international direct flights.

THAI chief commercial officer Korakot Chatasingha said the national carrier is promoting Bangkok as a tourism and aviation hub for European tourists, before travelling to other destinations in the region.

European flights should contribute around 30% of revenue to the airline this year.

It will increase flight frequencies to 91 per week in December, adding Belgium to its roster, up from 84 weekly flights at present.

Its average load factor for Europe flights remains robust at over 80%. Among all routes, London is the only destination offering first class service.

With 88 aircraft in its fleet by 2025, the airline will at least maintain the same flight frequency for European routes, he said.



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No Koh Kut 'secret deal'

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government has rejected claims that former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra reached a secret deal with Cambodia's ex-premier Hun Sen over the development of disputed maritime areas in the Gulf of Thailand.

"There is no such deal whatsoever. How can anyone who has no official role reach any deal?" Defence Minister Phumtham Wechayachai told media on Monday (Nov 11).

He said the Joint Technical Committee [JTC] has yet to be formed to discuss the overlapping claims area (OCA) under the 2001 memorandum of understanding (MoU).

The JTC will be established when Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra returns to Thailand on Nov 18 from the APEC summit in Peru, scheduled for Nov 10-16, said Mr Phumtham who also serves as a deputy prime minister.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry is responsible for forming the JTC, which will include officials from the Royal Thai Navy's Hydrographic Department, the Council of State, legal experts and other relevant agencies.



Defence Minister Phumtham Wechayachai visits Koh Kut on Nov 9. Photo: Bangkok Post

SCEPTICISM

The Pheu Thai-led government's plan to revive negotiations with Cambodia has been met with scepticism, mainly due to Thaksin and Hun Sen's close relationship. Hun Sen's visit to Bangkok earlier this year only renewed concerns over the controversial MoU.

Thaksin also downplayed attempts to establish a link between the MoU and his close relationship with Cambodia last Saturday (Nov 9), insisting the two matters should never be

linked because they are different things.

Mr Phumtham also said on Monday that tourism in Koh Kut has returned to normal in recent days after the government explained that the negotiations over the OCA will not affect Thailand's territorial sovereignty over the island in Trat.

He said that when the issue emerged, hotel reservations on the island dropped by 30%, adding that the situation has now improved after government reassurances.

Mr Phumtham also said that his visit to Koh Kut last Saturday was intended to reassure residents that Koh Kut belongs to Thailand.

He said local officials and navy personnel are doing their best to protect the island.

Interior Minister Anutin Charnvirakul also led a delegation of officials to visit Koh Kut on Monday as he reasserted Thailand's sovereignty over the island.

He said that Koh Kut belongs to Thailand under the French-Siamese treaty signed in 1907.

Under the treaty, the French ceded the Dan Sai and Trat territories to Siam, including all islands located south of Laem Ling (Laem Sing), including Koh Kut.

He also reiterated that the 2001 MoU remains the framework that the JTC is using to negotiate the OCA boundaries with Cambodia.

OIL-RICH

Anutin said that if both sides can reach a consensus and agree on joint development under the MoU, their respective parliaments must endorse it.

"We don't want to waste time worrying about things that will never happen. It is now focusing on how to improve the local

economy," Anutin said, referring to concerns that Thailand may risk losing sovereignty over Koh Kut in Trat province to Cambodia if the government proceeds with talks under the MoU.

Thailand and Cambodia claim sovereignty of the mineral and oil-rich OCA, which covers an area of about 26,000 square kilometres in the Gulf of Thailand.

The two countries signed an MoU in 2001, when the Thaksin Shinawatra administration was in power, to jointly develop parts of the OCA and demarcate a maritime border.

It stipulated at the time that the maritime border demarcation and joint development must be carried out as an "indivisible package", with a Thailand-Cambodia JTC set up to discuss them.

Several talks have been held since then, but there has not been any progress, mainly because neither side has been willing to accept the other's territorial claim.

In addition to the Palang Pracharath Party, Thai Pakdee Party chairman Warong Dechgitvigrom is urging the revocation of the 2001 MoU with a petition of 100,000 signatures to support the move.

Tourists smuggling weed to UK offered free Thai holiday

BANGKOK

BRITISH AUTHORITIES HAVE ASKED Thai police to arrest Britons smuggling cannabis back to the UK in exchange for a free holiday in Thailand.

Visiting officials from the UK's National Crime Agency were introduced to the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) by British ambassador Mark Gooding, ONCB secretary general Pol Lt Gen Phanurat Lukboon said on Nov 6.

They asked for cooperation in preventing the smuggling of cannabis into Britain, he said.

The delegation told them that drug smugglers were recruiting people in Britain through the Telegram chat app. They offered free tours to Thailand, plus pocket money, in exchange for smuggling cannabis back to Britain.

Pol Lt Gen Phanurat said British authorities have been seizing hundreds of kilograms of cannabis smuggled from Thailand, which had risen significantly this year.

"These people who are recruited in Britain are not tricked. They are tempted with free tours, accommodation and meals in Thailand, plus pocket money, in exchange for their agreement to bring cannabis back to Britain," he said, adding narcotics officials have already begun an investigation.

Pol Lt Gen Phanurat also said that a parcel declared to contain a dietary supplement that hid 210 grammes of a precursor for making



ONCB officials with police on Nov 6. Photo: Bangkok Post

ecstasy was recently intercepted. The parcel was sent from the UK to a British man and a Dutchman living in Bangkok.

A search of their rented condominium and house in Bangkok found 36 kilograms of cannabis in sealed packages, packaging equipment and 1.4kg of cannabis resin with illegally high content of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

The two men had arrived in Thailand as tourists about four months ago and were believed to be sourcing cannabis in Thailand to be mailed in parcels to Britain. Narcotics police found slips declaring the mailed parcels as containing pillows.

Prin Mekanandha, ONCB director of narcotics law enforcement, said the cannabis was also being supplied to people from Britain and other countries who were recruited via the Telegram app and did not need to apply for visas to enter Britain.

They hid the cannabis in their luggage and then returned to Britain, Mr Prin said.

Bangkok Post

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Dwayne Johnson and J.K. Simmons on the set of 'Red One' (2024). Photo: IMDb



Christmas comes early with 'Red One'

David Griffiths

It hasn't taken very long into this Christmas period to find a film that is guaranteed to become a Christmas classic. Starring Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans, 'Red One' takes the action genre and mixes it with mythological and a splash of comedy and the result is very special.

Recently the cast and crew came together for a press conference following the launch of the film and it was easy to see the excitement they were sharing after early reactions to the film came flooding in.

"That's awesome, we'll take that reaction any day of the week," says director Jake Kasdan with a laugh when he is told that people are already calling the film a Christmas classic.

"That was one of the most exciting aspects of this movie. We were looking for a way to tell the story of Santa in a way that was different to how it had been done before.

"You've seen Santa the one way all your life," he continues. "But the idea for this film was what happens if you can pull back the curtain and see what Santa is really like. So, all the aspects in this movie came from that seed idea."

Most of that side of the film comes from the amazing screenplay co-written by Hiram Garcia, who says that his idea was to create a film "that turns Christmas on its head, inspired people, explored the mythology but also brought a connection between people and Santa. I feel that happened with the brilliant performance of J.K. Simmons as Santa and the way that Jake brought it to the screen."

What makes *Red One* such a special film is how it manages to mix genres together so well. This may be an action film but that doesn't stop it from being a holiday movie either.

"Thankfully that was not something that I had to work out how to do," says star Chris Evans. "There were a whole lot of people that had to crack that code and I think they did that but made it so much fun. There is so much Christmas folklore here and there are always those stories that we grew up with, but internationally there are so many Christmas creatures and mythology it almost begs to be made into some kind of action/adventure movie. So it is not quite as hard as you would think."

"Yeah I agree," adds Dwayne Johnson. "I also think that it all started with the ideas coming out of Hiram's brain. Then Chris Morgan cracked it and then Jake came in and cracked it and they all brought it together on the page."

"I think the source material lends itself to a big action scale," he continues. "And that is not something that you typically see in Christmas movies. And yes it does give you the definitive Santa Claus and you also have all these talented actors who came in loving Christmas and every actor was absolutely perfect for their role."

"And then on top of all that you sprinkle something in that Jake does inherently well in all his films, and that is to bring heart to it. I have worked with him on two *Jumanji* films and now *Red One* and I have found that he has done that with all of his films. There is so much heart in this movie and I think often we say that as an overstatement in Hollywood, but with this film it is really true."

"One of my favourite parts of this movie is when J.K. as Santa Claus reminds me that it is our job to see the best in people," says Johnson after thinking for a moment. "You have to look at that child and you have to look beyond whether or not they are on the naughty list – you just have to look beyond all that and look at the kid in everybody."

Of course the other star of *Red One* is Lucy Liu, who says that one of the highlights of the film for her was to be involved in going back to her *Charlie Angels* days and being involved in some of the action sequences.

"Well, it was kind of impromptu," Liu says with a big laugh. "Early on I was talking to Jake and I asked if there were any kind of training or prep that I had to do and he said, 'No, I think that maybe she will throw a kick or maybe a punch and that will be it because you are just the Boss Lady and that is all it

will be', and I was like, 'That's great, no problem'.

"And then I turned up on set to do the costume fittings and everything," she continues. "And the stunt coordinator came in and said to me, 'I just want to give you a little pre-vis on what we are going to do' and he shows me this entire action sequence and my face just turned white... and then I was just like, 'Okay, let's do this'. Then as soon as I got the sticks in my hands it was like muscle memory kicked in and I felt alive again. I hadn't done it in such a long time but it all came back to me so quickly."

To finish off the interview the question had to be asked, what are some of the cast's Christmas traditions?

"For me it is getting family together," says Johnson. "And I know that sounds really simplistic but a lot of times when I was growing up my Dad was on the road and not always home for Christmas and with the business that I am in sometimes I have to work over the holidays... So for me just having the whole family together is the most important thing. And I wanna see the good sh*t under the tree... the good toys."

Chris Evans laughs and then adds, "When I was a kid we would write letters to Santa and then we would have Christmas Eve. I'm one of four kids and my siblings and I are all very close in age but on Christmas Eve we would all decide whose room we were going to sleep in and then we would all have a sleepover in someone's room. We would have the old TV and the VCR and then we would pick which Christmas movie we were going to watch and we would watch the film and then try to get to sleep, but then wake up all at the same time for Christmas morning."

At the press conference it was very easy to see how much fun this cast and crew had putting *Red One* together, but I can tell you right now it is half the fun of what you will have sitting down to watch what has turned out to be one of the best Christmas movies we have seen in a long time.

Red One is currently screening in Phuket and is rated 'G'.

David Griffiths has been working as a film journalist for over 25 years. That time has seen him work in radio, television and in print. He currently hosts a film podcast called *The Popcorn Conspiracy*. He is also a Rotten Tomatoes accredited reviewer and is an alternate judge for the Golden Globes Awards. You can follow him at Facebook: *SubcultureEntertainmentAus*



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Phuket News - Talking to Phuket

Viva Vespucci!

Classic tall ship flies flag for Italian Heritage

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Italian Navy training ship 'Amerigo Vespucci', renowned as the "most beautiful ship in the world," made port in Phuket last week, marking a historic event in the 156 years of relations between Italy and Thailand.

As part of the classic tall ship's world tour, the 'Vespucci' docked at the Phuket Deep Sea Port on Nov 5, and remained there through to last Sunday (Nov 10).

Vice Adm Suwat Donsakul, Director-General of the Royal Thai Navy's Operations Department, was in Phuket to welcome Capt Giuseppe Lai, Commander of the Vespucci, during a formal meeting on Nov 6.

Joining the formal meeting were Capt Marco Corsi, Assistant Defense Attache of Italy to the Republic of Singapore, along with Rear Admiral Uthai Yangwilai, Deputy Commander of the Third Naval Area Command at Cape Panwa, noted an official report of the meeting.

Paolo Dionisi, Italian Ambassador to Thailand, underscored the importance of the ship's visit, remarking that this visit to Thailand not only enhances Italian-Thai relations, which have spanned 156 years, but also reflects the deep cultural connection shared between the two countries.

Phuket Governor Sophon Suwanarat expressed delight at hosting the 'Amerigo Vespucci', noting that the visit serves as a bridge between Italian and Thai cultures.

The Vespucci's stay in Phuket provided an opportunity for cultural and professional exchange. Eight Thai naval cadets participated in onboard training with the Italian crew, highlighting the strong military cooperation between the two nations, Governor Sophon explained during his formal welcome sortie onto the ship.

As part of the festivities, Phuket hosted a gala dinner on Nov 8, featuring a fashion show in honour of HM The King Maha Vajiralongkorn's 72nd birthday anniversary.



TALL SHIP

The oldest ship in service in the Italian Navy, the Amerigo Vespucci was launched on Feb 22, 1931. The classic three-masted sailing ship provides training activities for first-year cadets of the Naval Academy, students of the Military Naval School 'F. Morosini', and other naval training institutes.

Young members of sailing associations such as the Lega Navale, the Associazione Nazionale Marinai d'Italia, and the Sail Training Association Italia, are also trained on the stunning ship.

"Committed for over 30 years to safeguarding and protecting the natural heritage and the marine environment, it [the ship] collaborates with organisations such as UNICEF, WWF, and Marevivo to instil respect for our planet in new generations," explains 'Villaggio Italia', which organises the Vespucci's activities.

"Due to its numerous and prestigious diplomatic and representative activities carried out worldwide, the Amerigo Vespucci is, in fact, a travelling Italian Embassy," the organisers added.

At 82 metres long and 15.5m wide, the Vespucci has a displacement of 4,200 tonnes and requires 7.3m draft to avoid hitting bottom.

Of the ship's three masts, the mizzenmast (closest to the rear of the boat) is the shortest at 43m tall. The foremast stands 50m tall and the mainmast reaches up from the deck some 54m.

The bowsprit, alone at 18m long, serves as the ship's fourth mast and brings the ship's length overall to 101m.

The masts allow the ship to fly 2,650 square metres of sail area, which altogether require a staggering 36km of cables and rigging.

Despite its impressive sail power, at best the ship achieves 15 knots under sail, and only 11 knots under motor power.

GRAZIE

The stop in Phuket marked a key leg in the ship's world tour, which began in Genoa in June 2023 and is set to conclude in Italy by June 2025. The ship, which serves as a floating cultural ambassador, is touring 15 major ports worldwide.

Marking its first-ever visit to Thailand, the Vespucci during its stay opened its decks to visitors with daily public tours showcasing Italian culture, art and maritime history.

Visitors were provided an immersive Italian cultural experience, with on-board attractions such as Italian cuisine, exhibitions and screenings of classic Italian films. Notable displays include the Olympic torch from Italy's first Olympic Games and a bronze replica of Michelangelo's famous statue 'David'.

The ship's arrival and the free tours quickly garnered significant interest.



Sensing the rare opportunity to see such a classic sailing ship up close in Phuket, thousands of Thai and international visitors registered for tours.

Due to its high popularity, reservations were required to manage visitor flow and all public tours, which were free of charge.

However, reservations were already booked out within a day of the ship arriving. While tour slots filled quickly,

walk-in visitors were welcome on a first-come, first-served basis. That presented its own problems, with huge traffic jams in the area and the queue for people to tour the ship reportedly reaching nearly a kilometre long.

After departing Phuket last Sunday, the Vespucci began its journey onwards to India, where it will remain in port in Mumbai from Nov 28 to Dec 2.

Additional reporting by Eakkapop Thongtub



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POP QUIZ

1. Sacha Baron Cohen's 'Admiral General Aladeen' character was the dictator of which fictional republic?

2. The three orders of classical architecture are Ionic, Corinthian and which other order?

3. Which city, located in southern India and the highest of India's major cities, is nicknamed the 'Silicon Valley of India'?

4. What was the middle name of Hunter S. Thompson?

5. Which battle against Roman rule in southern Britain ended with the defeat of Queen Boudica?

Answers below, centre

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across

1. Stand-in doc

6. Dolt

10. Stew

14. Tidal bore

15. Ethereal

16. Colonial and Medieval

17. Tolerates

20. Kind of palm

21. Split

22. Band aid?

25. Set of syllables

28. One who goes for the gold?

29. Ramble

31. Additionally

33. Hollows

34. Domestic

37. Be sore

39. Prove, in a way

45. Kind of appeal

46. Villainous looks

47. Barbershop sound

51. Face-off

53. Jewish month

54. Breaks

56. Antiparkinsonian agent

59. Sign of summer

60. Paesano's land

62. Turn
64. Constitutional phrase

70. Eye section

71. Sensory input

72. Get used (to)

73. Salon job

74. Ryan and Tilly

75. Get rid of
- Down

1. Chair part

2. Crew tool

3. Animation platform (abbr.)

4. Amphoras

5. Southwest U.S. features

6. Oil source

7. Chaired

8. Eye

9. Turned blue, maybe

10. Zealous

11. Bearish

12. Type of voyage

13. Fragrant compounds

18. In the past

19. Ambition

22. Kuwaiti, e.g.

23. Pout

24. Dad

26. Railroad car
27. Saclike structures

30. Impair

32. Resistance units

35. "___ time"

36. Shred

38. Extended period

40. Essence

41. Franco-Spanish botanist

42. Cry

43. On the mark

44. Home of Vigeland Park

47. Provoke

48. Indigenous

49. Graphics machine

50. "Taking of ____ 1 2 3"

52. Romantic ones

55. Take a load off

57. Potpie morsel

58. Cliffside dwelling

61. Little bit

63. Buzzed

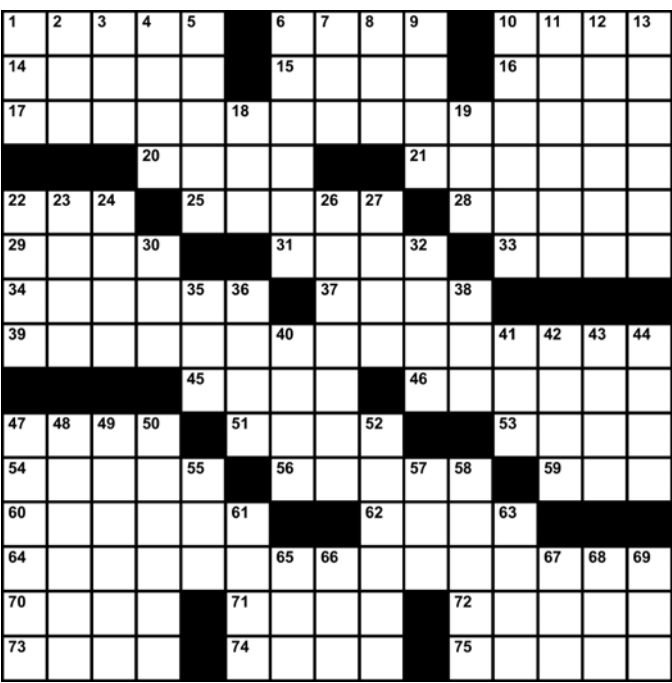
65. Wordsworth work

66. Impede, with "down"

67. Regret

68. One of a couple

69. Get firm



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

SUDOKU

Hard

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

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Republic of Wadiva; 2) Doric; 3) Bangalore; 4) Stockton; 5) The Battle of Watling Street AD 60 or 61.

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

S	A	M	O	A		A	R	C	O		O	M	A	N
A	C	E	R	B		C	O	R	N		M	E	S	A
L	A	S	T	B	U	T	N	O	T		L	E	A	S
K	I	S	S	E	R	S		S	O	I	G	N	E	E
						S	L	U	M	S		D	A	S
S	A	L	E			P	U	T	O	N				
A	R	A	R	A	T		E	I	R	E		N	O	S
F	I	N	A	L	A	S	S	E	S	S	M	E	N	T
E	L	K		V	I	A	L		O	S	P	R	E	Y
						E	L	L	I	S		H	O	S
B	A	S	S	O		V	S	I	G	N				
A	P	H	E	L	I	A		M	O	I	S	T	E	N
D	R	A	W	I	N	G	T	O	A	C	L	O	S	E
G	O	R	E			T	E	E	N		K	A	R	A
E	N	I	D			O	R	G	Y		S	T	R	U

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

solitary cracker that survived the sinking of the Titanic sold for nearly \$23,000 in a 2015 auction.

18

percent of drivers fleeing the Los Angeles Police manage to escape arrest.

400

dollars was the littering fine the Western Australian government issued NASA in 1979 when pieces of Skylab fell on the region.

32,000

US dollars is the latest annual salary offered for a 'Panda Nanny' in China – a real job where you get to spend 365 days a year with panda babies.

3.7 billion

people under age 50 worldwide are infected with the herpes virus.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW

Mai Khao from above. Photo by Brian Stamm

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

This week in history

Nov 15, 1933

Thailand holds its first election. At the time there were no political parties, so all candidates ran as independents. A total of 1,773,532 votes were cast and voter turnout was 41.5%.

Nov 16, 1990

Pop group Milli Vanilli are stripped of their Grammy Award because the duo did not sing at all on the album Girl You Know It's True. Session musicians had provided all the vocals.

Nov 17, 1558

Elizabethan era begins: Queen Mary I of England dies and is succeeded by her half-sister Elizabeth I of England, the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

Nov 18, 1928

Steamboat Willie, the first fully synchronised sound cartoon is released, featuring Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse. This day is considered by Disney to be Mickey's birthday.

Mickey Mouse in Steamboat Willie.

Nov 19, 1994

The first National Lottery held in the UK is drawn. A £1 ticket gave a one-in-14-million chance of correctly

guessing the winning six out of 49 numbers.

Nov 20, 1947

Princess Elizabeth marries Lt Philip Mountbatten at Westminster Abbey in London.

Nov 21, 164 BC

Judas Maccabeus, son of Mattathias of the Hasmonean family, restores the Temple in Jerusalem. The event is commemorated each year by the festival of Hanukkah.

Source: Wikipedia

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FRI15NOV



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SAT16NOV



LIVING IN PHUKET 2024
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Living in Phuket 2024

"Living in Phuket" is designed to help Phuket's many expats and their families connect with services that make life on the island easier. Major organisations and community groups from across Phuket in one location. "Living in Phuket" represents an invaluable resource of information for expats. The 2024 event will take place in the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town on Nov 16, presented by UFE Phuket, Melki.BIZ, Bangkok Hospital Phuket and The Phuket News. More info - livinginphuket.org



THE SNOWBIRDS GOLF TOURNAMENT
Win Amazing Prizes
3,500 Baht with dinner
SATURDAY November 16
AT AQUILLA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
Check-in: 10:00am
Shotgun starts 11:00am
4 Ball scramble format

The BDO/Rotary Club Snowbirds Charity Golf Tournament

CanCham South & Rotary Club of Patong Beach is holding its second annual BDO Snowbirds Chairty Golf Tournament at the Aquella Golf & Country Club on Saturday November 16th, 2024. This is a family-friendly networking and fellowship event, as well as a fundraiser. Proceeds will be shared evenly with the Rotary Club of Patong Beach for their Save a Child Swim Program. Last year, with BDO as our Title Sponsor, we raised over 57,000 Baht for the Program. We are thrilled that BDO has returned as our Title Sponsor this year, and our goal is to raise over 300,000 THB. The Swim Program, originating

in Patong, now reaches five schools in Phuket each year, offering a vital 10-week curriculum that imparts essential swimming skills and water safety knowledge to children. Over the past five years, the Rotary Club of Patong Beach has proudly supported more than 1,000 students through this life-saving initiative, fully funding the program's operations. Link to child swim program: <https://www.rotarypatong.org/page/save-a-child-swim-program> EVENT DETAILS Date: Saturday, November 16, 2024 Venue: Aquella Golf & Country Club Day's Events: 10:00 Registration Opens 11:00 Shotgun Start 17:00 Silent Auction Opens 18:00 Dinner & prizes 21:00 Event Concludes Tickets Golf & Dinner: THB 3300 Sale ends Nov 15, 11:50 PM Ticket type Only Dinner: THB 800 Sale ends Nov 15, 11:50 AM kareneidsvik@gmail.com

SUN17NOV



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Sunday Roast

12PM – 9PM: All you can eat Sunday Roast Buffet Beef, Pork & Capon chicken – Cauliflower, Broccoli, Peas, Carrots, Fried mushrooms, Grilled Tomatoes – Yorkshire pudding – Roasted Potatoes, Mashed Potatoes – Gravy, Mushroom sauce, Horse raddish, Mint Sauce. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 350 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 195 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

MON18NOV



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Monday BBQ Night

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



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WED20NOV



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Wednesday BBQ Night

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FRI22NOV



JOINT CHAMBERS MEMBERS BRIEFING ON
Crafting Tomorrow's Hospitality:
Modernizing Workforce Training in Tourism
Friday 22nd November 2024
17:00 - 18:00 hrs
Courttyard by Marriott
Phuket Town
Free of Charge for AustCham members,
partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members

Members Briefing on 'Crafting Tomorrow's Hospitality'

This event is scheduled to take place between 17.00-18.00 at Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town. MEET OUR SPEAKERS & MODERATOR: Ms Sumi Soorian, Director, Mitha Co. Ltd. as Moderator; Ms Jayne MacDougall, Executive Director of the Phuket Hotels Association; Mr Dary Milani, Pro Vice-Chancellor / Executive Director (Recruitment and International Operations) at La Trobe University; and Mr Stephen Healy, Founder and Managing Director from Nurture Higher Education and Global Academy at Siam University. Bookings - office@austchamthailand.com



JOINT CHAMBERS PHUKET SUNDOWNERS
COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT PHUKET TOWN
22 NOV
18:00 - 21:00 HRS

AustCham Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners

Join us for a wonderful night of making new connections and catching up with familiar faces in the Australian-Thai business community in Phuket at Courtyard by Marriott Phuket Town. Friday, November 22, 2024 - 18:00 - 21:00 hrs. 650 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members, 1,200 THB for non-members. Contact - office@austchamthailand.com

FRI29NOV



FRANK LEGAL & TAX
LIVE Workshop in Phuket
LONG-TERM RESIDENT VISA LTR
FRI 29 Nov 2024 3:00pm - 4:00pm
SAII LAGUNA PHUKET
REGISTER NOW info@franklegaltax.com

MLong-Term Resident Visa Workshop

We are pleased to invite you to our upcoming LTR Visa Workshop in Phuket on November 29, 2024. This event, hosted by FRANK Legal & Tax, will provide key insights into Thailand's Long-Term Residence (LTR) Visa process. Our experts will cover essential details on LTR visa requirements, benefits, and practical application tips. Whether you're considering a long-term stay in Thailand or simply want to understand the opportunities available, this workshop offers valuable information in an engaging setting. Speaker: Mr. Fabian Doppler – Managing Partner at FRANK Legal and Tax. Held at SAii Laguna Phuket from 15:00 - 16:00. Register - info@franklegaltax.com

FRI6DEC



Theatre's Presents
A Christmas Carol
A production by Theatre's
Dec 6, 8, 12, 13, and 15
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Coming to the Junkyard stage in December Theatreix is bringing you its fifth annual panto, the timeless tale by Charles Dickens of the Christmas-hating Ebenezer Scrooge. See A Christmas Carol in all its glory, pantomime-style, a delight for the whole family that will thrill you as it involves you in the action and fill you with Christmas cheer. Get your tickets now for December 6, 8, 12, 13, or 15 shows, starting at 6:30pm. Kids and adults THB 750 per person. Tickets available at junkyardtheatre.com/events



Grow Boating Evening - December 2024

We look forward to seeing you at the Grow Boating Evening at the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar from 5pm. We are delighted to announce that our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Paul Poole (South East Asia) Co., Ltd. an independent marketing consultancy based in Bangkok, Thailand specializing in commercial sponsorship. For more details see paulpoole.co.th There will be a delicious buffet sponsored by the Boardwalk Bistro and Bar for all attendees. Find us on [facebook.com/GrowBoating-Phuket/](https://www.facebook.com/GrowBoating-Phuket/)

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BVI Company No. 1003002
[in voluntary liquidation]

NOTICE is hereby given, in accordance with the BVI Business Companies Act, 2004 that the above named company, is in voluntary liquidation. The voluntary liquidation commenced on 5 November 2024 and Eldon Solomon of Palm Grove House, P.O. Box 438, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands is the voluntary liquidator.

บจก.ออเรียนเทเซีย อินเวสต์मेंท์

BVI Company No. 1003002
[ชำระบัญชีโดยสมัครใจ]

ขอแจ้งให้ทราบ ณ ที่นี้ ตามพระราชบัญญัติบริษัทธุรกิจ BVI ปี 2004 ว่าบริษัทที่มีชื่อข้างต้นอยู่ในสถานะเลิกกิจการโดยสมัครใจ การชำระบัญชีโดยสมัครใจเริ่มมีผลในวันที่ 5 November 2024 and Eldon Solomon of Palm Grove House, P.O. Box 438, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands เป็นผู้ชำระบัญชีโดยสมัครใจ

Dated: 5 November 2024

[Sgd] Eldon Solomon
Voluntary Liquidator

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SKAL PHUKET AGM & MONTHLY DINNER - NOVEMBER

Vincent Delsol, General Manager of Pullman Phuket Panwa Beach Resort, and his team welcomed all Skalleagues and guests for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and monthly Networking dinner for Skal on Nov 7. The AGM, for members only, was held in the Ton Koon Room. Following the AGM, the monthly networking dinner started with members and guests gathering at the Edge Cabana, followed by a buffet dinner at the Edge Beach Club. To find out more visit - phuket.skal.org



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Organised by the International Veterans Association - Phuket (IVA) and held on Sunday, Nov 10, at the Phuket International Church in the Clubhouse of Land & Houses Park. Chalong. Remembrance Day is historically on the 11th hour, on the 11th day of the 11th month, to mark the ending of the World War I and the signing of the Armistice treaty, but the service is traditionally held on the nearest Sunday in order to allow those working to attend and give thanks. Thanks to the choir from HeadStart school, a wonderful performance from the children. After the service a BBQ was held while a many a story was shared over a few cold ones. "They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them."

MotoGP season goes down to final race

MOTO GP

BARCELONA WILL HOST the final race of the MotoGP season this weekend in place of flood-hit Valencia with the championship title well and truly up for grabs.

"MotoGP can now confirm the 2024 curtain closer will be held in Barcelona," organisers Dorna announced on Nov 5.

"We will return to the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, where the world championship will be decided, on the original dates of the season finale, in solidarity with the Community of Valencia."

Barcelona also hosted the Catalunya MotoGP in May where defending champion Francesco Bagnaia powered to victory ahead of title rival Jorge Martin.

Riders requested to race at a venue other than Valencia out of respect for the victims of the worst natural disaster in Spain's recent history.

A minute's silence was held in Sepang ahead of the Malaysia MotoGP on Nov 3



Bagnaia celebrates victory in Malaysia. Photo: AFP

to remember the more than 200 people who were killed by the recent floods after heavy rain hit the region.

The title will go down to the wire this weekend (Nov 15-17) between Spanish championship leader Martin and two-time defending champion Bagnaia of Italy.

Bagnaia won a thrilling race in Malaysia after a ding-dong battle with Martin to take the pair's title battle to the final race of the season.

Martin's lead was cut to 24 points at the Petronas Sepang International Circuit after he finished second behind Bagnaia, with 37 up for grabs in the final round in Barcelona. AFP

Kunlavut snaps title drought

BADMINTON

Bangkok Post

Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn ended his long title drought in style as he carved out an impressive victory over China's Wang Zhengxing in the men's singles final of the US\$240,000 (B8.2 million) Korea Masters in Iksan City last Sunday (Nov 10).

The top-seeded Thai was in fantastic form as he dominated Wang 21-18, 21-18 in the 50-minute title showdown of the BWF World Tour Super 300 event.

The Thai top seed had entered the final in the wake of a 21-12, 22-20 semi-final triumph over Kiran George of India on Saturday. Wang had reached the title decider by eliminating South Korea's Cho Geon-Yeop 9-21, 21-15, 21-10.

On his way to the final, Kunlavut had dropped only one game, a feat matched by Wang.

Before his success in Iksan City, world champion Kunlavut had runner-up finishes at the French Open and the 2024 Paris Olympic Games this year. His last title came at the World Championships in August 2023.

In the women's singles final, second seed Putri Kusuma Wardani became the first Indonesian to win a Korea Masters title.

Wardani overwhelmed Han Qianxi of China, who was riding a tide of



Vitidsarn after winning the men's singles title at the Korea Masters. Photo: Supplied

confidence following her victory over Japanese top seed Tomoka Miyazaki in the semi-finals, 21-14, 21-14 in 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, Malaysian men's doubles pair Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik claimed their first title of the year at the tournament.

The world No.6 duo fought back to beat South Koreans Jin Yong and Kim Won-Ho 21-23, 21-19, 21-14 in the 66-minute final.

It also marked Chia and Wooi Yik's second career World Tour title following their Denmark Open victory last year.

The title was also a first for Malaysia at the Super 300 event since its inception in 2007.

China's Guo Xinwa and Chen Fanghui were also in dominating form as they defeated Indonesia's Dejan

Ferdinansyah and Gloria Emanuelle Widjaja in the mixed doubles final.

Guo and Chen needed only 31 minutes to wrap up the title showdown 21-10, 21-12, exploiting the defensive errors committed by their Indonesian opponents.

There was success for the host nation as well as Kim Hyi-Jeong and Kong Hee-Yong prevailed in a marathon that lasted almost an hour and a half to capture the women's doubles title.

The Korean pair had to rally from a game down after conceding the gruelling opener 23-21 to Chinese pair of Li Yijing and Luo Xumin.

Kim and Kong showed class and composure in winning the next two games 21-16, 21-18 to secure the only title of the tournament for South Korea.

Thai duo shine at snooker championships

SNOOKER

THAILAND CUEISTS returned home last Sunday (Nov 10) with a couple of trophies from the world amateur snooker championships in Doha.

Ploychompoo Laikiatphong won the women's singles title and former Asian champion Issara Kachaiwong made a triumphant return to the international stage with a victory in the masters (over-40) event.

Ploychompoo had a tough task as she faced Hong Kong's experienced star Ng On Yee in the title showdown of the International Billiards and Snooker Federation-organised tournament.

The young Thai found herself trailing Ng 2-0 in the best-of-five frames final, before gallantly fighting back to pull off a 3-2 (37-75, 19-62, 75-36, 63-62, 91-34) victory.

Issara was up against Afghanistan's Saleh Moahmmad in the



Ploychompoo. Photo: Bangkok Post

masters final and the clash between two of the best potters the game has ever seen provided a lot of fireworks.

The Chanthaburi native eventually prevailed, winning the riveting encounter 4-3 (73-7, 94-8, 41-62, 105-7, 20-67, 24-60, 65-15).

"I have been away from the international circuit for almost six years. I was determined to do well in this event and make the

most of the opportunity," Issara said following his victory.

"I was under a considerable amount of pressure but I am glad that it ended well."

Billiard Sports Association of Thailand president Suntorn Jarumon praised the performances of both Ploychompoo and Issara and lauded their fighting spirit. Bangkok Post

'Iron Man' eyes Takeru showdown

MMA

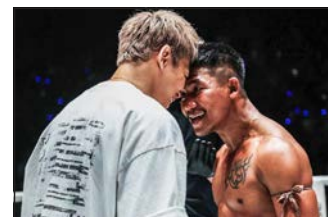
RODTANG JITMUANGNON is planning a showdown with Japanese kickboxing icon Takeru Segawa despite losing his ONE Championship flyweight Muay Thai title on the scale after missing weight for ONE 269.

"The Iron Man", who had held the belt for over five years, passed a hydration test on his first attempt at the Nov 7 official weigh-ins in Bangkok, but came in heavy at 135.5lbs.

He returned later in the official three-hour window but failed hydration on his second attempt, and declined to check his weight.

The 27-year-old Thai – who has missed weight multiple times during his career in ONE, including his most recent fight in June – was left in tears outside the weigh-in room at the host Best Western Plus Wanda Grand hotel.

The co-main event still went ahead at Lumpinee Stadium last Friday (Nov 8) with Rodtang easing to a unanimous decision win against Jacob Smith, who was still eligible to win the



Takeru (left) and Rodtang clash in the ring after the Thai had defeated Jacob Smith on Nov 8. Photo: Bangkok Post

now vacant flyweight Muay Thai title.

"I feel sad that I lost the belt on the scale. But I will continue, and get that belt back, and return to my throne soon," Rodtang said after his win.

The blunder had drawn fierce criticism from fans on social media, but the 27-year-old turned on the charm during a dominant display against Smith, to start winning some of them back over, at least.

After a hug from his mother on his way to the ring, Rodtang went through his whole repertoire of tricks – smiling and dancing, dropping his hands and goading Smith to take his best shot, and even kissing referee Olivier Coste on the cheek after being admonished for an

infraction, which the crowd happily lapped up.

There was a skirmish after the fight when Takeru ran into the ring to confront Rodtang.

The two rivals butted heads before Takeru – who had watched the fight from ringside – quickly departed, suggesting their long-awaited fight will finally take place early next year.

"I want to face Takeru," Rodtang said backstage during the post fight press conference.

"Yes, I almost started another match right there in the ring, and I think that it is time now that I have to face Takeru.

"I think this is the fight everybody is expecting, and hopefully Khun Chatri [Sityodtong] will give me this fight soon."

Takeru said he is confident of victory – and another knockout – after registering his first finish in ONE in September.

The pair had enjoyed a staredown in the ring then, too, after Takeru climbed off the canvas to defeat Myanmar's Thant Zin at ONE Friday Fights 81 in the same stadium. Bangkok Post

Man City slump continues

FOOTBALL

AFP

Manchester City slumped to a fourth consecutive defeat after blowing the lead to lose 2-1 at Brighton, allowing Liverpool to move five points clear at the top of the Premier League with a 2-0 win against Aston Villa last Saturday (Nov 9).

City had not suffered defeat in the league for nearly a year prior to losing at Bournemouth a week earlier.

But after also exiting the League Cup to Tottenham and being on the end of a 4-1 thrashing by Sporting Lisbon in the Champions League, Pep Guardiola has lost four straight matches for the first time in his illustrious managerial career.

City took the lead through Erling Haaland before Brighton substitutes Joao Pedro and Matt O'Riley scored the decisive goals for the Seagulls.

"We are not able to do 90 minutes right now. Four defeats in a row. We have to change things quick," Guardiola said.

"Maybe after seven years winning six Premier Leagues, maybe one year another team deserves it."

Liverpool kicked off at Anfield just 30 minutes later and quickly capitalised on City's latest slip with Mohamed Salah setting up Darwin Nunez for the opener before scoring himself shortly after.

It confirmed Liverpool's ninth win



Brighton's Matt O'Riley scores the winner against Manchester City. Photo: AFP

in 11 league games and 15th victory in 17 matches in all competitions since Arne Slot took over from Jurgen Klopp as manager, while Villa have slumped to eighth place after losing their last four games in all competitions.

Arsenal and Chelsea are nine points behind Liverpool after their 1-1 draw on Sunday, with returning Gunners captain Martin Odegaard setting up Gabriel Martinelli to open the scoring before Pedro Neto equalised with a long distance strike.

A share of the spoils sees the Blues remain ahead of Arsenal on goal difference as both sides move into the top four.

Nottingham Forest dropped out of the top four following a 3-1 home loss to Newcastle, while Ipswich stunned Tottenham to claim a 2-1 win, their first this season since returning to the

Premier League and since their last time in the top flight 22 years ago.

Manchester United signed off Ruud van Nistelrooy's temporary stint in charge with a 3-0 win over Leicester, with Ruben Amorim set to takeover following the upcoming international break.

Elsewhere, Wolves ended a wait since April for a Premier League win by beating fellow strugglers Southampton 2-0 to move off the foot of the table, as Fulham moved into seventh by inflicting more misery on Crystal Palace with an impressive 2-0 win at Selhurst Park.

Yoane Wissa scored a brace as Brentford twice came from behind to beat Bournemouth 3-2, while West Ham and Everton did little to quell the discontent among both fanbases in a drab 0-0 draw.



Masatada Ishii (right). Photo: Bangkok Post

Ishii names five newcomers in squad

FOOTBALL

THAILAND COACH-Masatada Ishii has called up 23 players for the two warm-up matches against Lebanon and Laos during the FIFA Day break this week.

Five players have received their first call-ups to the full international squad while some of the biggest names such as Chanathip Songkrasin, Sasalak Haiprakhon, Supachok Sarachat, Supachai Chaideed, Jaroensak Wonggorn, Patiwat Khammai and Jonathan Khemdee have been left out.

Sukhothai's Saringkan Promsupa, Uthai Thani's Thitathorn Aksornsri, Khon Kaen's Chitsanupong Choti, Buriram's Seksan Ratree and Prachuap's Panthamit Praphan are the five new

comers that Ishii has called up.

"Some of these 23 players will play in the Asean Championship next month," Japanese coach Ishii explained.

"The players that did not make the team have obligations with their clubs next month, so we could not call them up this time and we understand the situation very well.

"But this is also an opportunity for these new players to show their potential and prove that they can become national team players in the future," added Ishii.

At time of press, Thailand were due to play Lebanon yesterday (Nov 14) before they take on Laos on Sunday (Nov 17).

Both matches are being played at Thammasat Stadium in Pathum Thani and will kick off at 7:30pm. Bangkok Post

Free-flying Eagles swoop to ground the Lobsters

FOOTBALL

ARRIVING AT KRABI PROVINCIAL Stadium last Saturday (Nov 9) to discover the match had been brought forward by 30 minutes without any prior notification was perhaps an ominous sign of things to come for Phuket Andaman FC (PAFC) as they fell to a 2-0 defeat to Krabi FC.

Despite the unexpected change, PAFC started brightly but failed to capitalise on the various chances made and it was soon clear that something was amiss within their ranks.

The team lacked the cohesion and fluidity displayed in Coach Tum's first three games in charge as attempts to play out from the back were often thwarted by their lack of height and a midfield that seemed disengaged from the game plan.

Krabi capitalised on PAFC's disarray, exposing the vulnerabilities in the opposition's defence with a fluency and understanding that the visitors sorely lacked, although the opening goal in the 32nd minute stemmed from a debatable non-call by the referee after Bebe was clearly fouled in the build-up.

The goal deflated PAFC and, despite creating further chances, the midfield continued to operate too deep, leaving the attacking trio isolated. Winger Game



Photo: Supplied

and midfielder Petch were particularly ineffective, struggling to make any impact on the game.

The second half mirrored the first, with Krabi continuing to dominate midfield and create chances before scoring the decisive second goal in the 77th minute. PAFC did create several chances of their own but they were unable to convert.

The result leaves PAFC ninth in the 12-team table.

The team now faces a battle against relegation and reinforcements are urgently needed, particularly in central midfield and attack. While the three foreign players bring attacking flair, the lack of a dominant central midfielder and a proven goalscorer is a glaring weakness.

Next up is a home game against bottom club Ranong United tomorrow (Nov 16, kick-off 3:30pm) before a trip to Surat Thani the following week. Victories in both games are essential to lift the team's morale and provide a buffer from the relegation zone. Simon Causton

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22 NOV
18:00 - 21:00 HRS

JOINT CHAMBERS

PHUKET

SUNDOWNERS

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Lobster Men struggle at Krabi > p15

MAKING WAVES

Junior sailors shine at O'pen Cup

Photo: Scott Duncanson

SAILING

Scott Duncanson

Near perfect winds and weather conditions greeted 17 junior sailors participating in the 3rd O'pen Skiff Cup hosted by the Phuket Yacht Club in Chalong Bay on the weekend of Nov 2-3.

The two-day sailing event focused on 'fun with a hint of competition' and was a huge success with the young sailors between 9-14 years of age.

A variety of courses included the traditional windward-leeward to adventure courses where cap-sizes and 360-degree turns are compulsory, and of course everyone's favourite sailing under the Bridge of Doom, gave every

sailor an opportunity to demonstrate skills unique to the O'pen Skiff class.

Two age group divisions, the under 11s and under 15s, offered plenty of opportunity for mentoring and building friendships without a mobile phone or electronic device in sight.

Five races were scheduled each day and by the 10th and final race on Sunday afternoon it was the local Thai sailors who came to the fore with Putthison Limpanon winning overall in the under 15 division, closely followed by Alex Kramer and Maylisse Mangin.

Meanwhile, in the under 11 age group, first place went to Adrias Kosuge, as Pilou Mangin secured second and Alicia Siao registered third.

MOMENTUM

Formerly known as the 'O'pen Bic', the class has continued to grow in Phuket and now has a fleet of more than 40 boats on the island.

United World College in the north of the island, SAii Laguna Phuket centrally and Phuket Yacht Club in the south regularly operate 'learn to sail' courses for all levels of competency, from outright beginners with no previous sailing experience through intermediate and advanced sailors.

"We officially launched the class back in 2018-19 but before we could gain any sort of momentum that infamous pandemic arrived and stalled progress significantly," commented O'pen Skiff class president for

Thailand and Phuket Yacht Club Sailing School, Scott Duncanson.

"Since then, like most forms of sailing on the island, it's been a slow recovery back but with the addition of the new SAii Laguna Phuket location we're well placed to make junior and youth sailing accessible for everybody, either resident or visiting the island on holidays," he added.

COURSES

The next event on the junior sailing calendar is Phuket King's Cup Regatta which takes place between Nov 30 and Dec 6, while performance sailing courses are operating every weekend for children between the ages of 7-15. Weekday private sessions are also available and the school is open throughout the school holidays.

Recognising the importance of non-competitive sailing, O'pen Skiff students have the choice of Performance or Adventure Sailing learning pathways with the latter gaining experience through short passage sailing and trips with their families to nearby east coast islands and bays.

Parents are encouraged and invited to visit the Phuket Yacht Club, talk to the coaches and find out what sailing is all about.

Not letting kids have all the fun, adults may also learn to sail in the larger class dinghies, while the opportunity to learn as a family is also available. There really is something for everyone, of every age.

For more information please visit the Phuket Yacht Club Facebook page.

Spartan race sees big turnout in hot conditions at Blue Tree

FITNESS

THE HUGE POPULAR Spartan Thailand race took place in sweltering hot conditions last weekend (Nov 9-10) at Blue Tree Phuket, attracting over 5,000 fitness enthusiasts.

Returning for its third year, the '2024 Phuket Spartan Tri-fecta Weekend and Hurricane Heat 12HR Presented by Blue Tree Phuket' saw participants compete in a series of gruelling, obstacle-themed challenges across the two days.

The series of obstacle races

varied in distance and difficulty, ranging from 3 miles to marathon distances, with obstacles such as off-road running, mud wading, zip-lining, net climbing and wall climbing.

This year also saw the launch of the 'Young Spartans Running Race' which was enthusiastically embraced by children between the ages of 4-14, as well as the 12-Hour Hurricane Heat, which was staged for the first time in Thailand.

The event was launched at 7am on Saturday (Nov 9) by Phuket Vice Governor Samawit Suphanphai, who was joined by:

Thanawut Petchchara, Director of the Phuket office of the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT); Lertchai Wangtrakuldee, Director of the Phuket office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT); Boonterm Wimonphan, Deputy Mayor of Chong Talay, in addition to selected representatives from various public and private sector organisations, including official partner bodies supporting the event.

Vice Governor Samawit explained in his opening remarks that the event was organised in collaboration with the Phuket

office of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and Run Rio Thailand.

Phuket was honoured to welcome so many international athletes to compete in the event, which organisers hope can become established as the leading event of its kind in the ASEAN region, he added.

It is also a very important sports tourism related event that further helps raise the profile of Phuket, while generating income for local businesses and the province. With over 5,000 athletes competing and the same number attending in a variety of



Photo: Spartan Thailand Facebook

capacities related to the event, an estimated B300 million overall spend was anticipated across the weekend, Vice Governor Samawit said.

More information on the Spartan Thailand series can be found at their Facebook page.

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