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## UNIFORM RULES



A soldier checks a motorist wanting to pass through the Phuket Check Point onto the island. Photo: PR Phuket

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS RAMPED UP FOR ALL PROVINCES AS NEW COVID WAVE SPREADS

**The Phuket News**  
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Local officials this week ramped up the mandatory test requirement for people to enter Phuket to apply to all people arriving from any provinces, not just the 'red' and 'dark red' zones, including Bangkok, that are now under heavy restrictions to try to stem the spread of COVID-19. The new rule came into effect on Tuesday (July 20) following a new order issued last Sunday mandating that all domestic arrivals from anywhere in the country must present evidence that they have tested negative for COVID-19 in order to be allowed into the province.

The move to ramp up the COVID

protection measures follows a meeting chaired by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew last Sunday, where the Phuket Communicable Disease Committee agreed to ramp up protection measures from COVID being brought onto the island.

The move expanded on the same rule introduced on July 15, only five days earlier, that applied only to people arriving from 'red' or 'dark red' COVID high-risk zones.

The decision to increase COVID measures followed more infections being found on the island despite elevated measures brought into effect on July 15, Governor Narong said. The elevated measures included bringing soldiers in to help conduct checks at the checkpoint.

The new infections were mostly among people who had recently arrived on the island, he said.

Also, the number of new infections confirmed each day has risen above "specified standards", he added.

Phuket Vice Governor Piyapong Choowong explained several of the key measures at another meeting held late last Sunday.

Under the new order, all arrivals must be fully vaccinated or arrive to enter the province within 90 days of being discharged from medical care from recovering from COVID-19.

In terms of arrivals being deemed fully vaccinated, Vice Governor Piyapong said that the arrival needed to have received two injections of the Sinovac or Sinopharm vaccine,

or at least one injection of the AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccine, at least 14 days before arriving to enter the province.

However, regardless of whether the arrival was vaccinated or had recovered from COVID-19, all arrivals must present results from an RT-PCR test or a rapid antigen test issued in the past seven days confirming that the arrival is not infected, he said.

Under the order, all children aged 6-18 must have tested negative for COVID-19, just like anyone else. The requirements do not apply to children under 6 years old.

Vice Governor Piyapong also announced that the checkpoint onto the island will be closed to all vehicles from 11pm to 4am...

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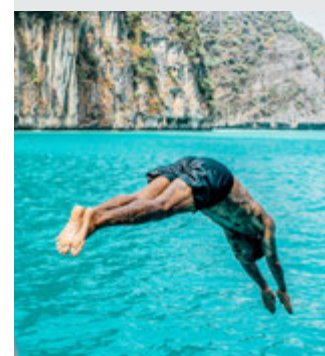
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Home test kits not accepted for travel permission



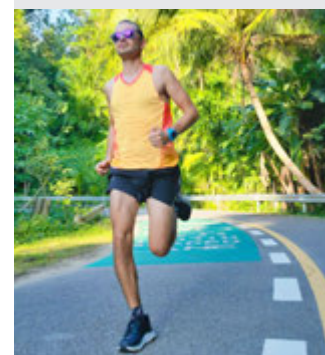
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Diving into the perfect time to tour the islands



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## News



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# Sandbox protection ramped up

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The only exception to the overnight inbound traffic ban were government officials and other staff and personnel conducting urgent business who had express permission from their supervisor, he said.

Although under the order it is not clear whether the same rules apply for people wanting to leave Phuket, Phuket Vice Governor Piyapong told *The Phuket News* on Monday, "There are no requirements in order to leave the island, but we would prefer that people in Phuket just stay in Phuket for time the being."

## PERMISSION TO LEAVE

The order specifically mentions that all people who live in Phuket or stay on the island to work – in order to leave the island and to be allowed back on the island – must present proof of vaccination OR a negative test result to enter the island.

They ALSO need to present a form that has been signed by an official.

The form must be signed by an appropriate official at



Key Phuket tourism figures meet Pol Lt Gen Surachate Hakparn, Advisor to the Prime Minister's Office, at the Phuket Check Point last Saturday (July 17). Photo: PR Phuket

a local government office, such as District Office or local municipality, or local administration organisation (OrBorTor).

Neither the form nor the order defines which officers are deemed to be "relevant government officials".

Vice Governor Piyapong told *The Phuket News* on Mon-

day, "The decision to introduce the form is primarily for Thais only, but if foreigners apply for the form [signed permission] that would be good too.

"It is up to the local administrative authority [for where the foreigner is staying] to decide whether or not to apply the requirement to foreigners. "Regardless, foreigners

must be vaccinated and have tested negative for COVID-19 in order to leave and come back onto the island," he said.

## OTHER RESTRICTIONS

Vice Governor Piyapong also pointed out that from Tuesday (July 20), all restaurants must cease serving alcohol

or allowing alcohol to be consumed on the premises from 9pm.

All shopping malls and shopping centres must also close at 9pm.

Convenience stores that normally operate 24-hours must close at 11pm and are allowed to reopen at 4am, Vice Governor Piyapong said.

Further public gatherings for activities that are permitted by authorities are now limited to 150 people, he added.

Under the order, all pubs, bars, karaoke venues and other kinds of entertainment venues, as well as venues for gambling, cock fighting, fish fighting, boxing and other similar places, are to remain closed.

Department stores, community malls, and other similar places must be closed at 9pm and the number of customers must be limited. Promotional events remain banned and kids amusement zones must remain closed.

Sport stadiums, gyms and fitness centers can open as normal, but snooker and billiards venues are restricted

to being open from 3pm to 9pm only.

Internet cafes must close at 9pm, but movie theaters, theme parks and waterparks can open as normal, except common-touch "playthings" must be open only 8am to 8pm.

Gathering for drinking in public areas remains prohibited.

People are to refrain from holding any celebrations and similar events, except traditional events that can not be postponed, such as funerals, weddings, ordinations and other religious ceremonies.

Government officers and private company staff are suggested to work from home to reduce the risk of infection. Officers leaving the island is prohibited unless there is an urgent or necessary reason, and such officers must be approved by their office chief.

Filming can be conducted on the island with not more than 150 participants, the order noted.

All officers and company staff must strictly follow the disease control measures, the order said.

## Hundreds of arrivals refused entry over new requirements

BEFORE THE MANDATORY test results requirement applied to all arrivals starting on Tuesday (July 20), about 30% of people arriving to enter Phuket by road on July 15 were refused entry for failing to satisfy the new entry requirements, which at that time applied only to those coming from the 34 'red' and 'dark-red' COVID high-risk provinces.

"In general, the entering and checking process at the checkpoint was good and smooth. Arrivals who want to enter the island prepared their documents to show to officers," said a report by the Phuket office of the Public Relation Department, also repeated through national state news agency NNT.

"However, about 30% of arrivals could not present required documents to officers and were denied, as they had come from the 34 provinces. Most of them had been fully vaccinated but were unable to present a test result," the report explained.

"Most arrivals knew the stricter measures, and under-



Governor Narong (left) at the meeting last week. Photo: PR Phuket

stood the necessity of the measures to control and protect against the current outbreak," the report added.

On average 432 people a day had been refused to be allowed onto the island for failing to satisfy the requirements, a meeting of the Phuket Communicable Disease Committee chaired by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw on July 14 was told.

The number of people arriving to enter Phuket already had been falling due to the entry requirements, and was expected to fall further due to the higher restrictions that were to come into effect on July 15. That was before the new entry requirements applying to all domestic arrivals came into force on Tuesday.

At the meeting it was agreed to have soldiers from the 41st Military

Circle stationed at the checkpoint for three months, possibly even longer through rotation, to help conduct checks of people wanting to come onto the island.

However, it was made clear that any soldier used to support officers at the checkpoint must be vaccinated, test negative for COVID-19 and be on Phuket at least 14 days before being assigned to man the checkpoint.

The Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command based at Cape Panwa had already been tasked to oversee checks at the three main ports (Ao Por Pier, Chalong Pier and Rassada Pier) and five yacht mooring areas in Phuket.

The Navy was also already patrolling the waters around the island in three zones, noted the report. Larger vessels are used to patrol the outside zone; the middle zone is patrolled for checking "precarious points"; and the inner area involves checks at risk locations such as fishing rafts and various water channels.

Other measures agreed to help ramp up COVID prevention meas-

ures included random inspections conducted on venues regardless of whether the location has been associated with known infections, despite PPHO officials already announcing that they will inspect businesses, shops, schools, mosques and shopping malls until the end of the month.

Governor Narong asked all relevant officials to continue to provide regular reports "to support the information aspects of Phuket Sandbox." That included how many people had arrived under the Phuket Sandbox scheme and how many people left early before observing their 14 days on the island.

The meeting was also told that more vaccination doses had been allocated to Phuket by the Ministry of Public Health, with vaccination injections to resume last Friday (July 16). However, the vaccination campaign now seems to have stalled with the number of people who have received two vaccination injections, and hence are deemed to be "fully vaccinated", remaining at 68% since July 1. *The Phuket News*



# Home test kits on their way

## Rapid antigen self-test kits coming soon, not accepted for travel

The Phuket News  
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Test results from COVID-19 rapid antigen test kits for self-testing at home cannot be used as evidence in order to travel, Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Dr Chalermpong Sukontapol has confirmed.

The news came just one day after the Thai Food and Drug Administration approved and registered four rapid antigen COVID-19 test kits for home use last Friday (July 16).

"The test kits are only for initial tests, which cannot be used as proof for travelling. Only a test certificate issued by a medical institution can be used as proof," Dr Chalermpong said.

"The [home] test kits are only to be used as an initial test. If anyone tests positive [using a home test kit], they still need to take an RT-PCR test at a hospital for confirmation," Dr Chalermpong explained.

Following Dr Chalermpong's confirmation that certified test results only will be



Dr Chalermpong with a home test kit. Photo: PR Phuket

accepted by officials staffing the checkpoint onto the island, the Phuket office of the Ministry of Interior announced four locations on the island where people may undergo a COVID-19 rapid antigen test: Mission Hospital Phuket in Rassada, Patong Hospital in Patong, Thalang Hospital in Thalang, and 'Nabon lab and x-ray' in Chalong.

At Mission Hospital, the test costs B800 and takes about one to two hours for test results to be confirmed. To be issued an extra letter confirming the patient's test results (not just the results form) will cost B300 more for Thai nationals (total B1,100) and B500 more for foreigners (total B1,300). Such letters are usually used to present to employers and

government officials.

At Patong Hospital, the test costs B500 for Thais and B700 for foreigners. The cost includes the test results certificate.

At Thalang Hospital, the test costs B500 regardless of nationality and will be conducted only from 8am-9:45am on Monday to Friday. The test results take about two to three

hours. The cost includes the test results certificate.

At Nabon lab, the test costs B450 also regardless of nationality. Tests are conducted from 9am-6pm. Tests must be conducted before 1pm in order to receive the test result on the same day. The cost includes the standard test results certificate, but the extra letter will cost an extra B150, for both Thais and foreigners.

Amid concerns of people causing themselves harm by conducting the swab tests themselves, Dr Chalermpong also explained how to use a home test kit.

His explanation came after a tourist who arrived under the Phuket Sandbox scheme suffered a nosebleed from a swab sample being taken by medical personnel.

The swab test and nosebleed happened on the tourist's first day in Phuket, Dr Chalermpong confirmed.

The tourist had shallow nasal capillaries and frequently suffered nosebleeds, which is a common condition that can be aggravated by

the swab test procedure, Dr Chalermpong said.

All medical personnel who perform swab tests have been informed of the incident to prevent further similar occurrences, he added.

"Soon, the test kits will be available for purchase at pharmacies and medical institutions. A package of the test kit contains a cotton swab, tester and a tube of testing liquid," he said.

"To conduct the test, people must wash their hands and prepare a clean cup. Use the cotton swab by inserting it in the nasal cavity several centimeters, or as far as the swab can reach. Rotate the swab five to six times to collect the sample," he added.

"Put the swab into the tube of testing liquid and rotate the swab four to five times. Softly shake the tube and leave it for a couple of minutes. Drop the liquid into the tester and leave it for 15 minutes.

"If the liquid goes to the C, that means the test is negative. If the liquid goes to the C and T lines, the test is positive," he concluded.

## Phuket brings infected residents home

THE FIRST COVID-19 case from a dark-red zone province arrived on the island last Friday (July 16) under the "Bring Phuket People Home" project aimed at facilitating infected people to receive medical treatment in Phuket.

Chief of Phuket Field Hospital at Prince of Songkhla University (PSU) Dr Bussaya Santisan explained that the case was a woman who worked in Bangkok and was found infected on July 13. The woman had to stay alone in her apartment and wait for hospital staff to inform her about bed availability in any of the hospitals.

One of the woman's parents contacted staff at Phuket Field Hospital and asked to bring their daughter back to the island to receive treatment. The parent then contacted an ambulance in Bangkok to bring the woman back, and medical staff picked her up at the Phuket Check Point. Then the woman was directly taken to Phuket Field Hospital.

"The Bring Phuket People Home project came after medical staff realised the



A Phuket resident has been transferred from Bangkok to the island to get COVID-19 treatment. Photo: PR Phuket

insufficiency of beds in the dark-red and red zone provinces where the number of infected cases has rapidly increased. So our staff at the Phuket Field Hospital stepped in to help lighten the load on doctors and bring Phuket people home," Dr Bussaya said.

"To be brought back to the island, an infected person must have a Phuket address, be tested positive for COVID-19 and unable to find a hospital bed. The cases must also be considered green patients who do not have infection in lungs," she added.

Dr Bussaya explained that the province is planning

to receive no more than 10 cases per day.

"Right now, we have only 30 patients in the field hospital where there are 170 beds and medical staff is on standby for 24 hours," Dr Bussaya said.

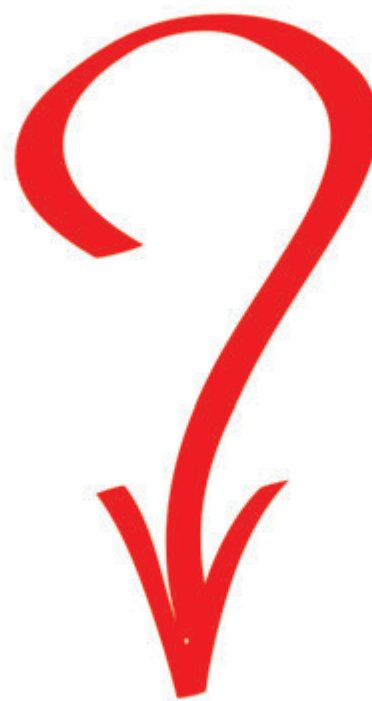
"However, any infected Phuket person who is unable to find a bed and wants to receive treatment in Phuket can call us at 076-377686 from 8:30am to 6pm," she added.

The needed documents are: an ID card, a COVID-19 test, X-ray results, medical history report and a relative's house for 14-day quarantine after treatment.

The Phuket News



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## Immigration extends COVID visas

**The Phuket News**  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Foreigners staying in Phuket on the 60-day 'COVID visa' can now apply through to September to extend their stay in Thailand, Phuket Immigration has confirmed.

The so-called 'COVID visa' was launched amid the pandemic last year so foreigners stuck in Thailand can stay in the country until they choose to go home or more options to fly home become available.

The 'visa', initially launched to allow stays of 30 days, now allows foreigners to stay for 60 days at a time, but still forcing foreigners to renew their 'visa' every two months at a cost of B1,900.

An announcement posted by the Phuket Immigration Office on July 15 explained, "Short term visa extension for the reason of COVID-19 pandemic, an alien can submit an application until 27 September 2021. Each permission will be granted for a period not exceeding 60 days."

An officer at Phuket Immigration who asked not be

named, but asked to be referred to as "Inspector Joe", told *The Phuket News*, "The infographic is just to announce that the COVID visa extension

will open further to September 27, as the previous announcement explained that the visa extension would be open only until July."

Asked whether Phuket Immigration had been informed how long the 'COVID visa' extensions would continue to be offered, Inspec-

tor Joe said, "I think they will further extend [allowing COVID visa extensions to stay] for as long as the COVID-19 pandemic is still happening and has not been resolved."

Inspector Joe urged foreigners to not leave it until the last minute to renew their permits to stay under the 'COVID visa', in order to avoid crowds and long queues at the immigration offices on the island.

"Foreigners can come to immigration offices to extend their visa early within 45 days before the expiry date, so please come early to avoid congestion and rush," he said.

'Inspector Joe' also confirmed that extensions to COVID visas are dated from the date the current 'visa' is set to expire – not the date that the foreigner applies for the extension.

Of note, Phuket Immigration opened a new office at Blue Tree Phuket in Cherng Talay in May to provide services to foreigners living in the north of the island to help alleviate crowds and delays at the main immigration office in Phuket Town.

## Man jumps from bridge, body found

A MAN DIED AFTER JUMPING from Thepkrasattri Bridge, leading onto the island, on July 14. His body was found floating near the shore and recovered later that day.

Lt Col Somkid Onchan of the Tha Chatchai Police was called to the scene at about 10:30am.

Police along with rescue workers from Mai Khao Tambon Administrative Organisation (OrBorTor), the Kusoldharm Foundation Muang Mai branch and from Loma Rescue arrived at the scene to find a blue Phuket-registered Honda Wave motorbike parked on the bridge.

A witness at the scene told police that a man had jumped off the bridge into the water below.

Rescue workers began a search for the man, but it was a local resident who reported finding the body of a man floating face-down not far from the shore nearby at about 11:10am.

Rescue workers were dispatched and brought ashore the body, which was dressed wearing a white shirt,



Police question witnesses at the scene. Photo: Kusoldharm Foundation Muang Mai

denim shorts and a pair of white sneakers.

The man was identified as Mai Khao resident Rungroj Normad, 47.

Mr Rungroj's body was taken to Thalang Hospital, where doctors are to perform a post-mortem examination before Mr Rungroj's body can be released to relatives.

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

Eakkapop Thongtub

## Karon thief steals B18k from American

A MAN WAS ARRESTED LAST week after stealing approximately B18,000 in cash from an American national at a villa in Karon.

Karon Police, led by Maj Pitchayut Srinak, arrested a 42-year-old Thai man at his house in Rassada on July 12 and charged him with the theft. The man was not named in the police report.

According to the report, 39-year-old American James Anthony Melwesti filed a complaint at Karon Police Station on July 5 claiming around B18,000 in cash was missing from his villa at Baan St Tropez in Soi Patak 10.

After checking CCTV footage, police discovered that a man had trespassed into the villa at about 2:45am. Around 15 minutes later he was seen leaving the scene on his motorbike.

After checking further CCTV footage along the route that the man had used to flee, police were able to identify him and track him down to his residence at Soi King Kaew 1/1 in Rassada.

Police also confirmed the man's clothes and motorbike discovered



Photos: Karon Police

at the residence matched what was evident in the CCTV footage.

The man was taken to Karon Police Station and charged with theft and using a vehicle to flee.

The stolen money was not retrieved by police as the thief claimed he had already used it to settle outstanding debts. He added he is currently unemployed and struggling for money.

Police were unable to confirm whether Mr Melwesti is a Phuket-based resident or visiting as a tourist.

Eakkapop Thongtub



# Police probed over gambling den

The Phuket News  
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The top ranking police officers of the Phuket City Police are under investigation for the lack of action in preventing gambling in their area of jurisdiction following a raid on a gambling den at a resort on Koh Siray, east of Phuket Town, last Saturday (July 17).

Region 8 Police Commander Lt Gen Kitrat Panpetch issued an order on Monday (July 19) to transfer the five top-ranking officers at Phuket City Police Station to temporarily work at the Region 8 headquarters at the northern end of the island while an investigation is conducted into their affairs relating to the gambling den.

Lt Gen Kitrat only identified the positions of those transferred from the police station as Phuket City Police Chief, Deputy Chief of Crime Suppression, Deputy Chief of Investigation, Suppression Inspector and Investigation Inspector.

Thai-language daily *Post Today*, however, named all five as Phuket City Police Chief Col Theerawat Liamsuwan, Deputy Chief of Crime Suppression Lt Col Chakkrit Taewatana, Deputy Chief of Investigation Lt Col Sathit Nurit, Suppression Inspector Lt Col Boonchai Charoenhatakit and Investigation Inspector Lt Col Thapthai Leelanon.



Officers at the resort villa gambling den on Koh Siray last Saturday (July 17). Photo: PR Phuket

The gambling raid was conducted at a resort villa on Koh Siray where police arrested gamblers while playing baccarat. Under the command of Deputy Commissioner of the CIB Pol Maj Gen Jiraphop Phuridet and Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Pornsak Nuannoo, the raid was led by Maj Pittaya Thanawut of the CIB and Lt Col Sathit Nurit of the Phuket City Police.

The gamblers tried to flee but failed to do so. In addition to the arrests, officers also seized betting chips which were marked to represent a total value of about B12 million.

Thai news agencies have reported that the venue was known as the 'Dragon Tiger' gambling den. One of the gamblers arrested was reported to be a local politician.

Of note, state news agency TNA, operated by MCOT, reported that 28 gamblers were arrested. The report issued by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department reported only 27 people arrested.

Phuket City Police Chief Col Theerawat Liamsuwan last Saturday said that the raid came after police received a tip-off in late June that there was a gambling group using the villa as gambling venue.

"Before this, investigation officers went to check the resort which turned out to be temporarily closed and partly under construction and did not find any gamblers," he said.

"Then today (July 17), we went to the resort again and found 27 gamblers. Among the gamblers was a local politician. Offices also seized three gambling desks, chips, and computers," Col Theerawat added.

All the gamblers were taken to Phuket City Police Station and charged with illegal gambling and having an illegal gathering under the Emergency Decree.

"We are ready to follow the

commander's order, and I confirm that we have been performing our duties with our best intention and capability. Before conducting the arrests, we had also coordinated and shared information with the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB)," Col Theerawat said in response to the being temporarily transferred.

"When the commander gives us orders, we need to follow them," he added.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonchew explained to the press that he had been informed of the transfers and investigation.

"The Phuket government has ordered all officers on the island to look for and take action on any gatherings for illegal purposes, especially gambling, and our police have patrolled frequently and taken decisive action," Governor Narong said.

"I have already ordered relevant officers to examine whether the resort was legally being used as a gambling venue in accordance with the law. Meanwhile, the local politician will be prosecuted under relevant law," he concluded.

Gambling is permitted in Thailand but only for special circumstances such as merit making as part of a funeral – and only with express permission from local law enforcement authorities and local administrative officials.

## Phang Nga delivery driver nabbed for 'borrowing' vaccination tags

A MAN HAS BEEN APPREHENDED at the Phuket Check Point by police and denied entry after it was discovered he was illegally using a friend's proof of vaccination certificate to enter the island.

Of greater concern was the fact he had used this illegal method several times before and been granted entry to the province successfully.

The man, a delivery driver coming from Phang Nga driving a white pickup truck, was planning to enter Phuket in the early hours of July 14 when police, led by Karon Police Deputy Chief Lt Col Somporn Surin, pulled him over.

He had presented his ID card which had the two stickers on it denoting he had received the required two doses of vaccination.

However, officers noticed the man started acting nervously and suspiciously and so asked him to exit his vehicle for questioning.

The driver subsequently



The man is questioned and his vehicle checked. Photo: Phuket Info Center

confessed that he himself had not been vaccinated. He added that he wanted to enter Phuket but did not want to pay for a test and therefore had asked his friend if he could use his proof of vaccination stickers.

The man also revealed the conversation he and his friend had exchanged via

his Line app.

The driver confessed to police that he had used this method many times before and been allowed to enter the island.

Officers denied him entry and informed the company he works for about his wrongdoing.

The Phuket News

## Rawai bars urged to open as eateries

IN A MOVE TO REINVIGORATE local entertainment venues decimated by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, Rawai Mayor Aroon Solos has urged bar operators to reopen their venues as restaurants.

Bars, pubs and entertainment venues have felt the full brunt of the pandemic and the ensuing restrictions enforced by central and provincial government, leaving many either temporarily shuttered or completely out of business.

Mayor Aroon revealed to *The Phuket News* Thai-language sister newspaper



Photo: Aroon Solos

Khao Phuket on July 15 that a meeting between him, Muang District Chief Somprat Prabsongham and selected bar operators at the office of Rawai Municipality sought solutions to help the business owners.

"The measure decided upon to help bar or pub opera-

tors is that they can open their venues to serve foods like restaurants," Mayor Aroon said.

"However, there will be conditions," he added.

"Social distancing will have to be respected, for example. Staff will not be permitted to sit with customers and no more than four people will be allowed at a table at any one time.

"The tables must be adequately spaced apart and hand sanitiser gels must be made available throughout the venue," he concluded.

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**ALCOHOL MAY BE A HEALTH HAZARD!**



# Sandbox refloats boat tours

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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Tourists under the Phuket Sandbox scheme have breathed new life into Chalong Pier, tour operators at the pier reported last Saturday (July 17) as about 300-400 tourists gathered at the pier to join tours to nearby islands.

Suchart Khomkham, CEO of the Freedom Dolphin Co Ltd, explained that the tourism business is improving with a higher number of customers from the Phuket Sandbox scheme.

"Before this we had about six or seven customers per day, but right now we have about 30 clients per day," he said.

"We check all tourists whether they have been vaccinated. Then they need to scan their faces and scan the code of Thai Chana location system. While tourists go into the water, staff on each boat cleans up everything by spraying alcohol solution every three hours," he said.

"Before this, we took some 60 tourists on board of each boat, but now we reduced the number to 30 tourists per boat to have space for social distancing," he said.



Tourists at Chalong Pier ready for a boat cruise off Phuket. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Songsak Charoenchai, a tour guide of Phuket Honeymoon Tour, explained that the number of their customers is also getting healthier.

"At Chalong Pier, staff will check tourists' body temperature and Mor Chana app to see whether they are Sandbox tourists. Our company already received an SHA+ certificate, and we clean up our boats and diving equipment every day," he said.

"Today our clients saw a group of 20 dolphins jumping and coming to welcome our

tourists while they were on the way to Koh Maithon in Rawai," he said.

Sirirat Moothongchun, a Thai arrival who just flew from England under the Phuket Sandbox scheme, explained that she did not want to quarantine in Bangkok, so she flew to Phuket.

"The testing process before coming and after arriving was easy and fast. When the test on arrivals came out, the hotel receptionist informed me the result was negative and allowed me out," she said.

"I just had the second test yesterday (July 16) and will be tested again next week. All hotel employees keep social distance from sandbox tourists. Before going out of Phuket, I think I will be so safe and clean [sic]," she added.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew last Sunday (July 18) issued a special order to confirm that Phuket Sandbox tourists may leave the island on "sealed" boat tours to nearby islands while still observing their mandatory 14-day stay on the island.

"Sandbox tourists who are still observing their mandatory 14-day stay in Phuket can travel around Phuket to other islands by leaving with a tour boat at these three piers: Ao Por, Rassada, and Chalong," the order noted.

"For the case that tourists want to travel around by yacht, they can leave the island through the marina, as follows: Yacht Haven Marina in Mai Khao, Ao Por Grand Marina in Pa Khlok, Phuket Boat Lagoon in Koh Kaew, Royal Phuket Marina in Koh Kaew, and Chalong Pier in Chalong," it added.

"Tourists must turn on the location sharing for the tracing app [MorChana] and inform the Phuket Marine Office or the Phuket Sandbox Command Center at least 6 hours before leaving," the order continued.

As marked in the previous order regulating boat tours, the new order confirmed that boats used for Sandbox tourist tours must have at least AIS (Automatic Identification System) Type B and VHF radio installed and operating at all times.

Boat owners, captains, or representatives of owners must present documents to

marine officers, including a report confirming the boat's time of departure and the time of return, a list of tourists and boat crew, and confirmation that the tourists on board are covered by insurance.

Pier operators, boatmasters, captains, boat crews and passengers all must follow the rules explained in the announcement of Marine Department no. 8/2564 issued on Jan 11 this year, said the order.

As such the order issued confirms that Sandbox tourists still observing their 14-day stay within Phuket may join tours to nearby islands that are within Phuket provincial waters. This includes sunset cruises as well as day trips to islands such as Koh Racha Yai and Koh Racha Noi, which are in Rawai subdistrict, as well Koh Bon and Koh Hei (Coral Island).

However, Sandbox tourists must complete their 14-day stay in Phuket before they can take day trips or travel to islands that are in Phang Nga or Krabi province, including Koh Yao Noi and Koh Yao Yai, off Phuket's east coast, and Phi Phi Island and Koh Lanta, which are both in Krabi province.

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## Tourism leaders talk up Sandbox success

PHUKET OFFICIALS and local tourism leaders have announced that the current rate of arrivals and bookings under the Phuket Sandbox scheme is on track to achieve the expected goal of the tourism re-opening.

The announcement came at a special press conference held at the offices of Phuket City Development Co Ltd Thursday last week (July 15).

Present for the occasion were Phuket Vice Governor Piyapong Choowong, Phuket Public Health Office (PPHO) Chief Dr Kusak Kukiattikoon, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office Director Nanthasiri Ronnasiri, Phuket Tourist Association President Bhumikitti Ruktaengam, and Pracha Asawathira, the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (Depa) Chief for Southern Thailand.

"Since the opening of Phuket Sandbox on July 1, a total of 5,473 tourists have come to the island, and we expect to reach up to 18,900 within this month. Before this the TAT expected to have only about 13,000 arrivals [in the first month],"



Tourists finally enjoying Patong Beach. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

said TAT Phuket Chief Ms Nanthasiri.

"So the performance and number of tourists are following our predictions," she added.

Ms Nanthasiri noted that the first month of the Phuket Sandbox will generate about B190 million for the Phuket economy.

"We estimate that the average expenditure to be about B40,000 per day per person," she said.

"Additionally, we have received bookings for SHA+ hotels for 190,000 room

nights for the three months July to September," she noted.

Mr Pracha, as the DEPA chief for Southern Thailand, explained that his office was developing an English-language version of the MorChana app that will function throughout the three provinces of Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi.

The special English-language version of the app is hoped to launch in time to welcome vaccinated foreign tourists on Aug 1, Mr Pracha said. Eakkapop Thongtub



# CCSA enacts travel curbs

Bangkok Post

Checkpoints are being set up to restrict people's movements in 13 'dark red' zone provinces in a bid to control the severe wave of COVID-19 infections, according to the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA).

Dr Taweessilp Visanuyothin, spokesman for the CCSA, said checkpoints will be up and running in the 13 provinces and along roads linking the 13 provinces with their neighbours around the clock as tighter restrictions came into force on Tuesday (July 20).

Dr Taweessilp said people need to show required documents when passing through the checkpoints, including ones that display QR codes when they register with <https://covid-19.in.th>

"Any inconveniences are to restrict travel," he said. "Unless totally necessary, don't leave home."

"You can expect inconveniences [should you travel]," Dr Taweessilp said.

The movements of people in the 13 provinces will be restricted, while those who seek to visit 'dark red' zones



CCSA spokesman Dr Taweessilp Visanuyothin announced the travel curbs for the 13 'dark red' zones on Monday (July 19). Photo: NNT

must have a proper reason and will be screened upon entry, he said, adding that the toughened measures will be in place for at least 14 days or until Aug 2.

These 13 provinces comprise Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon, Pathum Thani, Nakhon Pathom, Chon Buri, Chachoengsao, Ayutthaya and the southernmost provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, Songkhla and Yala.

All but three have been in lockdown since July 12. Chon Buri, Chachoengsao and Ayutthaya were designated as 'dark red' zones last Sunday (July 18).

Members of the public in these maximum control zones are urged to work from home and avoid unnecessary travel even outside the 9pm-4am curfew hours.

Shopping malls, department stores and community shopping centres are closed

except for supermarkets, drug stores and vaccination stations in their premises.

Six groups of people and businesses are exempted from travel restrictions for reasons of public health and the transport of essential goods.

## 'FULL THROTTLE'

Dr Taweessilp added that the capacities of public transportation services were to be halved from Wednesday (July 21).

"We'll go full throttle in

the next 14 days," Dr Taweessilp said.

"The surge in infections is mostly in these provinces and if the toughened measures work, [new] COVID-19 cases are expected to decline."

Citing projections from Mahidol University's faculty of environment and resource studies, Dr Taweessilp said the daily caseload would rise to almost 32,000 cases if action was not taken.

The announcement came as it was confirmed Thailand recorded an all-time high of 11,784 new COVID-19 cases, along with 81 fatalities on Monday. These figures marked the fourth consecutive day the new caseload broke records, with the previous daily high of 11,397 reported on Sunday.

## NO MORE SINO VAC

Meanwhile, a medical expert has said the government should stop importing Sinovac vaccines as they are not effective enough to fight the Delta variant of COVID-19.

Prasit Watanapa, dean of the Faculty of Medicine of Siriraj Hospital, said Sinovac vaccines were not effective enough to boost immunity responses so they were not

suited to deal with the highly-transmissible Delta variant.

"Pfizer vaccines are better. From now on, the government should avoid placing orders for Sinovac vaccines because they have efficacy problems. It should look at vaccines of high quality such as AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson, mRNA vaccines and protein subunit vaccines such as Novavax," Dr Prasit said.

"The government should have ordered Pfizer vaccines last year. Thailand was able to control the outbreak back then so it did not order them. Now the government has ordered them, but it has to wait because we were too slow.

"One should not say that Sinovac vaccines are low quality because each type of vaccine can be used effectively in certain circumstances. But Sinovac vaccines may not be the only solution during the current situation where the Delta variant is rampant.

"I am not pro-Sinovac. I prefer high-quality vaccines. We should be open to other types of vaccines such as Novavax. They should be considered. This is what we are waiting for. Just order them," he concluded.

## All domestic Bangkok flights cancelled

ALL DOMESTIC FLIGHTS serving passengers travelling into and out of Bangkok and other areas designated 'dark red' COVID high-risk zones were banned as of Wednesday (July 21) following an order by the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT).

The Phuket branch of Airports of Thailand (AOT Phuket), which operates Phuket International Airport, announced the ban on Monday morning (July 19), after the CAAT issued the order last Sunday (July 18).

"The CAAT has issued a ban on airlines from transporting passengers into or out of the dark red areas from the 21<sup>st</sup> of July," the CAAT announcement explained.

The dark red zones were named in the order as the provinces Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon, Chonburi, Ayutthaya, Chachoengsao, Narathiwat, Pattani, Yala and Songkhla.

The CAAT noted that the ban will remain in effect for 14 days as a "preliminary



A near empty departure hall at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok. Photo: AFP

measure", but also noted that the order will remain in effect until further notice, or "until the situation returns to normal".

All airlines were ordered to take action to assist any passengers affected by the flight ban, including flight cancellations and rescheduled flights.

Any flights still being operated by domestic airlines were ordered to ensure that flights did not exceed 50% passenger capacity. However, the order noted that passengers travelling together may sit together.

All other COVID-prevention measures already in ef-

fect are to be enforced, such as all staff and passengers are to wear face masks at all times during the journey and that passengers do not exhibit any signs of infection and have the required documents to travel where necessary.

All passengers are to be screened for elevated body temperature and checked for any signs of infection before being allowed to leave any airport, the order also noted.

"The Civil Aviation Authority will closely monitor the measures to bring Thai aviation back to normal as soon as possible," the order concluded. *The Phuket News*

## Anti-government protesters arrested

SIXTEEN PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED at last Sunday's (July 18) anti-government protest in Bangkok, during which eight police officers were injured.

Fourteen of the 16 were acting as security guards for the protest while the police described the other two as protesters.

Those arrested had set alight an effigy of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and violated the ban on people gathering, police said.

The protesting crowd made its way from Democracy Monument to Government House during the afternoon.

On the way, protesters clashed with police who shot water cannon and fired tear gas. Police also reportedly shot rubber bullets at some protesters.

During the dispersal of the protest, eight



Photo: Arnun Chonmahatrakool

police officers were injured, six of whom were admitted to hospital for bone fractures.

The protest dispersed later in the evening. Police said that warrants are being sought for 10 others who attended the protest. *Bangkok Post*

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Hong Krabi, the Krabi islands, Phi Phi and Phang Nga Bay have all been closed for sea tours in the last month or so; but let's consider what has done for the local wildlife for a moment. Closing down these areas gives the islands and national parks a much-needed chance to recover, and nature responds as sea and wildlife populations start to return amidst the quiet. These closures mean that when we are once again able to visit, the islands can be experienced as never seen before.

Closely following the 1<sup>st</sup> July Phuket Sandbox launch we welcomed the move to reopen the stunning Krabi Islands (including Hong Lagoon, Koh Lao Lading and Koh Phak Bia) which reopened as per schedule on 8<sup>th</sup> July. Phi Phi was a close runner up, reopening just a few days later, allowing you to once again enjoy Monkey Beach, Camel Rock and



Enjoying the Phi Phi Islands.

other islands in the Phi Phi national park such as the Poda islands, which the humorous chicken-shaped rock at Koh Gai is part of. *\*Please note that all destinations are subject to government entry requirements; contact 5 Star Marine to find out more.*

We are now getting excited to add Phang Nga Bay, which of course includes the infamous James Bond Island, to the list which is scheduled to allow day tours again from 1<sup>st</sup> August.

This will mean that you have a fantastic range of experiences to pick from as once Phang Nga Bay reopens, it will join the list you can enjoy right now: Coral Island, Raya, Mai Ton, Hong Krabi, Krabi Islands and parts of Phi Phi.

5 Star Marine can safely and confidently take you out on the water for private tours of any of these areas; not only are they TAT SHA Plus certified, but importantly they have gained national park licenses for every single

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# Black Widow: Return of a true Marvel

David Griffiths

Despite the fact she has been many people's favourite Avenger it was easy to start to think that Black Widow was the forgotten Avenger. Hardcore Marvel fans were furious when *Captain Marvel* became the first female-led Avengers movie, they saw it as disrespectful to Black Widow who had basically been there since Day One.

Well now Black Widow gets her chance and finally actress Scarlett Johansson (*Lost in Translation*) gets the opportunity to step up in a film that not only tells the origins story of Black Widow but also fills in the gaps of what happened to her in between *Civil War* and *Infinity Wars*.

Directed by award-winning Australian director Cate Shortland (*Somersault*), who was hand-selected by Johansson for the job, Black Widow reveals Natasha Romanoff's (aka Black Widow) Russian spy 'family' including her 'mother' Melina (Rachel Weisz – *The Constant Gardener*), 'father' Alexei (David Harbour – *Suicide Squad*) and 'sister' Yelena Belova (Florence Pugh – *Lady Macbeth*).

While Natasha is on the run from Secretary Ross (William Hurt – *Lost In Space*) she reunites with Yelena and despite a testy relationship they decide to find Melina and Alexei and get them to help hunt down the man who created them and now wants them dead – the evil



Scarlett Johansson in Black Widow (2021). Image: IMDB

Dreykov (Ray Winstone – *The Departed*).

The early stages of this film have Shortland's DNA all over them. When it comes to directing Shortland normally prefers gritty dramas and early on it feels like Black Widow is going to be more like an episode of *Alias* or *La Femme Nikita* than anything we have ever seen in the Marvel universe previously. To be honest that look and feel suited what kind of film Black Widow should be and it was almost disappointing when the film seemed to capitulate about halfway through and become yet another all action and very

little plot clog in the Marvel machine.

That is not to say that Black Widow is not an enjoyable film – it is to a certain extent. But you would have to say that the clichéd ending makes it an average offering rather than the brilliant film that could have changed Marvel forever if it had continued with the Shortland hard-edge approach that it had during the open scenes. Most of the disappointing aspects of Black Widow lay with the screenplay – the finale is derivative of the end action sequences of *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and in-

troduces us to a villain that wouldn't be out of place in one of the lamer James Bond films.

On the plus side though are the acting performances. Johansson shows that she deserved her own Avenger film a lot sooner with a performance that shows both heart and pure action skills no matter what she has to do during a fight sequence. David Harbour steals the show with his comedic timing while Florence Pugh puts in a brilliant performance and it is exciting to know that we get to look forward to her character returning in *Hawkeye* later this year. Eager fans will notice that the post-credit scene with Black Widow strongly shows how she will enter into the *Hawkeye* series.

While some people feared that Shortland's style of filmmaking would not fit the Marvel universe the truth is that her style almost pulled off one of the best Marvel films to date... it's just sad that it was pulled back by her overly Marvelised ending. The film does hold up due to the acting performances of its leads but it could have been so much better.

Black Widow is currently available on Disney+ and will be released in Phuket cinemas on July 29<sup>th</sup>.

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

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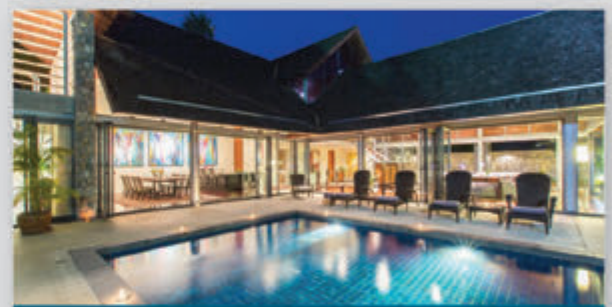
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Reduced to 135 Million THB



## POP QUIZ

- Which side of the road do people drive on in Myanmar?
- How many episodes of *The Simpsons* have aired since the show launched in 1989?
- What nickname was given to the Shinkansen high-speed trains of Japan because of their appearance and speed?
- Acer is a genus of trees commonly known by what name?
- What is US President Joe Biden's wife's name?

Answers below, centre

## SUDOKU

Medium

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

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

- Egghead
- Emphatic turndown
- Urban pall
- Sewing case
- Sunshine State city
- What the ewe grew
- Made Cuban moves with a partner

Down

- Album cover
- Alleviates
- Tennis great, Arthur
- Food fishes
- Fleece chaser
- Available
- Thumper's buddy
- Muscat native
- Diagnostic proc.
- Start of an Aretha Franklin song
- Tax form ID
- Restrain
- Luxembourg loot
- "Siddhartha" writer
- URL starter
- Kindergarten adhesive
- St Patrick's place
- Newspaper item
- Amount more than what was needed
- Has some tea
- Part of usual boating equipment

66. Houston

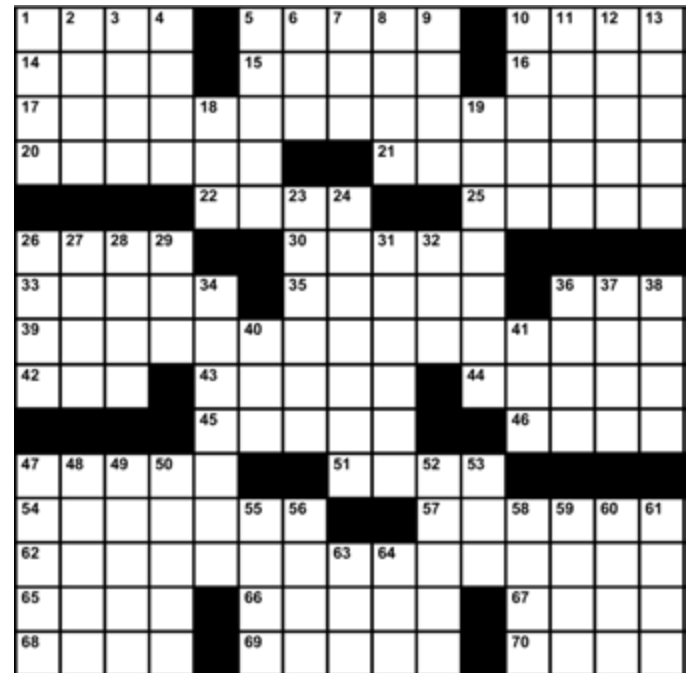
- ballplayer
- Cries of surprise
- Some of the flock
- Shorebirds
- Characters played by W. C. Fields, e.g.

Down

- Beatty and Sparks
- List ender
- Ancient alphabetic character
- Roll the \_\_\_\_
- Knots
- Critical campaign mo.
- Derisive laugh
- Cheers
- Brazo river city
- Lawn mower's path
- Coffee shop order
- \_\_\_\_ and aahed
- Windowpane
- A desperate housewife
- Health-care facility
- Yipees
- All together
- Basics
- Stadium sounds

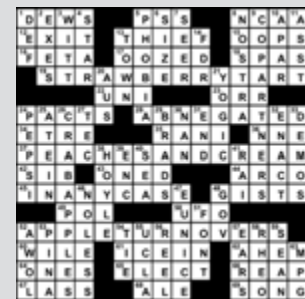
28. Fed

- Part of a geisha's attire
- Capital of Taiwan
- Massachusetts cape
- Under control
- Store
- Wild time
- Police dept. employee
- French key
- What?
- Man with a mission
- Road marker
- Michael of R.E.M.
- Sharp prongs
- Deadbeats' cars, eventually
- Prefix in biology
- Future atty.'s exam
- Lack of effort
- Corp. money managers
- Say the same thing
- Opportunity
- Fresh talk
- Bull's-eye, abbr.
- Very large coffee holder



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

## Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

6.5

times a year on average Jupiter is hit by impacting meteors big enough to generate fireballs visible from Earth.

20

moves are the most needed to solve any Rubik's cube.

150

years is how old female Greenland sharks need to be before they start reproducing.

3,500

guns per 100,000 people bought back by the government correlated with a 74% drop in gun suicides, according to an Australian study.

488 million

social media comments a year are fabricated by China's government to distract its citizens from bad news and political debates, said a Harvard study in 2016.

Source: Uberfacts

## ISLAND VIEW



Lake in Koh Kaew. Photo by Mark Pimbley

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

## This week in history

July 23, 1980

Phạm Tuân becomes the first Vietnamese, and the first Asian, in space on board Soyuz 37 as an Intercosmos Research Cosmonaut.

July 24, 2001

Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the last Tsar of Bulgaria when he was a child, is sworn in as Prime Minister of Bulgaria, becoming the first monarch in history to regain political power

through democratic election to a different office.

July 25, 1609

The English ship *Sea Venture*, en route to Virginia, is deliberately driven ashore during a storm at Bermuda to prevent its sinking; the survivors found a new colony there.

July 26, 1951

Walt Disney's 13<sup>th</sup> animated film, *Alice in Wonderland*, premieres in London.



Viktor Gorbatko with Phạm Tuân. Photo: Wikicommons

July 27, 1953

Cessation of hostilities is achieved in the Korean War

when the United States, China, and North Korea sign an armistice agreement. Syngman Rhee, President of South Korea, refuses to sign but pledges to observe the armistice.

July 28, 1571

La Laguna encomienda, known today as the Laguna province in the Philippines is founded by the Spaniards as one of the oldest encomiendas (provinces) in the country.

Source: Wikipedia



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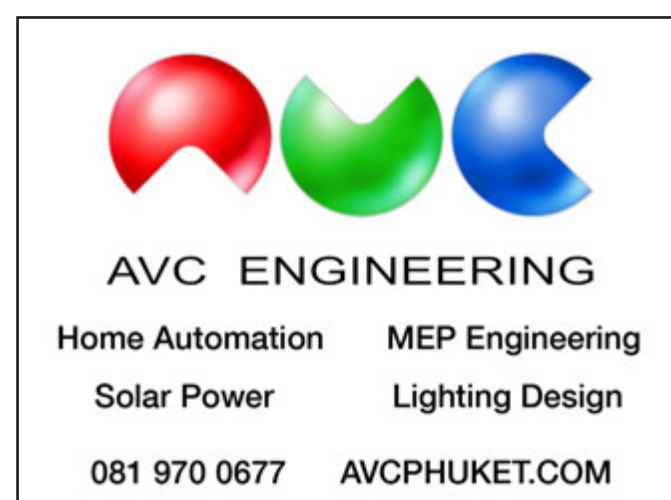
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**FRI 23 JUL**



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**MON 26 JUL**



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**WED 28 JUL**



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**SAT 28 AUG**



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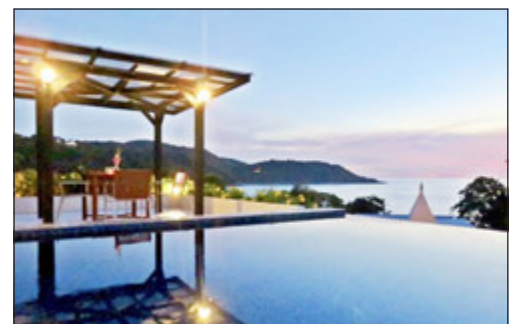
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*Jason Beavan*





The 2019 MotoGP at Buri Ram.  
Photo: Pattarapong Chatpattarasill

## Buri Ram MotoGP in doubt

### MOTO GP

THE MOTOGP IN BURI Ram scheduled for October might be postponed for the second year running because of the resurgence of the coronavirus in Thailand.

Tourism and Sports Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said the ministry and Dorna Sports, the commercial rights holder, will make a decision soon on whether the race should be postponed to next year to reduce the risk of infection.

There is concern among foreign racers because Thailand is still recording high levels of new cases, he said.

The MotoGP race at Chang International Circuit, Buri Ram was postponed for the first time during the outbreak in March 2020, setting a new date of Oct 10-12, 2021, before being rescheduled for Oct 15-17.

Last July, the Cabinet ap-

proved the licence extension, allowing Thailand to host the event for five years from 2021-2025.

Mr Phiphat said MotoGP races in other countries have also been cancelled, though some continued without audiences during the pandemic.

"The country will lose opportunities if we have to host the races in October without sport fans," he said. "If there is a choice of holding the race without spectators or postponing, we would prefer to postpone."

In 2019 most spectators came from Australia, Germany, China, the UK and Japan, while 63% of foreigners were first-time visitors to the province.

The organising budget for the MotoGP event in 2019 totalled B832 million, with B375mn or 45% coming from the government, including the MotoGP licence, infrastructure and other items. *Bangkok Post*

# Morikawa delights with British Open debut win

### GOLF

AFP

Debutant Collin Morikawa held off a charge from Jordan Spieth to win the 149<sup>th</sup> British Open by two shots after a scintillating day of action last Sunday (July 18) at Royal St. George's.

At just 24, Morikawa claimed his second major thanks to a bogey-free round of 66 to finish on 15 under par to become the first debutant to win both the US PGA Championship and the British Open.

"This is by far one of the best moments of my life," said the world number four, who handled the pressure with ease in front of crowds of 32,000 fans on the Open Championship's return after a two-year hiatus caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The American had never even played in links conditions until the previous week's Scottish Open when he tied for 71<sup>st</sup>, the worst finish of his professional career.

But the world number four showed no sign of inexperience as he revelled in the sweltering conditions as temperatures hit 30°C in Sandwich on England's south-east coast.



Collin Morikawa with the trophy after his victory at the British Open. Photo: AFP

"I've had belief in myself since turning pro that I can do it," added Morikawa, who is the first man to win two majors in his first eight appearances since 1934.

"When it's coming to these tournaments, courses and styles that I have never played, I do my homework Monday to Wednesday to know what I need to do."

### SATURDAY COSTS SPEITH

Overnight leader Louis Oosthuizen's bogey at the fourth allowed Morikawa to move into a share of the lead and he never looked back after a

two-shot swing at the par-five seventh.

The 2020 US PGA champion needed his putter to stay hot on the back nine just to save par at 10, 11 and crucially at 15 with Spieth breathing down his neck.

But by that time, he had moved to 15 under with another long-range putt at the par-five 14<sup>th</sup>.

Three solid pars coming home made Morikawa the first British Open debutant to win since Ben Curtis' shock success also at Royal St. George's 18 years ago.

Spieth was left to regret his sloppy finish to Saturday's

third round when bogeys at the final two holes saw him start the day two behind Morikawa.

"The finish yesterday was about as upset as I've taken a finish of a round to the house," said the three-time major winner.

An eagle at the seventh launched Spieth's challenge and he completed the final 12 holes in six under par with further birdies at the ninth, 10<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

"I'm proud of going six under in the last 12 in this golf tournament and putting some pressure on Collin," added Spieth. "I did all I could."

## Rivalry boils over at British Grand Prix

### FORMULA ONE

LEWIS HAMILTON emerged from the controversial British Grand Prix last Sunday (July 18) with a greatly reduced title deficit, but his crash with Max Verstappen has changed more than just the title arithmetic.

What happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object? Formula 1 found out on a sunny Sunday afternoon in Silverstone, where the burgeoning rivalry between Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton finally boiled over in a 51G crash.

The race was must-win for Hamilton, who arrived home with a 32-point disadvantage after a pair of beatings at the hands of Verstappen and his faster Red Bull Racing car in Austria.

Mercedes car updates have brought the teams back

level, but Hamilton's emphatic provisional pole on Friday was lost to an experimental weekend format that had pole decided by a 30-minute race on Saturday, which Verstappen won with a better start.

At the high-speed Silverstone, where equal cars find it difficult to follow, pole position and a first-lap lead would be invaluable.

Hamilton knew all this as he launched from second on Sunday, and the ferocity with which the pair battled off the line turned the atmosphere electric. The 140,000-strong crowd roared with delight as the two titans raced wheel to wheel, touching tyres down the Wellington straight.

But Hamilton was still behind as they exited Woodcote. Only Copse remained before the single-file Maggotts-Becketts complex. The time to move was now.

He slipstreamed up to Verstappen and dummied him on the outside before taking the

inside line for the turn. Copse is taken at 290 kilometres per hour, and both drivers, now side by side, were committed to claiming it.

Hamilton was slightly wide of the apex. Verstappen closed the door. The pair collided.

Verstappen's car shot off across the gravel and landed in the tyre barriers in 51G impact. He emerged winded, and a hospital visit cleared him of injury.

### 'AMATEUR'S MISTAKE'

Hamilton continued fundamentally unscathed and went on to win the race, overcoming a time penalty for being predominantly though not wholly to blame. Opinion outside race control was mixed and apportioned responsibility more evenly.

It isn't surprising the two came to blows, having come close to first-corner contact in earlier races. Hamilton was shoved off the road in Imola,

and the Briton backed out of a crash in Barcelona to ultimately win the race on pure pace. On both occasions he played the long game, protecting his then title lead. But in Silverstone, his points deficit ballooning, he took his stand.

"When someone's just too aggressive these things are bound to happen," Hamilton said to British TV. "I will never back down from anyone, and I would not be bullied into being less aggressive."

Verstappen hit back, calling Hamilton "dangerous", while Red Bull Racing boss Christian Horner called it "an amateur's mistake" and "desperate".

Hamilton and Verstappen are uncompromising racers, their method of duelling to put a rival in a position to withdraw or risk a crash. Their fearsome reputations preceding them and their natural speed leaving little alternative, inevitably the other driver chooses to yield.



Lewis Hamilton celebrates his victory at last weekend's British Grand Prix which was overshadowed by his collision with rival Max Verstappen. Photo: AFP

But in the intoxicating atmosphere of this crucial race neither driver was willing to play the subservient role. So one of them was forced to.

The crash is sure to change the dynamic of what had been hitherto a cordial battle, and you can guarantee that at their next on-track meeting both drivers will be only more determined not to back down.

And Verstappen might consider one other change. Unlike Hamilton in earlier races, the Dutchman chose not to consider his points advantage when forcing the issue in Silverstone and re-

sultantly came away with a 24-point swing against him. Yielding would have cost him seven points at worst and another chance at the pit stops.

Verstappen has long contended he won't change his campaign approach despite his first title tilt, but in coming off second best against the accomplished Hamilton, he may finally have cause to reconsider his route to the championship.

However we get there, the results are sure to be fascinating.

Michael Lamonato



# Cows prevail over an understrength Penguins

## CRICKET

Michael Flowers

The Thalang Cows and Patong Penguins renewed their rivalry when they took to the ACG field last Sunday (July 18) for a T20 seven-a-side match.

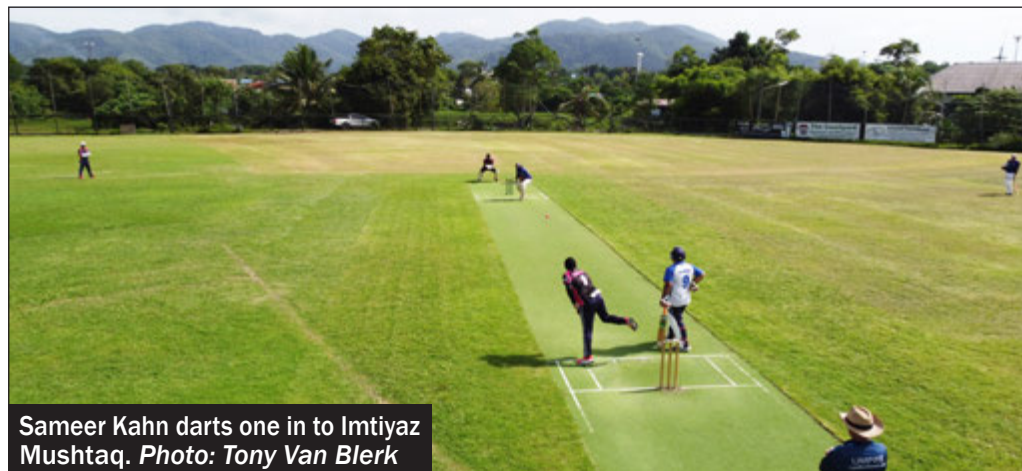
Ali Kahn and Mike Thomas opened for the Cows, the former smashing a six off the first ball of the over to signal his intent.

Kahn's explosive innings was cut short in the 3rd over, however, when he edged to wicketkeeper Michael Flowers for 25. Thomas then fell in the 5th over when he was stumped by Flowers off Manish Sadarangani's bowling.

Bhanu Singh and Guddu Yadav combined for 34 runs before Sadarangani struck again to run out Yadav for 18.

Singh 23 (22) was dismissed in the 12th over, caught by Sadarangani off Curt Livermore's bowling to leave the score at 87-4 after 11.3 overs.

Captain Joe Ninan then joined in-form Sameer Kahn at the crease and the pair pushed



Sameer Kahn darts one in to Imtiyaz Mushtaq. Photo: Tony Van Blerk

the score to 112 before Sadarangani and Livermore combined again to dismiss the former.

Sami Pir and Sameer looked to bat out the final 5 overs before Imtiyaz Mushtaq bowled Pir to leave the Cows all out for 145 after 19.1 overs.

## IN TROUBLE

In reply, Livermore sent in Seemant Raju and Shilash Sharma to begin the run chase, although both were back in the clubhouse before too long. Singh was the architect, catching Sharma for 6 before straight bowling Raju for 7.

Looking to build the innings were Mushtaq and Sada-

rangani although Singh struck again to clean bowl the latter for 5, leaving the Penguins in trouble on just 26-3 after 6.1 overs.

Mushtaq was then run out for 12, with Singh again involved, leaving Livermore and Flowers at bat.

The plan was to make it to the 10 over drinks break to reassess but on the final ball Pir and Ali Kahn combined to run Flowers out and effectively end the Penguins winning chances with the score at 49-5 with only one wicket in hand.

Saju Abraham (20 not out) joined the impressive Livermore (45 not out) as the pair

combined for an unbeaten partnership of 73 runs to add some respectability to the final outcome, but it wasn't enough as the Cows emerged victorious by 23 runs.

Singh was announced as the man of the match as players and friends enjoyed his delicious curry in the ACG clubhouse afterwards!

Honourable mention to both Sameer Kahn and Curt Livermore who also had excellent matches with both bat and ball.

This Sunday (July 25) the Cows and Penguins will begin a T25, five-game series with the action scheduled to begin at midday at the ACG.

# Running through the pain to help others

## RUNNING

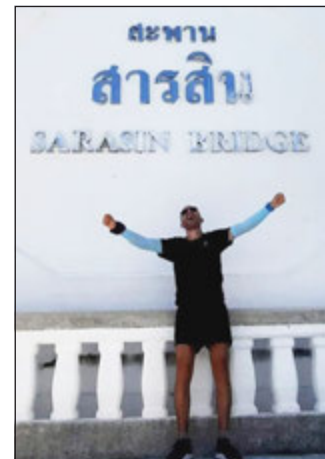
Continued from page 16

...encounter with a monitor lizard, he arrived at Nai Thon and another pit-stop before running buddies Raz and Arnfinn joined him for the 5km flat to Sirinath in increasingly hot conditions.

"The final stint was always going to be brutal," Mark said. "It was 11:30am and extremely hot, added to the fact that this section was a combination of soft sandy dirt tracks and sloping beaches. And of course by this point I had run over 55km!"

Still, the end was in sight and running onto the Sarasin bridge "felt amazing," Mark said. Up a flight of stairs to touch the sign signifying the official end point, he let out a huge victory yell! All done and dusted, clocking a time of 9 hours and 9 minutes.

"I was very happy with how the day went," Mark said on reflection. "I had no big low points, and for the majority of the day was in a really happy place. Seeing so many people come out was great, and I was very happy that I ran all the flats, downhill and nearly all



The finish at the Sarasin Bridge 'felt amazing,' said Mark. Photo: Fezzi Fezzino

the beach segments.

"The most important thing was I reached the fundraising target," he added proudly. "In fact I managed to raise a total of B146,000 which was 33% over the initial target."

The challenge has also been officially recognised and entered into *The Fastest Known Time*, an organisation that records routes and times achieved by a range of outdoor pursuits enthusiasts throughout the world.

*The Phuket News* congratulates Mark on his fantastic achievement and looks forward to hearing all about his next challenge soon!

# Pogacar hails 'incredible Tour de France adventure'

## CYCLING

TADEJ POGACAR WON A SECOND successive Tour de France last Sunday (July 18), hailing his victory as "an incredible adventure" at the final stage on the Champs-Elysees in Paris after three weeks of thrilling action.

Pogacar stole in at the 11th hour to win the 2020 edition, but this year he stamped his authority in the first week before he pulled on the yellow jersey beneath the Arc de Triomphe as the undisputed champion, aged just 22.

"We did it," he said with a huge smile, thanking everyone with his parents and siblings all present.

"It's been an incredible adventure being part of this cycling family," he said dedicating his latest triumph to "all cycling fans everywhere."

"I hope we can all come back next year without masks," he added.

Pogacar "rode between the raindrops" after surviving a litany of crashes as the Tour embarked from the nation's western tip at the Atlantic port of Brest.

The Slovenian then pulverised his rivals in the first time-trial as the race headed towards the Swiss and Italian border ski resorts where he also held his own.

The UAE Team Emirates leader then produced a pair of joyful mountain victories



Tadej Pogacar claimed his second successive Tour de France triumph in Paris last Sunday (July 18). Photo: AFP

in the Pyrenees to rubber stamp his status as the best rider on the Tour this year.

Pogacar also won the awards for best rider under-25 and the king of the mountains polka-dot jersey, a triple he also achieved on his debut last year.

Marking the end of the old era, 36-year-old Cavendish narrowly missed out on a fifth win on this edition – and a record 35th on the Tour de France.

Four wins in the six stages that ended in a mass bunch sprint were enough, however, for him to equal Eddy Merckx's record of 34 stage wins on the Tour and secure him the green sprint points jersey.

"It was just too hard," Cavendish said of the final sprint. "But it's just wonderful to be here," he said on the podium after picking up his award. AFP

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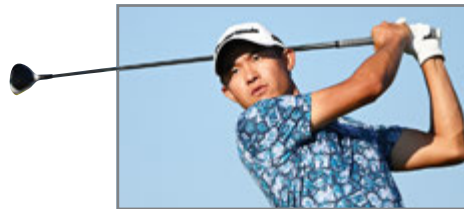
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# Sport

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**Morikawa's star continues to rise > p14**

## RUN DONE

**British expat smashes fundraising target in island run challenge**

Mark taking on the winding, hilly roads of Phuket's west coast. Photo: Andre Mouton

### RUNNING

**Ben Tirebuck**  
editor3@classactmedia.co.th

Many people enjoy an early morning run in Phuket. Hit the road or the beach before it gets too hot, take in some fresh air and stretch the legs. Phuket resident Mark Gillett redefined the activity last month, however, when he took on the gargantuan challenge of running from Promthep Cape to the Sarasin Bridge in one attempt.

The 36-year-old teacher's Herculean effort on June 20 was all in the name of a good cause though, raising funds for the One Phuket food drive to assist those in need during these challenging times of the pandemic.

The *Phuket News* caught up with Mark to get the low-down on his incredible achievement. Setting off "one minute behind schedule" from the Cape at 4:16am, the first thing that struck Mark were the spectacular views.

"Despite being night, we could see out over the Andaman Sea and the lights of Nai Harn from above, passing Windmill viewpoint and then heading past Nai Harn lake," commented Mark. "It was a beautiful start to a run."

He was joined on the first stretch by a couple of co-runners, Jay and Ernst, who served as 'pacers'. Mark said their company meant the first 5km passed by quickly and relatively easily as it helped distract his mind from the enormity of the challenge ahead.

Reaching Karon View Point and the first scheduled pit stop, Mark realised he had under-estimated the distance from Google maps by 2-3km, which meant they were behind schedule.

That meant picking up the pace a little before the next stop in Kata, something he managed to do with another co-runner Erik joining and pushing him on. Back on schedule.

For the next section the cameras were on him as the film crew joined and before long he arrived in Patong, meaning half a marathon had been completed already but

the punishing, steep inclines of the west coast hills were yet to come.

"Then it was a fast, fun

descent, towards the glorious sea where I let my stride open up and my pace rise as Kamala came into view. I was grinning from ear to ear, feeling fast and strong and having a great time."

### 'PATONG WALL'

This section included the 'Patong Wall' where Mark and his co-runner Erik had completed, at that time, Thailand's first Everesting run 10 months previously.

"It was great to have Erik running with me at that point and to reminisce about that challenge, which helped a few more kilometres fly past," said Mark.

Once he had cleared the brutally steep hills and a brief... *Continued on page 15*

## Thai athletes ready for gold challenge at Tokyo 2020

### OLYMPICS

THAILAND WON TWO GOLD medals at the 2016 Rio Olympics and they are hoping to perform better at Tokyo 2020, which officially opens today (July 23).

Of the 42 Thai athletes across 16 sports at the Games, the country's best hopes are taekwondo star Panipak Wongpattanakit, golfer Paphangkorn Tavatanakit, mixed doubles badminton pair Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai, skeet shooter Sutiya Jiewchaloemmit, and boxers Thitisian Panmod and Chatchai-decha Butdee.

The others who are seen as title contenders are golfer Ariya Jutanugarn, boxers Baison Maneekon and Juthamas Chitrapong, 10,000m runner Kieran Tantivej, badminton star Ratchanok Intanon, and windsurfers Nattapong Phonoparat and Siriporn Kaewduang-ngam.

Thailand have won Olympic golds in only two sports previously – weightlifting and boxing. Unfortunately, Thai weightlifters are banned from the Tokyo Games due to doping.

However, there may be an Olympic champion from the Kingdom in another discipline this time round.

Panipak is hot favourite to win the women's Taekwondo 49kg gold.

The 23-year-old is the top fighter in the division and earned a ticket to Tokyo thanks to her No.1 ranking.

Paphangkorn, otherwise known as Patty, is one of the hottest female golfers this year. She makes her Olympic debut at the Tokyo Games, along with Ariya, the other Thai female golfer at the tournament.

Badminton stars Dechapol and Sapsiree are among the world's top mixed doubles pairs and fellow shuttler Ratchanok, the 2013 world champion, could beat anyone on her day.

It will be the fourth Olympics for shooter Sutiya, who finished fifth in her Games debut at Beijing 2008.

Boxer Sudaporn claimed silver medals in the women's lightweight division at the 2018 world championships and the Asian Games in the same year.

Former world youth champion Thitisian, 20, is considered Thailand's best bet in the men's boxing contest, while Chatchai-decha, 36, will want to end his career with an Olympic medal in his third Games appearance.

Windsurfers Nattapong Phonoparat and Siriporn Kaewduang-ngam could spring a surprise, while US-based runner Kieran could be a dark horse in the men's 10,000m.

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**Taekwondo star Panipak Wongpattanakit is a hot favourite to shine. Photo: Bangkok Post**