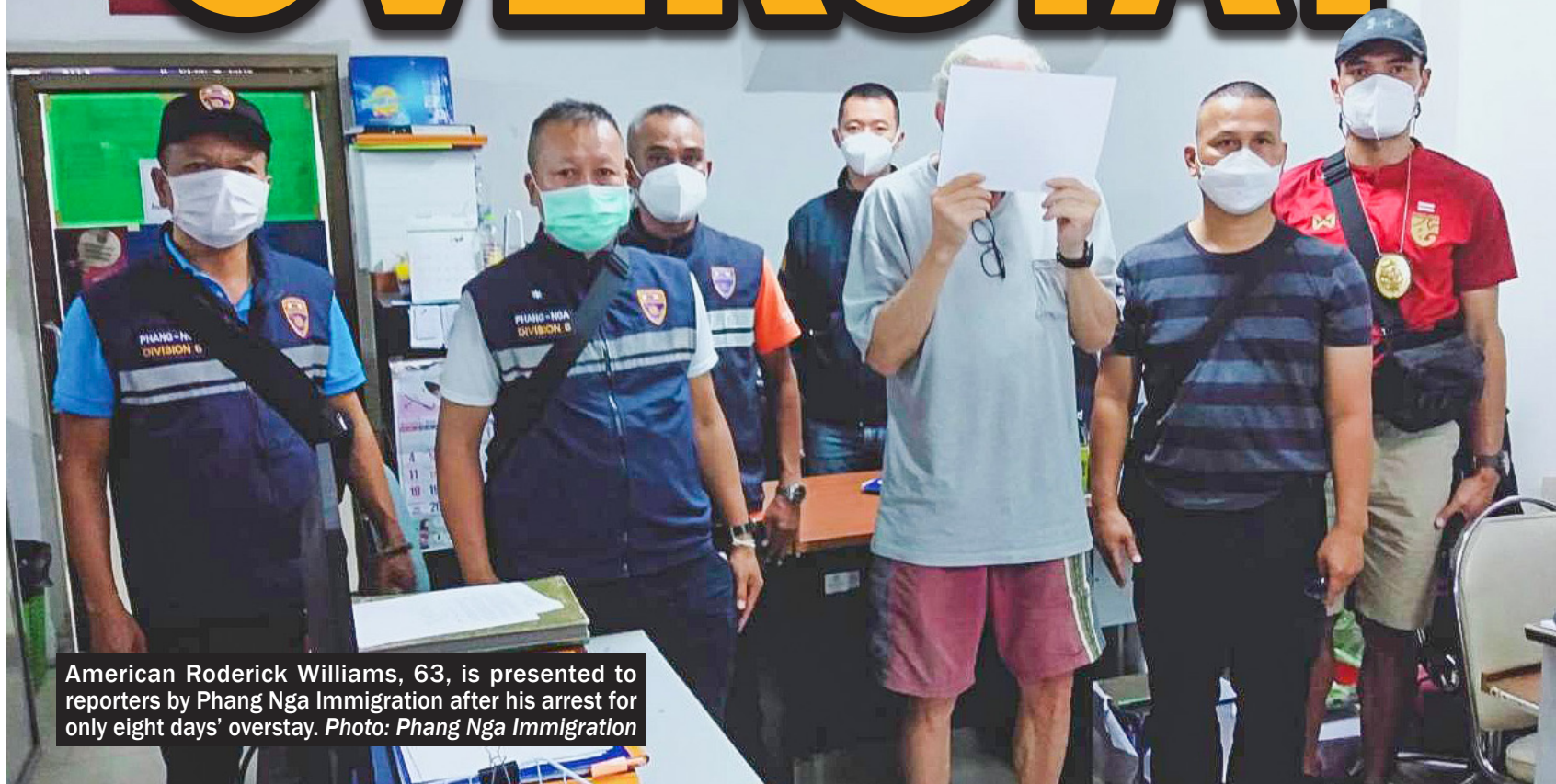


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OVERSTAY



American Roderick Williams, 63, is presented to reporters by Phang Nga Immigration after his arrest for only eight days' overstay. Photo: Phang Nga Immigration

ARRESTS BY NON-PHUKET IMMIGRATION OFFICERS QUESTION 90 DAYS' GRACE

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Arrests of foreigners in Phuket by officers from Phang Nga Immigration have thrown into doubt the 90 days' grace foreigners used to have to surrender for overstay.

Immigration officers from Phang Nga last week arrested two Americans, both in their 60s, for overstaying their permits to stay in the country.

Michael Scott Drannan, 63, was arrested at his home in Moo 2, Thung Maphrao, in Thai Mueang District, Phang Nga, on Dec 4. Mr Drannan

had overstayed his permit to stay by 745 days, officers said.

Mr Drannan had arrived in 2020 before the COVID-19 tourism shutdown. His most recent permit to stay expired on Nov 18, 2020, officers explained.

He lived at his home, growing vegetables on a 30-rai plot with a Thai lady leaving the house to buy essentials for him. He had not left his home for two years, officers explained.

Mr Drannan was aware that he had broken Immigration requirements by not applying for an extension to his permit to stay, officers said.

Mr Drannan was taken into cus-

tody and charged with overstay in the country. The length of the overstay now meant he faced deportation, officers noted.

However, the other American arrested, Roderick Eugene Williams, also 63 years old and also a resident of Moo 2, Thung Maphrao, Thai Mueang, Phang Nga, was taken into custody at a rented room in Moo 7, Rawai, also on Dec 4, officers continued.

Mr Williams had arrived in Phuket on Dec 1, said Phang Nga Immigration. His most recent permit to stay allowed him to stay in the country until Nov 26, 2022, officers noted.

As he was arrested on Dec 4, Mr Williams had overstayed by eight days, officers said.

Mr Williams was taken to Chalong Police Station and charged for overstaying.

Of note, officers from Phang Nga had travelled to Phuket specifically to arrest Mr Williams over the weekend for the Dec 5 holiday, a major holiday throughout the country.

A long-term Phuket expat involved in Mr Williams' case told *The Phuket News* that the Chalong Police officers who placed Mr Williams under arrest, doing so under direction from Phang Nga Immigration, were a little...

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PHUKET'S QUALITY TILE BOUTIQUE



Turtles return to lay eggs at Mai Khao > p5

Arrests for overstay cross lines

Continued from page 1
...confused as to why Mr Williams was being arrested, considering he had overstayed only eight days.

Chalong Police granted Mr Williams release on B20,000 bail so he could leave detention at the police station for dietary reasons.

However, that lasted only 48 hours as Mr Williams was ordered to be deported by the Phuket Provincial Court on Dec 6. He was taken back into custody and held at the detention centre at Phuket Immigration Office in Phuket Town.

As of Tuesday this week (Dec 13), Mr Williams was still being held at Phuket Immigration detention, waiting for a flight back to the US.

Of note, Mr Williams told *The Phuket News* that contrary to information given by Phang Nga Immigration, he actually arrived in Phuket on Nov 10. He had stayed at three different hotels, which are supposed to report him checking in at each hotel, before he was arrested at the rental unit on Dec 4.

RETURN VISIT
The officers from Phang

Warning of Overstay

Starting from 20 March 2016, the aliens overstaying in the Kingdom of Thailand for a long period will be banned from re-entering the country as follows;

In case of aliens surrendering to the authorities

Period of Overstay	Period of banning from re-entering Thailand
More than 90 days	1 year
More than 1 year	3 years
More than 3 years	5 years
More than 5 years	10 years

In case of aliens being arrested and prosecuted

Period of Overstay	Period of banning from re-entering Thailand
Less than or 1 year	5 years
More than 1 year	10 years

Remark:
The prohibition of entry starts from the day alien departs from the country.
This rule does not apply to -
1) An alien who departs the country before the age of 18.
2) An alien who departs the country before enforcing this rule.

[More details >>](#)

แจ้งผู้ดูแล / Enter Main Site

"Good guys in, Bad guys out"
Pol.Lt.Gen. Nathathorn Prousoontorn
Commissioner of Immigration Bureau

Image: Royal Thai Embassy, Brussels – Mission of Thailand to the European Union.

Nga Immigration returned to Phuket last Sunday (Dec 11) to arrest 30-year-old South African national Richard Reynolds in Tambon Thepkrasattri, Thalang, for overstaying in the country for 196 days.

The arrest, at a housing estate in Moo 4 Thepkrasattri, was led by officers from Phang Nga Immigration, not Phuket Immigration, reported Thai national daily *Matichon*.

At time of press, Phuket

police, immigration and all other officials had yet to publicly recognise the arrests of Mr Reynolds and Mr Williams in Phuket.

According to the *Matichon* report, Phang Nga Immigration said they were notified by Chiang Rai Immigration that Mr Reynolds had overstayed in the country.

Acting on that information, Phang Nga Immigration contacted the Cyber Crime

Investigation Bureau (CCIB) – not any Phuket officials – and learned that Mr Reynolds was staying on the island.

Oddly, the report did not mark that any immigration or police officers from Phuket were present for the arrest, a standard requirement for officers making arrests outside their usual areas of jurisdiction.

According to the report, Mr Reynolds' permit to stay in Thailand, issued for a Non-

Immigrant 'B' visa, which allowed him to work in the country, expired on May 27.

Mr Reynolds was reported to have been taken to Thalang Police Station and charged for illegally staying in the country.

According to the *Matichon* report, Mr Reynolds told police that he could not afford to return home.

CRACKDOWN

The arrest of the three foreigners comes amid a crackdown on people staying in Thailand illegally. While the crackdown has not been officially announced, reports of foreigners throughout the country being arrested for breach of immigration rules have continued almost daily.

Under Immigration Bureau regulations, the fine for overstay is B500 a day.

However, under the 'Good guys in, Bad guys out' policy brought into effect in 2016, foreigners arrested for overstay of less than one year still face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for five years.

Foreigners arrested for overstay of more than one year

face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for 10 years.

Foreigners who surrender to officials for overstay face "more lenient" punishment. In addition to the B500 a day fine, foreigners who surrender for overstay of more than 90 days but less than one year face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for one year.

Foreigners who surrender for overstay of more than one year but less than three years face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for three years.

Foreigners who surrender for overstay of more than three years but less than five years face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for five years.

Foreigners who surrender for overstay of more than five years face deportation and being blacklisted from re-entering the country for 10 years.

According to the policy announced at the time, there is no deportation or blacklisting for re-entry for periods of overstay of less than 90 days.

Patong Hill road hoped to fully open by Christmas

THE WORKS REPAIRING the landslide site on Patong Hill are hoped to be complete and the road (Phra Baramree Rd, Route 4029) opened to all vehicles by Christmas Day, officials have revealed.

The announcement followed Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob inspecting the work underway on the hill earlier this month.

Currently the project to rebuild and reinforce the embankment where the landslide occurred in October is about 70% complete, said an official report of Mr Saksayam's visit.

"It is expected to be completed and fully returned to the public around December 25," the report noted.

As of last Thursday (Dec 8), buses and trucks with no more than 10 wheels have been allowed to travel eastbound over Patong Hill,



The first bus to make its way down Patong Hill stands at the ready on Dec 8. Photo: PR Phuket

from Patong to Kathu.

In addition, currently motorbikes and "small vehicles" (cars, pickup trucks and passenger vans) are allowed to travel over the hill and past the landslide site in both directions between Patong and Kathu.

All other vehicles must access Patong via either Kamala to the north of Patong, or via Chalong-Kata-Karon to the south of Patong.

The opening of the road down the hill to vehicles with no more than 10 wheels came into effect at 10am on Dec 8 following a decision by key officials the previous day.

Present at the meeting held

at the site of the landslide site on the hill were Patong Mayor Chalerm Sak Maneesri, Kathu Mayor Chai-anan Sutthikul, Kathu District Chief Siwat Rawarangkul and the superintendents of Patong and Kathu Police Stations.

"The contractor had improved and repaired the area by compacting the soil and rocks at the same level as the road surface, as well as solving other problems in accordance with the established plan. The area is therefore safe and strong to a certain extent that large vehicles can use the way," said an official report of the meeting.

"However, the traffic lanes on the way up [the hill] from Kathu to Patong cannot be widened because that area is still under construction," the report added.

A further concern about larger vehicles being allowed up the hill, from Kathu to Patong, was that larger vehicles that had "limitations in power efficiency" could encounter problems climbing up the hill, and cause "more safety and traffic problems", the report noted.

The repairs are on schedule to be completed by the target date Dec 25, said the report.

Larger vehicles will be allowed up the hill only after sufficient repairs to the landslide site and the road had been made, officials assured.

Until then, as is currently allowed, only motorbikes and "small vehicles" – cars, pickups and passenger vans – will be allowed to continue travelling up the hill towards Patong, the report concluded.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong last week assured that safety will be the top criteria in any decisions made in allowing any vehicles to use the main road over Patong Hill.

SPARE ROAD

The privately built road up Patong Hill from opposite Patong Go Kart on Phra Baramree Rd in Kathu to the Chao Por Sua Temple ("Tiger Temple") at the top of hill officially opened on Dec 5.

The road, which has yet to be designated an official name, opened to traffic as part of the "test phase" on Nov 29.

Only motorbikes and 'small vehicles' – namely cars, pickup trucks and passenger vans – are allowed to use the road. Heavy vehicles are not permitted to use the road.

LOCAL PROGRESS

While in Phuket, Mr Saksayam attended a meeting at Phuket airport chaired by Phuket

Vice Governor Amnuay Pinsuwan to update him on the status of the transport mega-projects slated to start on the island next year.

The projects listed as discussed at the meeting were the Phuket light rail, the Kathu-Patong Expressway Project (Patong Tunnel), the Muang Mai-Koh Kaew-Kathu Special Route ("expressway") Project and the underpass project at the Heroines Monument.

Joining Mr Saksayam for the meeting were representatives from the Department of Highways, the Department of Rural Roads, the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT) the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA) and the Marine Department.

No details of the progress of any of the projects were included in the official report, other than they were still proceeding according to schedule. *The Phuket News*

Patong Beach vendors want more sand space

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Preechawude 'Prab' Keesin has called for the areas on Patong Beach where beach operators may provide services to tourists to be doubled, from the 10% of the total beach area allowed now to 20% of the total beach area.

Mr Preechawude, head of the Pisona Group of companies in Patong and Founder of the Patong Development Foundation, made the announcement at a Dec 6 meeting at Patong Municipality, where he was re-elected to another term as President of the Patong Beach Umbrella Bed Community Enterprise.

The Patong Beach Umbrella Bed Community Enterprise is the organisation that coordinates the operations of the sunbed rental operators on Patong Beach.

"In the past, members of the Patong Beach Umbrella Bed Community Enterprise joined together to do social activities and conserve the environment, such as picking up trash on the beach and so



Beach umbrella and sunbed rental operators are calling for more area on Patong Beach to serve tourists. Photo: PR Phuket

on," Mr Preechawude said.

"We will continue to take care of social matters and the environment as before by expanding the green areas along the beachfront by planting morning glory and trees in the areas designated for beach umbrellas [sunbeds]," he continued.

"This will be done in the five zones [where beach operators are allowed to operate] to conserve nature, and for the benefit of the enterprise," he added.

The Patong Beach Umbrella Bed Community Enterprise is about to submit a formal request to increase the size of the areas where beach operators, including massage service providers, may operate, Mr Preechawude said.

The aim of the expansion is to "be more consistent with the needs of tourists", he noted.

"The original plan allows for 10% of the total beach area to be used. For this high season, we will request to expand the area to 20% so the

bed umbrellas [sunbeds] will be sufficient to meet the needs of tourists," Mr Preechawude said.

Mr Preechawude also responded to the recent conflict with beach massage operators, who accused sunbed rental operators of expanding their area of operations within the beach operator zone on Patong Beach near the end of Bangla Rd.

According to Mr Preechawude, the problem was with people taking advantage of the sunbeds during the night, after the sunbed operators had gone home.

The culprits were "a group of occupations that seize the opportunity to work on the beach at night", he said.

"These matters must be taken seriously to ensure orderliness and create a good image of Patong Beach," Mr Preechawude said.

"Because Patong Beach must be a beautiful, clean and safe beach, which will build confidence in security and to create a good image for Patong Beach and Phuket in the future," he concluded.

Night patrols target fireworks, lanterns

PATROLS ALONG PATONG Beach at night by security personnel are continuing, with officials reporting that the ongoing patrols are to crack down on people illegally selling or using fireworks and sky lanterns on the beach, and people causing "mischief".

Members of the Kathu branch of the Volunteer Defense Corps (OrSor) paramilitary organisation are conducting the patrols, under orders by Kathu District Chief Siwat Rawaengkul "to take care of the safety of tourists", noted an official report of patrols.

The patrols are also to curtail "the movement of individuals prone to violence or groups of people to act in a symbolic way that may have consequences affecting the credibility of Phuket's tourism", the report noted.

The patrols began last week as a measure to crack down on drugs, illegal fireworks and "troublemakers" and any other activities that were deemed to constitute a danger to the public.

OrSor personnel seized illegal fireworks and sky lanterns at four locations on Patong beach on Dec 7. Of



Photo: PR Phuket

the contraband bound, some of the fireworks had already been lit, Mr Siwat noted.

No people associated with the illegal fireworks and sky lanterns were found, but officers will continue to track them down, Mr Siwat added.

"I would like to publicly admonish these people who bring fireworks and sky lanterns, or any other similar object, to sell on the beach – and those who buy them and bring them to the beach themselves," Mr Siwat said.

"The beach is a public place and the penalty for doing this is a fine of up to B60,000 or up to three years' imprisonment, or both," he said.

"Officers will conduct intensive checks on the beach every day," Mr Siwat warned.

Local business owners and members of the public were urged to report any suspicious items or activities in their area.

The Phuket News

Phuket officials promise to oppose corruption, reject gifts

PATONG OFFICIALS LED BY MAYOR Chalernsak Maneesri have vowed to fight corruption and in particular to reject all sorts of gifts as they can also be a form of bribe. The vow was announced as Thailand marked its Anti-Corruption Day 2022 on Dec 9.

Mayor Chalernsak and fellow city officials declared their intention to prevent and suppress corruption as well as to "jointly promote the corporate culture of honesty", said a report by PR Patong.

"Patong Municipality must be an organisation where all officers refrain from accepting or giving gifts and symbolic presents for performing their duty, including during festivals and any other special occasions," the report said.

The main Anti-Corruption Day event on Dec 9 was attended by representatives from all local agencies, including the Phuket Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (OrBorJor, or PPAO).

The main assembly at the so called Phuket Auditorium at Phuket Provincial hall was led by Governor Narong Woonciew and PPAO President Rewat Areerob.

The official report by PPAO did not mention any specific vows made by the participants. Civil servants from Patong were the first and for some time the only ones to be precise in what exactly they promised to aim not to do.

A later report posted by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket) at around 7pm said that the 'No Gift Policy' applies to all government officials on the island.



Phuket officials vowed to be honest and to fight corruption. Photo: PPAO

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, Thailand was the 110th least corrupt country in the world out of 18 reviewed in 2021. Thailand scored 35 points out of 100 in the most recent survey. The 2022 report is expected in January.

Several countries scored the same number of points as Thailand in the 2021 index. They were Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mongolia and Malawi.

"The top performers in Asia Pacific are New Zealand (CPI score: 88), Singapore (85) and Hong Kong (76). However, most countries sit firmly below the global average of 43. This includes three countries with some of the lowest scores in the world: Cambodia (23), Afghanistan (16) and North Korea (16)," said Transparency International report on corruption in Asia Pacific in 2021.

The report did not say anything specifically positive or negative about Thailand. The country is considered to be among those where "the inertia on the index continues."

The Phuket News

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The Phuket News

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PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

www.foreca.com

FRI DECEMBER 16



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Wind 11 m/s

SAT DECEMBER 17



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

SUN DECEMBER 18



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 11 m/s

MON DECEMBER 19



High: +31°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE DECEMBER 20



High: +32°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

WED DECEMBER 21



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

THU DECEMBER 22



High: +30°

Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

Fire guts tour boat

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Investigation is underway into the fire that badly damaged a tour boat at Khlong Tha Chin Port in Ratsada on Dec 11. No injuries or deaths were reported. The damage was estimated at B10 million.

Firefighters from Phuket City Municipality and Ratsada Municipality were informed of the incident on the east coast of Phuket at around 6am, the Phuket Info Center reported.

Five fire engines rushed to Khlong Tha Chin Port where the large tour boat *Sea Angel Beyond* was on fire. Sea vessels with water pumps also hurried to the scene as well as local boat operators who joined emergency personnel in spraying water on the fire which was soon extinguished.

It was reported that the blaze started on the bow of *Sea Angel Beyond* and rescue workers were worried that the fire may reach fuel tanks. That did not happen.



The fire badly damaged the 'Sea Angel Beyond', a 49.5-metre-long tour boat designed to carry 490 passengers. Photo: PPAO

One crewman was sleeping on board at the time of the incident. He was not injured.

Phuket firefighters and their local helpers also succeeded in preventing

the fire from spreading to other vessels moored in numbers at the port at the time. As extra precaution *Sea Angel Beyond* was towed away for safety.

Phuket Vice Governor Amnuay

Pinsuwan and Mueang Phuket District Chief Suwit Suriyawong rushed to the scene after having been informed of the fire. At the port they were joined by officers from Phuket Marine Police, Mueang Phuket Provincial Police Station, Phuket Marine Office and other relevant agencies.

At time of press, it had yet to be confirmed what caused the fire on board of the B30mn vessel, which was reported to be the largest boat in the private fleet of a "major cruise company in the area". The owner of the boat is named in the reports as Sea Angel Cruise Co Ltd.

The preliminary investigation blamed the fire on a malfunction in some electrical system, yet the full investigation had yet to be concluded.

Sea Angel Beyond is a 49.5-metre-long steel boat designed to carry 490 passengers and 29 crew members. The boat is powered by three diesel engines.

It was registered in Phuket in November 2016. The licence was renewed on Nov 25, 2022.

42 snakes bagged in 19 days

RESCUE WORKERS FROM the Kusoldharm Foundation have delivered 42 snakes that had been caught in residential areas to the Khao Phra Thaeo Nature and Wildlife Education Center in Thalang.

The snakes were collected by rescue workers in just a 19-day period, with many of them caught by rescue workers from the Muang Mai branch of the Kusoldharm Foundation, reported the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

Of the 42 snakes delivered on Dec 7, 41 were in bags, with one large snake delivered in a cage.

The snakes will be handed over to the Phang Nga Wildlife Nursery Station, the report confirmed.

The decision was made in early 2021 for all snakes caught in Phuket to be taken off-island as a precaution to prevent snakes released into the wild from re-entering populated areas.

Since then, snakes caught in Phuket have been handed over to the Phang Nga Wildlife Nursery Station or the Klong Saeng Wildlife Research Station in Surat Thani.

Following heavy rains across the island this year, many snakes have been caught since October, including a cobra recently caught at a home in Rawai and a large constrictor near the Heroines Monument.



Photo: PR Phuket

Following the cobra caught in Rawai, Rawai Municipality urged people who find a snake in their home to call the Rawai Municipality Disaster Prevention and Mitigation officers at 076-613800.

Alternatively, people can call the emergency hotlines 199 and 1669.

Also vastly experienced in removing snakes are rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Foundation (076-426301) and the Phuket Ruamjai Foundation (098-7045345), and Vinnie Modell, the "Snake Guy in Phuket" (080-8648092).

Rescuers regularly remind people that during periods of heavy and prolonged rain, the chance of encountering a snake increases as the rising water forces them to seek refuge on higher ground.

Even when found in homes, snakes tend not to confront humans. They try to hide, but do react when they feel threatened.

The Phuket News

Man, 69, in financial distress found hanged in Pa Khlok

A 69-YEAR-OLD MAN KNOWN to be suffering financial distress was found hanged on Monday morning (Dec 12), one day after his birthday.

Police were called to the scene, a rented room above shops in Moo 8, Pa Khlok, Thalang, at 7:10am, confirmed Lt Pongpipat Khamchomphu of the Thalang Police.

Police along with emergency workers from Thalang Hospital and the Kusoldharm Foundation arrived to find the body of Nopparat Thongjuea on the second-floor balcony outside one of the residential units with loops of package-sealing strips around his neck.

He was unconscious and unresponsive at the scene and formally pronounced dead on arrival at Thalang Hospital.

Mr Nopparat was believed to have died some five to six hours before the rescue workers arrived.

The owner of the building, named by police only as "Mr Suwat", told officers that he had met Mr Nopparat at a church gathering about a month ago.

Mr Nopparat was in deep financial distress and Mr Suwat invited him to stay in the room with other people, including Thais and foreigners, with similar difficulties.

Mr Nopparat's body was discovered by neighbour Ratchapha Kaewwan when she went to the back

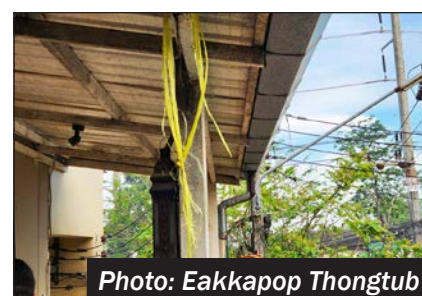


Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

of the building to wash dishes.

"I usually come down to wash the dishes at 5:30am. He would sit there and drink coffee every day. Today I came down late, about 6:16am, after mopping the house. At first I thought he had fainted," she said.

Ms Ratchapha said the preceding day was Mr Nopparat's 69th birthday. She said she was aware Mr Nopparat was in debt, with people regularly arriving at the unit to collect money.

Building owner Mr Suwat said he was aware that Mr Nopparat was having problems, but did not think he was in a state to end his own life.

Mr Nopparat's body was taken to Thalang Hospital, where police said it would be returned to relatives so they could hold his funeral.

For emotional support and counselling, contact the Samaritans of Thailand at 02-1136789 (24hrs, English & Thai) or the Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai).

Eakkapop Thongtub

the Phuket News

Phuket readies for New Year

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Patong will host a 'Phuket Carnival at Patong 2022' festival on Patong Beach from Dec 16-18 from 10am onwards each day to help drive tourism to the popular tourist area.

The festival was announced at a press conference in Patong on Dec 8, attended by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew, Patong Mayor Chalerm Sak Maneesri, Tourism Authority of Thailand Phuket Office Director Nanthasiri Ronnasiri and Patong Beach Hotel Association President Supattra Jaruarayanon.

"The festival 'Phuket Carnival at Patong 2022' can be regarded as the official opening of the tourist season of Phuket and as a declaration of readiness to welcome tourists who visit Patong Beach and Phuket," Governor Narong said.

"I am confident that the event will be another tourism promotion activity that will generate revenue and enhance the image of tourism for Phuket Island, which everyone has been waiting for."

Mayor Chalerm Sak added, "The festival 'Phuket Carnival at Patong 2022' aims to promote tourism to Patong Beach for both Thai and foreign tourists and to build confidence and create a new image of Patong Beach, which is ready to welcome



The 'Phuket Carnival at Patong 2022' festival will be held at Patong Beach on Dec 16-18. Photo: PR Phuket

tourists from all over the world.

"The event will help stimulate the tourism economy of Phuket and promote income for local people."

Many of the festival events will be held at the 'Bangla Lan' area, at the beach end of Bangla Rd, Mayor Chalerm Sak noted.

"The festival will feature a parade highlighting 17 styles of cultural diversity, performances representing the cultural diversity of Phuket, a tattoo contest on the beach, sexy

jogging and running for exercise, fun on the beach, tie-dye making and fashion shows on the beach, symphony band performances, as well as various bands, concerts and entertainment from EDM [electronic dance music] DJs and spectacular night fireworks as well as food stalls and vendors selling many other products," he added.

DEE PHUKET

Meanwhile, Phuket Vice Governor

Anupap Rodkwan Yodrabam on Dec 8 announced that the annual New Year festival held at Saphan Hin will return, held at the center stage area at Saphan Hin from Dec 28 - Jan 5.

Known for decades as the annual 'Red Cross Fair', Vice Governor Anupap noted that the festival this year is again being called "the annual Dee Phuket 2023" fair.

The fair will feature all the attractions of a large-scale Thai-style

fair, with live music and cultural performances each night along with hundreds of vendors selling local food and other products.

No details about the usual fund-raising activities held by the Phuket chapter of the Red Cross Society of Thailand were revealed at that time.

A traditional key attraction of the year each year are the lucky draws held by the Phuket Cross Cross chapter. The lucky draws in years past have included major prizes such as a B2.29 million townhouse, cars and motorbikes, and small gold ingots.

The funds raised are used to carry out local Red Cross community projects across the island and to support flood and drought disaster victims elsewhere in Thailand.

NAI YANG

The Sakhu Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor) will hold its "Open the Sea Beach at Nai Yang Beach" festival on Dec 15-16.

The event will feature live music performances by Thai celebrities Jeab Benchaphon, Luang Kai and Ice R Siam.

The festival will also feature food competitions, a youth band competition, performances by students and community groups in Sakhu and a host of other activities.

The festival activities will be held at the southern end of the beach.

First Phuket turtle nest of the season

SIRINAT NATIONAL Park has confirmed that the first turtle nest of the 2022-2023 season was found in Phuket last Sunday (Dec 11) following three similar discoveries in Phang Nga province.

Phuket resident Boonjerd Saetan informed the Marine National Park Operations Center 2 of the turtle tracks in the sand on Mai Khao Beach at around 6am, Sirinat National Park reported in a Facebook post.

Officials from the Department of the Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) followed the tracks, near Splash Beach Resort, and found a turtle nest with 108 eggs, of which 76 were in "good condition", meaning not broken and not empty.

As the nest was located where it could be damaged by the surf, officials moved all the eggs to a safer area on Nai Yang Beach, near the Sirinat National Park Visitors Centre. The baby turtles are expected to hatch in 50-60 days.

DMCR officials did not see the mother-turtle herself. The tracks on the sand indi-



A leatherback turtle nest with over 100 eggs was found on Mai Khao Beach last Sunday (Dec 11). Photo: Sirinat National Park

cated that her shell measured about 110cm wide.

The mother is believed to be a leatherback turtle, the largest of all living turtles and the heaviest non-crocodilian reptile, reaching lengths of up to 1.8 metres and weights of up to 500 kilogrammes.

Earlier this year three turtle nests were found in Khao Lak in Phang Nga province, just north of Phuket. The first one was discovered on Nov 17 meaning the baby turtles are to hatch in the first half of January.

All the three nests in Phang Nga were below the high-tide mark, so officials relocated the eggs to a safe area. The new nests were surrounded by fences for protection and are currently under 24-hour CCTV control and visual watch by DMCR personnel.

Beach patrols for more sea turtle nests continue. Officials kindly ask local residents and tourists to inform them in case more sea turtle tracks on the sand or turtles themselves are spotted.

The Phuket News

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18:00 - 21:00
Yon | Ocean House

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Live duo gets you into the Xmas spirit

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Complimentary: Special beverage

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31st December 2022
21:30 - 01:00
Akoya | Star Lounge

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More than 17,000 vacancies available

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

More than 17,000 job vacancies in Phuket are waiting to be filled at more than 1,400 businesses on the island, Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew revealed last week.

The revelation came at an event to highlight the Department of Employment's “ไทยมีงานทำ” (“Thais have work”) mobile phone app to help job seekers find employment.

The event, held at the Phuket Vocational College on Dec 8, was chaired by Governor Narong and joined by a host of key tourism, hospitality and business figures, along with leading Phuket employment officials.

Among the key figures present were Rasika Channarong, Chief of the Phuket Labour Office; Thanaphong Orachon, Chief of the Phuket Labor Welfare and Protection Office; Charin Thamrongkiatkul, President of the Federation of Thai Industries; Charan Sangsan, Secretary-General of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce; and Chuenporn Kanchansaya, Secretary-General of the Federation of Thai Industries, Southern



Photo: PR Phuket

Andaman Coast branch.

Governor Narong pointed out that the recovery by Phuket's tourism industry had resulted in mass staff shortages throughout the industry.

“Currently, about 8,000 foreign tourists travel through the airport per day, with the number of tourists expected to increase in the last months of 2022 and early 2023.

“In addition, the proportion of Thai tourists has increased 41.34% compared with 2019,” Governor Narong said.

Dr Krisada Tanskul, an

advisor to the Thai Hotels Association Southern Thailand chapter, said the average occupancy rate at local hotels was also on the rise. In October it was 57%, November was 70% and it is expected that December will have an occupancy rate of 75-80%, Dr Krisasda noted.

“As a result, businesses have increased their employment demands. Many places have labour shortage problems, especially businesses in the hotel, tourism and service sector and other

related sectors,” Governor Narong noted.

“According to a survey by the Phuket Provincial Employment Office, it was found that there were 1,423 places of employment in Phuket with 17,173 positions available. This includes the wholesale and retail business sector, followed by food and beverage, service personnel, and spa massage therapists,” he explained.

“The problem of labour shortage in the Phuket area is an important problem, and the

unemployed need to train for careers that are in demand in Phuket so that the people of Phuket can have sustainable careers to create stability and wealth for Phuket,” Governor Narong added.

Job seekers were urged to travel to Phuket to work, with the province paying a minimum daily wage rate of B354, the highest in the country alongside Chon Buri and Rayong.

“They will also receive other compensation benefits from work,” Governor Narong said.

Withthaya Ketchu, Director of Phuket Vocational College, pointed out that the college had signed many MoUs (Memorandums of Understanding) with local businesses to take on graduates who had been educated and trained in line with industry needs.

“Each semester, more than 1,000 students are trained at the leading establishments in Phuket, but this is not enough to meet the needs of the establishments in Phuket,” Mr Witthaya said.

“Therefore, Phuket Vocational College has made MoUs with various provincial vocational colleges to provide

opportunities for students who are ready from other provinces to come to practice vocational training in Phuket with leading enterprises. This expands opportunities for students and helps to alleviate the problem of the labour shortage,” he added.

Pichit Sing-Thongkham of the Phuket Provincial Employment Office urged job seekers to use the “Thais have work” mobile phone app to find employment.

“Job seekers can find job information that is most suitable for themselves by matching job positions by area and where they live, as well as matching job positions based on existing knowledge, abilities and skills. And there are also services for employers who want a way to promote their vacancies,” Mr Pichit said.

In addition to using the app to find suitable job positions, job seekers could also use the app to apply for training courses to improve their skills and increase employability, Mr Pichit explained.

Job seekers may also contact the Phuket Provincial Employment Office at 076-219660 ext 11-12 or call 083-6419990, he added.

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Thailand's 10 millionth visitor heads for Phuket

PRIME MINISTER GEN PRAYUT CHAN-ocha personally welcomed Thailand's 10 millionth tourist arrival last Saturday (10 Dec) and expressed his gratitude to all sides for their efforts and cooperation in revitalising the tourism industry.

Hetham Almdlj and Njood Alkhuwaiter arrived together at Suvarnabhumi Airport last Saturday afternoon (Dec 10). The couple landed in Bangkok on Saudi Airlines flight SV846. They were welcomed with gifts and souvenirs by businesses and tourism operators, and will spend 10 days in Phuket.

Also in attendance to welcome the visitors was Tourism and Sports Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Governor Yuthasak Supasorn and Suvarnabhumi Airport General Manager Kittipong Kittikachorn.

PM Prayut said welcoming 10 million visitors is a milestone accomplishment for the nation and underlines tourists' confidence in Thailand as a destination for international travel. He also emphasised that the success was made possible due to everyone working hard to overcome challenges that led to the Kingdom's gradual and sustainable reopening after the global pandemic. He thanked everyone for being a welcoming host and looking after international guests, as well as wishing travelers a pleasant experience in the country and hoping they will visit again in the future.

Mr Phiphat said “The target of 10 million arrivals in 2022 has been met, as was promised to the Thai government. It is a milestone achievement that reflects the successful restoring of Thailand's tourism industry, an achievement which has come about from the concerted efforts of all stakeholders in the public and private sectors.”



PM Prayut welcomed Hetham Almdlj and Njood Alkhuwaiter at Suvarnabhumi Airport last Saturday. The couple will be spending 10 days in Phuket. Photo: NNT

The Amazing Thailand 10 Million Celebrations, organised by TAT in cooperation with public and private sector partners, were held at seven key international and regional airports in Bangkok (Suvarnabhumi and Don Mueang), Phuket, Krabi, Chiang Mai, U-Tapao, and Samui, as well as two border checkpoints in Songkhla (Sadao) and Nong Khai.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew led the celebrations at Phuket International Airport last Saturday.

Events at all nine locations showcased Thailand's soft-power foundations – including Food, Film, Fashion, Fight, and Festival – which are being used to promote Thailand in source markets around the world. This included cultural shows and souvenirs unique to each location presented to arriving passengers on the designated flights or land border crossings.

Thailand's total visitor arrivals for 2022 has now exceeded 10mn with over B500 billion in international tourism revenue generated. The target for 2023 is 20mn arrivals, and international tourism revenue of B1.5 trillion – representing a return to 80% of the pre-pandemic level seen in 2019 – out of a total B2.38trn in overall tourism revenue.

The Phuket News

National police chief to take over 'Tuhao' probe

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

National police chief Pol Gen Damrongsak Kittiprapas said he will take charge of the investigation into a criminal syndicate linked to Chinese businessman and suspected crime boss Chaianat 'Tuhao' Kornchayanant.

Gen Damrongsak said the move is in response to criticism of the investigation by former politician and massage parlour tycoon Chuvit Kamolvisit who said police have been too slow to act.

"To prevent misunderstandings over what Mr Chuvit said regarding the police investigation, I will closely supervise and direct the investigation," Gen Damrongsak said, adding that Mr Chuvit keeps leaking information to the public about a Chinese gang allegedly involved in the matter.

"I strongly believe this investigation is for real, not for show as accused."

Previously, Pol Gen Su-



Chaianat 'Tuhao' Kornchayanant (right). Photo: Pornprom Satrabhaya

rachate Hakparn, the deputy national police chief, was assigned to supervise the investigation, which was being handled by a police investigation team headed by the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Bureau.

As for the investigation's progress, so far nine key suspects, including Mr Chaianat, have been arrested.

Mr Chuvit also claimed that three former division commanders of the Immigration Bureau (IB) took bribes in exchange for approving applications for non-immigrant visas for at least 3,325 Chinese

nationals who entered Thailand on a tourist visa.

The approvals of these non-immigrant visas – Type B (Business) and Type O (Other purposes) – were made between 2020 and last year by the three police major-generals, Mr Chuwit claimed.

Two of them, identified by Mr Chuwit only by the initials of their first names K and D, are former classmates of Pol Gen Surachate at the Royal Police Cadet Academy (RPCA), he said.

He identified the other as "N", claiming this is the initial of his first name. All

three served as chiefs of the IB's Divisions 4 and 5, said Mr Chuwit.

"Since Pol Maj Gen K and Pol Maj Gen D, who signed to approve these visa-switching applications for the Chinese nationals, are Pol Gen Surachate's classmates, I was wondering if he would ever dare take action against them," Mr Chuwit asked.

According to him, the cost of getting such an application approved by the three former commanders ranged from B100,000-300,000 per person.

Chinese nationals arrived in Thailand on a tourist visa which allowed them to stay for 30 days.

During that time they sought to have their visas changed to a Type B or Type O with the help of the Chinese criminal syndicate being investigated independently in connection with the drug trade and other illegal activities, said Mr Chuwit.

A Chinese legal firm was set up to assist them, he said, adding the Khon Kaen-based Prans Hanyu Foundation was also involved in the racket.



Dr Yong Poovorawan. Photo: Government House

COVID-19 now becoming a seasonal bug, says expert

BANGKOK

COVID-19 IS BECOMING a seasonal virus in Thailand, primarily active during two periods of the year, Dr Yong Poovorawan, director of the Center of Excellence in Clinical Virology at the Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University said on Monday (Dec 12).

Dr Yong said on his Facebook page that infections are expected to peak between June and September and November and February. He said the virus can re-infect a person, similar to the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), but unlike diseases such as measles which, once infected or vaccinated, can build immunity that lasts for life.

Dr Yong said contra-

ry to earlier predictions, herd immunity cannot end the spread of COVID-19. Though many people have become immune to contracting the virus, the pandemic continues to occur.

He said vaccines will not stop or contain the pandemic. No available vaccines were superior in quality to others as they all do the job of reducing severe symptoms and death, he added.

From Dec 4-10, there were 3,961 new infections, said the Department of Disease Control (DDC). Some 107 deaths were reported nationwide during the period, while 385 people were on life support.

There have been 2,492,054 infections nationwide this year so far.

Bangkok Post

Anutin 'not keen' on being Prayut's heir

BANGKOK

BHUMJAITHAI PARTY LEADER and Deputy Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said he wouldn't want to inherit the prime minister's post from anyone, saying many of those who did so in the past didn't manage to serve a full term.

He made the remarks after Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said on Dec 6 he hoped to stay in office for another two years after next year's election, during which time he would find a suitable person to succeed him once he reaches his tenure limit.

If Prayut gets re-elected next year, he would only be able to serve as prime minister until 2025, as the constitution bars anyone from serving as premier for more than eight years. Observers believe Anutin has a high chance of being picked by Prayut as his successor.

Responding to the speculation, Anutin said historical precedents have shown that the political careers of such "heirs" are often ill-fated.

"For me, I have to personally win the trust of the people first, as opposed to waiting [to be appointed a successor]," he said.

"As such, my concern is how Bhumjaithai can broaden its appeal to more people."

When asked whether he would support Prayut as prime minister if he were to run under the United Thai Nation Party (UTN), Anutin said, "Things will be clearer after the election."

Many pundits expect Prayut to join



Anutin. Photo: Bangkok Post

the UTN, a new party led by Pirapan Saliravibhaga, a former Democrat MP who serves as an adviser to the prime minister.

They believe the party will nominate Prayut as its prime ministerial candidate as soon as he leaves the Palang Pracharath Party (PPRP), which had nominated him as a PM candidate in the last election.

The UTN was founded in March last year by Seksakol Atthawong, a former aide to the prime minister. It was formed to back Prayut's potential return as premier. However, Prayut remains tight-lipped over any possible move to the UTN.

Bangkok Post

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'Violent Night' brings a very different Christmas

David Griffiths

Despite what some people say, violent Christmas movies are not exactly a brand-new thing. If they were, then we wouldn't have the "Is *'Die Hard'* really a Christmas movie?" debate each year and we certainly wouldn't have had films like *'Reindeer Games'* surface nearly 20 years ago.

That argument aside, what we should all agree on is that the latest action film to have a Christmas theme – *Violent Night* – is perhaps one of the best alternative Christmas films we have seen over the past few years.

Directed by Tommy Wirkola (*Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters*), *Violent Night's* plot centres around Santa Clause (David Harbour – *Stranger Things*) who has just celebrated his 1,100th birthday.

As Santa heads out on Christmas Eve though he is jaded – kids are no longer the kind and grateful kids that he knew years ago – these days they actually leave out letters demanding cash and it seems that he is also tired of delivering gifts like video games as well. His jaded, depressed mood has led him to drink to excess and it seems a wonder if he completes his Christmas journey this year.

However, Santa's night soon makes an interesting turn when he arrives at the luxurious estate of the Lightstone family. He soon discovers that one of the few remaining nice kids, Trudy (Leah Brady – *The Umbrella Academy*), is in peril.

Trudy was hoping that this Christmas would see her parents, Jason (Alex Hassell – *Cowboy Bebop*) and Linda (Alexis Louder – *Copshop*), reignite their failing marriage as they spent the holiday period with her tough-yet-rude Grandmother (Beverly D'Angelo – *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*). However, those plans go right out the window when the estate is raided by a group of criminals, led by a gangster calling himself Scrooge (John Leguizamo – *The*



David Harbour is one Santa you don't want to get on the wrong side of. Image: IMDb

Menu), hell-bent on stealing the family's fortune.

With her belief in Santa still very strong Trudy calls upon Santa to help rescue her and her family and the jaded Santa has to decide whether to enter what looks like a losing battle or do his best to help out.

Films such as *Dead Snow* and *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters* have previously revealed that Tommy Wirkola is one of the most creative directors currently working in the industry and *Violent Night* only goes even further to show his creativity.

Given the premise of this film it couldn't have turned B-Grade really, really quickly, but the good news is that it doesn't. If anything, *Violent Night* does all it can to separate itself from other alternative Christmas films out there by capturing that special magic and life lessons encased in movies like *The Santa Clause* or even *It's A Wonderful Life*, but then adding a violent element that sees major carnage and blood splatter all throughout the film. It's a mix that doesn't sound like it should work – but by some Christmas miracle does.

It's at this point that we should point out that if you are a little bit squeamish when it comes to blood and horror that this isn't the film for you. Yes, there is a lot of blood, but to the credit of Wirkola and his screenwriters, Pat Casey (*Sonic The Hedgehog 2*) and Josh Miller (*Sonic The Hedgehog 2*), every single kill in this film is creative as characters look to use whatever around them as weapons. One standout is certainly Santa's kill on a thug with a Christmas star... that will stay in people's minds for a long time to come.

While Tommy Wirkola certainly does a lot to show what a talented director he is with *Violent Night* this film would have failed if the actor playing Santa didn't get everything 100% correct... and luckily David Harbour steps into that role sensationally well.

Harbour is the perfect actor for this role as he is someone who can show heart in the more touching scenes, be dramatic when the films calls upon him to show Santa's depression and most important for this role can hold his own in an action sequence. Sure, this isn't the kind of role that people will talk about when it comes to Oscars, but here Harbour is sensational and is one of the reasons why this film will be long remembered.

If you are an action fan, then *Violent Night* is set to become a cult classic for you. This film delivers everything that you could possibly want from it – from comedy, through to crime capers, quips about other Christmas films and some amazing action/horror sequences. Tommy Wirkola you have done it again.

Violent Night is rated '15' and is showing in Phuket now.

3.5/5 Stars

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



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Phu Quoc – a paradise built on the pearl island of Vietnam

ADVERTORIAL

Despite COVID-19 remaining relevant, in some ways, it is now under control as can be seen from the rising recovery of tourism. Now that travel is becoming more accessible, everyone is eager to get away from the outbreak and explore the world's wonders. Vietnam, one of the 'top of mind' destinations in Asia-Pacific, is ready to embrace tourists again. One of Vietnam's beauties, 'Phu Quoc', is emerging as a blooming tourism destination that offers unforgettable experiences for visitors.

'Phu Quoc', is the largest island located in the south of Vietnam, showcasing tropical beaches full of transparent turquoise water which houses floating villages, cable cars, safari, theme parks, hotels and resorts, variety in nature, and rich culture. Flying to Phu Quoc is now easier and more affordable than ever, in just 1 hour 15 minutes, with **Thai Vietjet**'s direct flight service from Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport to Phu Quoc International Airport, every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday.

Named a paradise built on the pearl island of Vietnam, Phu Quoc has many attractions to visit. Here are seven recommended locations on the island for you to explore.

1. Vinpearl Grand World Phu Quoc – a new entertainment and shopping com-



plex located in Phu Quoc United Center at Long Beach. With an area of 85 hectares, it holds a shopping mall, a museum, and hotels and resorts, all designed in enchanting European architectural style. A beautiful canal flows through the streets, with boats and performers putting on vibrant shows for visitors.

2. VinWonders Phu Quoc – the top-rated amusement park in Vietnam, located in Phu Quoc United Center at Long Beach, is a must-visit place during your visit. There are more than 100 rides for tourists of all ages, offer-

ing exciting experiences to all.

3. Vinpearl Sea Shell Aquarium – recognised as the world's largest turtle-shaped aquarium. In the depths of the ocean, you can explore the sea creatures and their habitats and enjoy the unique performance put on by exquisite mermaids and the fish feeding show.

4. Vinpearl Safari Phu Quoc – Vietnam's largest wildlife zoo & conservation park. Besides the aquarium, Vinpearl Safari is perfect for anyone who loves animals. You can discover

animals of 150 different species living in the peaceful nature.

5. Sun World Hon Thom Nature Park – the world's longest sea-crossing cable car, 7,899-metres-long, developed by Sun Group. You can find Aquatopia Water Park, hotels and resorts, and Hon Thom beach's glistening turquoise waters and white sand.

6. Ham Ninh floating village – one of the oldest fishing villages in Vietnam. Ham Ninh floating village offers nostalgic scenery and rich culture passed on through generations of fishermen. You can enjoy fresh seafood while under an entrancing view of sunset and sunrise.

7. Bai Sao Beach – one of the most beautiful beaches in Phu Quoc, known as Star Beach. It has crystal clear water, and is an ideal snorkelling location to discover a wide range of coral and sea life, as well as kite surfing.

Formerly, Phu Quoc was a destination known for beautiful seas and beaches with clear water and fine white sand. The significant development and the new attractions launched on the island have completely transformed it into a paradise on earth. It now attracts tourists from all around the world to experience its beauties first-hand.

Planning a trip to Phu Quoc now? Fly Thai Vietjet at an affordable price with a convenient, friendly and fun experience. For more promotional fares, time schedules, special packages and vouchers, please visit www.vietjetair.com and www.skyfun.travel.



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POP QUIZ

- Which is the smallest planet in the Solar System?
- Where in the world are 99.9% of all commercially grown artichokes produced?
- Which musician's autobiography is titled 'Me'?
- What do the initials M&M – found on the colourful chocolates – stand for?
- What is a baby spider called?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

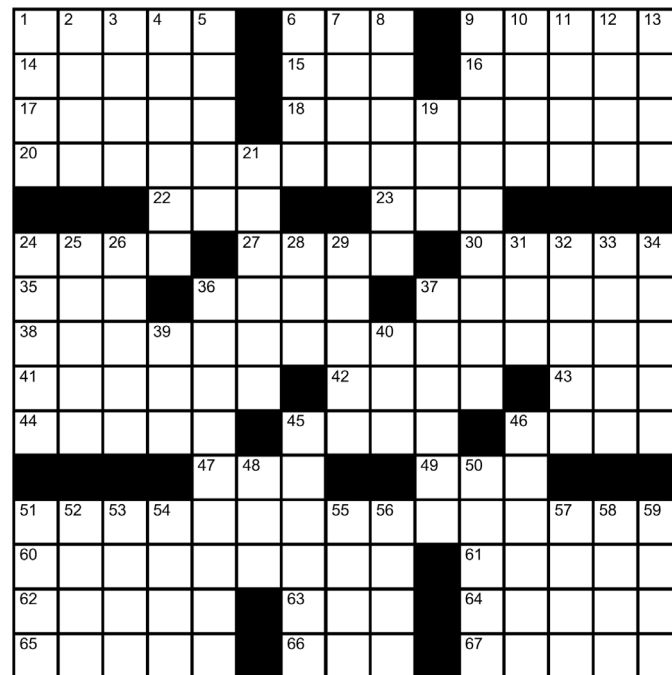
- Timothy Dalton and Laura Ashley, e.g.
- C.E.O.'s degree
- Attendance counter
- Draw forth
- "___ Town"
- Elizabeth I was the last one
- Kidney-related
- Endangers
- World's lingua franca
- Neighbor of Ger.
- Education acronym
- Dines
- Expression of disgust
- Chop-chop
- SALT signer
- ___ Verde National Park
- Eye problem
- Paper lights
- Spring (from)
- Like a wall at Yale
- Crystal meth, in slang
- Daughter of Mnemosyne
- Red Cross supplies
- Chemistry Nobel
- Otto
- Turn black, maybe
- ___ particle

Down

- Common condiment
- Intertidal zone
- Digress
- Admiral's command
- One end of the spectrum
- Auto option
- "The ___," Woolf novel
- Back
- Heals
- Lived
- 1950's British P.M.
- Air bag?
- Resells, such as concert tickets
- Prefix with centric
- ___ orchid
- Decorative inlay
- Strong Middle Eastern drink
- Deer gathering?
- 1984 Peace Nobel
- Think tank nugget
- Marathon
- Gaelic language
- Compass dir.

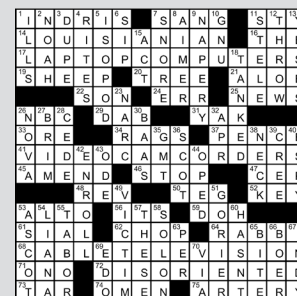
21. Least ingenuous

- South American capital
- Theater employee
- Bangladesh dough
- Finish, with "up"
- Have a cow
- ___-eyed
- Courtyards
- Girth for a saddle
- City in North Rhine-Westphalia
- Certain composers
- Not learned
- Colocynth or mongongo
- Cause of inflation?
- 1988 Venezuelan telenovela
- Disco dance
- Cry of disgust
- State in NE India
- In doubt
- Lacquered metalware
- Atlas stat
- Goatish glance
- Remnant
- Overhaul
- Farsi-speaking land
- Old ointment
- Assembly sites



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

5.50

US dollars is how much the flag cost that astronauts planted on the moon in 1969.

40

percent of a colony's worker ants spend the majority of their time doing nothing.

10,927

metres is the deepest any human has travelled below sea level (about 0.17% of the distance to the centre of the Earth).

267,570

is how many islands Sweden has, with fewer than 1,000 of them inhabited.

1.1 million

pounds (498,951kg) is how much the average cumulus cloud weighs.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Nai Harn sunset. Photo by Sutharat Khaodee

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

This week in history

December 16, 1773

Boston Tea Party: Members of the Sons of Liberty disguised as Mohawk Indians dump hundreds of crates of tea into Boston Harbor as a protest against the Tea Act.

December 17, 1989

The first full episode of The Simpsons, 'Simpsons Roasting on an Open Fire', premieres on television.

December 18, 2018

A meteor explodes over the

Bering Sea with a force over 10 times greater than the atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima in 1945.

December 19, 1998

President Bill Clinton is impeached by the United States House of Representatives for "high crimes and misdemeanors" following the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

December 20, 1924

Adolf Hitler is released from



Clinton with Lewinsky in February 1997.

Landsberg Prison after serving only nine months of a five-year sentence after he was found guilty of treason.

December 21, 1941

World War II: A formal treaty of alliance between Thailand and Japan is signed in the presence of the Emerald Buddha in Wat Phra Kaew, Thailand.

December 22, 2010

The 17-year-old policy 'Don't ask, don't tell' banning homosexuals serving openly in the United States military is formally repealed.

Source: Wikipedia

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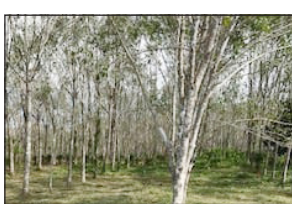
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TRAVEL DAILY'S THIRSTY THURSDAY

The legendary travel industry networking event was back in Phuket on Dec 8, at Xana Beach Club Angsana Laguna Phuket. Since its inception, TD's Thirsty Thursday events has attracted over 200 key travel and hospitality players every month at some of Asia's most exciting venues in cities ranging from Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Phu Quoc, Hong Kong. Thirsty Thursday is a strictly members-only event that offers attendees an opportunity to network in a relaxed atmosphere completely hosted for two to three hours, with drinks and finger food. It is the ideal platform for sponsors to showcase their products to the travel trade.



NEW BANYAN CAFÉ SPORTS BAR IS NOW OPEN

Located at Banyan Tree Phuket, the Sports Bar officially opened on Friday, Dec 9 with over 100 invited members and guests all enjoying this great new addition to the Banyan Tree Phuket Food and Beverage line-up. This new outlet will show live sporting events and stock a variety of international beverages along with an exciting new menu.



CHaine DES ROTISSEURS - PHUKET CHRISTMAS LUNCH

A record attendance enjoyed the beachside dining at The Boathouse Phuket on Saturday, Dec 10. Chef Jonathan Bruell and his culinary team outdid themselves with a fantastic Christmas-themed menu that included lobster, crab and avocado cocktail, Omelet Arnold Bennett, turkey breast ham and chestnut roll and bubble and squeak croquette cake with cranberry jus, plus much more. The Chaine des Rotisseurs is the oldest and most prestigious international gastronomic society, devoted to promotion of fine dining and all the pleasures of the table.



Demetrious Johnson. Photo: Supplied

Colorado to host first ever ONE competition on US soil

MMA

ONE CHAMPIONSHIP has announced the company will make its US on-ground debut on May 5 next year at the 1st Bank Center in Broomfield, Colorado.

The card will be headlined by the world championship trilogy bout between MMA legend and ONE flyweight world champion Demetrious Johnson of the US and long-time divisional king Adriano Moraes from Brazil.

The two have traded high-light-reel knockout finishes and will settle the score at ONE's debut show on US soil.

ONE on Prime Video 10: Johnson vs Moraes III will be free for Amazon Prime subscribers in the US and

Canada as part of a landmark deal that kicked off in August.

Colorado has a rich history in combat sports as the first state to ever host a mainstream MMA event in 1993. Since then, the state has gone on to host a litany of events across multiple cities and venues.

Chatri Sityodtong, chairman and CEO of ONE Championship, said: "This is a monumental day in the history of ONE Championship as we announce our US on-ground debut in Colorado on Friday, May 5.

"We are very grateful for the support of the state athletic commission and look forward to putting on an unforgettable show for our passionate fanbase in the US and watching around the world."

Bangkok Post

Game on as Pickleball finds a home in Phuket

PICKLEBALL

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Those of a racquet sports persuasion will be interested to learn that the fast growing and popular sport known as Pickleball now has a weekly competition organised by the Pickleball Phuket Club of Kathu.

The inaugural event took place on Dec 6 and saw more than 20 players, including tourists and residents of a variety of nationalities, participate in a round-robin tournament.

According to the Pickleball Phuket Club website, Pickleball is a racquet/paddle sport that was created by combining elements of several other racket sports. Two or four players use solid paddles to hit a perforated polymer ball over a net. The ball is much like a wiffle ball, with 26-40 round holes. A pickleball court is like badminton, with a net like tennis, and the paddles are similar to those in table tennis. There are thousands of pickleball tournaments



Photo: Supplied

throughout the world as well as numerous international championships.

The action started on Dec 6 at 6pm with a series of warm-ups and lasted until past 10:30pm for those that progressed to the latter stages of the competition, with results obtained after a dozen matches for the finalists.

On completion of the tournament trophies and prizes were awarded, including vouchers, caps, medals for the top three finishers and a cup for the winner.

Yves from Belgium put aside the disappointment of

his national football team's recent poor show at the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup to claim the gold medal.

The silver medal was won by the youngest champion in the competition, 12-year-old Theo from France, with the bronze medal going to Keint from the USA.

A special mention must also go to young Thai hopeful Anzac who performed brilliantly and could have made the final but for a small margin.

Congratulations to everyone involved in a great occasion, for your results, your presence and your great

sportsmanship.

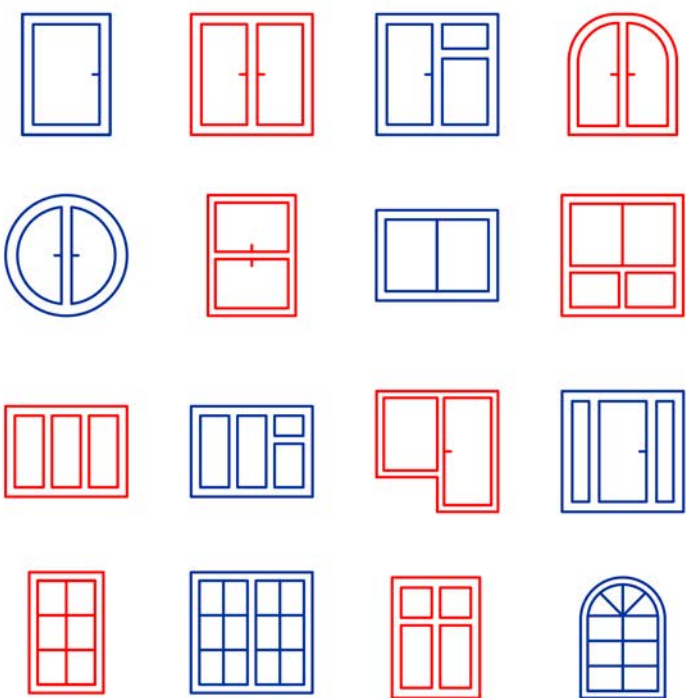
Pickleball Phuket Club is located at 58/3 Moo 1 in Kathu, has four open-air courts and is open daily from 7am-11pm.

The Pickleball Phuket Club Kathu challenge games will take place weekly every Wednesday moving forward. The number of places is limited to 20 players and registration must be submitted by Tuesday at the latest.

For more information please contact Khun AE: Mobile : +66(0) 611758160; Email: contact@pickleballphuket.com or visit pickleballphuket.com.



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Thais shine at World Bodybuilding Championship at Central Phuket

BODYBUILDING

THAILAND WON A TOTAL 28 MEDALS as the curtain came down on the 13th World Bodybuilding and Fitness Championship at Central Floresta Phuket last Sunday (Dec 11).

Thai athletes contesting a range of weight and height specific categories won one gold medal, one silver and one bronze on the final day of competition to take their overall total to 10 gold, 13 silver and five bronze.

Chanyapat "Kwang" Korparaphirom won the final gold medal of the competition on Sunday when she retained the senior female world title in the 170cm height limitation category, a title she had also previously won at the last competition in Uzbekistan in October 2021.

Firma Diana Azizah of Indonesia won silver with the bronze medal going to V. Na Choochan of India.

Chanyapat said she was delighted to win and retain her title and was already setting a target of achieving a hat-trick of titles at next year's competition in South Korea.

Other highlights included Thailand's Sirinthip Organic, who won gold in this year's Asean Games in Vietnam, winning a silver medal in the women's 165cm class, finishing behind Mongolia's Galzan Kalzaruul and ahead of Muniapin Delatiela of New Caledonia.

Elsewhere, Jeeraphan "Yon" Pongkham won gold in the senior male under 60kg weight class and Thongsuk Corps won bronze in the men's 182cm height class.

In the team competition Thailand's women finished in first place overall on 375 points,



Thailand's Chanyapat 'Kwang' Korparaphirom retains her title. Photo: PR Phuket

with Mongolia in second on 325 points and Hungary in third on 200 points.

The Thai men's team won silver with a overall points score of 600, with India claiming gold on 715 points and Malaysia in third place on 180 points.

Dato Paul Sure, President of the World Bodybuilding and Fitness Sports Federation (WBPF), oversaw the official closing ceremony on Sunday where trophies and medals were given to individual and team winners.

Dato Sure was joined by Sukri Supavarekul, President of the Bodybuilding and Fitness Sports Association of Thailand and Thammawat Wongcharoenyot, head of the Sports Association of Phuket.

The closing ceremony also marked the handover of the official WBPF flag to representatives from South Korea, who will host the 14th edition of the tournament from Oct 31 to Nov 5 next year.

The Phuket News

the Phuket news

Southgate future uncertain

England manager to review position following World Cup exit

FOOTBALL

AFP

England crashed out of the World Cup against an all too familiar backdrop of heroic failure and agonising over yet another crucial missed penalty in a major championship last Saturday (Dec 10).

But as the Three Lions packed their bags on Sunday there was much about the circumstances of their exit that felt like a break from the past.

No anguished wailing about tactical failings or technical ineptitude. No demands for a root-and-branch review of English football and no calls for a change of manager.

Instead, a growing consensus that Gareth Southgate should – if he wants to – be allowed to continue for at least one more tournament.

The 52-year-old manager was roundly lambasted after his team's two previous tournaments, blamed for an inability to tweak his game-plan mid-course during the 2018 World Cup semi-final



The future is uncertain for England manager Gareth Southgate after his team's loss to France in the World Cup quarter-final last Saturday (Dec 10). Photo: AFP

loss to Croatia and last year's European Championship final defeat to Italy at Wembley.

Yet as the desert dust settled on the 2-1 loss to France, few were accusing Southgate of tactical incompetence.

His decision to go on the front foot against the world champions, opting for a 4-3-3 formation, came within a

whisker of paying off.

"We wanted to go toe to toe, we felt that was the way we wanted to approach the tournament," Southgate said afterwards. "We've done that."

"We've had consistent performances across three tournaments but tonight is probably the best we've played against a major nation across

the period that I've been in charge.

"But we have fallen short and the scoreline is all that matters and that's hard to take."

Southgate's current contract runs through to the end of 2024, meaning he will have the chance to lead England at the next European Championship.

The England manager,

however, said that he plans to take time to reflect on his future before deciding whether to stay or go.

"I've got to be sure that whatever decision I make is the right one," Southgate said.

"I think it's right to take a bit of time to do that because I know in the past how my feelings have fluctuated in the immediate aftermath of tournaments."

Southgate may perhaps be persuaded to stay by the array of talent that should remain at his disposal through the next tournament cycle.

The average of Saturday's England starting line-up was 26. The core of the team should still be available for years to come. Players such as Jude Bellingham (19), Phil Foden (22), Bukayo Saka (21) and Declan Rice (23) are still maturing.

Southgate hinted that the age profile of his squad may persuade him to see out his contract.

"There is so much to be excited about when you see the age of a lot of the players," he said, before adding, ruefully:

"But you still have to win games that are winnable to reach semi-finals and finals."

Southgate's players are adamant their manager should remain in charge.

"I hope he stays," said Rice. "There's a lot of talk around that. He's been brilliant for us. There's a lot of criticism that's not deserved."

Harry Kane, who missed a late penalty against France that would have levelled the scores at 2-2, also hopes Southgate stays.

"We love having Gareth as a manager and we want him to stay for sure but that's his decision," Kane said.

"We've got a great team, great young players kind of coming into their prime, and we've got the Euros not too far away. So as much as this hurts we have to move on and look forward to that."

At time of press, the semi-final games had yet to be played, with Argentina due to play Croatia on Tuesday (Dec 13) and France up against Morocco 24 hours later. The World Cup final takes place on Sunday (Dec 18, 10pm).

England sack coach Jones nine months before Rugby World Cup

RUGBY

ENGLAND WERE LEFT looking for a new head coach nine months out from next year's World Cup after the Rugby Football Union announced on Dec 6 that Eddie Jones had been sacked.

Veteran Australian boss Jones paid the price for presiding over England's worst year since 2008, the team losing six out of 12 Tests, with five wins and a draw.

He was the second head coach to be fired in 24 hours after Wales replaced Wayne Pivac with predecessor Warren Gatland.

Jones was contracted to take England through until the end of the 2023 World Cup in France – he took the team to the final in 2019 but lost to South Africa – but the RFU curtailed his seven-year reign.

Jones' future was in the balance following a recent Autumn series where a lone win over Japan and fortunate draw with New Zealand were bookended by defeats by Argentina and South Africa.



Eddie Jones' time is up as England boss. Photo: AFP

The RFU then called in an anonymous panel to review the Autumn campaign – standard procedure after all major series – but it was clear Jones' job was on the line despite a 73% win rate as England coach.

The panel's findings then paved the way for the RFU board to confirm Jones' exit.

Steve Borthwick, the former England captain turned boss of Premiership champions Leicester, is the favourite to succeed Jones full time, having been a long-serving deputy to the 62-year-old at both Japan and England.

But the RFU said forwards coach Richard Cockerill would take charge of England on an interim basis.

Jones was proud of England's achievements during his tenure, saying: "I am pleased with much that we have achieved as an England team and I look forward to watching the team's performance in the future."

RFU chief executive Bill Sweeney said: "It's important to recognise the huge contribution Eddie has made to English rugby, winning three Six Nations, one Grand Slam and taking us to a World Cup final." AFP

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Pickleball makes Phuket debut > p14

HOLLYWOOD HAT-TRICK

Third Regatta in a row for Roberts and crew



Team Hollywood on their way to their third consecutive Phuket King's Cup Regatta title. Photo: Guy Nowell

SAILING

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Defending champion and veteran Australian sailor Ray Roberts' *Team Hollywood* narrowly edged out rival Thailand's TP52 Kevin & Tom Whitcraft's *THA 72* to win the top-flight IRC Zero class at the 34th Phuket King's Cup Regatta last weekend.

It was the third successive victory for Roberts' team, having placed first in the IRC Zero class in the last three Regattas.

It went right down to the

wire as *THA 72* won the first race on Saturday's (Dec 10) final day, leaving it trailing *Team Hollywood* by one point heading into the final race of the Regatta.

The two yachts dueled it out throughout the course and as they turned the top mark on the last leg of the final race, they were less than a boat's length apart.

Sparring all the way down the course, *Team Hollywood* recorded six wins from 10 races in this class, and was just able to pull out victory crossing the finish time by six seconds on corrected time over *THA 72*.

"That was real racing to-

day, nip and tuck all the way," commented world-renowned sailor Adam Minoprio, who was the tactician on *Team Hollywood*.

The Singapore-registered boat *WindSikher* of Sarab Singh and Nick Burns finished third overall, winning the last contest in the series.

Kazuki Kihara's Japanese crew on *Char Chan* won the IRC 1 class, avoiding a late charge by Garry Holt's *Let's Get It On*, which claimed second overall, as Craig Douglas' *Ramrod* clinched third.

Thais claimed victory in the Premier Cruising class, as Ithinai Yingsiri's X-Yacht 55 *Pine Pacific* won again on the

final day to claim victory over Peter Cremers sleek Warwick 75 *Shatoosh* with Simon & Chaa Piff's *Firstlight* finishing third.

Jakod Handte's *Fei Jian* triumphed in the Charter Cruising Class class, winning a division in the King's Cup for the first time in 30 years of competition.

Torben Kristensen's *Kinnon* had to retire from the regatta after race two on day three when it collided with *2Fast4you*, but it still claimed second place in the class over Masami Yamashita's *Inlova* due to its first-place showings early in the regatta.

The Multihull OMR class

did not compete on the final day but Hermann Schwarz's *2Fast4you* won every race in this class over Hang Chen's *ZOE*, except for the race in which it had to withdraw because of its collision with *Kinnon*.

His Excellency Air Chief Marshal Chalit Pukbhasuk, a personal representative of His Majesty the King of Thailand, presided over the Royal Awards Ceremony and presented the trophies to the winners at the Beyond Resort in Kata on Saturday afternoon.

Thais performed very well in the International Dinghy Classes as Chanatip Tongglum won the Optimist Boys and

Prin Subying won the Optimist Girls class. In the 29er class, Chaichanawut Deenak and Suthon Yampinit led the pack, with Narisara Satta and Nichapa Waiwai winning the Skiff Boat class. Prakasit Hongpradab won the Open ILCA 7, with Paliga Poonpat and Chakkaphat Wiriakitti claiming the 420 class. The 470 class was captured by Navee Thamsontorn and Panida Suksomporn.

The Open ILCA4 was won by Kenan Tan of Singapore with fellow countrymen Khoo Zachary taking the Open ILCA6 division and the Open Skiff championship was won by Anandi Chandavarkar of India.

UWC students running to stop human trafficking

RUNNING

GRADE 11 AND 12 STUDENTS from United World College (UWC) Thailand in Phuket are helping drive a commendable initiative to raise money and awareness as part of efforts to combat modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

The student-run initiative '24-Hour Race' will take place at Thanyapura Health and Sports Resort from 9am on Jan 21 until 9am on Jan 22.

Participants can elect to race themselves or relay style in a team of up to eight people, with the win-

ners those who run the furthest collective distance.

Runners will attempt to reach as many laps around the Thanyapura track within the 24-hour timeframe, with the option to divide up the time between the team. Teams can fundraise however they see fit, although this is typically separate from the running with teams working together before the race by holding fundraising activities such as bake sales, carwashing, etc.

All proceeds are to be donated to a Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in Pattaya. CAC works to build a safe environment where child victims of trafficking and sexual

exploitation are able to speak to forensically trained interviewers about the trauma they have experienced. They are provided education and mentored in leadership and project building. CAC works to prevent the possibility of re-trafficking.

The 24-Hour Race is a Running To Stop The Traffik (RTSTT) initiative consisting of 21 student-led races worldwide, where participants push themselves physically and mentally for 24 hours for those in need and to stop human trafficking. Since the movement's founding in 2010 there have been over 130,000 students from 256 schools across

20 cities worldwide directly engaged. The movement has raised close to B50 million, which has helped fund over 2,000 rescues and arrests.

There are currently an estimated 50 million people enslaved. Many are subjected to forced labour, sex, and marriage and 80% of human trafficking survivors end up being re-trafficked. Slavery can only be ended with greater awareness, understanding, and urgency. The 24-Hour Race is a movement that brings change to hundreds of people around the world while platforming the upcoming generation to become



Photo: 24-Hour Race

change makers.

For more information on how to get involved, how the race works and how to buy tickets please visit the website: 24hourrace.org/races/phuket or the Instagram page: @24hour-racephuket The Phuket News