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THE PLAN

**TOURISM MINISTER
REVEALS MULTI-
PHASE STRATEGY,
FIRST INTERNATIONAL
TOURISTS TO PHUKET
HOPED FOR JULY**

Tourism and Sports Minister Phiphat Ratchpikarn at the meeting in Phuket where he revealed his plan earlier this month. Photo: MoTS



The Phuket News
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Tourism and Sports Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn has revealed his plan to reopen Thailand to international tourists, with Phuket to lead the way under a pilot project that he says hopes to see foreign tourists arrive on the island in July.

Mr Phiphat initially revealed his plan at a meeting at the Angsana Laguna Phuket resort in Chalong Talay on Mar 10, but details of the plan became known only earlier this week.

The Tourism Minister is expected to present to the Centre for COVID-19

Situation Administration (CCSA) his proposal to pilot in Phuket the 'Sandbox' model to welcome foreign tourists to the country today (Mar 19).

Mr Phiphat announced the news at the "semi-public" meeting on Mar 10, which was attended by leading tourism representatives from Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi. Also present at the meeting for the announcement was Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Governor Yuthasak Supasorn, and Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew.

Minister Phiphat explained that the 'Sandbox Model' is similar to 'travel bubbles', which allow people from two countries to travel to each other. Launching the model must depend

on the number of vaccinated people and in each area, he said.

It is possible to start the model with China, he added.

"The Ministry [of Tourism and Sports] expects to start the sandbox model by having Phuket as the pilot province. About 70% of people in Phuket must be vaccinated, which means about 900,000 doses of vaccine are needed for 450,000 people," he said.

"Before starting the model in other two Andaman coastal provinces – Krabi and Phang Nga – we have discussed with the Ministry of Public Health about the request for 3 million doses of vaccine especially for

people in the three provinces, in order to be ready before fully opening for foreign tourists on Oct 1 as timeline announced by the government," Mr Phiphat explained.

"The three provinces were chosen as [pre-COVID] they generated up to B600 billion from tourism, which in 2019 was about one-fifth the national total revenue from tourism. Of the B600bn, B470bn came from Phuket, B100bn came from Krabi and B45bn came from Phang Nga," he said.

Minister Phiphat further explained that the Ministry of Tourism and Sports will present to the CCSA ways to relax the opening of the country in various forms...

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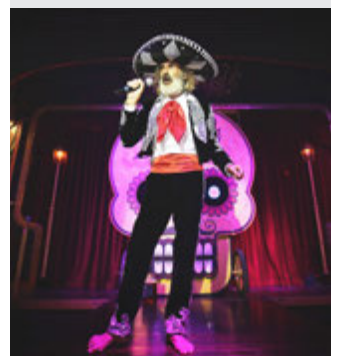
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**One Phuket
takes strides in
COVID relief**



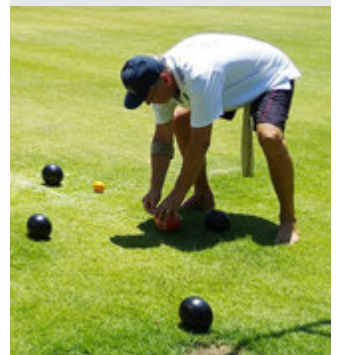
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News



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Plan to reopen tourism revealed

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"The government is preparing to reduce the number of quarantine days," he said.

Tourists who have been fully vaccinated will be swab tested first and then enter quarantine in an 'Area Local Quarantine' hotel for seven days, he said.

"At this stage, the Ministry of Public Health only allows tourists to remain in their rooms, but we will propose to the CCSA to allow tourists to go out of their rooms from Day 1 of their quarantine. Then after a second swab test, if they are not infected, they can exit quarantine entirely after seven days," Mr Phiphat explained.

"Tourists who have not been vaccinated will have to be swab tested and enter quarantine for 10 days. If they are found not infected after the second swab test, they can go out," he added.

Mr Phiphat said that formal confirmation of the relaxation of quarantine measures to be made by the end of this month.

"The D-day is April 1, and the government will make a 'timeline announcement' to clarify how the government will relax the opening of the country with step-down reductions every two months," he said.

In addition to piloting the 'sandbox model' in Phuket, the 'villa quarantine', or 'area quarantine', model will also be trialled in seven provinces – Phuket, Krabi, Surat Thani (including Koh Samui, Koh



Bhumikitti Raktaengam expressed cautious support for the plan. Photo: PR Phuket

Pha-ngan and Koh Tao), Chiang Mai, Chonburi (including Pattaya and Jomtien), Bangkok and Phang Nga (including Khao Lak), Mr Phiphat said.

"If this plan is approved by the CCSA on Mar 19, I will inform Phuket people again. Last year, I talked about the Phuket Model too early, so that they [the CCSA] did not give it a good response," he said.

VAX ROLLOUT

Dr Kusak Kukiattikoon, the new Chief of the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO), last Friday revealed details of the plan to vaccinate 74.4% of the population in Phuket by Oct 1, including the vaccination of more than 94,000 people working in the tourism industry, to help reopen the island to tourism.

Dr Kusak, who took up the position of PPHO Chief only on Monday (Mar 8), revealed

the plan at the meeting of the Phuket Communicable Disease Committee at Phuket Provincial Hall last Friday (Mar 12).

So far 2,000 doses of the Sinovac vaccine have been administered, with 1,581 medical personnel and 419 disease control staff at high risk of direct exposure to the virus receiving their first injection, Dr Kusak said.

A further 16,000 doses of vaccine are to be administered in April. Of the 8,000 people to receive injections are 3,500 people with congenital disease as well as 4,500 people working with Alternative Local Quarantine venues, he added.

Dr Kusak explained that 417,402 people were registered as living in Phuket, with 250,986 residents registered as living in Muang District, 99,840 people registered as living in Thalang district and 66,576 people registered as

living in Kathu District.

Of those, 106,865 were children under 18 years old, leaving 310,537 people, or 74.40% of the island's population, to be vaccinated for COVID-19, he said.

In total, 94,100 people working in the tourism industry are to be vaccinated.

"This sector must be 100% vaccinated," Dr Kusak said.

Of the 7,500 people working in other businesses, 5,250 people – or 70% – are to be vaccinated for COVID-19, he continued.

Of the 80,000 foreign workers on the island, 70%, or 56,700 people, are also to be vaccinated for the disease, Dr Kusak added.

In May, the Sinovac vaccine will be administered to 4,000 people with underlying diseases and general members of the public registered as living in Phuket, and to 20,000 workers in the service industry,

Dr Kusak explained.

In June, 95,152 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be administered to people over 60 years old and general members of the public registered as living in Phuket.

A further 167,800 doses will be administered to 83,900 workers in the hospitality and tourism industries, he added.

In July, 36,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be administered to 18,000 workers in the hospitality and tourism industries, he said.

CAUTIOUS SUPPORT

Phuket Tourist Association President Bhumikitti Raktaengam this week expressed his support for the government's effort to restart tourism, but maintained that any quarantine remained a barrier for Phuket.

"As long as tourists have to face quarantine, only a small number of tourists will come," Mr Bhumikitti told *The Phuket News*.

"I really appreciate their efforts. However, we all have to understand that for tourism, quarantine is an important issue. Quarantine cannot go along with tourism.

"No matter how long the quarantine is, there will still be some difficulties. So, I really appreciate their effort. However, if you asked me whether the plan will attract big numbers of tourists, I don't think the numbers will be high."

Phuket Chamber of Com-

merce President Thanusak Phungdet also voiced his support for the plan, but urged the government to make a formal announcement soon so that operators could start organising and promoting travel packages, and tourists themselves could start making plans to travel to Phuket.

"We need the clarity of the plan approval as soon as possible, so that operators can prepare their staff, places, and equipment for the coming tourists," Mr Thanusak said.

"For the other issues, I leave the government to make its plans and think, but I want to focus on the reopening in October. Vaccinated foreign tourists coming to Phuket do not need to face quarantine," he added.

"This will positively affect Phuket a lot. The tourism and economic situation of Phuket will start to recover. Even though it will not be as good as before the pandemic, at least it will be better [than now]," he said.

Mr Thanusak also cautioned that assuring domestic tourists that Phuket will be safe to travel to remains a key issue.

"If they know we are open to foreign tourists, they might not be confident and afraid to come. Then what will we do? We have to keep them too," he said.

"If everything is organised and our people are vaccinated, then there will be nothing for them to worry about," he added.

Sri Panwa owner injured as car hits power pole

VORASIT 'PLA WAN' ISSARA, 40, the owner of the upscale Sri Panwa resort at Cape Panwa was injured when the car he was driving struck a power pole on Sakdideet Rd in Wichit last Sunday night (Mar 14).

Capt Chatri Chuwichian of the Wichit Police and rescue workers were called to the scene, in front of Ao Nam Bor School, at about 7pm.

Mr Vorasit was trapped in the driver's seat. Kusoldharm rescue workers were forced to use hydraulic 'jaws of life' equipment, and took about one hour to free him from the wreck before rushing him to Bangkok Hospital Phuket in Phuket Town.

The extent of his injuries were not immediately reported.

Capt Chatri told the press that Mr Vorasit was driving towards Phuket Town when the accident happened.

Capt Chatri at that time made no specific mention of whether or not Mr Vorasit had been tested for alcohol or whether CCTV footage from the area would be reviewed to determine whether he was speeding at the time of the accident.

Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Dr Chalermpong Sukontapol told the press on Monday (Mar 15) that Mr Vorasit's condition had improved but that he remained under observation in the intensive-care unit (ICU) at the hospital.

"It has been found that there has been no blood congestion in Mr Vorasit's brain. If there are no serious effects, he can be discharged from the ICU," Dr Chalermpong said.

Dr Chalermpong gave no other description of Mr Vorasit's condition.

Local resident and retired police officer Yuttapong Changlek told *The*

Phuket News on Monday that the curve where Mr Vorasit struck the power pole had been the scene of many accidents.

"This time, the accident victim is a famous person, so this has become very popular news which has now forced agencies to look at the road and take action to make the road safer," Mr Yuttapong said.

"The road is not as safe to drive at high speed, especially when it comes to the curve," Mr Yuttapong said, adding that the road was "very bumpy".

"Officers should have come to inspect the road and fixed it earlier, not only after an accident occurs that affects a famous person," he added.

Following the accident being reported nationwide, Phuket Provincial Police at 11:01pm Monday night posted on its official Facebook page



Rescue workers work to free Mr Vorasit from his wrecked Subaru on Sakdideet Rd last Sunday night (Mar 14). Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

that Mr Vorasit had been tested for alcohol, but did not elaborate on what the test results were.

The post explained that Wichit Police Chief Col Prateung Ponmana and other police were continuing their investigation and have already inspected the scene of the accident.

"Police have already examined the car to find out whether the incident was from the flaw of the car or the driver's reckless driving," the post said.

"Police have already contacted the doctor and medical staff who are taking care of the driver [Mr Vorasit] to conduct a blood test for the alcohol," the post noted, with no specific officer quoted.

"We would like to thank all the good people who helped the injured in the accident," the post concluded.

Of note, the post gave no description of the blood test result at all. *Eakkapop Thongtub*

Heavy-handed tactics flamed

Elderly woman shoved, warning shot fired in street drug arrest

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Residents in the Saphan Hin community on the outskirts of Phuket Town have railed against police conduct in arresting a drug suspect, which included shoving a 64-year-old woman over after an argument over her taking photos of the arrest, and firing a warning shot into the air in the middle of a small residential street to prevent the suspect from fleeing.

The commotion began when plainclothes officers arrived in the narrow street Saphan Hin Soi 6 Thursday last week (Mar 11).

The officers arrived in three vehicles, one a black Isuzu SUV without licence plates, prompting local residents to gather around to see what the visitors wanted.

The officers took one suspect into custody, but not without firing a warning shot into the air.

While the commotion continued, one officer approached a 64-year-old woman, who asked to be named only as



Ms Chamoi points to where she was sitting when the altercation with the police officer started. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

‘Ms Chamoi’, who was sitting in front of her home taking photos of the situation unfolding.

The officer thought she was recording the arrest on video, Ms Chamoi said.

“The officer was angry, so

I took a photo of him. He then took a photo of me and started taking photos of other people in the street,” she explained.

After an exchange of words, the officer angrily shoved Ms Chamoi in the chest, causing her to fall

backwards onto a parked motorbike.

“Right now I still feel pain in my legs. The police did this incorrectly. Police can take pictures of people, but why can’t the public take a picture of the police? He [the

officer] threatened to sue me, but I never broke the law,” Ms Chamoi said.

“[I/we] Would like the [police] supervisors to train and take care of their subordinates so they do not do things like this, especially with local residents who have not done anything wrong. We must respect each other, and they must remember that local residents are people too,” she added.

One local resident was outraged by the firing of the gun into the air.

“This community had hundreds of people, children as well as adults. If someone fires a gun into the air, where do they think the bullet goes? It doesn’t just disappear. It could fall onto someone’s head,” he said.

“If someone dies, will the officer be held responsible? Police need to be trained to not do this. People in our community do not accept it,” he added.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Pornsak Nuannoo responded to the incident on Mar 12, saying

that officers were only doing their duty.

The officers already had two drug suspects in custody and had arrived in the street to arrest a third, he explained.

However, the suspect attempted to flee as local residents started crowding around the police officers’ vehicles, he said.

“At the scene, they shouted [for the suspect] to stop, but the suspect immediately tried to run away. The officer fired a single shot into the air for the crowd to disperse and the officer managed to arrest the suspect,” he added.

“This team of investigators has a long history of continuous drug arrests in the past and has never had a complaint [against them]. With this arrest, and with other drug-prone areas in Phuket, when the officers arrive there is often a problem with the public and sometimes they [the officers] are even surrounded,” Maj Gen Pornsak noted.

“The authorities understand this problem, and we are trying to do our best,” he said.

Crocodile spotted at Chalong Pier

AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS, a team of experts from the Department of Fisheries in Surat Thani on Tuesday (Mar 15) were continuing their search for a crocodile seen near Chalong Pier last Saturday.

Officials were first notified by a local resident that a crocodile was in the marina area at the pier at about 2:30pm last Saturday.

In normal times Chalong Pier is a major jump-off point for tourists heading out on tours of nearby islands.

The croc was estimated to be about two metres long, and was seen surfacing three times, said Chaiwat Lanpeaw, an officer at Chalong Pier’s Tourist Centre.

Watcharin Rattanachoo, an officer at the Phuket Provincial Fisheries Office (PPFO), said that officers had posted red flags to warn people of the danger.

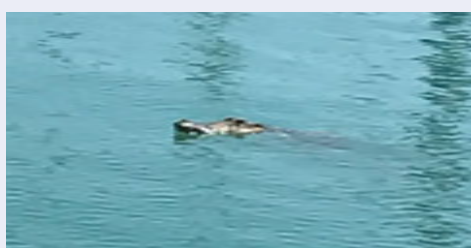
The PPFO had also called in the ‘Kraithong Lumnamtapi’ team of experts from the Department of Fisheries in Surat Thani to catch the crocodile.

The ‘Kraithong Lumnamtapi’ team were the lead hunters in catching two crocodiles in Phuket: Yanui in 2018 and Ley pang in 2017.

The team were also called in to help catch a crocodile seen at Saphan Hin last September. That croc was never caught.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew arrived at Chalong Pier on Monday to be briefed on any updates in the hunt for the latest crocodile.

Governor Narong noted that it might be easier to locate the crocodile once all boats had been moved out of the marina.



Expert croc catchers have been called in to catch the crocodile seen at the Chalong Pier Marina last Saturday (Mar 13). Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

“All officers have been asked to continue to keep monitoring the area to help take care of people’s safety,” Governor Narong said.

“Officers have yet to learn whether the crocodile found is a dangerous type or not as it has yet to be caught,” he added.

A notice from Chalong Municipality urged anyone who believes they have seen the crocodile to call the Phuket Marine Office immediately at 076-391174.

Of note, Chalong Municipality’s Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation office in 2018 confirmed they had left a sign saying “Beware of baby crocodiles” in place at the end of Soi Palai, just 2.4km north of where the crocodile was seen on Saturday, because officials could not be sure that there were no crocodiles in the area.

The sign was posted in early February that year after residents of Soi Na Kok in Chalong’s Moo 5 area, near Soi Palai, caught a baby crocodile about 50 centimeters long and weighing about 300 grams, estimated at that time to be two to three months old.

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THU MAR 25

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Bang Kaew dogs to be caged, muzzled

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The dog that chased and bit a 15-year-old girl while she was walking to school last week must remain caged to prevent further attacks on people walking by, Phuket City Municipality Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Chalermpon Piyanarongroj has announced.

The news follows Mr Chalermpon on Mar 11 holding discussions with the dog owner, who has been asked to be named only as "Ms May" since the incident, which left a bite wound on the girl's left calf.

The discussion came as Mr Chalermpon and fellow Phuket City officials delivered one cage for the dog, a Bang Kaew breed which the owner has named "Khan Thong".

"From our meeting, we all agreed to issue a new



The student's mother, Chotika Kansuya, 32, holds up photographic evidence of the wound caused by the dog's bite. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

municipal announcement to clarify that Bang Kaew dogs must be classified as 'special control' dogs," Mr Chalermpon said.

"For this case, we have provided the owner a cage which we borrowed from the Phuket Livestock Office. However, she [Ms May] has

two dogs. The other dog must remain chained while we wait to provide another cage," he said.

"The chained dog must

wear a muzzle in order to prevent it from biting people walking past," Mr Chalermpon said.

Phuket City Municipality will also provide officers to standby around the school during the morning and afternoon rush hours, he added.

The student's mother, Chotika Kansuya, 32, filed a complaint to Lt Col Suchart Meelampong of the Phuket City Police just hours after the incident occurred.

Ms Chotika claimed B100,000 was to be paid as compensation for the harm done to her child.

"Ms May" said she would fight that amount in court.

Meanwhile, Mr Chalermpon and his fellow officers visited the girl at her home, in order to cheer her up and assure her that the municipality was taking steps to prevent any further such incidents from happening again.

Phuket gold shops checked for security, police ramp up patrols

PHUKET PROVINCIAL POLICE have started inspecting gold shops in Phuket Town to ensure they have adequate security measures, and have dedicated officers to regularly patrol areas where gold shops are located.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Pornsak Nuannu led a team of officers to inspect several gold shops in Phuket Town on Mar 10.

Maj Gen Pornsak said that his officers had already met with gold shop owners in Muang District, which covers Phuket Town, Wichit, Chalong and Rawai.

"The meeting and inspections were conducted to follow the Royal Thai Police national order to take proactive measures to prevent gold shop robberies and to boost confidence among gold shop operators," Maj Gen Pornsak said.

One of the gold shops in Phuket Town inspected by Maj Gen Pornsak and his entourage of officers was Yaowarat Gold Shop on Tilok U-Thit Rd.

Wiroj Wankittikhun, the owner of the store, explained that his store already had a steel grill installed as well as an electrically locked door controlled remotely by staff, an alarm system, CCTV cameras and glass covered with safety film.

"We also have a book for police on patrol to make notes in, as requested



Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Pornsak Nuannu leads an inspection of a gold shop in Phuket Town last week. Photo: PR Phuket

by the police," he added.

"Police have been sent to inspect locations across Phuket at high risk of robbery, such as gold shops, banks and department stores. They are prepared to take action with any robbery," Maj Gen Pornsak assured.

"I have already ordered the chief of each police station to create their own measures to prevent any robberies of gold shops and convenience stores in the areas under their jurisdiction," Maj Gen Pornsak said.

"We are also coordinating with local administrative organisations to install more CCTV cameras along roads and in community areas, and to ensure the cameras are kept in good condition," he added.

Maj Gen Pornsak gave no indication of any recorded rises in crime that might have inspired the latest move to pre-empt any robberies of stores with cash and valuables on site.

The Phuket News



More than 1,000 red sea urchins were found washed ashore Patong Beach on Monday (Mar 15). Photo: PR Phuket

Red sea urchins return to Patong

MARINE LIFE EXPERTS THIS week were again called in to investigate a mass of red sea urchins washing ashore Patong Beach after more than 1,000 of the spiny creatures were left on the sand at Patong on Monday (Mar 15).

Local residents again raised the alarm after finding the sea urchins, measuring 8-15cm across, littered along the beach in front of the Patong Merlin Hotel.

Officers from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) have collected some specimens for investigation and took some water samples for testing.

The officers reported that the beach water temperature was 32.6°C, and the water had a salinity reading of 30ppt (parts per thousand) and a pH reading of 8.07.

The officers identified the sea urchins as 'Astropyga radiata Leske', the same species as those that washed ashore on Mar 2.

The officers also said that the sea urchins had been left stranded on the beach by strong waves during the spring tide, also the same explanation given on Mar 2.

However, DMCR officers on Monday also explained that the sea urchins have come close to shore in Patong to feast on macro algae that has bloomed in the bay during the current sea weather conditions.

The sea urchins were cleared from the beach later Monday. However, lifeguards at Patong have warned people to beware any sea urchins that may have been left undiscovered on the beach due to their sharp spines.

The Phuket News

One Phuket breaks barriers

Food security campaign gains momentum, businesses step up

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The efforts by those supporting the One Phuket initiative are having a sincere impact on the lives of those still struggling to get by amid the ongoing economic crisis, with 800 'Life Bags' packed last Saturday (Mar 13), and 420 of those delivered to families in need in Thalang and Srisoonthorn.

"Our neighbours need us. The 800 bags we packed this morning were funded by the amazing team at 5 Star Marine, but we must not leave it all up to them. Please donate what you can today so that we can help more people," One Phuket organiser Samantha Gayfer posted on the campaign's official Facebook page.

The initial aim for last Saturday was to pack 2,000 Life Bags at Sutai Muay Thai.

"We didn't raise the THB 200,000 necessary for this week, BUT the team at 5 Star Marine is covering these supplies. Three cheers for them! We need the rest of the community to chip in so we

can continue this good work. Please donate what you can as you scroll and take a look at what it looks like to shop for 2,000 Life Bags. Thanks for the wheels Mark & Rebecca Kynaston," Samantha posted.

The One Phuket initiative is gaining much-needed momentum, and passed a key milestone last Friday with 500 members now actively engaged in supporting the effort.

UNCLE'S HOUSE

The members are finding inspiration in the hard-hitting, heartfelt experiences in meeting the people in need across the island.

One such experience was posted under the title "Let's Go To Uncle's House - A Covid Story", highlighting the plight some of Phuket's most-affected are being forced to live through.

"As we drive door to door delivering Life Bags to those in need, we often see situations that are heart-wrenching," explained the post.

"This past week we delivered to 'Uncle's House'... Before Covid, Uncle's House



One Phuket is reaching out to help those in no position to help themselves, but One Phuket needs your help to do that. Photo: One Phuket

was just 3 people in one room with no running water and no air conditioning – just a bucket for a shower.

"When Covid hit and people started losing the ability to pay rent or support their family, they sought refuge at Uncle's House.

"You see, Uncle owns his house, so that makes him very lucky. But, like many, Uncle doesn't have a job now. So when

his house went from 3 people to 7 people, he was stressed about how to feed them.

"There was no job. No money. No help.

"Then as more and more people lost the ability to rent houses they moved into 'Uncle's House'. Seven people quickly became 10 people, then 12 people, and now there are 17 people living with Uncle.

"We met Uncle and the 17

people living in his modest home this week. All of them without jobs and no real hope of getting them.

"But this is where the story changes. One Phuket was able to provide 5 Life Bags to this house... Uncle and his new family can eat again today. And, for the first time in a long time, Uncle smiled," the post noted.

"One Phuket is growing quickly. People are working hard – and together – to meet the island's needs BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH DONATIONS," the post pointed out.

BUSINESSES STEP UP

Brett Wilson brought the Pullman Phuket Arcadia Naithon Beach team to help with efforts packing Life Bags last week, while Enrico Bratta of Steam Cleaning Phuket, is donating 15% of the total income from services carried out until April 30 to One Phuket.

Katie Hudson, who represents Australian beachwear label Tom & Teddy in Phuket, is donating B500 for every pair of swim shorts for

men sold to the effort.

The swim shorts sold at the Around the World in One Day Brunch at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa in Mai Khao Beach over last weekend raised B6,500.

"Thank you Katie. I know your business is equally impacted by the economic crisis, but still you give," said Andrea Edwards, a key figure in the One Phuket drive.

"To give you an idea, Katie's donation means we can buy 43 life bags, which typically feeds more than 170 people," she added.

Katie Hudson confirmed that she will continue the contributions until at least the end of April.

"We know many people are struggling to make ends meet regardless of what business you're in, but if your business can help raise funds or collect donations on site, please come and join us!" Andrea said.

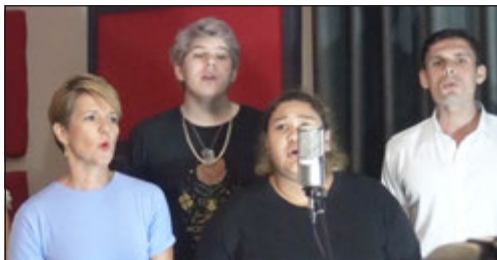
"We need to raise 200,000 baht every week to buy enough Life Bags to help the people most impacted by this crisis. If we can raise more, we can care for more."

Artists get ready for 'Lean on Me Fest'

A COLLECTIVE OF MUSICIANS, music students and music teachers gathered at Legend Music studio in Koh Kaew last month to record 'Another Day In Paradise', which has now been released to help raise funds to support COVID relief efforts across the island.

"Within hours of the video's release we were receiving donations to One Phuket. Many people don't like to have video and pictures of the poverty in their faces, so music related videos like 'Another Day In Paradise' help in these situations, explained Phuket expat Gary Crause of Legend Music Recording Studio.

"We felt compelled to do that particular song because we live in paradise. Many of us don't get to see the poverty firsthand, and many don't even realise how serious the situation is. This helps us bring attention to the



Local artists sing 'Another Day in Paradise'.

problem right now, right here; and pulls on the heart strings to prompt more and more people to get involved!"

Artists from 10-14 local bands will perform live free at the 'Lean On Me Live Fest' at Blue Tree Arena this Saturday (Mar 20), from 3pm. Funds raised from donations will go towards COVID charity efforts. *The Phuket News*

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Marine tourism gets a boost

Phuket yacht visitors first to receive 'smart wristband' trackers

The Phuket News
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Nine foreigners and one Thai who arrived in Phuket on a yacht on Mar 6 have become the first people in the country to wear "smart wristbands" to track their location and their health while observing their mandatory 14-day quarantine while still on the boat.

The yacht, 'Sapphire' arrived in Phuket from Australia and was boarded by health officials and Royal Thai Navy personnel from the Third Area Command at Cape Panwa to conduct tests to ensure none of the crew were infected with COVID-19, reported the Third Area Command.

The yacht and its crew were staying in the holding area designated for arriving yachts at Ao Por, off Phuket's east coast, where they remained while completing their mandatory quarantine.

After the crew have completed the 14-day quarantine, the yacht will be moved to moor in Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina, the Navy added.

SMART WRISTS

All 10 on board have been issued "smart wristbands" created under the "Digital Yacht Quarantine" project, developed by the Digital Economy



The yacht, 'Sapphire', arrived in Phuket with 10 people on board on Mar 6. Photo: Thai- MECC 3

Promotion Agency (Depa) and AIS, and two other private companies.

The smart wristbands operate on a 900MHz "Narrow band - Internet of Things" ("NB-IoT") connection that maintains connectivity up to 10km over the sea, AIS Chief Enterprise Business Officer Tanapong Ittisakulchai explained at a press launch for the devices in Bangkok on Mar 8.

"We also have a cloud platform to be a main network for the NB-IoT Wristband Tracking," Mr Tanapong said.

Chatchai Tangchittrong, CEO/Co-Founder of PMH Holding Co Ltd noted, "In this project, we have two models, the 'Activ 10+' and the 'Smartwatch Activ 30+'. The

two models can be both location trackers and health devices which tourists can wear as wristbands all the time, in order to prevent them from leaving the yachts.

"The wristband has sensors to check tourists' pulse, blood pressure and body temperature. They also have an option to send SOS signals if tourists urgently need help. All the information from the wristband will be shown on the website dashboard in real time for medical staff," he explained.

"Smart wristband health-monitoring services we use are the same models that are used for the 'Hotel Bubble Project' in the Cayman Islands," Mr Chatchai said.

In explaining his company's role in the project, Tanapat Thuatraiphop, CEO of Flow Corporation, said, "We are partnering with Patri Tour Group Co Ltd, which operates Ao Por Pier. We conduct the registration for the NB-IoT Wristband Tourist Tracking and arrange medical staff for monitoring the tourists' health information.

"This partnering is a new dimension of 'new normal' tourism. We are not only improving tourism, but also helping to boost the marine tourism industry throughout the whole Andaman region," Mr Tanapat said.

SUPPORTING TOURISM

Also present at the press conference in Bangkok was Depa President Asst Prof Dr Nuttapon Nimmanphatcharin.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has had a big effect on the Thai economy, and the tourism industry, especially in Phuket, which is a destination dependent on foreign tourists. In 2020, Phuket lost more than B320 billion in [tourism] revenues [due to the pandemic]," Mr Nuttapon said.

"Yacht tourists will receive NB-IoT Wristband Tourist Tracking, which can be a health-monitoring tool during the 14 days of onboard quarantine. It will boost tourists'

confidence and support the public health safety for tourists coming to Phuket, as well as improve the quality of cooperation among tourists, medical staff, and other relevant officers," he added.

Mr Nuttapon did not elaborate on whether or not the wristband tracking devices will be later used at Alternative Local Quarantine (ALQs) venues throughout the country to prevent any people under quarantine from wandering outside of their quarantine hotels.

Meanwhile, Tanyuta Singhmanee, Managing Director of Asia Pacific Superyachts Co Ltd, representing the Thai Yachting Business Association (TYBA), pointed out to the press in Bangkok, "As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our association members lost about 50-60% of their revenues, which are mostly from foreign yacht tourists.

"We have boosted local people and tourists' confidence about the disease control measures since we started the yacht quarantine in October last year. We have not found any yacht tourists infected so far," Ms Tanyuta said.

"In 2021, we expect that there will be about 100 yachts, bringing 300-500 tourists, coming to Thailand," she added.

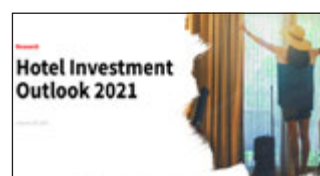
Investors seeking more Asia Pacific hotel assets in 2021

INVESTORS ARE CONFIDENT in the long-term future of the Asia-Pacific hotels market despite ongoing COVID-19 pressure on the tourism and hospitality sectors, says JLL. According to investors surveyed by JLL, approximately 70% say they are bullish on the Asia-Pacific hotel market and are interested in deploying capital into the sector in 2021.

JLL is forecasting approximately US\$7 billion in transactions in 2021, an increase of 20% year-on-year, up from \$5.8 billion in 2020. While sizable pools capital are ready to be deployed, pricing and financing will become a larger consideration for investors.

According to JLL, the gap between buyer and seller price expectations will narrow as distress becomes less likely, while sellers come to terms with the impact of operating cash flow on pricing. Over 80% of investors surveyed are eyeing discounts of 20-30%, while sellers are expected to move roughly 10% in asking prices.

As optimism around recovery builds, Japan (52%) and Southeast Asia (46%) are



For its Hotel Investment Outlook report, JLL polled approximately 100 clients in late January 2021. Image: JLL

emerging as the most desirable hotel investment markets in Asia-Pacific, owing to strong demand dynamics and positive long-term fundamentals. Investors also view Australia (31%) and China (22%) favourably.

"The cycle has been reset and we are now on the cusp of a period of recovery. Optimism around the deployment of vaccines and an eventual recovery in tourism has started to drive activity and investors don't want to miss the opportunity. At the same time record amounts of capital have been raised to be deployed into the real estate sector in general, including into hospitality," said Nihat Ercan, Senior Managing Director, Head of Investment Sales, at JLL Asia Pacific.

Approximately 25% of surveyed investors are taking a more cautious approach to

deploying capital, seeking greater clarity on the industry's COVID-19 recovery before committing further funds to the sector. Around 5% of investors polled by JLL are looking to exit the sector and refocus on other asset classes. "Demand for assets has initially concentrated on core markets like primary cities in Japan and Australia, yet we see this diversifying in the coming months," said Mr Ercan.

Conversely, investors also see the current environment as an opportunity to invest in existing properties and focus on asset management initiatives including renovations, repurposing, and repositioning properties in response to changing consumer preferences.

"The past year has been all about protecting cash flow and this will continue for the coming 12 to 18 months. Seasoned owners realise that now is the time to invest in existing hotels, with little displaced business," noted Xander Nijens, JLL's Managing Director, Head of Advisory and Asset Management, Asia Pacific.

The Phuket News

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PM, ministers get COVID-19 vaccines

Bangkok Post

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and other Cabinet ministers were inoculated against COVID-19 at Government House on Tuesday morning (Mar 16).

Their vaccinations had been postponed last Friday after several European countries had suspended the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine on reports of adverse reactions in a small number of patients.

However, Gen Prayut said the World Health Organization and the European Medicines Agency had confirmed the safety of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

"It has been verified that there is no bad reaction from the AstraZeneca vaccine," the prime minister said.

"Inoculations start today with the cabinet and government officials who come in close contact to a large number of people," he added.

"This is to ensure safety and imbue confidence in the general public.

"What concerns me the



Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha receives his COVID-19 vaccine at Government House in Bangkok on Tuesday. Photo: COVID-19 Information Centre

most now is ensuring the vaccine reaches all people in at-risk groups as soon as possible.

"Today people can have confidence. The prime minister is not only important person. Everyone is important to their own family. Everyone is equally important. So we will speed up vaccinations as soon as possible."

'UNDER CONTROL'

During his 30-minute observation period after inoculation, the prime minister gave a brief talk that was broadcast live

on the Government House Facebook page.

He said that so far 116,520 doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been distributed through 13 provinces and 50,388 people were being inoculated.

Gen Prayut also said the government would allow the private sector to procure COVID-19 vaccines that had been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

"COVID-19 is under control and the country has enough vaccines for the early stage of inoculation," he said.

"So we will ease measures to let people live normal lives in the new-normal way.

"This Friday the CCSA (Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration) will consider easing measures and allowing activities during the Songkran festival. The government must also take care of the economy," he said.

A government official stated that people over 60 are getting the AstraZeneca vaccine and those younger will receive the Chinese-manufactured Sinovac.

This came after US-based pharmaceutical company Moderna confirmed it will be submitting an application to Thai health authorities this month to approve its COVID-19 vaccine.

Additionally, Indian firm Bharat Biotech has begun the process of submitting the required documentation for registration of its vaccine, senior FDA official Surachoke Tangwiwat confirmed last Thursday.

The prime minister is due to receive his second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine on May 25.

Songkran holiday extended to six days

THE SONGKRAN HOLIDAY will be extended to six days this year, after the Cabinet approved a special holiday on April 12. The Songkran festival break will now run from Saturday through Thursday, April 10-15.

The announcement came after Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha insisted on Mar 8 that Songkran celebrations be held to revitalise the struggling tourism industry.

People would be allowed to travel across the country to celebrate, the PM said, but each area must impose measures to prevent the virus spreading.

Gen Prayut said he wanted to see the economy improve and people's income boosted by tourism activities over the long holiday.

He therefore vowed to ease restrictions ahead of the festival so that people had enough time to plan their trips and make hotel reservations.

Meanwhile, Culture Minister Itthiphol Kun-



Culture Minister Itthiphol Kunplome. Photo: NNT

plome said water splashing will probably be allowed during the Songkran festival because the daily number of new COVID-19 cases had dropped from three digits to only two digits, reports state news agency NNT.

Mr Itthiphol said the government is paying more attention to the number of people at event venues, and will find a balance between helping the economy and the prevention of new clusters of COVID-19 which would spread the disease in communities.

He also said detailed measures for the Songkran festival would be presented to a sub-committee of the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA).

The Phuket News

Temporary camps for fleeing Myanmar refugees

THE ARMY IS PLANNING temporary camps in Ranong and Chumphon provinces for Myanmar nationals fleeing political violence, as the death toll among protesters opposed to the military coup there continues to escalate.

Maj Gen Santi Sakuntak, commander of the Thap Satri Task Force, said Monday (Mar 15) that Muang, La-un and Kra Buri districts in Ranong and Tha Sae district in neighbouring Chumphon have been designated as areas for temporary shelters.

He said Thailand would



Protesters in the streets of Myanmar. Photo: AFP

accept them on humanitarian grounds and send them back after the situation returns to normal, instead of setting up permanent refugee camps at the border.

Protests against the military junta in Myanmar have

turned deadly since the Feb 1 coup, with dozens of demonstrators killed. The military regime imposed martial law in two townships in Yangon.

Thailand shares a 2,400 kilometre land border with Myanmar. Bangkok Post

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Jeffrey the Filipino Elvis.



The top-flight performances at the Underwood Art Factory on the bypass road is making it a cultural hub for Phuket.

A cultural hub in the making!



THE PLAY'S THE THING!

Joel Adams

It has been a while since my last installment of The Play's The Thing, and for that I am sorry. As you know, the COVID pandemic has made it more difficult to have things to report on. However, at this moment things are brewing in the island's thespian world with some real promise for the theatrical future of our beloved island!

Join me as we take a look at the

Underwood Art Factory on the bypass road, right next door to Ikea. I am sure most of you, especially if you have been on the island a while, know the Art Factory, but if you haven't been there lately, I encourage you to go and enjoy the Grind Café's tasty fare in an artsy and eclectic atmosphere like no other in Phuket.

As you enter, you are whisked off to another world with art from everywhere and every time surrounding you. Don't take my word for it. You have to see it to believe it. I love it! In fact, the first time I ever went there, I dreamed of being able to use it for a stable repertory company here in Phuket since, at that

time, it was being used only every once in a while.

The Underwood story began in the 1980s in Australia when John Underwood, having completed his studies in fine arts, set up a company called Art Busters. Providentially, his fledgling company was invited to take part in the World Expo in Brisbane in 1988 and was extremely successful, so much so that they were invited back to subsequent world fairs, in Seoul, Seville and more, giving the company international exposure and opening the window to the world.

In the 1990s Art Busters bid for and was granted a major project with Seacon Square in Bangkok. John and family, when they came to Thailand, were won over by the warmth and culture of this nation and its people. So they stayed. In 2000 John moved his family to Phuket and founded Underwood Art Factory as a product design company, receiving many commissions to create artistic décor, furnishings and more for hotels and other establishments in Phuket, around Thailand, and even internationally, designing, among many other things, luxury five-star pre-fab hotel suites that are now in operation at Treehouse Villas Koh Yao Noi Luxury Resort and far-off Mauritius. Time and space fails me to tell you all that the Factory has done over the years and is still doing; that's another story for another time.

What we are interested in at this time is the ongoing formation at UAF of a permanent performing arts hub for Phuket. Eight to 10 years ago, once the Factory was up and running and doing well, John built a bar, restaurant and stage in front of the factory, and hosted Collin Hill's band, The Lost Legends, along with P. J. Stanley, who performed great music there weekly for a year and a half or more. As happens in Phuket, some of the musicians moved or moved on, and the gigs came to an end.

After that, the factory stage was used as an entertainment venue sporadically over the years for comedy, music, improvisation, concerts and more. Many of us have attended their comedy shows or music concerts in recent times, but when there was no show, the theatre continued to lie dormant, waiting to be brought to life.

In June of 2019 Theatrix performed their very popular play, 'The 39 Steps', there, which led to the idea being born of doing more and bigger shows, of



John Underwood

creating a regular theatre company to produce plays for adults and children, sketches, musical gigs, and more on a regular basis at the theatre in the now-open and popular Grind Café.

As of this writing, the Grind Café at Underwood Art Factory has been the venue for many great events helmed by the inimical and omnipresent Mango Yordbear. There have been wild variety evenings with Stefano, the often comic Italian opera singer; Jeffrey, the Filipino Elvis who also does Michael Jackson and Frank Sinatra to perfection; Collin Hill, Amber Sparks, Veronica Barboza Rojas; Khun Mam's fusion Thai dancers and more.

In December, Theatrix and The Good Shepherd Phuket Town presented a very successful charity Christmas panto called Aladdin, and we have made the decision to make this a yearly event. There are Bohemian Markets on Sundays, complete with live music and great atmosphere, and more with more, much more, to come.

Theatrix is now busy rehearsing the hilarious, madcap 'The Play That Goes Wrong' for performance in May and June. We will keep you posted so you can be sure not to miss it.

Having seen how much the children enjoyed our panto in December, we are now making plans to set up a children's theatre troupe to regularly offer quality theatre to the children of Phuket.

And there's one more exciting thing I have to tell you! To accommodate all these future plans, John and company are presently building a new bigger indoor stage on the property! This will make Underwood and the Grind Café a complete theatrical venue where performance classes are taught, variety evenings are prepared, and plays are mounted and performed both for adults and children in two different theatres. This is going to be exciting! Stay tuned!



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UWC Lends a Helping Hand

ADVERTORIAL

by Joanna Matlub

It has now been over a year, and 5 Star Marine together with Sutai Muay Thai continue to support vulnerable communities in and around Phuket, Phang Nga and Surrounding Islands. To date, they have exceeded over 150,000 life bag donations, (each one containing enough staple supplies to feed a family of 5 for around 4 days). The fleet of 5 Star Marine speedboats have enabled access to some of the most at-risk areas, and allowed the charity efforts to go further afield, reaching impoverished smaller villages and islands as well as focusing efforts across Phuket itself.

However, they have now been able to warmly welcome more helping hands from students and teachers at UWC Thailand International School. 5 Star Marine recently put out a plea, not for donations, but for more hands-on deck for practical volunteering. So, when UWC proposed that they could help out and make this charity effort part of their community and Extra Curricular Activities (ECA's), this offer was gratefully received.

Packing and delivering over 2,000 life bags each and every week is a huge undertaking, and one that 5 Star Marine has dedicated a significant amount of time and effort to already. Now thankfully though, they have more will-



ing volunteers, as students and teachers help out weekly both on and off campus.

This assistance sits in synergy with UWC's mission – '... We view the understanding of our minds, our bodies, and our emotions as a key life skill; fostering the development of our students by tending to both intrapersonal awareness and interpersonal sensitivity in order to create a positive and international school culture. Our aim is to cultivate genuine happiness. In an increasingly interdependent world, we treat others and the planet with respect, kindness and consideration, helping even in the smallest of ways.'

UWC gives their students the opportunity to learn beyond the classroom, and encourages them to take full advantage of projects offered. They believe that

by trying out new interests, students have a chance to explore their talents, meet new people, develop new skills and discover what they are passionate about. This type of mindset is in perfect harmony for the new collaboration with 5 Star Marine and their donation drive.

The school will be providing a 20+ strong team of students and teachers each Saturday to assist with the community packing at Sutai Muay Thai in Surin. As a true community effort, additional school parents and children of all age ranges will be getting involved also. These sorts of activities are a vital part of student life and learning; providing an opportunity to bring students, staff, and parents, (as well as the wider community), together.

In addition to the off-campus efforts, there will be a weekly group of students (up to around 50), who will aim to pack 1,000 life bags each time for this worthy initiative. As part of UWC's Extra Curricular Activities, there are now 2 dedicated students taking on the responsibility for coordinating the Saturday off-site packing; including organising the participants, mini buses and time-frames. This also forms part of their co-curriculum program which all students are encouraged to take part in.

In true UWC style, the school has launched a competition inviting all students to challenge the packing process and in particular to look at how to reduce plastic usage, re-use or recycle elements of the current food packing practices. This ties in cohesively with the learning outcomes around their 'Ethics of our Choices and Actions' by looking at the types of plastic we use versus the human need, and encourages students to question and improve this process.

5 Star Marine are grateful for the hands-on deck they so needed, and the response from UWC has been a perfect fit to help with these donation efforts. They continue to take the safety of all school and other volunteers, beneficiaries and staff as of paramount importance, with all donation activities being overseen by public health officers and local arbiters; adhering to screening, sanitising and queuing with social distancing guidelines.



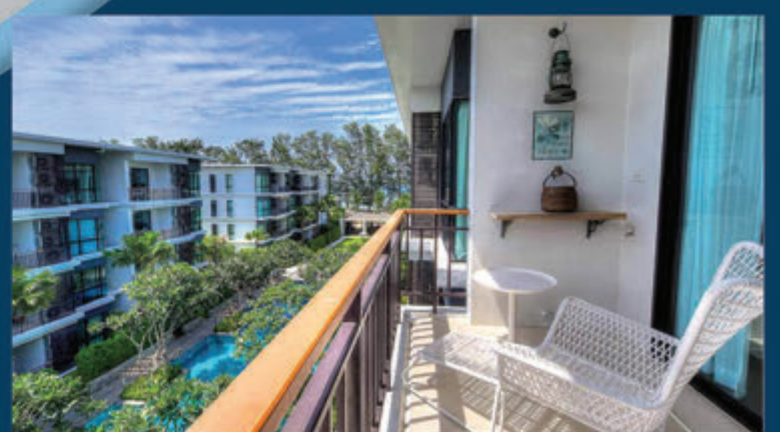
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POP QUIZ

1. Who designed the Jolly Roger flag, featuring a skull with crossed swords?

2. What word, meaning the person in charge or the boss, comes from the Japanese for "squad leader"?

3. Who wrote A Dictionary of the English Language, published on April 15, 1755?

4. The fuppence was a silver coin worth four pence that was discontinued in 1856. What was its better-known name?

5. Who is the only honouree with five stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Medium

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

1. Certain bird

6. Keats, for one

10. "The Sound of Music" backdrop

14. Antipasto morsel

15. Biblical preposition

16. Gloss

17. George's aunt

20. Calendar abbr.

21. Puzzle

22. Put something on

23. Blast from the past

26. Reduces friction

27. Contradicted

29. Arouse desire

30. Bouquet

31. "___ No Sunshine"

32. "A pox on you!"

35. "Stony End" singer

39. Numbskull

40. Irritate

41. Salsa, for one

42. Mark

44. Colorful bird

45. Call a koala an elk, e.g.

48. Chipper

49. Secrets

50. Arctic bird

51. TV doc

54. She beat Bo Bice

Down

1. Microsoft product

2. African plant

3. Stains

4. Holiday lead-in

5. "Losing My Religion" rock group

6. Blender button

7. Black stone

8. "Yadda, yadda, yadda"

9. Bear

10. Ancient meeting places

11. Floor coverings

12. Newbie, of sorts

13. Eye sores

18. All fired up

19. Aces, sometimes

24. Arm or leg

25. Abby address?

26. Romance, e.g.

27. Cake with a kick

28. "-zoic" things

29. Deed

31. Line to the audience

32. Needlepoint, e.g.

33. Ancient Andean

34. "Our Time in ___" (10,000 Maniacs album)

36. Speech of old Syria

37. Matinee ___

38. Handel oratorio

42. "St. Elsewhere" singer, ____ Barkley

43. Eastern royal

44. Tip for the dealer

45. Court officer

46. Fit to be tied

47. Deep-six

48. Disloyal one

50. Cuckoos

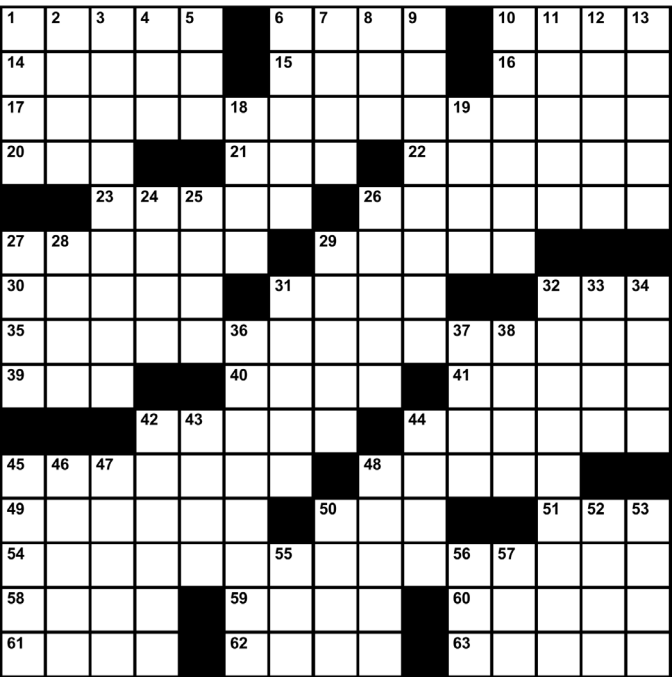
52. Cheat, slangily

53. Lofty lines

55. Fair ___ doctrine

56. Engine speed, for short

57. Chinese dynasty



Solutions to last week's puzzles:

PITHS	CAMP	ADDS
ATRIA	ALEE	TARO
PEOPLE	TIME	MONEY
AMP	ERE	OKINAWA
INSANE	ANC	
COCAS	ARAB	ERIN
AVAILS	ANOVA	EMU
ROLLING	STONE	MAD
ELL	POSE	SILAGE
SOYS	WARS	MARES
LAB	SHRANK	
ICEAGES	OAT	AGE
NEWYORKER	FORBES	
CREE	RUST	ROLLS
HERR	YAPS	SWED

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

9.3

percent of adults worldwide currently have diabetes – that rate was 4.7% in 1980.

14

minutes is how long it took Sia to write Rihanna's song 'Diamonds'.

40

bottles of sunscreen were used by the cast 'Baywatch' each month to keep them free from sunburn.

1,000

emojis is what students at China's University of Electronic Science and Technology are forced to write out every time they are late to class.

101 million

US dollars was stolen from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York account belonging to Bangladesh Bank, the central bank of Bangladesh, by hackers in 2016 due to the bank's use of \$10 computer network switches and no firewalls. US\$63mn transferred to four personal accounts in the Philippines still remains to be recovered.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW

Leatherback sea turtles on their way to the sea (Feb 27, 00:30am). Photo: Marlon Palawan

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

This week in history

Mar 19, 1932

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is opened.

Mar 20, 2003

Invasion of Iraq: In the early hours of the morning, the United States and three other countries (the UK, Australia and Poland) begin military operations in Iraq.

Mar 21, 2006

The social media site Twitter is founded.

Mar 22, 1906

The first England vs France rugby union match ("Le Crunch") is played at Parc des Princes in Paris. England wins 8–35.

Mar 23, 1801

Tsar Paul I of Russia is struck with a sword, then strangled, and finally trampled to death inside his bedroom

A US Marine stands guard at Rumaylah Oil Fields in Southern Iraq.

at St Michael's Castle.

Mar 24, 1989

In Prince William Sound in Alaska, the Exxon Valdez spills 240,000 barrels (38,000 cubic metres) of crude oil after running aground.

Mar 25, 1306

Robert the Bruce becomes King of Scots (Scotland).

Source: Wikipedia

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Avoid close contact with patient/elderly

Wear hygiene or face mask and maintain a distance of more than 1 meter

Separate bedrooms

Clean clothes and other items frequently

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water

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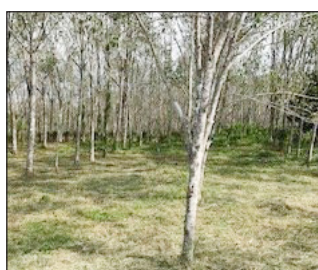
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SUCCESS FOR ALL

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QSI Junior Team.



Rob, Pablo, Adam and Davide

JUNIOR DIVISION RESULTS

- 1st BCIS (2 days with Chef Davide @ Katathani)
- 2nd QSI (1 day with Chef Pablo @ Dedos)
- 3rd UWCT Food platter (Electric Spoon Scale)

SENIOR DIVISION RESULTS

- 1st UWCT T-shirt Team (2 days with Chef Davide @ Katathani)
- 2nd UWCT Uniform Team (1 day with Chef Pablo @ Dedos & refining their dish to be "Today's Special" @ Dedos)
- 3rd QSI (Electric Food Scale)

Congratulations to the winning teams! It was great to see students out and excited again after this past year. See you next year for the 6th Annual Cooking Competition on March 12th!



INTERNATIONAL VETERANS ASSOCIATION - MAR 2021 BBQ

Members and supporters of the International Veterans Association (IVA) Phuket meet on Mar 12, 2021 at the Par Hotel for their monthly BBQ. The IVA brings together military and emergency-service men and women, either serving or veteran, to provide a focal point for providing help to those in need, both the members and the community alike.



K. Chanakarn, K. Goy & Jo



Bjorn, Chef Noi, Chef Marco, K. Chanakarn & Frederik

SUAY X PINE - HAVANA NIGHT

Continuing the SUAY X Pine collaboration, on Mar 13, 2021, SUAY Chertalay hosted an all you can eat BBQ with live cooking stations and desert bar, with Pine Beach Bar mixing up exciting beverages that paired perfectly with the BBQ selections.



Pep is dreaming of Champions League success. Photo: AFP

Man City target quadruple

FOOTBALL

TWO SEASONS AGO AS Manchester City won the first ever domestic treble of trophies in England, Pep Guardiola branded the possibility of ever doing a quadruple “almost impossible”.

A season characterised by injuries, fixture congestion, player fatigue, coronavirus infections, and for City no pre-season, should have made the feat more improbable than ever.

Yet, City remain on course to prove Guardiola's prediction wrong.

After defeating Fulham 3-0 last Saturday they hold a commanding 14-point lead at the top of the Premier League, meaning it is a matter of when not if a third title in four years is sealed.

At time of press they were scheduled to take on Borussia Monchengladbach in their Champions

League last 16 second leg on Tuesday, holding a 2-0 first leg lead.

This weekend they travel to Everton in the FA Cup quarter-finals, while a League Cup final with Tottenham awaits in April.

For all City's domestic success, Guardiola's priority remains the Champions League, the only major trophy to escape the Catalan since he arrived in Manchester five years ago and the one the club's owners brought him to the club to deliver.

But rarely have City's resources also given them such an advantage in Europe.

With Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Paris Saint-Germain still involved in tight title races and Barcelona and Juventus already out of the competition, City can afford the luxury of cruising towards the finishing line in the Premier League, while saving their energy for the Champions League. *AFP*

Blunt Blades head into the Wilder-ness

FOOTBALL

Ben Tirebuck

editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Sheffield United's season just goes from bad to worse.

Last season's heroics are but a distant memory in a torrid campaign that saw manager Chris Wilder leave his post by “mutual consent” last Friday (Mar 12) after almost five years in charge.

The Blades have lost 23 of their 29 Premier League games so far this season and sit marooned at the bottom of the table 14 points adrift of safety. It is safe to assume they will be plying their trade in the Championship next season.

Which makes the decision to allow local lad and fan Wilder to walk all the more bemusing. After all, it was he that took the club from dire straits in the second-tier to multiple promotions and back to the promised land. Yes they have had a nightmare season but that lower-league nous is exactly what the club will need next season and one struggles to think of a better qualified candidate to take on the role than the man who has just departed.

Another long exile from the top flight awaits the club.

FIVE STAR FOXES

On Sunday they looked rudderless and completely bereft of ideas without their trusted head honcho in the dug-out as they were demolished 0-5 by Leicester City. It was the Blades' heaviest league defeat since April 2000. They had never lost by more than three goals under Wilder.

In the Blades' defence, the Foxes



Had enough: Chris Wilder has left Sheffield United who have had a disastrous season. Photo: AFP

were superb to a man with stand out Kelechi Iheanacho grabbing a fantastic hat trick. Leicester remain in third place and on course for Champions League qualification next season.

Elsewhere, Manchester United remain second after a narrow 1-0 win against West Ham courtesy of a Craig Dawson own-goal.

Arsenal took the North London bragging rights after defeating Spurs 2-1 thanks to a controversial penalty won and scored by Alex Lacazette.

Erik Lamela had scored an outrageous ‘rabona’ style goal for Spurs but was then sent off after a petulant slap at Kieran Tierney which hampered any chances

of his team taking a result.

At the bottom Newcastle needed an injury-time equaliser in their 1-1 draw with Aston Villa which leaves them in a perilous position. They meet Brighton this weekend in what is truly a six-pointer to avoid relegation.

The Seagulls boosted their survival hopes after they defeated local rivals Southampton 2-1 last Sunday and will go into the ‘avian derby’ against the Magpies full of confidence.

Fulham still remain in the bottom three after a 0-3 defeat to runaway leaders Manchester City but have shown enough resilience and form of late to suggest they are capable of pulling away.

Boxing legend Marvin ‘Marvelous’ Hagler dies

BOXING

BOXING LEGEND MARVIN Hagler, the undisputed middleweight champion from 1980 to 1987, died last Saturday (Mar 13) at age 66, his wife said.

In a posting on the famed

fighter's Facebook page, Kay G. Hagler said her husband passed away at the family home.

“I am sorry to make a very sad announcement. Today unfortunately my beloved husband Marvelous Marvin passed away unexpectedly at his home here in New Hampshire,” she wrote. “Our family

requests that you respect our privacy during this difficult time.”

“Marvelous” Marvin Hagler fought from 1973 to 1987 and delivered some of the epic bouts in a golden era of the sport, finishing with a record of 62-3 with two drawn and 52 knockouts.

The southpaw's most heralded triumph came in a 1985 matchup at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas against Thomas “Hitman” Hearns that lasted only a tick over eight minutes but was regarded as a classic.

After a first round filled with power punches in which Hearns suffered a broken right hand, Hagler suffered a cut to the head early in the second.

A ringside doctor examined Hagler in the third round and the fight went on. Hagler wobbled Hearns with a powerhouse right and sent him to the canvas moments later, Hearns rising only to collapse into referee Richard Steele's arms.

Hagler won the World Boxing Council and World Boxing Association middleweight titles in 1980, stopping Britain's Alan Minter in the third round at London's Wembley Arena, and added the International Boxing Federation's inaugural title in 1983.

Hagler defended the undisputed crown 12 times, including



Marvin Hagler greets fans before a 2013 fight between Gennady Golovkin and Nobuhiro Ishida. Photo: AFP

a 15-round unanimous decision victory over Panama's Roberto Duran in 1983 and his final triumph, an 11th round knockout of unbeaten Ugandan John Mugabi in 1986.

Over a decade from 1976 to 1986, Hagler went unbeaten with 36 wins and a draw and carried a 16-fight win streak into what proved to be his final fight, a showdown with “Sugar” Ray Leonard

in 1987 at age 32.

Leonard, coming off three years of retirement at age 30, captured a controversial 12-round split decision and launched his return to the ring as Hagler bid farewell.

Hagler was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame and after stepping out of the ring served as an actor and a boxing commentator. *AFP*

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Patong captain Jason Robertson taking his third wicket during the series opener against Thalang on Sunday at the ACG. Photo: Michael Way

Penguins soar to victory in series opener at ACG

CRICKET

Curt Livermore

After a thrilling series between Rest Of World and Asia, the island's club teams, Patong Penguins and Thalang Cows, revived their rivalry last Sunday (Mar 14) to begin a best-of-five match series at the ACG.

Penguins' captain Jason Robertson elected to field first after winning the toss, sending Cows' in-form Jeremy Bootsy and the ever entertaining Sami Pir to open the batting.

It was Patong who landed the first blow from the very first delivery of the match when Bootsy latched onto a wide Robertson delivery outside off stump only to pick out the alert Eddie Chataway

in the covers who made no mistake with the catch.

Paul Evans joined Pir at the crease and the pair added a much needed 34 runs before Sajal Gaur bowled Evans for 7 runs. Imityaz Mushtaq then joined Pir who soon reached his 50 in the 15th over.

With the partnership now standing at 79, youngster Chataway stepped up as Mushtaq (31) edged one behind into the gloves of wicket-keeper Michael Flowers.

Cows' captain Joe Ninan joined Pir in the middle and helped advance the score to 150-3 before he was caught LBW by Curt Livermore for 20.

Post-drinks Pir was still at the crease and approaching his century before he was caught by Flowers for 89 in the 26th over.

Sameer Khan then used his experience to manufacture 55 runs from 50 balls and leave the Cows on a below par but defendable 256 all out.

RUN-MACHINE

Raju and Flowers opened the batting aggressively for Patong before the latter was caught by Pir for 19 and Raju was dismissed by Imityaz in the 7th over for 13.

Patong run-machine Justin Swart wasted no time in finding his groove by smashing a boundary from his first ball faced. Joined in the middle by Shilash Sharma, the pair added 48 runs before Sharma was caught by Hamilton in the 16th over, closely followed by Chataway.

Robertson then joined Swart at the crease and helped advance the score to 193-5

before Mayur bowled Swart (82) in the 22nd over.

Livermore joined Robertson and the pair added 33 runs before Livermore (16) was caught behind in the 26th over.

Dom Judge (5 n.o.) showed great composure as he and Robertson (52 n.o.) got their side over the line with the latter bringing up his half century from the final ball of the innings.

MVP went to Robertson with special mentions to Saju Abraham, Justin Swart, Sami Pir and Mayur Deuskar.

The series now goes on hold with Patong Penguins 1-0 up in the best of 5 match series.

This Sunday (Mar 21) sees the Dwarves look to topple the Giants in the first of a best of three series at the ACG.



Tyson Fury (left) and fellow British heavyweight Anthony Joshua have signed a two-fight deal. Photo: AFP

Joshua, Fury sign two-fight unification deal

BOXING

ANTHONY JOSHUA and Tyson Fury have signed a deal for two all-British world heavyweight title unification fights, Joshua's promoter Eddie Hearn said on Monday (Mar 15).

Confirming the agreement, Hearn told *ESPN*: "The hard part is always getting everybody to put pen to paper."

"But this was a major effort from all parties to get this over the line. You had rival promoters, rival networks and rival fighters."

Hearn said a venue for the fights, in which Joshua's WBA, IBF and WBO titles and Fury's WBC belt will be on the line, is set to be confirmed "within the next month".

According to reports, Saudi Arabia, where Joshua won a rematch against

Andy Ruiz Jr in December 2019, is the frontrunner to host both fights.

But Hearn told *ESPN* he "already had approaches from eight or nine sites" across the Middle East, Asia, Eastern Europe and America.

"We'd like to get a site deal confirmed in the next month," he said.

Both Joshua, 31, and Fury, 32, are expected to earn £100 million (B4.2 billion) each, with the purse split 50-50 for the first fight and 60-40 for the rematch in favour of the defending champion.

Since avenging a shock defeat to Ruiz, Joshua has defended his WBA, IBF and WBO titles against Kubrat Pulev in London in December.

Fury has not fought for more than a year since defeating Deontay Wilder in February 2020 to claim the WBC title. *AFP*

Brady extends contract

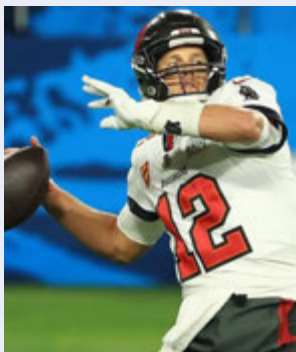
FOOTBALL

TOM BRADY SIGNED a contract extension with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers last Friday (Mar 12) and immediately set his sights on an eighth Super Bowl crown.

"In pursuit of 8," the 43-year-old quarterback wrote on his Instagram account.

The new contract keeps Brady in Tampa through the 2022 season, when he will be 45, and features voidable years at the end of the contract allowing the club to spread his salary cap hit over a longer period.

That will save the Buccaneers US\$19 million (B584 mn) for the 2021 season, when he was due to cost \$28.4 million under



Tom Brady. Photo: AFP

NFL payroll limit rules and his original two-year deal.

The savings will allow Tampa Bay to spend more on keeping the talented supporting cast that helped deliver a 31-9 victory over Kansas City in last month's Super Bowl.

Last season, Brady completed 401 of 610 passes for 4,633 yards and 40 touchdowns with 12 interceptions. *AFP*

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Sport



**Fury, Joshua
heavyweight
fight on > p15**



Phuket Pairs Bowls winning pair Noon and Pat. Photo: Robert Knight.

BOWLS PAIR ON A ROLL

BOWLS

Robert Knight

In steaming hot weather on Monday (Mar 15) a full complement of 16 bowlers battled it out to become this year's Phuket Pairs Bowls Champions.

With partners drawn at random there were some clear favourites thrown together, although as witnessed previously form and expectations are often overturned and several of the so called underdogs were quite confident of causing an upset prior to

the tournament.

The decision was taken to revert this year's tournament back to a simple knockout format rather than the arduous and complicated "champions league" format of the past two years. The knockout format always has the potential to throw up a few shock results – put simply, lose and you're out!

Surprisingly, the first round went to form with no shock results although former champion Ulf "Ue" Egerstaad and Ray Austin were taken to a last end decider against now occasional bowler Rob

Knight and Duncan Kennedy.

It was in the semi-finals where two favourite pre-tournament pairings of Dot Barker and Glenn Collins and George Sasonow and Ron Blackwood perished, leaving Dot Glenn and Ron still searching for that elusive first "major" victory despite their sterling form on club days.

Progressing to the finals were Ulf and Ray "Rocket" Austin pitted against Pat Ailm and Noon Mslk. Only Ulf had ever won a "major" before so at least one new player would be getting their name on the honours board.

A close game was expected in the final but, after Pat and Noon took an early 5-1 lead, the expectations were that Ue's previous championship experience would prove to be a crucial factor. In quite a few other championships, finals nerves had affected the challengers, particularly in Noon's last final appearance.

Not this time though! Noon had obviously conquered the nerves that affected her last time and, coupled with "Totally Ice Cool" Pat, the pairing comprehensively out bowled Ue and Ray with some stunning

deliveries to streak to a well deserved 14-5 victory.

It was somewhat of an anti-climax for the watching crowd but there was nothing Ue and Ray could do about the top class standard of bowling by Noon and Pat who became the newest names on the honours board. Congratulations to Noon and Pat!

The "plate" final for first round losers turned out to be an absolute thriller worthy of any final. Underdogs Duncan Kennedy and Rob Knight came through from one point behind on the last end to sneak it from Dean

Lambert and Greg "Hollywood" Holman, both previous champions themselves, by a score of 8-7.

The next "major" competition is the very prestigious Phuket Singles Championship on April 5th.

Kamala Lawn Bowls Club is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday with all welcome for a 3pm start. Private parties and other groups are also welcome and all equipment is provided. For further details please contact the club on 0991307299 or 0948987476.

'Largest of its kind' whopper fish caught off Racha Noi

FISHING

DUTCH EXPAT ERIC Smulders recently reeled in what he believes is the largest grouper fish ever caught on a line in Phuket.

Eric was deep sea fishing with a group of friends on his catamaran on March 7 off Racha Noi when he snagged the impressive fish.

"Every week I go with a group of friends to an area off Racha Noi where the sea bed drops from 70 or 80 metres to around 150 to 200," Eric told *The Phuket News*.

"The trawlers do not fish in these waters as their nets cannot reach," he added.

"On this particular occasion we were about 20 or 30 miles south of Racha Noi around 7am. We always use live bait and electric reels as it is too deep to hand reel.

"Suddenly I had a bite and very quickly realised it was a huge fish as it was very powerful and resistant. It was a real struggle.

"The normal breaking strength of a fishing line is about 20 pounds and this one took a long time to get aboard without breaking the line.

"The reel was overheating and had to be cooled down with water every five minutes or so. It took close to an hour for us to reel the fish in."

Unfortunately the prize fish was dead when it was finally reeled onto the boat.

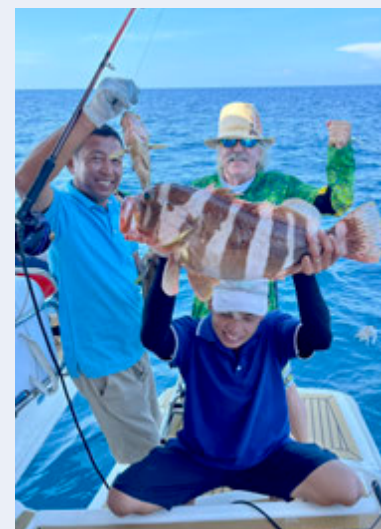
"Fish caught in deep waters usually are unable to decompress when they hauled from the depths to more shallow waters and therefore often, unfortunately, die due to the differing water pressure," Eric said.

"It was a grouper, a beautiful

fish and I believe one of the largest of its type to be caught on a line in Phuket," said Eric.

Eric's Catamaran Leopard 51 is available to hire for fishing, diving and recreation. It has three bedrooms and can be chartered daily or for multiple days and weekends. Currently there is a special COVID rate of USD1000 (B30,720) per day which includes fuel and three crew. For further details please contact the Khun Moddang on 0842465999.

Ben Tirebuck



What a catch! Eric and his crew show off the impressive fish. Photo: Eric Smulders