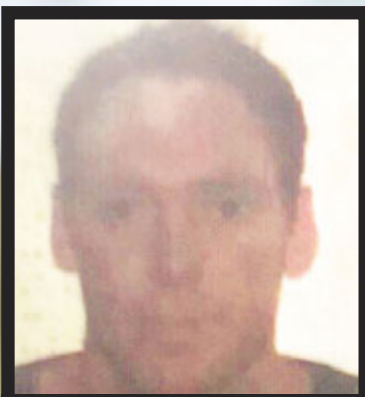


WIFE OF GERMAN FOOTBALL STAR MUGGED ON BEACH > PAGE 2

## RED NOTICE



Matthew Dupre, 36, of Nunavut.



Gene Lahrkamp, 36, of Ontario.

Col Krisana Pattanajaroen confirmed police will seek a Red Notice for each of the killers. Photo: Royal Thai Police



## SANDHU KILLERS IDENTIFIED, POLICE MOVE TO HAVE INTERPOL NOTICE ISSUED

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Royal Thai Police will formally request Interpol to post a Red Notice for the two men wanted for shooting dead known criminal Jimi "Slice" Sandhu in Phuket earlier this month.

Deputy Royal Thai Police spokesman Col Krisana Pattanajaroen last Saturday (Feb 12) named the suspects as Gene Karl Lahrkamp, 36, of Kincardine, Ontario, and Matthew Leandre Ovide Dupre, 36, of Frobisher Bay, in the Qikiqtaaluk Region of Nunavut.

Both are Canadian nationals travelling on Canadian passports. Both have previously served in the military, he said.

Phuket Provincial Court has approved arrest warrants for the two men for murder, illegal possession of firearms and discharging a firearm in a public area, Col Krisana added.

"The police will coordinate with Interpol, for them to consider issuing a Red Notice to inform all 195 member countries around the world," he said.

"The request is to seek help and to inform law enforcement around the world with useful information so

that they can arrest the men and to begin the extradition process for the men to be prosecuted in Thailand," he explained.

Col Krisana said that national police chief Gen Suwat Jangyodsuk has "emphasized" that all police officers involved in the investigation and arrest of the suspects to "expedite the investigation to build confidence among people, including tourists".

"Moreover, news related to the case is now widely presented on social media. This can cause confusion and misunderstandings. Therefore, people are asked to follow the news

from the government only. If there is any additional information, it will be announced later," he added.

Gen Suwat in Phuket in person last week confirmed that the two suspects had already fled Thailand.

The two men arrived in Thailand on Dec 18 as tourists, and left the country on Feb 6, he explained.

The two men did not travel on forged passports, Gen Suwat said.

Gen Suwat confirmed that police knew where the men fled to, but he declined to reveal which country the fugitives landed in after leaving Thailand.

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'Fake police' scam hits Phuket Town



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Re-imagining a sustainable, better Phuket



SPORT PAGE 15

Zouma under the hammer after cat abuse video



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# News



**Rising prices  
spurs 'war room'  
response > p6**

## Hunt for killers uncovers guns, evidence

*Continued from page 1*

...The identities of the two men were revealed after a week of intensive investigation by police, during which police scoured the streets of the Saiyuan area in Rawai, retracing the route the killers took in fleeing the scene.

In total, police assigned 20 teams of officers to hunt two suspects.

Officers also recovered two handguns reportedly used in the shooting, which saw Sandhu shot some 19 times at close range outside his villa at a resort on Wiset Rd.

The handguns, a CZ 9mm and a Walther PPK, were recovered from Rawai Beach, where the killers tossed them into the water during their escape. Officers found the handguns after closely reviewing CCTV footage from cameras in the area and using a metal detector to locate them in the water.

"Both [guns] were found in the sea about 100 metres from the scene of the incident. Both guns are legally registered. Currently, we are currently investigating those involved as to how they came to be with the perpetrators and used in this



Police scoured the streets in the Saiyuan area in Rawai. Photo: PR Phuket

incident. The registered owners of the two firearms are being invited to come in for questioning," Gen Suwat said.

Later reports noted that the guns were legally registered to a retired police officer and a former Royal Thai Army soldier. At time of press police had yet to reveal how the legally registered firearms came to be in the possession of the killers.

The search of the Saiyuan area in Rawai was conducted by investigators from the Region 8 Police, Crime Suppression Division, Immigration Bureau, Tourist Police and even the Region 8 Police Special Weapons

and Tactics (SWAT) unit.

The searched focussed on the streets of Soi Saiyuan 8, 9 and 10. The main focus of the search was on Soi Saiyuan 9, located across the road from where Sandhu was gunned down outside his rented hotel villa.

Police questioned local residents and other guests staying in the villas. Officers specifically questioned foreigners, and requested to check their passports and compare appearance with the two men recorded on security CCTV killing Sandhu then fleeing the scene.

Police also inspected a Muay Thai camp in the area, but said that



The guns used in the shooting were found at Rawai Beach. Photo: Phuket Provincial Police

so far no vital clues to tracing the killers had been discovered.

Forensic police were reported to be expediting their analysis of bullets and bullet casings found at the scene.

Police reported that they are still waiting for DNA test results on shirts believed to be from the criminals that officers found and collected from a bin behind the boxing camp, in Moo 7 Saiyuan. The results were expected in the next few days.

"Now we are waiting for DNA test results from the Police Forensic Science Center 8 in Surat Thani and

the Police Forensic Science Center 8 in Songkhla," Col Kritsana said last Saturday.

CCTV footage from a private home in the area showed the two men walking along Soi Aree Rop Uthit, Saiyuan, at 11:02pm before stopping to discard some items in the bin. Officers later learned of this through the CCTV footage provided, and recovered the clothes from the bin.

Police also confirmed that they had spoken to a person who saw the two men walking barefoot on the small street connecting Soi Saiyuan 8 and Soi Saiyuan 9.

During the search officers detained a foreign man for questioning in connection with a GPS location device found fitted to the rented car used by Sandhu.

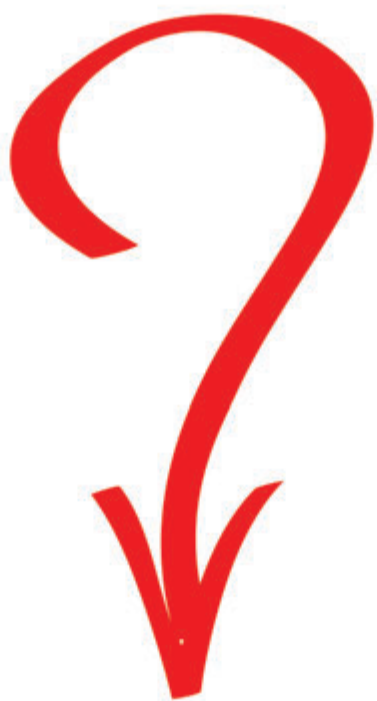
Officers discovered the GPS device and traced its location signal being sent to a phone at a home in Soi Saturday, in the Saiyuan area of Rawai, police reported.

An arrest warrant was issued and the foreign man was taken into custody on Feb 9.

No other details of the arrest have been released.



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## German TV presenter mugged on beach

POLICE HAVE NOW JUMPED INTO action over Cathy Hummels, wife of German football star Mats Hummels, being mugged on a beach in Khok Kloi, just north of Phuket on the mainland.

Ms Hummels, who described her experience as a "nightmare", had been in the area filming as a TV presenter for the show "Battle of the Reality Stars".

Phuket Provincial Police at 11:49pm on Feb 9 responded to a report by Thai-language Daily News Online just hours earlier featuring the headline, "Shock! Hummels' wife robbed in Phuket".

The story noted in its report, "Cathy Hummels, wife of Mats Hummels, was attacked and mobile phone stolen on Phuket Island."

Phuket Provincial Police noted that police in Phuket were ordered to investigate the incident, but found that no police stations in Phuket had received any reports of the attack.

Not mentioned in the Phuket Provincial Police announcement was that the attack occurred in Phang Nga, immediately north of Phuket. That news as confirmed by Col Amphon Chantakul, Chief of the Khok Kloi Police.

"Therefore, I would like to ask everyone who reads the news to acknowledge that Phuket Province under the supervision of the police while Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong is the commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, I assure you that Phuket is always safe for people and tourists," the notice read.

The attack occurred on Natai Beach at about 9pm on Feb 5, Lt Col Parusk Masmalai, Deputy Chief of the Khok Kloi Police, confirmed.

Ms Hummels was attacked about 800 metres from the Aleenta resort, where she was staying.



Photo: Cathy Hummels / Instagram

An unknown man approached Ms Hummels and punched her several times, knocking her to the sand.

After Ms Hummels screamed that she had no money, the man grabbed her phone – which Thai reports have noted well was an iPhone 12 Pro Max – and then fled.

Ms Hummels suffered bruising in the attack, Lt Col Parusk noted.

Ms Hummels was unable to give any description of identifying features of the man who attacked her as it was too dark to see clearly, he added.

Ms Hummels marked that she just wanted to leave on her flight back to Germany, via Dubai, which departed at 12:10am, Lt Col Parusk also reported.

She assigned a local translator to pursue charges on her behalf.

Police are continuing their investigation in the hope of finding her attacker.

*The Phuket News*



# Protesters fight Ao Kung dredging

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Local conservationists hoping to protect the large coral reef in Ao Kung in Pa Khlok, on Phuket's east coast, have petitioned Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew to carefully reconsider the outcome of a public meeting held where a majority of local residents, mostly fishermen, voted to approve dredging in the bay.

Pradit Phuanket, leader of the Baan Ao Kung Mangrove Forest Conservation Group, along with supporting members of the group on Feb 9 submitted to Governor Narong a formal objection to the outcome of the meeting, also held on Feb 9.

Governor Narong received the letter in person, accompanied by officials from the Phuket Provincial Ombudsman's Office, and as usual several other related agencies.

Mr Pradit said that the meeting was "a truly unfair forum for stakeholders". At the meeting a majority of the local residents present, mostly local fishermen, voted in favour of the dredging.

"We submitted a letter to



Most of the people at the public meeting who voted to approve the dredging were local fishermen. Photo: PR Phuket

Governor Narong on Nov 1 last year to object to the results of an expert aerial photographic interpretation and to ask for reconsideration of the dredging of Ao Kung by taking all facts into account and 10 additional issues," Mr Pradit said.

"But until today, there has not been a letter of acceptance to clarify the facts from the Phuket Provincial Office in any way," he added.

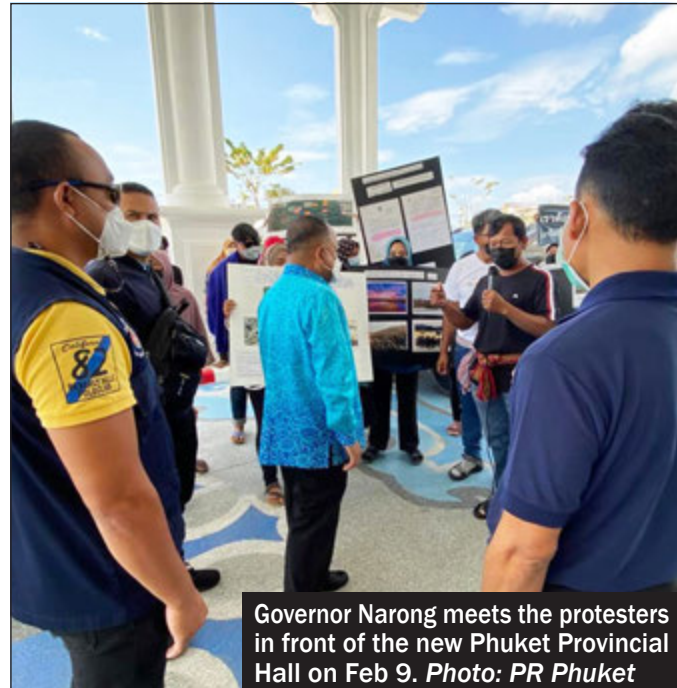
Governor Narong assigned Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong to look into the

complaint.

The meeting on Feb 9 was conducted by the Office of Waterway Development and Maintenance 3, under the Bureau of Waterway Development and Maintenance of the Marine Department, along with the Ministry of Transport.

The Waterways Development and Maintenance Office 3 sent public invitations to join the meeting on Feb 1.

Present at the meeting were Phuket Marine Office Chief



Governor Narong meets the protesters in front of the new Phuket Provincial Hall on Feb 9. Photo: PR Phuket

Nachaphong Pranit, Pa Klok Mayor Panya Samphaorat, representatives of local government offices and about 180 local residents attended the meeting.

At the meeting the attendees were shown presentations of the dredging plans, including the location and the operating times and the size of the dredging units.

"Most locals agreed that dredging is required for the convenience of fishing boats," said a report by the Phuket

office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

Chet Pantip, former village headman of Moo 9 Pa Khlok, said that fishing boats had difficulty accessing the "port" in Ao Kung at low tide.

"We therefore submitted a request to the municipality requesting the dredging of Ao Kung, which is a public water area," he said.

"There have been several rounds of hearings of public opinions in which the majority agreed to take action. There-

fore, the Marine Department should now conduct dredging," Mr Chet added.

"For some groups that are concerned about the environment and the nearby mangrove forests, according to the surveys by the relevant authorities, the examination of the aerial photographs have shown there will be no impact," he said.

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

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

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

## PPAO rolls out Moderna

MORE THAN 22,000 PEOPLE WILL RECEIVE vaccination injections of the Moderna vaccine through the current campaign by Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO, or OrBorJor), with promises of 38,000 more doses to come.

PPAO President Rewat Areerob announced the news at the launch of the current Moderna vaccine rollout at the Central Phuket Floresta shopping mall on Feb 8.

"This is good news for Phuket people who have been waiting for the Moderna vaccine for a long time," Mr Rewat said.

The vaccinations began with medical teams administering injections from doses sourced from the Thai Red Cross, he said.

"From Feb 11-28, doses of the vaccine will be given to people from the 22,000 doses the PPAO purchased from the Government Pharmaceutical Organization [GPO]," he added.

The 22,000 doses to be administered are already dedicated to people who have registered through the PhuketMustWin website to receive Moderna, Mr Rewat noted.

A further 38,000 doses of Moderna have been ordered from the GPO, Mr Rewat added.

"Local people don't have to worry. In March, the PPAO will open registration for the remaining 38,000 doses," he said.

Mr Rawat stated that the next delivery of Moderna vaccines is expected to arrive in Phuket around the beginning of March.

The Moderna vaccine provided by the PPAO will be provided only to Thai citizens registered as Phuket residents.

"The only condition for receiving the vaccine is that the person must have a 13-digit Thai government ID card number and be registered on a house registration document



The PPAO has started rolling out its mass vaccinations using the Moderna vaccine. Photo: PPAO

[tabien baan] in Phuket," Mr Rewat said.

Mr Rawat added that the provision of Moderna vaccine is a collaboration between the PPAO and the GPO.

"The management team of the PPAO and I decided to purchase 60,000 doses of Moderna vaccines in July last year due to the prediction that the COVID situation would still be unresolved," he said.

"Citizens should be given a third and fourth booster," he added.

"Since Phuket had been chosen by the government to be the city that drives the economy under the Phuket Sandbox project, the PPAO realises the importance of the health of Phuket people and disease prevention as well," he said.

"We have always tried to build confidence among people in the COVID-19 epidemic prevention measures and will continue to do so until the epidemic is over," he concluded.

The Phuket News

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Wind 14 m/s

WED FEB 23



High: +33°

Low: +26°

Wind 7 m/s

THU FEB 24



High: +33°

Low: +26°

Wind 7 m/s

## Volunteers to tackle canal sewage, litter

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

A joint campaign by Royal Thai Volunteers and the Rak Bang Yai Club will aim to clear weeds, litter and other debris from the Bang Yai Canal, which runs through the heart of Phuket Town, so that foul smells emanating from sewage in the canal will dissipate.

The joint campaign was announced at the new Phuket Provincial Hall on Feb 11 during a video teleconference with Admiral Pavit Rujithes, Director of the Royal Thai Initiative Volunteer organisation, operated under the Royal Office.

Also present were Kanungnit Ketkaew, Director of the Phuket branch of the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE), and Teerayut Naweeekarn, President of Rak Bang Yai Club.

At the meeting, Mr Teerayut explained that efforts by the Rak Bang Yai Club to clear the canal had been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We used to hold an activity every week, but due to the



Bang Yai canal. Photo: PR Phuket

COVID-19 situation it is now only once per month," he said.

The club's goal is to sustainably solve problems of flooding and drought, he said.

Mr Teerayut avoided saying that the issues only arose through lack of care and attention given to the maintenance of the canal.

The Rak Bang Yai Club will hold its next canal clearing on Feb 20, he added.

"Phase 1 [of the activity] is to eliminate weeds along the dam and canal walls.

"It will start from the bridge in front of Satee Phuket School and continue to Queen

Sirikit Park," he explained.

"The second phase will start from Queen Sirikit Park and continue to the tip of Saphan Hin," he added.

"A total distance of three kilometres," he noted.

"Bang Yai Canal is the main canal that flows through Phuket. The origin of the water is from Kathu and the canal flows through Phuket City and flows into the sea," Mr Teerayut explained.

"Bang Yai Canal is useful as a source of fresh water for consumption [further upstream], trapping aquatic animals and helping to drain

rainwater into the sea during the rainy season," he said.

"Now, Bang Yai Canal has a problem of sewage, littering and waste causing foul odours," Mr Teerayut said.

"There are weeds that cover the waterways along both sides of the canal, especially the area that flows through the community in Phuket Town," he said.

"Therefore, I will lead volunteers to develop Bang Yai Canal to create cleanliness and beauty," he added.

Adm Pavit praised the efforts.

"I would like to see the

participation of the people to take action together with [Royal Thai] Volunteer work. With support from the government, this will make the work sustainable," he said.

"The development and restoration of Bang Yai Canal initiated by the Rak Bang Yai Club and continuing to operate is considered as a model for other provinces," Adm Pavit said.

"The benefits that people will receive by reviving the Bang Yai Canal is tourism and foreigners and local people can learn about the local culture and see the activities of the community, because Bang Yai Canal is rich and diverse in culture," he added.

"I think that it is worth supporting. I want Phuket to be a place of sustainable development, a useful place," Adm Pavit noted.

"I would like to thank the Phuket Governor for setting up a team of [Royal Thai] Volunteers working together with Phuket people taking part [in the campaign].

"I want Phuket people to continue taking care of this place," he said.

## New fire station opens at Surakul

A NEW FIRE STATION AT Surakul Stadium was officially opened on Feb 10, amid much fanfare and a monk blessing ceremony.

Rewat Areerob, President of the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO, or OrBorJor), presided over the opening ceremony, joined by Wichit Mayor Kreetha Chotiwichippan, heads of local government offices and local village headmen (Phu Yai Baan).

Officially called the "The Phuket of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Centre (Surakul Centre)", the new firefighting "centre" is located behind Surakul Stadium, on Ekwanit Rd.

Construction of the building, 13.5 metres wide and 14m long, began in 2019 and the centre started providing firefighting services in September last year.

On display for the opening were the firefighters stationed at the centre and much of the firefighting equipment they have been provided.

Oddly, not on display was a vehicle for the firefighters to use, though an official announcement by Wichit Municipality assured



Photo: Wichit Municipality

that they had one.

The centre aims to help reduce response times to emergency calls in the area, which includes the Central Festival Phuket and Central Floresta shopping malls, said the announcement.

Wichit has two other fire stations in the municipality: one at Sri Phuwanat Park on Pattana Thongtin Rd (Tel: 076-525199), the other at Ao Makham (Tel: 076-684443).

The municipality has in total 31 firefighters, with teams assigned to two shifts, covering responses needed 24 hours a day.

The new fire station at Surakul can be contacted at 076-540889.

Fires anywhere across the island can be reported by calling the 199 hotline.

The Phuket News

## Phuket edition of Monopoly to launch next month

THE PHUKET EDITION OF Monopoly will be officially launched next month at an event held at Central Floresta shopping mall.

Nattakit Tangpoonsinthana, Assistant Managing Director of Marketing at Central Pattana Public Company Limited announced the news on Feb 10.

The launch event will be held on Mar 19, Mr Nattakit confirmed.

"We are honoured and delighted that Central Phuket has been chosen as the first shopping center, and the only shopping venue in Asia, that will appear on the board game MONOPOLY: Phuket Edition, together with the main famous attractions of Phuket such as the Sarasin Bridge, Kata Beach and Promthep Cape, among others," he said.

"We are very proud that we are a part of helping to support the country's tourism and attract tourists from all over the world, especially now the situation is beginning to unfold in a better direction, to help stimulate the economy and generate cash flow both at the provincial and national level," he added.

Jirawadee Kunsab, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) London Office, said, "The creation of

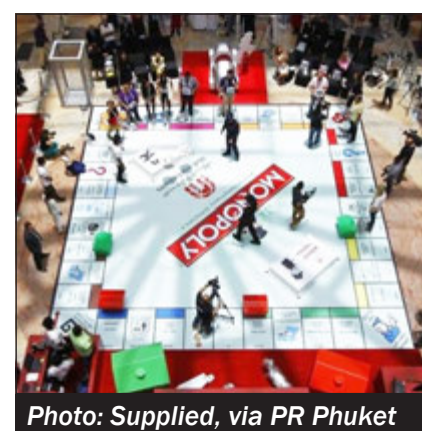


Photo: Supplied, via PR Phuket

the board game MONOPOLY: Phuket Edition is an important collaboration between TAT and Winning Moves.

"By launching the game, travel to a variety of tourist attractions in Phuket will become more well known, from popular tourist attractions that everyone knows about, as well as new and unknown hidden gem attractions," he said.

"The upcoming MONOPOLY: Phuket Edition board is also a great opportunity to communicate information about the Thailand Reopening under the Test & Go programme to invite foreign tourists around the world to come and see the beauty of Thailand and Phuket again," he noted.

The Phuket News

the Phuket news



# 'Fake police' scam in spotlight

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

A Phuket expat of 36 years has stepped forward to explain an in-depth scam involving a man wearing a police uniform claiming to be from Phuket Town Police Station extorting tens of thousands of baht by threatening the expat with 10 years in jail for receiving illicit funds.

The scam began on Feb 3, when Swiss national Alain Gogniat, 58, received a phone call telling him a FedEx parcel could not be delivered.

"It was an automated message, asking me to 'Push #1' to talk to someone about it. At first I just ignored it, but I kept getting the same phone call, about 10 times," Alain explained.

By coincidence, Alain was genuinely expecting documents from Switzerland to be delivered by FedEx, so he finally agreed to 'Push #1' during the phone call.

He was put through to a woman who explained, not that a parcel could not be delivered to him, but that a parcel addressed to be delivered to an address in South



Alain Gogniat, a Phuket expat for 36 years, and his son Nong Ananda at the police station.

Korea had been sent in his name. The parcel had been intercepted by Customs and was being held by police in Bangkok.

"She said it was being held because it contained 20 passports and 10 credit cards hidden among some clothes," Alain said.

Alain was put through to a man who introduced himself as an officer at Phuket Town Police Station. The "policeman" gave details of

the case, and asked to move the conversation to a LINE group so a video conference call could be held.

Alain joined the conference call, which was made through a LINE group called "Mueang Phuket Provincial Police Station" (the same as the official name used in full in Thai) – complete with a photo background of the actual Phuket Town Police Station and the Royal Thai Police emblem. The contact

info presented in the LINE group account was the correct details for contacting the actual Phuket Town Police Station.

The man addressing Alain was wearing a police uniform, but wearing a face mask obscuring his face.

The "officer" at first expressed sympathy to Alain for being caught up in the affairs of two men arrested in Bangkok. The officer showed photos and reports of the

men arrested. Both men had separately claimed that Alain had received payments of B800,000 and B900,000 as commission for his role in their crimes, the officer said.

However, the officer soon changed his tune and started badgering Alain – and his 14-year-old son Nong Ananda (or "Nong Nano"), who was translating for Alain – and threatening charges that would result in 10 years' jail or a B200,000 fine for receiving funds procured through illegal activities.

Over 90 minutes, the officer kept repeating the threat of jail unless Alain could prove that he did not receive the funds – at first by showing the balance in his bank accounts, but then transferring B57,000 from one account so that "the source of the funds could be investigated".

The money would be returned within some 45 minutes, the officer said.

"That was when I started to get suspicious... So I also asked the man [the 'officer'] to widen the angle of the camera so I could see better, and then I could clearly see that the man was wearing a Thai police uniform," he said.

At first, Alain refused to transfer the money, but after four hours in total and his son panicking that his father would be sent to jail, Alain finally transferred the B57,000.

The LINE video call was terminated, but then the officer kept calling back to ask for more money. Alain refused, and now believed he had been scammed. The calls kept coming but Alain ignored them and went to Phuket Town Police Station to file an initial formal complaint, submitting screenshots, recordings and call logs all substantiating his report of the scam.

The money was transferred to a Kasikornbank account in the name of Pongdanai Chaiya, who police the next day said they had already located in Chiang Mai.

At last report police were working on having Mr Pongdanai present himself for questioning.

"I can laugh about it now, but at that time I was really scared. I just want other foreigners to know that this happened, and not to be deceived by such thieves. Do not send anyone money, even if they appear to be police officers," Alain said.

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# 'War room' targets mass price hikes

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit has set up a 'war room' to provide him with daily updates on product prices as fears rise over increases in transportation costs due to rising fuel prices.

Deputy Prime Minister Jurin has also ordered the Department of Internal Trade to closely monitor product prices and to calculate appropriate price increases for individual products in the event of a transport fare hike.

Various transportation services are now reportedly looking to raise their fares by about 20%, reported state news agency NNT.

Relevant state agencies have been tasked with calculating the appropriate change in product prices that may follow the transport fare hike, the report added.

Mr Jurin said global oil prices have sharply increased and the effects are being felt in every country – a message that local government agencies have been repeating for weeks.

The government has ameliorated rising fuel prices by



Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit. Photo: NNT

capping the price of diesel at B30 a litre, the NNT report added.

However, *The Phuket News* notes that not marked in the report was that petrol prices have increased by over 19% in just the past six months.

The commerce minister said individual products will be looked at should the diesel price exceed B30 a litre.

Phuket will be particularly exposed with nearly all retail produce and items sold on

the island being brought in by road.

"In such a scenario, commerce officials will determine the impact of oil prices on each product's overall cost," the report added.

Mr Jurin noted that products have different cost structures and so prices cannot be allowed to increase across the board. He added that joint deliberations over proposed price increases would be needed in advance.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, the Department of Internal Trade will be analysing product cost structures more meticulously than before.

"For the benefit of consumer benefit, product prices will be kept as low as possible but at levels which still allow producers to subsist," Mr Jurin noted.

So far, manufacturers have cooperated with requests to keep prices unchanged amid heightened costs, he said.

The impact of rising fuel prices comes as officials confirm that all provinces last year recorded their lowest level of tourism revenue on record.

Tourism receipts in 77 provinces set a historic low in 2021 with revenue declining by 69.55% to B241,350 billion, while the income gap between Bangkok and other major provinces remained wide, according to the Tourism and Sports Ministry.

Meanwhile, almost 42% of hotel operators remain concerned about the COVID-19 situation, even though more have started to reopen, reported the *Bangkok Post*.

Last year Bangkok posted the highest revenue at B62.7bn, plummeting by 75.39%, while Chiang Mai lagged in second place with a decrease of 53.27% to B23.3bn.

Phuket recorded B21.3bn in revenue, a massive drop of 80.34%.

In the bottom half, Nong Bua Lam Phu, Amnat Charoen and Samut Sakhon earned the lowest tourism income at B58.24mn, B139.6mn and B142.2mn, respectively.

The tourism recession carried on from 2020, in which total revenue from 77 provinces plunged 55.4% to B482bn.

The hotel business operator sentiment index conducted by the Thai Hotels Association (THA) and the Bank of Thailand which polled 200 operators nationwide between Jan 10-26 also reported the ongoing impact from the pandemic as 49% of them had revenue lower than 30% compared to the pre-COVID level.

The average occupancy rate in January dipped to 32% from 37% in December due to the temporary suspension of the Test & Go programme.

Some 50% of hotels had less income compared to December, while 53% had cash flow to sustain them for less than three months.

"Three-quarters of hotels were uneasy about the Omicron threat as 42% of them were deeply concerned about the situation and 44% were moderately worried about the latest outbreak, particularly hotels in the North which recorded a high number of cases," said Marisa Sukosol Nunbhakdi, president of THA.

She said most of the hotels were affected because domestic travellers reduced out-of-home activities, while Test & Go's suspension impacted bookings from international guests.

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## India travel bubble floated

THAILAND WILL SOON initiate a travel bubble with India with the main goal of attracting high-value young Indian visitors who can make a significant contribution to the recovery of the country's tourism-dependent economy.

The Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) on Feb 11 approved to review a proposal on the Thai-Indian Air Travel Bubble (ATB), in which extra convenience will be offered to air passengers travelling between the two countries, despite some remaining COVID-19 restrictions, said CCSA spokesman Taweelap Visanuyothin.

Airlines and air ticket agents together with COVID-19 control authorities will play a key role in this bilateral tourism promotion campaign, he said.

About 1.9 million Indian tourists came to Thailand in 2019, a 25% increase from the previous year, Taweelap said, citing figures from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

They each spent seven days and B44,700 in Thailand on average, he said.

In 2019, this generated about B80 billion for Thailand's tourism income, a 20% rise from the previous year



Tourists from India pose for pictures overlooking Pattaya City in June 2018. Photo: Bangkok Post / file

when India had already become Thailand's third-largest tourism market, with over 300 flights running from India to Thailand, the spokesman added.

"Indian visitors represent Thailand's hope for the recovery of tourism," said Somsong Sachaphimukh, vice president of both the Tourism Council of Thailand and the Indian-Thai Chamber of Commerce.

"India is a high-value tourism market given it has 600-700 million people aged 29 years and under," she said. "The country also has a growing number of new millionaires."

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports previously forecast 20% growth in the

number of Indian visitors to Thailand by 2030, while the World Bank projected that 83 million Indian tourists would be travelling overseas by that same year, up from 24 million in 2017, Ms Somsong said.

Thailand's main rivals for Indian tourists are Dubai and Singapore, she said.

Holidaymakers account for 85% of visitors from India. They are mostly aged 25-35 years old and like to travel with groups of friends, family or as couples, she noted.

Spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said earlier the government hoped to start talks with China and Malaysia this month, in a bid to secure travel bubbles.

Bangkok Post



# Southern border to reopen to tourists from next month

## BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government is planning to reopen the Thai-Malaysia border next month to stimulate tourism and the economy in the deep southern provinces.

Deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek says Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has ordered the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) and the tourism and sports emergency operation centre to outline pandemic mitigation measures for the reopening of border checkpoints in Songkhla, Yala, Narathiwat and Satun.

Following the government's policy to open a travel bubble with Malaysia, tourists from the neighbouring country will be allowed to enter under the Test and Go scheme with no quarantine upon arrival although visitors will still need to pass two RT-PCR tests after arriving in Thailand.

"The prime minister is confident Thailand will remain one of the world's top tourist destinations despite



The border checkpoint in Sadao district of Songkhla. Photo: Assawin Pakkawan

the pandemic.

"The government will support efforts to revitalise tourism, with an emphasis on public health and safety," Ms Rachada said.

Dr Suthep Phetmak, inspector-general attached to public health zone 12, said the COVID-19 situation in Malaysia and Thailand are similar and therefore the risk of the border reopening will be low.

Before the reopening, government agencies will prepare immigration processes, testing, hotels with the SHA+ standard and businesses with a COVID Free Setting, including public transport, tourism sites,

restaurants and department stores, he said.

Meanwhile, Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has been urged to reconsider the decision to exclude COVID-19 treatments from the list of conditions covered by the Universal Coverage for Emergency Patients (UCEP) scheme, as the number of new infections is still on the rise.

Deputy Public Health Minister Sathit Pitutecha said the time simply wasn't right to make changes to the scheme, especially since the country had just reported 16,330 new cases and 25 deaths from COVID-19 last Saturday (Feb 12) – the highest since Aug

29 last year.

He said he will ask Anutin to delay the rule's implementation to April 1.

The government had earlier announced that starting on March 1, COVID-19 treatments will no longer be covered by the UCEP, except for those who are in a critical condition.

At present, all costs associated with COVID-19 treatments are covered by the scheme, meaning patients can seek treatment at any hospital free of charge.

The announcement means only patients who are suffering from a critical, secondary infection brought on by COVID-19 will be covered.

Those who have tested positive but do not require critical care will have to make use of other welfare schemes to cover the cost of their treatment – for example, the National Health Security Office's universal health coverage scheme or the Civil Servant Medical Benefit Scheme.

Separately, the Pheu Thai Party also urged the government to reconsider the move, saying it would complicate efforts to contain the outbreak.

## Second oil spill 'doubles' damage to Rayong coast

### RAYONG



Workers clean up the first spill on Jan 25. Photo: Bangkok Post

A SECOND OIL SPILL from a pipeline owned by Star Petroleum Refining Public Co Ltd (SPRC) has at least doubled the damage to the marine environment off the coast of Rayong, an expert said on Sunday (Feb 13).

Thon Thamrongnawasawat, deputy dean of the Faculty of Fisheries at Kasetsart University, wrote on his Facebook page that oil slicks can once again be seen along Mae Ramphueng beach, one of the areas worst-affected by the first oil spill on Jan 25.

After the first spill, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment urged the police to investigate SPRC, who is majority-owned by Chevron. The company was also told to cease operations immediately after the incident.

However, SPRC admitted on Feb 10 that a further 5,000 litres of crude oil had leaked from the same pipeline.


Mr Thon said thin films

of crude oil can be seen along Mae Ramphueng beach once again.

Worse still, he wrote, samples taken from the beach showed the oil was seeping deeper into the sand.


A study of wedge clams, a known biological indicator of pollution, that were taken from the area showed many were killed as a result of exposure to crude oil. The spill, he said, isn't just affecting local clam populations, as many other crustaceans commonly found along the coast have also been affected.



The clean-up of Mae Ramphueng beach is carried out by the Air and Coastal Defence Command under the navy, which recently said the situation was "under control". Bangkok Post



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Robot cleaners on Kamala Beach. Images: Sustainable Concept Art by Palmer Owyong



Reimagining Patong. Images: Sustainable Concept Art by Palmer Owyong

# Building a sustainable Phuket



## SUSTAINABLY YOURS

Palmer Owyong

### Better Environmental Education

We could start with better environmental education. In Israel, water is extremely scarce, and they are taught the importance of it, beginning at 4 years old. Since they start so young the lessons stay with them for a lifetime. The result is that the average Israeli uses almost 40% less water daily than the average Thai. The government also constantly reminds them of the value of water with advertising campaigns that remind citizens to “Save Water Save Life”, and to “Only Use What You Need”.

Phuket could adopt a similar strategy with the environment by teaching children school, and reminding adults to reduce their litter; placing advertise-

ments on billboards and social media about the importance of recycling, composting, reducing our waste and not littering on beaches or burning trash.

### Create Walking Spaces

For several years Phuket Town has been applying to be recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, similar to Penang’s George Town. It has a cultural heritage made up of Thai and Sino-Portuguese architecture, is decorated with colourful street art, and is filled with amazing restaurants and food stalls. What it lacks is accessibility; parking is difficult to find and the sidewalks are narrow and cramped.

One solution is to close a few of the streets to cars and motorbikes and turn them into walking and biking areas. This is already done every Sunday on Thalang Rd with the Lard Yai Market. We could turn this into a full weekend and slowly add in a few days of the week.

Pre-COVID-19 several major cities including San Francisco, New York, Boston, London, Mexico City, Barcelona, Madrid, Oslo, Brussels, Copenhagen, Paris, Milan, Athens and Rome were already restricting cars in the central business districts to fight climate change, reduce air pollution, and make the area more liveable. The pandemic has accelerated this trend, as it has highlighted our basic human need to have open outdoor spaces.

The ban on cars has resulted in cleaner air, reduced pedestrian deaths, lower obesity rates, less stress-related diseases, and additional space for housing, parks, trees, plants biking, and walking paths. Furthermore, business in the city centres has improved, in the areas where the streets are closed. For example, London saw an increase in retail spending of 30% at shops and restaurants. Studies show that walkable streets are more economically productive per acre for several reasons; they are safer for pedestrians so people make more frequent trips; there is more space; people can move at a leisurely space so they will stop to investigate shops; and you can plant trees, to make the area cooler and more inviting.

The Blue Zones Projects has taken a similar approach in over a dozen cities in the United States, making them more liveable, by adding bike paths, improving and adding parks and trees, and making them more pedestrian-friendly. The results? A 14% reduction in obesity, a 30% reduction in smoking, lower healthcare costs, less employee absenteeism and a generally happier community. So, reducing car usage not

only has environmental benefits, but economic and health benefits as well.

### Better Public Transportation

Even in low season, the roads on Phuket can become congested, but pre-pandemic peak, during high season, they could be mind-numbingly maddening. The past solutions have been to widen or build more roads and tunnels, but a well-known and scientifically validated observation, known as Jevon’s Paradox, tells us that the more capacity you build on roads, the more traffic it produces. The reason is that when people find it easier to drive, they will drive more often, thus creating an endless need to build and widen roads.

A future solution that is still in the planning stage is the B40-billion light rail system, but not only is the plan ludicrously expensive, it is also inflexible; once the tracks are laid there is no changing the routes. A better solution would be to create a fleet of affordable medium-sized electric buses that could cover the island. This would both reduce traffic and improve air quality while saving billions of baht.

### More Solar and Wind

Thailand gets 60% of its energy from natural gas, and imports more than half of its energy resources, although that’s slowly starting to change with the hydro-solar project that opened in Ubon Ratchathani last April.

Phuket is blessed with an almost limitless supply of sun and wind. One way that we could capitalise on it is by adding solar panels and vertical wind turbines to the rooftops of big-box retail stores like Macro, Ikea and Big C. These rooftops have the advantage of not taking up any new space, being flat and almost always exposed to the sun or wind, and could substantially reduce the island’s carbon emissions.

We can also combine the existing agricultural industry on the island with solar panels to create agrivoltaic farms. This is when you place the panels above the crops, which protects them from over-exposure to direct sunlight while reducing moisture loss. In return, the crops cool the solar panels, making them run more efficiently. The farmer benefits by improving their crop yield, and getting an extra income stream from generating energy.

*This article is Part 1 of a two-part special report. Read Part 2 next week. Palmer Owyong is an environmental activist working with the Kamala Green Club and the Global Sustainability Hub.*

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# Do or Do Not, There is No Try

## ADVERTORIAL

By Joanna Matlub

**L**iving Waters Phuket has stepped up to complete vital community projects in record turnaround times

### The Foundation

The Living Waters Phuket Foundation was set up to build brighter futures for communities in need. It provides financial grants to projects around essential relief areas including emergency and sustainable food security, education requirements, renewable energy and environmental issues.

Right now, this Foundation is focussing their efforts and funds to work as quickly as possible, turning around grant applications in order to help the most vulnerable and time critical projects in and around Phuket.

### Let's Make It Snappy

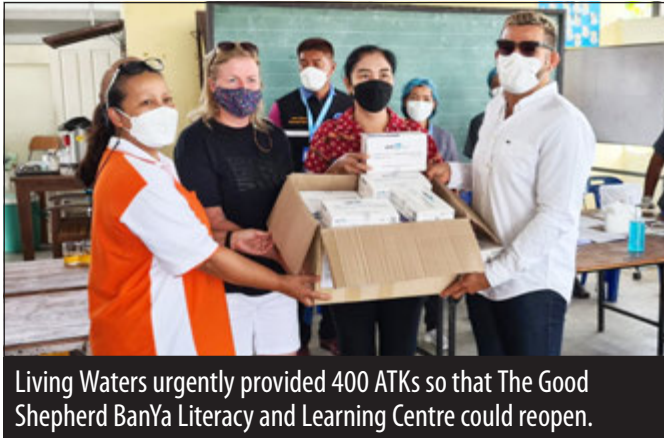
With thousands of people requiring immediate assistance, communities often do not always have the luxury of time spent waiting for grant applications to get turned around; some need instant help especially given the current economic situation.

This is where Living Waters Phuket is stepping up and getting projects promptly approved and funded; in some cases this has been managed in a matter of just a few days!

Only last week, Donna Toon, who has volunteered for The Good Shepherd for over 12 years and has proved to be an indispensable asset for raising awareness and funds for their causes, reached out to Living Waters Phuket for help with one such critical project.

### Swiftly Supporting Local

The Good Shepherd BanYa Literacy and Learning



Living Waters urgently provided 400 ATKs so that The Good Shepherd BanYa Literacy and Learning Centre could reopen.

Centre in Phuket needed funding to purchase ATK test kits for over 400 children in order for testing to take place to allow the school to finally reopen. Living Waters Phuket fully supports educational requirements to help children return to school, and helps support opportunities for children to gain an education no matter what their situation is.

Donna reached out to Living Waters Phuket and they immediately got the ball rolling to help with getting this project underway. A grant was applied for online, (the Foundation's independent board of advisors review each grant application they receive objectively, fairly and impartially), and funding was approved the very next day.

A few days later the ATK kits were delivered, children were tested and the school was able to open – from a community need highlighted, to project completion in under a week, a rapid and successful project completed for everyone involved.

Shaun Stenning, CEO of 5 Star Marine was pleased to report, "This is exactly the type of work I started Living Waters Phuket for – to help people in our community who need it the most. In just under

four months since establishing this Foundation, we are more than proud that our operations can assist vulnerable projects in efficiently quick turnaround times – this is something that is vital, in some cases every single day saved can make a huge difference."

### Project Highlights

Living Waters Phuket have completed multiple projects to help the local community. A very small selection is referenced below to highlight the type of initiatives being funded:

- The Red Cross Phuket – The wheelchair assistance initiative saw funding and distribution for over 1,800 wheelchairs to assist those with mobility issues across Phuket.
- Phuket Has Been Good To Us - The Foundation provided funding to allow 500 disadvantaged students access to a new computer lab as well as providing brand-new IT equipment for the school.
- Tambon Phunai Koh Yao Yai Orphanage – Funding for school supplies for parentless children for one full school year; which directly allowed the children to return to school to get the chance to continue gaining an education.
- Life Bags – This ongoing project has included the largest single order of life bag supplies in the past two years. Purchasing, packing and distributing supplies by 5 Star Marine continues on a regular basis a few times each week to help those communities suffering the most.
- Coconut Island School – The Foundation provided infrastructure for portable water for 300 students, as well as equipment for the school's kitchen including a fridge, freezer and fans.

### Find Out More

🌐 [www.livingwatersphuket.com](http://www.livingwatersphuket.com)

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## POP QUIZ

1. How old is Grammy award-winning singer and actress Cher?
2. Which five countries share borders with Syria?
3. Who was the first Sultan of Egypt?
4. On which side of the road are vehicles driven in Greenland?
5. In which year were Thai banknotes first issued?

Answers below, centre

## SUDOKU

Medium

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

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

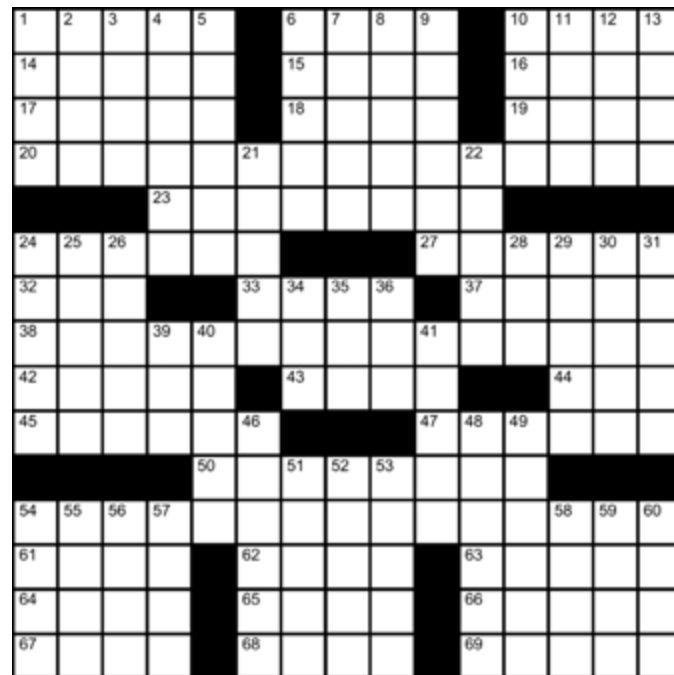
1. Spring flowers
6. Holder for 1-Across
10. Luxury home features
14. Ready for battle again
15. Regrettably
16. Broke down
17. Available
18. Barber's supply
19. Part of WATS
20. Liposuction, e.g.
23. Encirclement
24. Maximum
27. James, for one
32. Clavell's "\_\_\_-Pan"
33. Decorative pitcher
37. Emmy-winning Lewis
38. Hit TV show
42. Turbine part
43. Decorative inlay
44. Corroded
45. Supplement
47. Waders
50. \_\_\_ sin
54. Updating a kitchen, e.g. (Brit.)
61. Start of something big?

Down

1. Video game
2. City near Sparks
3. These may be sowed
4. Doggerel
5. Drives
6. Oracular
7. "Wellaway!"
8. Hot stuff
9. 100 centavos
10. Booty
11. Title for some priests
12. Monkey
13. Corset part
21. \_\_\_ pole
22. Apply anew
24. Female organs
25. Phylum, for one

26. Paws

28. Howe'er
29. They go with the flow
30. Mountain ridge
31. Some messages
34. It's catching
35. Down Under bird
36. Noise from a fan
39. Lobster eggs
40. Overthrow, e.g.
41. "In & Out" star, 1997
46. Aftershock
48. "Johnny Armstrong," for one
49. Maltreat
51. Insect stage
52. Noggin
53. Wastes time
54. Arizona Native American
55. Dutch \_\_\_
56. Gloom
57. Prize since 1949
58. Machu Picchu builder
59. Hit hard
60. Pluck

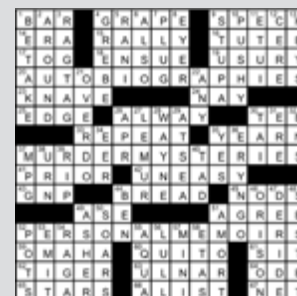


Visit: [www.ilovecrosswords.com](http://www.ilovecrosswords.com)

## Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

(1) 75; (2) Iraq, Turkey, Israel, Lebanon and Jordan; (3) Saladin; (4) Right; (5) 1902

## Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

in eight people have traces of cocaine on their hands, even if they don't use the drug, according to UK researchers.

6

in 10 Americans believe they've seen a ghost, according to a survey, and six in 10 Americans say they are "too scared" to go to the dentist.

20

percent of the world's population has a second toe longer than the first; a trait known as "Morton's Toe" or "Greek Toe".

400

questions a day the average 4-year-old child asks, reported a UK study.

1

million

dogs in America are the primary beneficiaries in their owner's wills.

Source: Uberfacts

## ISLAND VIEW



Tropical silhouette at Kata Beach. Photo by Luke Gullins

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to [exeditor@classactmedia.co.th](mailto:exeditor@classactmedia.co.th)

## This week in history

Feb 18, 2001

WikiLeaks publishes the first of hundreds of thousands of classified documents disclosed by the soldier now known as Chelsea Manning.

Feb 19, 1674

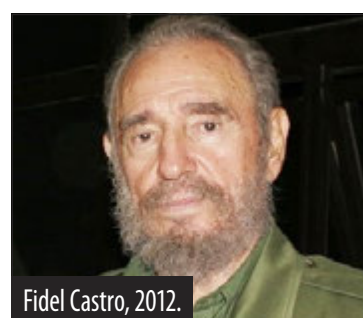
England and the Netherlands sign the Treaty of Westminster, ending the Third Anglo-Dutch War. A provision of the agreement transfers the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam to England, and it is renamed New York.

Feb 20, 1998

American figure skater Tara Lipinski becomes the youngest gold-medalist, age 15, at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan.

Feb 21, 1808

Without a previous declaration of war, Russian troops cross the border to Sweden at Abborfors in eastern Finland, thus beginning the Finnish War, in which Sweden will lose the eastern half of the country (e.g. Finland) to Russia.



Fidel Castro, 2012.

Feb 22, 2006

At least six men stage Britain's biggest robbery, stealing £53 million (about B2.13 billion) from a Securitas

depot in Tonbridge, Kent.

Feb 23, 1905

Chicago attorney Paul Harris and three other businessmen meet for lunch to form the Rotary Club, the world's first service club.

Feb 24, 2008

Fidel Castro retires as the President of Cuba and the Council of Ministers after 32 years. He remains as head of the Communist Party for another three years.

Source: Wikipedia



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THU

24 FEB



**Skål Phuket Dinner at Blue Tree**

Dear Members, Colleagues, & Friends of Skål Phuket You are invited to join us for the 1st Skål Phuket Dinner of 2022 at Blue Tree Phuket from 18.00-22.00. Guest speakers include Daniel Steinke, Managing Director of Blue Tree Phuket & Bart Duykers, Area Director of BB&B Thailand. Become a member and connect with the biggest Travel & Tourism professional network. Being part of Skål Thailand offers you a wide range of benefits. 080 376 7130, [contact@skalphuket.org](mailto:contact@skalphuket.org)

FRI

4 MAR



**The Grow Boating Networking Evening for March 2022**

We would like to invite you to join us for the next Grow

Boating Evening which will be held at the Sea Breeze at the Royal Phuket Marina on Friday the 4th of March from 5pm. It is with great pleasure that we announce that the Thailand Yacht Show have very generously agreed to be the drinks sponsor for Grow Boating for the next 12 months, which saves us having to worry about finding a sponsor each time, so do come along and enjoy their hospitality! There will be a delicious light buffet for all attendees and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to [growboatingphuket@gmail.com](mailto:growboatingphuket@gmail.com) Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See [www.thepuketnews.com](http://www.thepuketnews.com)

TUE

8 MAR

**International Women's Day Lunch 2022**  
 Firefly Pool & Restaurant - The Pavilions Phuket  
 Tuesday 8th March 2022  
 9:00-10:30 Walk the Walk  
 11:00-2:30 Talk the Talk & Lunch  
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FRI

11 MAR



**Australia Day Phuket Sundowners - March 2022**

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of

Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC) and the Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), is delighted to invite you to join us for "Australia Day Phuket Sundowners" at JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa, on Friday 11 March 2022, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. A celebration of all things Australian, join us for your favourite Australian food & beverages, and welcome in the New Year as the first business networking event in Phuket of 2022! Please register in advance, as walk-ins are not allowed for this event Limited spaces, please book early to avoid disappointment COVID-19 Requirements: Attendees must be able to show proof of at least double vaccinated and a Negative test result (ATK/RT-PCR) conducted within 24 hours of arriving at the event. Cost: 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members. Accommodation: JW Marriott Resort & Spa offers an additional 10% discount on the room rate inclusive of Breakfast for stays booked & consumed between the 27th to 30th January 2022. For reservation, see <https://bit.ly/AustChamThailandPromotion>, or contact [JWPhuket-Sales@marriotthotels.com](mailto:JWPhuket-Sales@marriotthotels.com)

THU

17 MAR



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## Djokovic on entry list for vaccinated-only Indian Wells

### TENNIS

TOP-RANKED 20-TIME Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic, prevented from playing the Australian Open because he was not vaccinated for COVID-19, has entered next month's Indian Wells ATP event.

Djokovic is a five-time champion at Indian Wells, where organisers announced entries on Feb 9 and said proof of full vaccination will be required for spectator entry into the grounds for the March 7-20 tournament.

The Serbian star was set to try and win a fourth consecutive Australian Open title last month – what would have been his record 21<sup>st</sup> career major singles crown – but Australian border officials said he did not meet requirements for unvaccinated travelers to enter the country.

Djokovic's visa was eventually canceled and after a legal appeal failed he departed without playing.

Organisers at Indian Wells noted in a statement that vaccinations will be required for the event, but also said player protocols for Djokovic and other men's players will be



World number one Novak Djokovic. Photo: AFP

decided by the ATP in line with US restrictions.

"With health and safety as the tournament's top priority, the BNP Paribas Open will require valid proof of full vaccination to enter the Indian Wells Tennis Garden for the tournament," it said.

"The guidelines for the players are governed by the protocols established by their respective governing bodies, the WTA and ATP, as well as any restrictions established by the United States of America in regard to the vaccination status of international travelers entering the country."

AFP

## England kick-start hopes for Six Nations in Rome

### RUGBY:

AFP

England got their Six Nations campaign up and running last Sunday (Feb 13) with a comfortable 33-0 win over Italy in Rome to bounce back from the previous weekend's loss in Scotland.

Eddie Jones' side swept in five tries at the Stadio Olimpico as England inflicted a 34<sup>th</sup> straight Six Nations defeat on the Italians and moved three points behind leaders France.

Jamie George crossed twice with Marcus Smith, Elliot Daly and Kyle Sinckler adding further tries and Smith kicking eight points for an England side who were in control from the off.

Jones said there's no limit to how good Smith can be after the England fly-half starred in Rome.

"There's no ceiling to how good he can be," Jones told reporters.

"If he keeps on wanting to get better, keeps on having a learning mindset he could be an absolutely outstanding



England's fly-half Marcus Smith scores a try during England's 33-0 Six Nations win against Italy in Rome last Sunday (Feb 13). Photo: AFP

player at test level by the World Cup. And obviously that's pretty important."

England sit second in the Six Nations standings after their bonus point win over the Azzurri, three points behind leaders and tournament favourites France.

They face Wales at Twickenham in a fortnight's time and Jones was in positive mood about a display which banished memories of the

opening round defeat to Scotland in Edinburgh.

They burst out of the blocks with two tries in the first 20 minutes and never looked back from that point.

"We went out with a strong intent of taking the game to Italy, not allowing them into the game and I think we did that," said Jones.

Meanwhile, Ireland head coach Andy Farrell says that if his side shows the same "fight

and character" they displayed in the 30-24 loss to France on Saturday they will be "in the mix" for the Six Nations title come the final day of the tournament on March 19.

The Irish had looked out for the count when they went 22-7 down early in the second-half but two quickfire converted tries put them back in the match.

Although they fell just short – ending their nine-match Test winning run – Farrell took heart from the performance.

"History shows you that you've got to be ready in the Six Nations," he said.

"I'm sure that if we continue to show the fight and character that we have done here, which was an unbelievable Test match, I'm sure we'll be in the mix towards the end of it."

Wales overcame Scotland 20-17 in Cardiff on Saturday with coach Wayne Pivac praising captain Dan Biggar as "someone who fights for every last inch" after the fly-half played through the pain barrier to revive his side's hopes.

Phuket News

# English Premier League Predictions

[thephuketnews.com/predictions.php](http://thephuketnews.com/predictions.php)

## Rams down Bengals in Super Bowl thriller

### NFL

COOPER KUPP SCORED TWO TOUCHDOWNS and Aaron Donald spearheaded a fearsome defensive display as the Los Angeles Rams defeated the Cincinnati Bengals 23-20 to win the Super Bowl on Sunday (Feb 13).

Kupp scored a decisive touchdown with 1min 25sec remaining to give the Rams the lead at SoFi Stadium before Donald grabbed the Rams' record-breaking eighth sack of Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow to seal a blockbuster victory.

Donald's sack of Burrow was the dramatic final act of a gripping contest between the star-studded Rams and the Bengals, whose bid to win a first-ever Vince Lombardi Trophy fell agonizingly short.

Wide receiver Kupp was named Super Bowl MVP three years after missing the Rams last appearance in a Super Bowl through injury.

The Bengals had stormed into a 20-13 lead early in the second half but the Rams clawed their way back into the game thanks to their rampant defense led by Donald.

Burrow was sacked repeatedly at key moments to prevent the Bengals from extending their lead before Matt Gay's field goal pulled the Rams back to 20-16 heading into the fourth quarter.

Rams' quarterback Matthew Stafford then led a 15-play, 79-yard drive that benefited from three crucial Bengals penalties near the goal line before Kupp plucked a



Rams' quarterback Matthew Stafford (centre) prepares to hand off the ball during Super Bowl LVI. Photo: AFP

one-yard pass in the end zone for the go-ahead touchdown.

"Stafford and Kupp came to life," said Rams head coach Sean McVay, who becomes the youngest ever head coach to win the Super Bowl at the age of 36. "Our best players shined the brightest when they had to and that's why we got it done."

It was the Rams second franchise Super Bowl victory and their first since returning to Los Angeles from St. Louis in 2016. Their previous win came in 2000.

Sunday's showstopping finale was a fitting end to one of the most gripping NFL post-seasons in years.

With Los Angeles basking in a February heatwave, a 70,000-capacity crowd packed with Hollywood celebrities were given a show-stopping halftime show led by icons Snoop Dogg, Dr.Dre, Eminem and Mary J. Blige. AFP



# Liverpool keep pressure on leaders Manchester City

FOOTBALL

AFP

Liverpool kept the pressure on Premier League leaders Manchester City as Fabinho sealed a 1-0 win over Burnley last Sunday (Feb 13).

The Brazilian struck late in the first half at windswept Turf Moor to give Liverpool their fourth successive league victory.

Liverpool are nine points behind City with one game in hand as the Reds refuse to let the title race become a prolonged coronation for Pep Guardiola's men.

City made it 14 wins from their last 15 league games on Saturday as Raheem Sterling's hat-trick inspired a comfortable 4-0 win at lowly Norwich.

But Guardiola is convinced Liverpool will push the champions all the way to the finish line and the way they ground out a hard-fought success against bottom of the table Burnley suggests he is right not to count them out.

"It is nine points and then it is 12 points because most of the time City play before us. These are really difficult games. That is why we don't think about the title race," Reds boss Jurgen Klopp said.

After a shaky start, during which Burnley threatened a shock opener, Fabinho restored order five minutes before half-time, poking home a fifth



Fabinho (left) opens the scoring for Liverpool at Turf Moor. Photo: Paul Ellis / AFP

goal in his last seven games from Trent Alexander-Arnold's corner.

"A perfect afternoon. Raining and windy," Klopp said. "Everything today was set up to be a banana skin for us. We played the circumstances rather than suffered from them."

Meanwhile, Tottenham lost to Wolves 0-2, their second successive home defeat. Antonio Conte's side, loudly booed off at full-time, dropped to eighth place, five points adrift of the Champions League places. Wolves, who climbed above Spurs into seventh place, have won four successive top-flight away games for the first time since 1980.

Manchester United are now 23 points off the top and in increasing danger of failing to qualify for next season's Champions League following a frustrating 1-1 home

draw with Southampton last Saturday.

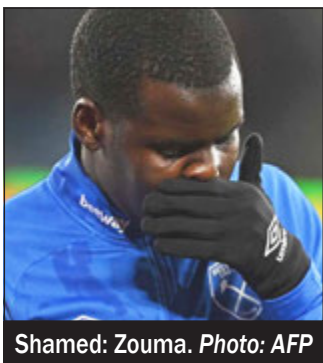
The Red Devils took the lead through Jadon Sancho's first Premier League goal but, for the third consecutive game, surrendered a lead to draw 1-1 when Che Adams slotted in off the inside of the post two minutes into the second half.

At the bottom of the table, Everton secured just their second league win in 16 games in Frank Lampard's home debut in charge with a dominant 3-0 victory over Leeds while Brentford edged seven points clear of the bottom three by snapping a six-game losing run with a 0-0 draw against Crystal Palace.

Newcastle continued their fine form with a 1-0 victory against Aston Villa with England defender Kieran Trippier scoring from a free kick for the second consecutive game.

# Zouma hammered after cat abuse video shocker

FOOTBALL



WEST HAM HAVE FINED Kurt Zouma the "maximum amount possible", believed to be £250,000 (B11 million), after a video showed the defender physically abusing his cat went viral.

The 27-year-old has also lost his deal with sportswear giant Adidas over the disturbing video showing him dropping, kicking and slapping his pet in his home.

The RSPCA animal welfare organisation described the video as "very upsetting" and is leading the investigation while cooperating with police, adding it had taken two animals belonging to the player into care.

The video, which emerged last Tuesday (Feb 8), was filmed by Zouma's brother and released on TikTok. Zouma's son was also in the video with all three laughing during the sickening ordeal.

Almost 300,000 people have signed an online petition calling for Zouma to be prosecuted as the public backlash intensifies in a country renowned for its love of animals.

Adidas confirmed it had cut ties with Zouma, saying: "We have concluded our investigation and can confirm Kurt Zouma is no longer an Adidas-contracted athlete."

Insurance and investment company Vitality announced it was suspending its sponsorship as West Ham's "official wellness partner", saying it was "distressed" by the video.

West Ham said: "We would like to make it clear that we in no way condone cruelty towards animals."

But Zouma, who apologised for his actions, was nevertheless selected by manager David Moyes for last Tuesday's 1-0 win against Watford, igniting a huge backlash. The player pulled out of Sunday's game at Leicester in the warm-up, claiming he felt unwell. AFP

# Chelsea win Club World Cup

FOOTBALL

REIGNING EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS Chelsea won the Club World Cup last Saturday (Feb 12), the last major trophy missing from their cabinet.

Kai Havertz repeated his heroics from the Champions League final in May, nervelessly converting a penalty deep into extra time as the Blues overcame Palmeiras of Brazil 2-1 in Abu Dhabi.

Chelsea become the third English club to win the competition after Manchester United and Liverpool.

"Maybe this cup or this tournament is not so highly regarded in Europe, but once you're here and once you feel it, it totally catches



you," said manager Thomas Tuchel.

"You don't know the other team because they don't come from your country, not from your league, it's a fantastic feeling, incomparable to any other feeling and so that's why it's so beautiful."

Chelsea return to Premier League action this weekend against Crystal Palace, the first of four matches in 12 days across four different competitions. AFP

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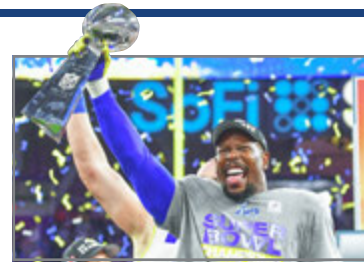
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# Sport



**LA Rams win a Super Bowl thriller > p14**



Peter Forneck (left) takes on Jonathan Ofaolain at the Grapple At The Temple 2 event on Feb 5. Photo: Bonnie Fairzel

## PHUKET'S GRAPPLING FUTURE

### JIU JITSU

**JP Mestanza**  
tv@classactmedia.co.th

From chokeholds to arm locks, there are a number of ways Brazilian Jiu Jitsu competitors are able to finish a match.

At the Grapple At The Temple 2 event on Feb 5 in Nai Harn, there was a host of techniques on display from practitioners across Phuket, and Thailand.

The island's burgeoning BJJ scene descended upon the Temple Jiu Jitsu Academy in southern Phuket for a highly-anticipated competition that didn't disappoint. Expert submission grapplers and Jiu Jitsu practitioners were also invited from all over the Kingdom to take part in 'Super Fights' that wound up the crowd.

The event was also live-streamed on Full Metal TV on Patreon, with a

commentary team providing insight into the matches and the goings-on between the competitors on the mat.

In the main event, DJ Jackson, a world champion Gi and Nogi athlete, who coaches and trains out of Fairtex in Pattaya, took on Rodrigo Goulart, a black belt from Brazil.

A pin drop could be heard as both men were careful in their movements, not allowing the other to set their techniques up. Still, the match ended due to an accidental injury for Goulart, who was able to at least walk away despite an injured knee.

In the other 'Super Fight' matches, Nanami Ichikawa, who trains out of Arete BJJ in Bangkok, defeated Francesca Renda (Temple BJJ) via submission, while experienced MMA fighter Marley Swindells (Phuket Grappling Academy) and Johnny Lippiatt (Temple BJJ) threw on the Gi for their match, which ended in a draw.

In the remaining 'Super Fight',

Achilles Ralli (Arete) took on Daniel Larman (Temple BJJ) in a Nogi match that also ended in a draw, though their bout included precarious moments in which they inadvertently fell into the crowd.

The competition itself pitted practitioners from across Thailand, with a heavy presence from many of Phuket's growing number of BJJ academies and gyms, including Bang Tao MMA, Tiger Muay Thai, Phuket Grappling Academy, Temple BJJ, Nova Uniao Phuket, Phuket Fight Club, and Gracie Barra Phuket. It was an international affair with participants from 20 countries represented on the mat, and all levels taking part.

The BJJ grappling scene on the island has been growing for the past decade, which largely stems from the growth of mixed martial arts gyms in Phuket.

The island has always been an

attractive place for top-tier MMA talent to train, thanks to the beautiful beaches, cheap cost of living and seemingly innumerable number of high-level Muay Thai trainers.

As Phuket grew to become a hub for MMA, the gyms that offered this training also began to offer grappling classes, which have become incredibly popular throughout the years. Over the past two years, more gyms have opened, providing more opportunities for the sport to grow, leading to the birth of events such as Siam Sub-Series, and now Grapple At The Temple.

### FULL LIST OF THE WINNERS FROM GRAPPLE AT THE TEMPLE 2:

- Male Nogi Advanced: Aleksei Perederiy
- Male Nogi Intermediate (+80kg): Martin Sharples
- Male Nogi Intermediate (-80kg):

Magomed Kadimagomedov

- Male Nogi Beginner (+77kg): Sebastian Stallinger
- Male Nogi Beginner (-77kg): Verdaulet Kenzhetayav
- Female Nogi Intermediate: Varvara
- Female Nogi Beginner: Shayada Shulopas
- Male Gi Purple Absolute: Mohammed Ahmed
- Male Gi Blue Belt (+85kg): Peter Forneck
- Male Gi Blue Belt (-85kg): Josh Colello
- Male Gi Blue Belt (-75kg): Marcello Schovenold
- Male Gi White Belt (+75kg): Stanley Sogbandi
- Male Gi Blue Belt (-75kg): Eugene Moran
- Female Gi Purple Belt: Nanami Ichikawa
- Female Gi Blue Belt: Kim Hoyer
- Female Gi White Belt: Shayada Shulopas

## Rawai Cycling Team Race 2022 confirmed

### CYCLING

THE 2022 RAWAI CYCLING Team Race has been confirmed to take place on March 20 with total prize money of B100,000 up for grabs.

The route will cover approximately 55km, starting from Promthep Cape and taking in Rawai Beach, Chalong Circle and Karon Beach Circle before finishing back at Promthep Cape.

Teams consisting of four cyclists

each will take part in the event which is split into four different age-based categories, each with 10 teams in total competing.

The cost to enter the competition is B2,000 per team and there is B100,000 in total prize money that will be distributed between the top-five finishing teams in each of the four categories.

Trophies will also be awarded to the winning team in each category and medals will be distributed to everyone participating in the race. A special red and white "King

of the Mountain" shirt will also be awarded for the winner of the 2.4km uphill stretch between the SiS Hotel in Karon to the Three Bays viewpoint.

### THE CATEGORIES:

- Group A:** Open, no age limit
- Group B:** Total age between 140 - 160 years
- Group C:** Total age between 161 - 180 years
- Group D:** Total age over 181 years

### THE SCHEDULE:

### March 19

- 4:30pm:** Athlete registration and collection of race kit and numbers at Promthep Cape
- 5pm:** Meeting to cover overview of the rules
- 6pm:** Dinner at a local restaurant at Promthep Cape.

### March 20

- 5:30am:** Athletes in place at the Block Start
- 5:40am:** Official opening ceremony of the competition
- 6am:** Start of the race

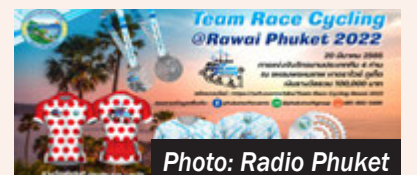


Photo: Radio Phuket

- 11:30am:** Race results announced and award ceremony
- 12:30pm:** End of the competition

Further information including race rules and payment details can be accessed from Khun Mana on 086-5951005, LINE ID: @phuketsoftgroup or <https://soft.events/bike/Team-Race-Cycling-Rawai-2022>

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