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LONG RUN

CONCERNS RAISED AS WELFARE PAYMENTS STOP, UNEMPLOYMENT HITS HIGHEST ON RECORD

A man scours the job vacancies board at the Phuket Provincial Employment Office. Photo: Tanyaluk Sakoot

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Grave concerns have been raised for the welfare of people across the island left jobless by the COVID-19 pandemic, with fears that crime and suicide rates will rise as people struggle to get by.

Phuket Provincial Employment Office Chief Santi Nantasuwon confirmed to *The Phuket News* on Tuesday (July 14) that the unemployment rate on the island is the highest on record, with just 276 job vacancies registered with the government agency, compared with 6,316 people registered with the office as unemployed.

"This is the worst time for the people of Phuket, there are not enough jobs available for the number of people seeking work," Chief Santi said.

Chief Santi estimated that Phuket's jobless totalled some 10,000, "including those who have not registered with us that they are unemployed."

Pointing out that more than 30,000 Thais have already left Phuket in order to return to their home provinces, Mr Santi said that the number of jobs on the island lost to the COVID-19 fallout would easily be much higher.

"As many people have now returned to their home provinces, it is hard to give a clear number of the total number of people in Phuket left unemployed by the current situation," he added.

The jobs that are still available are mostly menial, Mr Santi noted, but he urged people to take up any work they can, even if in neighbouring provinces.

"I want unemployed people to take jobs that are different from their previous experience and location. They can work in nearby provinces, such as Phang Nga and Krabi. Also, colleges have opened skills-training courses so that people can train now and apply for better jobs later," he said.

The PPEO will hold a job fair at the Baan & Beyond centre on the bypass road on Aug 20.

"More than 30 companies have notified us that they have job vacancies on offer," Mr Santi said.

"Most of the jobs that the employers say they need the most are purchasing officers and stock handlers, as well as positions in product sales, product labour staff, retail staff and managers," he added.

The unemployment rate skyrocketing comes as 107 companies and limited partnerships on the island have asked to be struck off since January, totalling more than B237 million in registered capital being written off, the Phuket office of the Department of Business Development under the Ministry of Commerce confirmed this week.

It also comes as pubs, bars and other entertainment businesses on Bangla Rd in Patong start closing their doors again after a hopeful reopening on July 1 to see if resuming business was viable.

One bar owner told *The Phuket News* on Tuesday that many operators were hopeful to generate some income, even if just to keep people employed, but that without tourists even that small goal was impossible.

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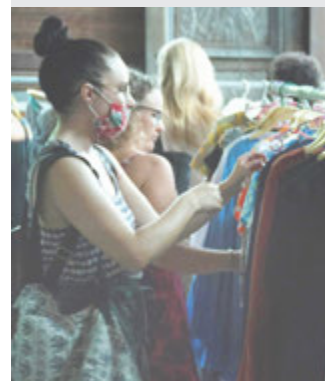
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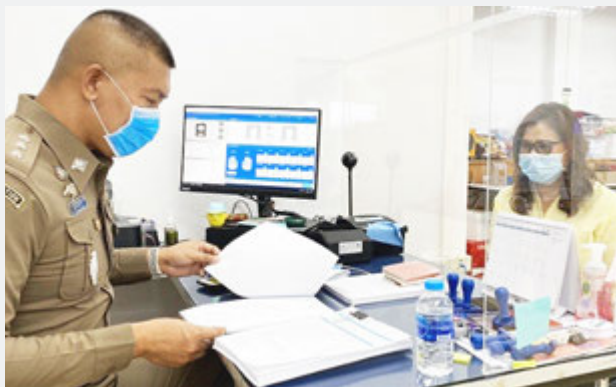
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News



Villagers save 300-year-old tree > p4



People wanting to make sure of their visa status before the July 31 amnesty deadline can do so at Phuket Immigration. Photo: Phuket Immigration

Phuket Immigration advises visa-worriers to take action early

THE CHIEF OF THE Phuket Immigration Office in Phuket Town is inviting foreigners who are concerned about their visa status ahead of the July 31 amnesty expiring to visit his office and have their extensions to stay renewed, or even have their 90-day reports filed.

Speaking to *The Phuket News*, Phuket Immigration Chief Col Narong Chanaphaikul urged foreigners to not worry about their visa and permit to stay status just yet, as the automatic visa extension granted by the Immigration Bureau will remain in effect until at least July 31.

Under the extension, foreigners whose visas had expired on or after March 26 are permitted to stay in the country until July 31 without having to apply for an extension, without paying any fees or submitting any documents.

The automatic extension applies to all visa types, not just short-term tourist visas,

and 90-day reports are not required until July 31.

"However, any foreigners who are starting to feel concerned as the July 31 deadline approaches can just book an appointment to come and see us," Col Narong told *The Phuket News*.

"People whose visas have already expired can come and see us to renew their visas [extensions to stay] if they want to. We will not deny them that," Col Narong said.

"The same applies for 90-day reports. We will process them also," he added.

Col Narong did stress for foreigners to try to use online portals first, especially for 90-day reports.

"Please try to use the Immigration Bureau app or website first. If people have issues using either of these, then please book an appointment to come to see us at the Phuket Immigration Office," he said.

The Phuket News

Pressure intensifies as jobless face bleak future

Tanyaluk Sakoot
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Continued from page 1

Phuket Chamber of Commerce (PCC) President Thanusak Phungdet this week expressed his grave concerns for the fallout to come from the spiralling unemployment rate.

"Crime and suicide rates will rise," he told *The Phuket News*.

Mr Thanusak confirmed that he had received no response to his plea for the government to extend its social security payments for people in Phuket for another three months – a formal request he submitted more than a month ago.

The first three months of social security payments made available to people left without work due to the current situation ended on June 30.

At that time, estimates indicated that the fallout from the COVID-19 crisis may end up costing Phuket more than B280 billion in lost revenues. That figure has yet to be revised.

"There has been no feedback from the government yet," Mr Thanusak said.

"This is very important for people who live and work in Phuket. The impact is not just on businesses, but on the 'grassroots' people, the ordinary people and employees.

"The grassroots of the economy will die because they have no form of income, and in Phuket these people used to work in the tourism industry. Tourists provided their income, but now we have no tourists coming to Phuket," he added, ensuring to re-use the



Phuket Provincial Employment Office Chief Santi Nantasuan urged unemployed people to take what work they can. Photo: Tanyaluk Sakoot

term "grassroots", the same term the central government is using in its promotional campaign to explain to the public which section of society they are helping to get through the crisis.

Phuket was unlike any other province in the country, in that its dependence on international tourists made it much more vulnerable to suffering than other tourism destinations in Thailand, Mr Thanusak pointed out.

"Phuket is not like any other province. Other provinces have other industries to help generate income for the province, such as agriculture and industrial manufacture," he said.

"Phuket does not have this. We have relied on tourists, and not just tourists in general, but international tourists. Over the years the number of Thai tourists has had relatively very

little impact on our tourism industry," he said.

"This is the reason why the government must think about Phuket province differently. Phuket made its income from foreign tourists, not Thai tourists. Phuket is even different from Pattaya, where there are usually crowds of Thai tourists," he said.

Even the push to boost domestic tourism was not likely to work for Phuket as it is expected to help the likes of Pattaya, he added.

"Phuket is not like Pattaya. They have different domestic tourist markets to appeal to. When it comes to having cheap holidays, Thais do not travel far from their home provinces. Pattaya is close to Bangkok and people from Isan [Northeast Thailand] generally travel to visit the Eastern seaboard – not Phuket," he said.

"From the situation right

now, people still need more support from the government. At least, some support from SSO [Social Security Office] so they can at least have money to buy food," Mr Thanusak said.

"If not, Phuket will face rising crime and suicides," he said bleakly.

Further, the ongoing lack of employment opportunities will create a skill drain, as trained workers leave the island to find employment elsewhere, he added.

"Skilled workers will move out from Phuket province, and it will be much harder to get them back when the tourists return. Phuket will not have enough skilled employees to work in hospitality and tourism businesses," Mr Thanusak explained.

"Next, I will push this issue with the Phuket Governor to follow up with the government this week," he said.

Hit-and-run monk killer not drunk, say police

CHALONG POLICE CHIEF COL Sarawut Chuprasit last Thursday (July 9) announced that Yanaphat Sakulboonphanit, 35, who killed a monk walking by the side of the road in a hit-and-run in Chalong early on July 5, had tested negative for alcohol at the time of the incident.

"The medical examination results showed no alcohol at all," Col Sarawut told reporters on July 9, five days after the body of Phra Rungrote Padnguan was found in a roadside ditch not far from Wat Ladthiwanaram (Wat Tai), where he was practicing.

Police were called to the scene, on Chao Fa East Rd, near Land & Houses estate, at about 5:30am that day.



The Honda Mobilio sedan pictured parked by a roadside restaurant less than 30 minutes before Phra Rungrote was struck and killed by the car. Image: Supplied

One witness told police that Phra Rungrote was walking along the road collecting alms when a white saloon car hit him and sent him into the ditch. The car then sped away from the scene.

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Nui Beach club demolished as illegal land claim bites

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The notorious illegal beach club at Nui Beach in Karon, where tourists for years were extorted entry fees and even threatened with violence, has been torn down by officials for illegally occupying state forest land.

More than 100 officers descended on the site last Thursday (July 9), bolstered by security personnel from the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command and led by the Phuket branch of the Internal Security Operations Command (Isoc).

Isoc, which has a branch in every province in the country, serves as the political arm of the Thai military.

Police support present was provided by Phuket Provincial Police, Border Patrol Police 425 and Karon Police Station. Also present were officials from provincial and local government offices and agencies.

The enforced raid team was present to support Phuket and regional forestry officials to execute an official order served in June last year.

The order instructed the illegal occupiers of the land to remove any structures built illegally at the site. The lack of any action to do so empowered officers to enter the site and remove the structures themselves.

The area reclaimed covered 8-2-70 rai (8 rai 2 ngan 70 talang wah) at Nui Beach, officially recorded as along Soi Laem Mook, outside of Village No. 5, Karon Subdistrict.



The notorious beach club at Nui Beach in Karon was torn down last Thursday (July 9). Photo: Isoc

The offenders were taken to Karon Police Station for prosecution for illegally encroaching on state forest land within the Nakkerd National Forest Reserve, the report noted.

Specifically named as an offender was Kittiphop "Singha" Pengkaew.

Efforts to tear down the beach club began in February 2015, after complaints from local people that staff of the Nui Bay Member Club had barred them from walking to the beach unless they paid a fee, and had fired shots to threaten them.

As a Navy-led team of officers arrived to investigate the incident, Jakkapong Sawadtawee, 30, a member of the club staff, tried to get away in his car. Navy personnel chased him down and forced him to stop.

In his car they found the Glock 9mm semi-automatic pistol and the gear for smoking ice. Another 20 staff were lined up, ordered to write down their

names and were given a drugs test.

A second raid in May that year ensued after it had been confirmed that the land document issued for the site at the beach was illegally issued, and that a beach club built on it was therefore illegal, too.

The beach club was ordered to be demolished in July 2015 following violent threats from its operators towards people who tried to access the beach without paying. Inspections revealed that the structures had been illegally built on sand. However, the demolition never happened and was never enforced.

A high-level investigation last year into several areas of encroachment onto Royal Forest Department land saw the move to free Nui Beach from its illegal occupiers gain momentum.

Of note, the investigation last year also included illegal operations at Freedom Beach.

Family financial stress blamed for suicide

POLICE BELIEVE STRESS over family financial problems motivated a man to take his own life in the Soi Kingkaew housing community in Ras-sada early Monday morning (July 13).

Capt Wetchasak Junadul of the Phuket City Police was called to the impoverished housing estate at 10am, after the parents of the man, Weerapol Mahingsarat, 22, found their son hanged by a nylon rope attached to a bathroom door near the back of the house.

Mr Weerapol lived in the home with his parents. All three are originally from Songkhla province, Capt Wetchasak noted in his report.

When police arrived, the body had been brought down from where it was found hanged, Capt Wetchasak also noted.

Mr Weerapol was embroiled in an argument with his father at about 4am over family finances, the parents told Capt Wetchasak.

The parents went out to sell fried chicken, and found their son hanged when they came home at about 10am, they said.

Forensic Police and a post-mortem examination conducted



Police in front of the house in Soi Kingkaew on Monday morning (July 13). Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

at Vachira Phuket Hospital found no signs of a struggle on Mr Weerapol's body or at the scene, Capt Wetchasak explained.

"It is believed that the deceased may have been stressed from family problems and may have been distraught by his argument with his father, leading him to take his own life," he concluded.

Mr Weerapol's body had already been handed back to his parents at their request so they may prepare to hold their son's funeral, he added.

If you or anyone you know is in need of counselling, please contact the Samaritans of Thailand at their 24-hour hotline 02-713-6791 (English), 02713-6793 (Thai) or the Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai).

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Corruption charges loom

DSI files for NACC prosecutions over condo project

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Bangkok MP Sira Jenjaka, who also serves as the Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights, has revealed that the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has filed a formal request with the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) to prosecute Phuket officials over the construction of The Peaks Residences condo project in Kata, on Phuket's southwest coast.

The NACC will invite relevant parties to provide additional information, MP Sira said during his visit to the island last Sunday (July 12).

He also requested all people who had paid monies to the project developer as deposits or full payment for condominium units at The Peaks to inform the Commission on Legal, Justice and Human Rights.

MP Sira inspected the site, overlooking Kata Noi Bay, to confirm whether or not construction had been halted in accordance with a ban on all further building until investigations into the condo project had concluded.

It had not. Construction had continued at the site despite the ban, MP Sira said, adding to the long list of charges the project developer is now facing.

MP Sira repeated the case history of the project to the



MP Sira speaks to the press in Kata last Sunday (July 12). Photo: PR Phuket

press while at the site, starting with the fact that the Nakhon Sri Thammarat Regional Administrative Court already handed down its verdict to revoke land document NorSor 3 Kor No. 1863 used to launch the project.

"The NorSor 3 Kor was issued unlawfully and has been revoked by the Department of Lands. At this stage, the appeal is now being heard by the Supreme Administrative Court," he said.

MP Sira added that the DSI had conducted its own investigation into the authenticity of the land document, and also found that it had been issued illegally.

"Karon Municipality was responsible for suspending construction at the site, and

for canceling the construction permit," he said.

"Karon Municipality did not do that. Instead they renewed the construction permit on the basis of holding B3 million as collateral [for any damages that might need correcting in the future]. They had no authority to do that," MP Sira said.

MP Sira also pointed out that the project was built on areas where the hillside slope is greater than 35°, which in itself is illegal.

"Therefore, the action of local officials, especially Karon Municipality, can be considered as wrongdoing by an official authority under the Criminal Code," he said.

MP Sira also pointed out that he had been informed by

local residents living below the site that the construction of the project had increased the risk of their homes flooding during heavy rains – another aspect he was in Phuket to inspect for himself.

"The forest in the area has been affected by the condo project, where construction has not been suspended in accordance with an official order. People living in the lower areas are affected by landslides and floods," he said.

"When there is heavy rainfall, there are no trees to slow down the speed of water flowing downhill before it reaches public roadways and the beach below," he added.

"From our inspection, we found evidence of landslides and flooding. Some bricks from

the construction site had even been found washed downhill," MP Sira said.

MP Sira earlier this month was acquitted of accusations that had interfered with local officials' handling of the project.

Seven out of eight Constitutional Court judges last week ruled that Mr Sira did not do any wrongdoing in his highlighting of the investigation into the project, following a total of 57 MPs filing a request to terminate Mr Sira's status as an MP as he stood accused of breaching Section 185 (1) of the Constitution, which bans any MP from interfering with officials performing their duties.

The names of the 57 MPs who signed the complaint were not publicly disclosed.

Villagers rally to save 300-year-old tree from road expansion

LOCAL VILLAGERS IN Pa Khlok have rallied together to save a tree they believe is 300 years old from being felled as part of the road expansion of the main route through the subdistrict.

The tree was located on the opposite side of the road from Ban Para School in Moo 4, Pa Khlok, but last Thursday night (July 9) was finally moved to in front of Ban Pa Khlok School in Moo 2, Pa Khlok, about five kilometers away.

Preparations to save the tree have been underway for over the past week following an outcry by local residents on social media to



The tree was moved last Thursday evening (July 9). Photo: PR Phuket

save the tree in order to preserve it for future generations.

The villagers and volunteers from across Phuket carefully had the ground around the tree excavated before using a large crane to lift the tree onto the

back of a large lorry, and transporting it to its new home.

The main obstacle over the past week has been the weather, local people involved with the project explained, with intermittent heavy rains preventing the huge relocation operation from safely going ahead.

The road, Route 4026, is being expanded to four lanes under a Department of Highways project costing B720 million.

Local residents in Pa Khlok have already moved to preserve 214 rai of protected mangroves from being destroyed by having the expanded road redirected around a mangrove forest.

When villagers saw the plans for the road expansion, they realised that it would mean the much-loved tree would have to be cut down to make way for the project.

Villagers in the area requested the relevant agencies to delay cutting down the tree so that volunteer groups from many parts of Phuket could unite and gather the money required to save the tree.

It's new location at Ban Pa Khlok School was chosen as there is a spacious area where it can be placed, far away from students, where it will be safe from unnatural events.

The Phuket News

Is Phuket already on the path to recovery?

ADVERTORIAL

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been far-reaching and unprecedented. The coronavirus quickly entered Phuket and wreaked havoc on public health and its tourism-fuelled economy. However, despite the concern surrounding Phuket's future, Blue Horizon Developments' CEO & founder, Andres Pira, firmly believes the island is already on the path to recovery.

"Phuket has been through a lot," says Pira. "When you look back at the financial crisis of 1997 or the tsunami of 2004, it is apparent that the island emerges from a crisis much stronger. COVID-19 will be no different."

Before the coronavirus was declared a pandemic by the WHO, it was predicted that Thailand would see 350,000 infections and 7,000 deaths by mid-April 2020. To ensure that those figures remained pessimistic projections, the Thai government declared a state of emergency and took stringent measures to contain the virus. Borders were closed, most Thai provinces were placed under lockdown, and a nationwide curfew was imposed.

Phuket underwent a more serious lockdown than other areas since the island had the highest number of coronavirus infections per capita in



The Blue Horizon team (www.BlueHorizon-Thailand.com).

Thailand. Thus, businesses had to temporarily halt operations, including Blue Horizon Developments. With employees working remotely at limited capacity and its contractors unable to proceed with construction projects, the award-winning company suffered losses.

The President of Phuket Chamber of Commerce, Thanusak Phungdet,

recently stated that Phuket is the hardest hit province in Thailand. It has already lost ฿120 billion in income and is expected to lose another ฿160 billion by year-end if the situation does not improve.

While many investors and developers wonder what the future holds, Pira is confident that the property market will improve by the first

quarter of 2021. "Thailand is among the few places in the world that have successfully kept the virus at bay, and Phuket is no exception," says the real estate tycoon, who praises the country's leadership, community spirit and healthcare system in dealing with the pandemic. "The economy and the property market will heal. This could be the longest

and most painful recovery period to go through, but as with any crisis, COVID-19 offers opportunities for improvement."

Blue Horizon Developments resumed its operations at the beginning of July and is back in full swing. Aside from honouring professional commitments, both the company's CEO and employees have been giving back to Phuket's residents after being inspired by their sense of community, especially during times of hardship.

Blue Horizon Developments has been showing its continued appreciation for Phuket by supporting over 700 underprivileged kids on the island through visa and work permit sponsorship for English teachers. The company's employees also distributed food and other necessities to nearby residents together with Andres Pira, who covered all the costs, to help those suffering from a loss of income.

"My team has taken it upon themselves to clean the beaches around Phuket to make them even more stunning than they already are," says Pira, beaming with pride. "We hope to share some of the love and kindness we have received over the years from the generous locals, help ease their struggles, and make the island a more liveable place for everyone here and anyone looking to make Phuket their home. We would like to play our part in Phuket's recovery from COVID-19."

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A Meal with Russell Distance Russell



A MEAL WITH...

Baz Daniel
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We live in very unusual times and so I thought I would have supper with a Phuket resident who boasts one of the most unusual occupations on the island. Flamboyantly-named Russell Distance Russell is the region's leading Dog Psychologist (in fact may be our island's only Dog Psychologist!) and is the owner/manager of the Canine Point dog boarding and training academy located near Ban Don Village in Thalang.

Russell has made his home in the Andaman region from 2005 when, as he puts it, "the Beagle landed in Phuket" after growing up in a Hong Kong apartment full of puppies.

His mother, Athena Cant, is a well-known local resident, who founded the Phuket Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), so perhaps a career among boxers, bulldogs and beagles was always on the cards.

However, never one to be a conventionalist, Russell made his way toward future canine capers via an eclectic career route featuring adventures in Andaman property, management training and becoming a wedding celebrant – a role he still performs to this day, and not always featuring four-legged nuptialists.



A dog's-eye view of our island with Phuket's leading doggie psychologist, Russell D Russell (right).

In 2009 more adventures brought Russell's dulcet tones to Phuket's burgeoning radio scene as he presented firstly a regular rock music show and then became the well-recognised voice of a breakfast show.

Despite loving being a DJ with its thrill of "being on air and in the moment", the Hounds of Destiny were still baying deep within Russell's subconscious and in late 2009 he had the opportunity of attending the largest canine training facility in the US for a course, leading into an internship,

which he seized, like a doggie grabbing a big, juicy bone.

Back in Phuket from 2011, Russell dallied with dog training and canine security, but found the going extremely tough, so he also continued with local radio DJ-ing and worked with Coral Seekers to supplement his income.

In July 2016, Russell made the decision to go full time with his dog training academy, saying, "It was my 'go big, or go home' moment and while it was tough to begin with, I quickly built up a brand and reputation and the business showed good growth over the years. In 2019 I opened a brand-new Canine Training Resort on three rai of land, near in Ban Don Village, with state-of-the-art training facilities and luxury resort rooms for our canine guests. We even have a couple of sport fields and a swimming lake for our barking bathers."

Russell, his Black Labrador Sassy, and I enjoyed a delicious supper sitting on the iconic wooden decking alongside the Boat Lagoon Marina at Bart Duyker's recently-opened the 9th Degree Bistro, wine shop and tapas bar.

Here the breakfast, lunch and supper menus are packed with fresh, healthy dishes and tapas and the extensive beverage selection benefits greatly from Bart's expert guidance and vast wine knowledge credentials.

In these virally-challenged times, the 9th Degree was a superb choice, as socially-distanced, fresh-air, indoor/out-

door dining is a doddle here, and they even have live music at the weekends.

I asked Russell about his basic philosophy for boarding and training his canine guests. "We treat each dog as a member of our extended family enjoying the spacious, beautifully-designed air-conditioned resort rooms, covered patio and secure outdoor exercise fields and water park. Our kitchen provides home-cooked, fresh food and room-service delivers a hearty breakfast and a sumptuous dinner. We also offer an extensive range of training programmes, from basic obedience, through to CGC certifications, using private, or group classes, or through our unique residential training facility.

"Our goal is always to bridge the communication gap between pets and their owners, to help prevent unwanted behaviour (canine and human) and help people build lifelong bonds with their dogs".

When we broached the inevitable topic of COVID's impact on his business, Russell said, "Clearly 2020 has smashed all of us a bit sideways, but since we've been allowed to reopen, things have been ticking over and I'm hopeful we'll continue with that trend, maybe seeing a return to 'normal' towards the end of the year."

As 'man's best friend' (sorry ladies!) dogs are perhaps looked to for support in these troubling times, so I asked Russell if getting a doggie while we are socially constrained was a good idea.

"Not really," he said, "Dogs thrive on consistency, routine and clear-messaging in their training, so if they enter a household where, say, the children are at home all day and so the puppy receives far more attention than they will get when things return to 'the new normal', they will suffer accordingly".

Clearly, Russell understands a great deal about the doggie psyche, but he also makes a very interesting point about we humans. "I always try to meet a new dog with its owners, as I am totally convinced that training a dog well starts with training its handlers well too!"

As we strolled away from the charming waterside idyll of The 9th Degree under a star-filled sky, I couldn't help thinking that some of our political leaders – especially now claiming to be as fit as a 'Butcher's Dog' – would do well to listen to Russell's wise words about consistency and clear-messaging.

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The return Swap Shop was a huge success, raising funds for the Life Home Project Foundation & Orphanage. Photo: Phuket SWAPSHOP

Phuket Swap Shop eye on revival

Popular island thrift meet returns with a focus on helping those in need

The Phuket News
editor1@classactmedia.co.th

The Phuket Swap Shop enjoyed a large turnout at its first meet since the COVID-19 lockdown was lifted, raising funds for the Life Home Project Foundation & Orphanage through a Swap Shop held at the Grind Cafe on the bypass road on July 4.

The Swap Shop was held under the guidance of Rassada Municipality, with Mayor Phudit Raksarat lending a hand in organising the event and in collaboration with the Andaman Natural Resources Conservation Foundation (ANRCF) with Samran Sinthong, secretary of the ANRCF Southern Thailand area, also joining the team.

The Phuket SWAPSHOP coordinators Sarha Robinson and Yoana Vastrée Estevez not only decided to do something against the excessive waste of products by giving locals the possibility to swap pre-loved treasures rather than throwing them away, but also connected sustainability, charity and local support into one event.

"Our relaunch on July 4 was a huge success!" said Sarha. "Over 200 people decluttered their houses and swapped to their heart's content at the Grind Cafe," Yoana agreed happily; "I could not believe my eyes when I saw so many people lovingly share their beautiful possessions. We were amazed by the constant flow of clothes, books, shoes, homeware and more!"

Phuket SWAPSHOP collaborates with different venues each time to support local businesses, which is very important in these difficult times.

"We had many people reach out to us such as organic farms and vegetarian restaurants who are all involved in making sustainable living reality," Sarha explained.

"The big focus of the July 4 event was to raise funds for children under the care of the Life Home Project Foundation," she added.

The Life Home Project Foundation is a non-profit organisation with the goal of preventing the spread of HIV, as well as helping HIV-infected/affected people and AIDS patients. The foundation first acted as a hospice for women with AIDS with the main purpose of establishing a self-reliant and sustainable shelter by offering vocational training and education for HIV affected women and their children, as well as helping HIV-positive persons and AIDS patients in the community and in hospitals.

The foundation receives no government funding and relies entirely on private donations.

The success of the Phuket SWAPSHOP relaunch will see another event held in the south of the island, at Raw-Fitness in Nai Harn-Rawai on July 27. This event will be in conjunction with the Andaman Natural Resources and Conservation Foundation, which will be holding a beach cleanup at Nai Harn beach that morning.

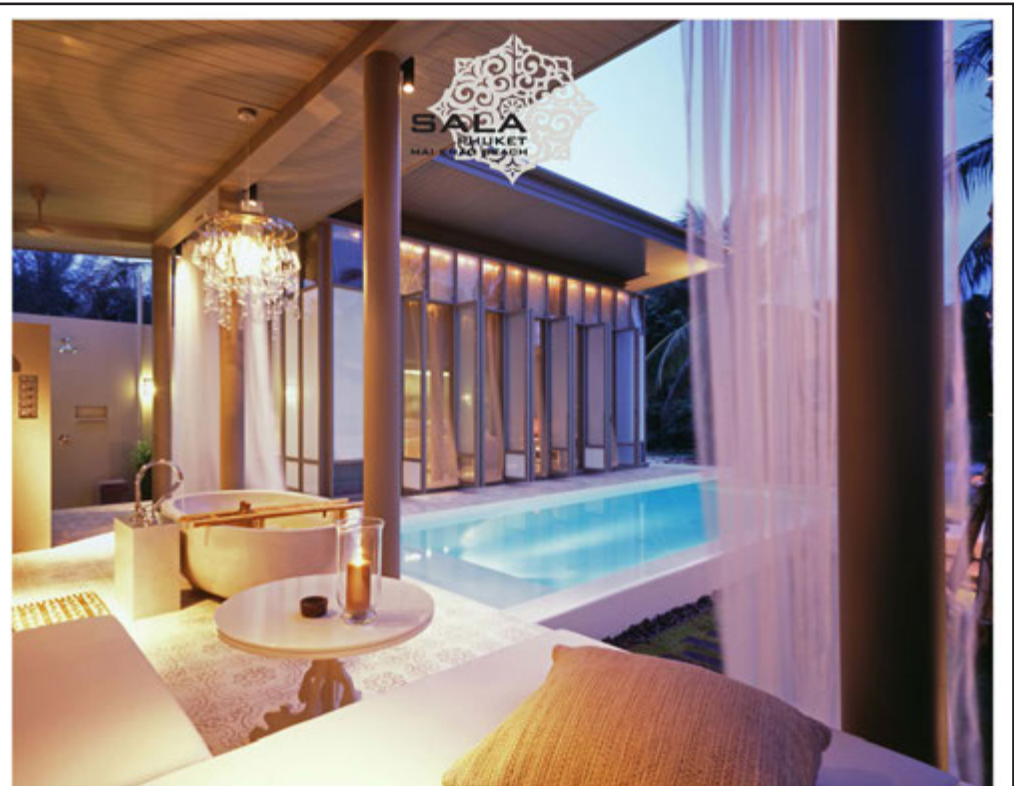
"We are so grateful that we can

help so many people at the same time," said Sarha. "We will support the ANRCF in their mission to promote sustainable living and caring for the environment, we will help local businesses by bringing in a lot of visitors and we will give the local community a chance to SWAP and find new treasures. It's an amazing collaboration of awesomeness!"

If you want to give back to Phuket and support the community, make sure you follow and like the Phuket SWAPSHOP Facebook page to stay updated about future events: "We encourage everyone to come, see and take part –

and remember, all this helps to raise funds for children in need!"

For more information about the Phuket SWAPSHOP events, contact Sarha and Yoana through the Phuket SWAPSHOP Facebook page or by email to phuketswapshop@gmail.com. Raw Fitness is located 90/6 Moo 1 Saiyan-Nai Harn, Viset Road, Rawai, on the east side of Route 4030, which runs through the heartland of the Rawai expat community on its way towards Nai Harn Beach (Google Map "Plus Code": Q8M8+FX Rawai, Mueang Phuket District, Phuket)



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POP QUIZ

1. In which year was the first James Bond movie *Dr. No* released?
2. What is the collective noun for a group of Rhino?
3. Which planet in the solar system is the hottest?
4. What does the Japanese word "sushi" mean?
5. British military hero The Duke of Wellington was born in which capital city?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Young salmon
 6. Kisser
 10. Droops
 14. Lowest point
 15. ___ believer
 16. Small gull
 17. 1952 novel, with The
 20. Split
 21. Rowboat adjunct
 22. Not too brainy
 25. ___ Rebellion of 1857-59
 26. Twisted
 30. Hoodlum
 32. Fuse
 35. Sniff out
 41. Author of 17 and 63 Across
 43. Meager
 44. Broad view
 45. Square
 47. Che or gen followers
 48. Item with a ladder
 53. Pastoral poems (var.)
 56. Wheels for mom
 58. Lest
 63. 1929 novel
 66. Cost of living?
 67. Ashtabula's lake
- Down**
1. Prig
 2. French Sudan, today
 3. Betting data
 4. Beer garnish
 5. ___ housing
 6. "Harper Valley ___"
 7. Ashes holder
 8. Logic game
 9. "La Scala di ___" (Rossini opera)
 10. Inscribed stone
 11. Greek moralist
 12. Artist, with El
 13. Sinuous
 18. ___ degree
 19. "48 ___"
 23. Yen
 24. Sang like a canary
 26. Scores high
 27. Do the trick
 28. Doctor Who villainess, with The
- 29. Big bang matter**
31. Beam
 33. Sixth sense
 34. Peeper problem
 36. "Walking on Thin Ice" singer
 37. Shrek, e.g.
 38. Holiday opener
 39. Weak
 40. Young falcon
 42. Lots
 46. Napa Valley area
 48. Sting
 49. Certain inmate
 50. Empty
 51. Kind of pool
 52. "Give It To You" rapper
 54. Illuminated
 55. Muzzle
 57. Blown away
 59. Hombre's home
 60. "Iliad" warrior
 61. Blue books?
 62. See
 64. Go horizontal
 65. Directed

Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) 1962; 2) A crash of rhinoceroses; 3) Venus; 4) Sour rice (Sashimi is the fish); 5) Dublin

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
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56					57				58		59	60	61	62
63							64	65						
66					67					68				
69					70					71				

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

year is how long it roughly takes for 98% of the atoms in your body to be replaced.

3

kisses a day can speed up and strengthen your metabolism.

8.2

seconds of eye contact must be held for that "Love at first sight" feeling to occur, according to some studies.

64

percent of men say they spend more money on dating during the summer than any other season, according to one survey.

38.7 million

litres of fuel is saved by UPS delivery trucks every year by making no left turns.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Abandoned resort. Photo: Robert Tosh

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

This week in history

July 17, 2014

Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, a Boeing 777, crashes near the border of Ukraine and Russia after being shot down. All 298 people on board are killed.

July 18, 64 AD

The Great Fire of Rome causes widespread devastation and rages on for six days, destroying half of the city.

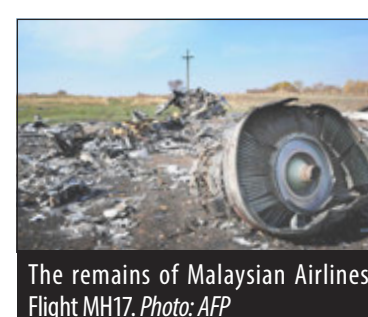
July 19, 1545

The Tudor warship Mary Rose

sinks off Portsmouth; in 1982 the wreck is salvaged in one of the most complex and expensive projects in the history of maritime archaeology.

July 20, 1969

Apollo program: Apollo 11's crew successfully makes the first manned landing on the Moon in the Sea of Tranquility. Americans Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to walk on the Moon (July 21 UTC).



The remains of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17. Photo: AFP

July 21, 356 BC

The Temple of Artemis in Ephesus, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, is destroyed by arson.

July 22, 2011

Norway is the victim of twin terror attacks by far-right extremists: a bomb blast targeting government buildings in central Oslo; and a massacre at a youth camp on the island of Utøya. Combined, the attacks left 77 dead, with 69 killed on the island, 33 of whom were under the age of 18.

July 23, 1903

The Ford Motor Company sells its first car. Source: Wikipedia

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Hamilton waltzes to F1 win

Mercedes secure one-two finish in Austrian state of Styria

FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato

Lewis Hamilton secured his first win of the season in a one-two victory for Mercedes at the Styrian Grand Prix, held at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg, Austria, last Sunday (July 12).

The Briton had been untouchable since recording his masterful pole position in the wet from Max Verstappen in qualifying. The Red Bull Racing driver expected to challenge Hamilton for victory come the race, but the reigning world champion never gave him a chance, acing his start and nailing the single safety car restart to keep the Dutchman at arm's length throughout.

The margin at the chequered flag was 13.7 seconds, and Hamilton was serene in rejoining the winners circle in 2020.

"Firstly I have to say a big thank you to my team," he said. "What a weird year it is, but it's great to be back up here and to be driving – and to be driving with this kind of performance."



Lewis Hamilton takes victory in the Styrian Grand Prix. Photo: AFP

"To come back this weekend after a difficult weekend at the first weekend last week [finishing fourth with a penalty], this is a great, great step forward."

Verstappen couldn't hold onto second place, surrendering it to Valtteri Bottas in the second Mercedes four laps from home.

The two Mercedes cars

sandwiched Verstappen early in the first stint to force him to make an early pit stop to cover the approaching Bottas behind. The Finn then ran 10 laps longer before pitting, which meant he could use his younger tyres to snatch second place near the end of the race.

Verstappen didn't make it easy for him though, rebuffing a move into turn four by

hanging onto his outside to take the inside line into turn six and hold the place. But his unlikely defence lasted only one more lap, the pace difference overwhelming.

Red Bull Racing was snookered by a lack of support from Alex Albon in the sister machine. The Thai driver was woefully off the leading pace in fourth and by lap 20

was out of Hamilton's pit stop window.

It meant Verstappen had no choice but to fall into the Mercedes trap and take the early stop, which left him defenceless late.

While Mercedes and Red Bull Racing battled for the podium, Ferrari was again absent from contention, this week thanks to a nasty lap-one crash between teammates Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc.

Leclerc lost control of his car trying to sneak down Vettel's inside at the third turn. He rocketed over the kerbs, lifting the rear of his SF1000 into the air and dropping it onto Vettel's rear wing, tearing it from its chassis.

Both drivers retired with irreparable damage, with Leclerc accepting blame for the disaster that extended Ferrari's painful start to the season.

Albon ultimately finished fourth, but only after staving off a fast-finishing Sergio Perez, who was making a mammoth recovery from 17th on the grid.

The two made contact on lap 69 of 71, resulting in damage to the Mexican's front wing that sent him tumbling towards the rest of the midfield.

It generated an almighty fight for fifth place that ran all the way to finishing line, with Lando Norris just sneaking ahead in the final seconds of the race, his third overtake in two laps.

The sister Racing point of Lance Stroll almost demoted Perez to sixth, but the Canadian missed out in a photo finish, falling short by just 0.066 seconds.

Daniel Ricciardo was the biggest loser of the final frenetic laps. Having steadfastly defended sixth place for much of the second half of the race, an ugly move by Stroll on the penultimate lap dropped him to seventh and then eighth in short order to the opportunistic Norris.

Carlos Sainz finished ninth after making a late pit stop for soft tyres to score a point for fastest lap of the race, and Daniil Kvyat completed the top 10.

Fair play under scrutiny

FOOTBALL

Continued from page 12

...swat away paltry fines. The punishment needs to be much harder otherwise the entire system is worthless.

It is too premature to suggest FFP could be scrapped altogether. Supporters of the rule point to the fact that over the past two seasons European club football has turned profit as opposed to previously losing €1.8bn a year.

Some reform, however, seems inevitable. UEFA's authority and its very competence has been undermined, as have its own notions of centralised control on the game. Cynics will argue the ruling hints at a European breakaway league driven by the wealthy top tier clubs edging ever closer, free of any central governing body.

One thing for sure is Manchester City will have a seat at the very head of that table and continue to chart the course for European football for many seasons to come, fair play or not.



Photo: AFP

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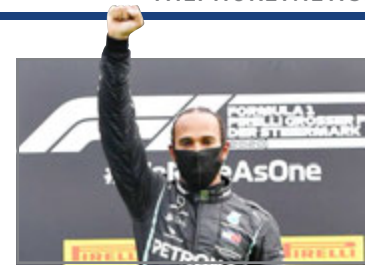
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Mercedes lead the charge in Austria > p11

OVER THE BLUE MOON

FOOTBALL

Ben Tirebuck

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Manchester City may have conceded their Premier League crown to rivals Liverpool but the club arguably scored their biggest win of the season on Monday (July 13) when the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) lifted a two-season ban from European competitions imposed by UEFA.

The club had been accused of deliberately inflating the value of income from sponsors with links to the Abu Dhabi United Group, also owned by City owner Sheikh Mansour, to avoid falling foul of financial fair play (FFP) regulations between 2012 and 2016.

The alleged offences were not flagged by UEFA until 2018, meaning they were unable to investigate before the five-year statutory limitation expired and the decision was overturned: "Most of the alleged breaches reported... were either not



The owners and management of Manchester City are all smiles as their Champions League dream is still alive. (L-R) Chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak, Pep Guardiola and owner Sheikh Mansour. Photo: AFP

established or time-barred," said CAS. City were instead handed a €10 million fine (B357mn), reduced from the initial €30mn.

The decision is a huge lift for the club who can now focus on securing the one piece of silverware they most

covet and that has thus far eluded them during the decade-long reign of Sheikh Mansour.

They resume Champions League action against Real Madrid on August 8 with a 2-1 lead safe in the knowledge that they will be participating in

Europe's top club competition again next season.

The ruling also puts an end to speculation that manager Pep Guardiola and star players such as Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling could possibly leave the club and ensures they will continue to be able to attract top talent to their already impressive playing squad.

The future for FFP & UEFA

The broader implications for UEFA and FFP are less clear with initial criticism claiming the ruling undermines the legitimacy and moral authority UEFA have in being able to enforce FFP regulations, raising serious questions as to the credibility and effectiveness of the law.

FFP was put in place to control the richest participants at European football's table by restricting unsustainable debt. It was essential, said advocates, to prevent the sport from becoming top heavy and overly dominated by fabulously wealthy Russian oligarchs, US private equity firms and

Middle Eastern petro-dollars while at the same time protecting clubs from reaching beyond their means.

However, the many clubs across the continent who have been forced to comply with the law by selling prized assets will no doubt be smarting by the decision. A.S. Roma, for example, admitted they sold Mohammad Salah to Liverpool for a much reduced fee in order to adhere to the regulations by a stipulated date.

Other clubs have fallen foul of FFP directives yet gone unpunished. In 2017 France's Paris Saint-Germain spent €405mn (B15 billion) on Neymar and Kylian Mbappe within weeks of one another and have been condemned as completely skewing their domestic league with their financial clout.

The breach of FFP was flagged by UEFA last year only for CAS to overturn the decision in a strikingly similar manner to City's this week.

Both are extremely wealthy clubs with deep pockets who can...

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