

COVID GUARD UP FOR NEW YEAR EVENTS > PAGE 3

## OMICRON HAS LANDED



Tourists crowd the arrivals hall at Phuket International Airport on Monday. Photo: AoT Phuket

### 'TEST & GO' SUSPENDED AS THAILAND MARKS FIRST LOCAL OMICRON CASE

The Phuket News  
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Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha has ordered all new applications for tourists to enter the country under the Test & Go scheme to be suspended following Thailand marking its first local transmission of the Omicron COVID-19 variant in Bangkok on Monday (Dec 20).

The shattering news came as Phuket was gearing up for the New Year, with tourist arrivals increasing steadily since the scheme began

on Nov 1, after nearly two years of suffering under the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic.

The ban on new arrivals will not affect about 200,000 visitors who had previously registered for the Test & Go scheme, government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said. "This is not to shut off tourists but to temporarily suspend arrivals," he clarified.

The ban on new applications came into effect immediately, without warning.

The decision will be reviewed on

Jan 4, Mr Thanakorn said.

Leading Phuket officials have called for people to not panic over people arriving on the island from abroad testing positive Omicron. There have been no local transmissions of the COVID variant in Phuket, Dr Kusak Kiattikoon, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Public Health office (PPHO), said on Monday.

Dr Kusak led a press conference held at the PPHO head office in Phuket Town, joined Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panaphong, Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Dr Weerasak

Lorthongkham and Bhumikitti Raktaengam, President of the Phuket Tourist Association.

The press conference was held after the PPHO broke the news last Sunday (Dec 19) that five people who had arrived in Phuket on direct flights from abroad last week had tested positive for Omicron.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet on Monday stressed, "Phuket continues to conduct RT-PCR checks at the airport for the safety of tourists and the public."

He then explained that of the five...

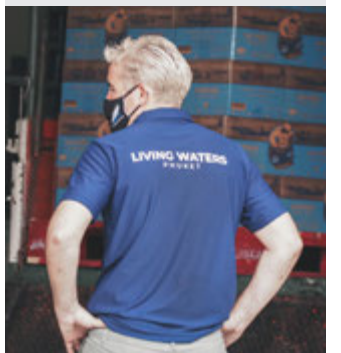
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## News



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# Call for calm as Omicron arrives

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...cases, a 36-year-old man from Sweden traveled from Sweden to Thailand and arrived in Phuket on Dec 12. The man was vaccinated with two Pfizer vaccination injections.

A 31-year-old American male, also vaccinated with two Pfizer vaccination injections, arrived in Phuket from England on Dec 13, as did a 36-year-old Thai national, traveling from Saudi Arabia.

The Thai man traveled via Qatar before landing in Phuket. The man had received two injections of Sinovac and one of Pfizer, and was allowed to travel to Pattani to receive treatment, he said.

A 32-year-old Tunisian male traveling from France arrived in Phuket on Dec 13. The man had been vaccinated with two Pfizer injections and is "receiving treatment" in Phuket, he added.

The fifth case was a 24-year-old woman of German nationality, V/Gov Pichet said. She arrived in Phuket on Dec 14. She had received two injections of Moderna vaccine and was also receiving "treatment" in Phuket, he said.

However, less than 24 hours after the PPHO posted its notice announcing the five cases last Sunday, and despite



PPHO Chief Dr Kusak Kiattikoon called for people to not panic. Photo: PR Phuket

Vice Governor Pichet's breakdown of the five cases at the press conference, Dr Kusak at the same press conference said that only four of the five were now confirmed to be infected with Omicron.

The Swedish man had now been confirmed not to be infected with Omicron, he said. "There have been no local transmissions of Omicron in the Phuket area. They have only been found among foreign tourists [sic] on Day 0 of their stay, before they were allowed to travel throughout the area," Dr Kusak said.

"Both the infected and the risk group have undergone rigorous treatment and quarantine procedures," Dr Kusak assured.

"We ask people not to panic, to strictly follow the measures to protect themselves, especially by wearing masks, and we invite people to receive their third-dose booster vaccination by registering through PhuketMustWin [web portal] now," he added.

Regarding, "rigorous treatment and quarantine procedures", the PPHO report posted last Sunday itself marked that four of the five initially identified as infected with Omicron were designated to stay at "hospitals" (hotels with medical staff on site). One of the five was allowed to leave the province to receive treatment in Pattani.

Regarding Dr Kusak's call for people to receive a third-

dose booster vaccination, while officials for weeks have been heavily campaigning in Thai for people to register to receive their booster jabs of either Pfizer or Moderna, the PhuketMustWin website itself maintains that the current campaign is for Thai nationals only.

The Phuket News has independently confirmed directly with the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO, or *OrBorJor*) that its Moderna booster jab campaign is currently for Thai nationals only.

"Phuket has strict measures to screen people who travel to the area, especially through Phuket airport," PPHO Chief Dr Kusak assured on Monday.

"Everyone must be tested by RT-PCR method, and when [arrivals are] diagnosed with COVID-19, [officials] will enact public health procedures and conduct rigorous testing of both those who are infected and those who have been exposed to high risk contact who have previously tested negative for the virus," he said.

Dr Kusak also said that the PPHO had "only recently" been informed that of the five reported as testing positive, only four had been confirmed as infected with Omicron.

"After testing positive for COVID-19, swab samples of the five were sent to the Department of Medical Sciences for a thorough examination, which confirmed that not five but four are infected with Omicron," he said.

"After a person tests positive, the sample will be tested for strain isolation at the Phuket officers of the Department of Medical Sciences, which takes at least seven days," he said.

"When the results show that there is high probability of the Omicron strain, it [the sample] will be sent to the Department of Medical Sciences to test again, which takes about two to three days, Dr Kusak said.

While aiming to inspire

confidence that Omicron will be detected at the frontline entry point to Phuket, Dr Kusak did not explain why the news was not announced a week ago, or whether any other arrivals since Dec 13 were suspected of carrying the Omicron variant. According to the Phuket Reopening Daily Report issued by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), 10,959 arrivals landed in Phuket from abroad from Dec 14-18 alone.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet called for people across Phuket to remain vigilant in protecting themselves from being infected with any form of COVID-19.

"Phuket is currently in the economic recovery phase. There are various tourism promotion activities, including sports competitions as well as preparing for New Year's Eve activities to welcome the new year.

"This news coming out may affect the feelings of the people and tourists, but Phuket Province [the provincial government] still insists on strictly enforcing its measures to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 while emphasizing that people continue to follow public health measures to protect themselves and uphold their social responsibility," he said.

## Phuket to be first to roll out fourth COVID vaccination jabs

PHUKET RESIDENTS WILL be the first in the country to receive a fourth COVID-19 vaccination injection as health officials roll out their extended campaign in the new year.

Dr Kusak Kiattikoon, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO), announced the news on Tuesday (Dec 21).

Joined by Dr Weerasak Lorthongkham, Director of Vachira Phuket Hospital, Dr Kusak said that the push to continue with yet another round of vaccinations aims to protect local residents from all forms of COVID-19.

The move comes as Phuket health officials are pushing hard to have the island vaccinated with third-dose booster injections, Dr Kusak said.

As of Tuesday (Dec 21), of the target 547,584 people in Phuket to be vaccinated for COVID-19, 479,524 had received one vac-



Phuket residents will be the first in Thailand to be offered fourth-dose booster injections. Photo: PPHO

cine injection. Of those, 462,550 had received two jabs, and 264,153 people had received third-dose booster jabs.

"Right now we are focussing on those who have received two doses of AstraZeneca. People who received their second dose of AstraZeneca more than three months ago can now

register through PhuketMustWin [website] to receive a third dose of vaccine, either Pfizer or Moderna," he said.

"This is to stimulate the immune system to a higher degree of response, in order to protect against all forms of the disease, no matter which variant," Dr Kusak continued.

The mass vaccination push will continue into the new year.

"The first of the Sinovac+Sinovac+AstraZeneca group will complete six months since their last injection in February. Therefore, the fourth vaccination injection campaign in Phuket will occur before anywhere else in Thailand," Dr Kusak said.

"From January, anyone who has been vaccinated with Sinovac+Sinovac+AstraZeneca can receive a booster vaccination of Pfizer or Moderna during January-February onwards to make Phuket people highly immune to all strains of the coronavirus," he added.

"This is to confirm that we are working to protect Phuket people further from variants brought into the country, and we are continuing our screening of foreigners to prevent infections in Phuket," he said.

"We have to learn to live with

COVID," Dr Kusak noted. "We used to have more than 100 new cases a day, but yesterday [Dec 20] we recorded 44 new cases, and the day before that just 28.

"The number of new cases has fallen, but we must keep our guard up. We cannot let it return to more than 100 new cases a day. "We're better now [than before], so the new year countdowns will go on, but we need cooperation from business operators, parents, brothers and sisters, to be careful during the new year when going out to eat or to celebrate and see in the new year," Dr Kusak said.

"I ask everyone to maintain social distancing, and where they can choose to eat outdoors. Celebrating the new year together still brings risk, but at least by taking precautions we can still allow the atmosphere of Phuket tourism to continue," he said.

Eakkapong Thongtub



# Vaccinations, ATK tests for New Year celebrations

The Phuket News  
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Organisers of large events and parties for New Year celebrations are being asked to ensure that COVID prevention measures are enforced and that all people attending events have tested negative for COVID-19 before being allowed entry.

"The COVID-19 situation in Phuket is now considered to be improving as the number of people infected is declining, possibly due to higher vaccinations, screenings and better access to health services," said Vachira Phuket Hospital Deputy Director Dr Witita Jang-iam.

"As for the New Year's festival, COVID screening measures in case of large gatherings such as more than 500 people must consider the risk of the event organisation format, such as concerts, parties, etc," she added.

"The main measure is to screen by ATK [antigen test kit] before people enter the event and that everyone



All official New Year events will be no alcohol, and private venues in Phuket may serve until 1am, Jan 1. Image: PRD

behaves according to DM-HTT [prevention measures]," Dr Witita said.

"Additionally, in-ground network partners will also be assigned to make sure the crowd is not overcrowded for everyone's safety," she added.

In Phuket, the Amazing Thailand Countdown 2022 celebration will be held at the beach area at Saphan Hin. The number of people at the event at any one time will be limited to 1,500 for Dec 27-29, and to 5,000 people for Dec 30-31.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong said the event

will comply with measures mandated by the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) in order to permit a crowd in excess of 1,000 people. All participants must show negative COVID-19 test results from an antigen test kit issued within 72 hours prior to the event, along with proof of vaccination and registration via the QueQ app, a step taken in order to limit the number of participants.

The audience immediately in front of the main stage will number approximately 730 people, with an estimated

4,000 people watching on a big screen from the area surrounding the beach at Saphan Hin.

World-renowned Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli has been confirmed to perform at the event, Tourism and Sports Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn said this week.

Meanwhile, the order issued by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew last month to allow the sale and consumption of alcohol at venues across the island all through the night of Dec 31 to 6am on Jan 1 has been cancelled.

The cancellation was announced by the Phuket Info Center, operated by the Phuket office of the Ministry of Interior, on Tuesday (Dec 21).

All food and beverage outlets that are permitted by licence to usually sell alcohol until 11pm were now allowed to sell alcohol and allow the consumption of alcohol on the premises until 1am only on the night of Dec 31.

The notice marked that the rule change was to allow people to enjoy the New Year's Eve festival.



Maya Bay, without the hordes of tourists. Photo: DNP

## Maya Bay to reopen to tourists on Jan 1

MAYA BEACH WILL definitely reopen to tourists on Jan 1 but swimming will be off-limits, according to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

The famous tourist attraction in Hat Noppharat Thara-Mu Koh Phi Phi Marine National Park in Krabi will begin welcoming a limited number of tourists on New Year's Day, department director-general Thanya Netithammakul said last Sunday (Dec 19).

Mr Thanya said the number of tourists visiting the beach on Phi Phi Ley Island would be limited to 375 per hour.

However, swimming would definitely not be allowed because the sea around Maya Beach is home to a large number of blacktip reef sharks. A recent survey found there were 161 blacktip reef sharks

in the area, he added.

According to Mr Thanya, the department was pondering collecting an additional fee from tourists.

Apart from paying an admission fee to enter the marine national park, tourists would have to pay extra for visiting Maya Beach itself.

The matter was being considered by an advisory committee of the park, he said.

The department closed Maya Bay in June 2018 after it was overwhelmed by tourists, leading to the destruction of reefs and marine ecology in the area.

Although small in size – just 250 metres long and 15 metres wide – the bay has drawn global attention since it featured in the Hollywood movie *The Beach*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, filmed there in 1999.

Bangkok Post

## Dive safety boost in national parks

LARGE COMMERCIAL DIVE TOUR boats are no longer permitted to enter the area immediately surrounding dive sites in national parks following new safety measures introduced by Varawut Silpa-archa, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment.

Large boats must now remain 100-200 metres from the dive site and ferry their dive tourists to the dive site itself by smaller boats.

Minister Varawut has introduced a "three strikes" system of penalties for violating the new measure. A first offence will incur a B5,000 fine and an official warning. A second offence will incur a B20,000 fine and the boat operator's licence will be suspended for 30 days. A third offence will incur a B100,000 fine and the boat operator's license will be revoked.

"Large boats with engine power and a large propeller, in addition to disturbing the creatures that live on the coral reefs, may also be dangerous for other divers as well," Mr Varawut said.

"Therefore, I would like to inform you that all business operators will be informed, and we invite tourists to travel to scuba dive to see the beauty of the Thai sea during this New Year festival. Please help monitor the behaviour of business operators too," he added.

The move has been praised as a common sense approach to dive tour safety, removing the possibility of tourists being injured by large boat propellers, and to help protect coral reefs from environmental damage.

Kevin Lidureau of Seafarer Divers noted, "Minister Varawut is just reinforcing the IMO [International Maritime Organization] that all boats must stay at least 50 metres away from any diving activity for safety reasons.



Dive tour operators must now ferry divers to dive sites in national parks in smaller boats. Photo: Seafarer Divers

However he added, "For the moment it is only in national parks, but it may be extended for the whole Thailand.

"This is the best decision so far for people to enjoy safe diving while divers are on decompression stops or surfacing at the end of diving," Mr Lidureau said.

"Using dinghies gives the chance to go to the right place for immersion for a small group of divers. With *MV Andaman Seafarer* we have been using dinghies, as is done at many marine national parks around the world, since 1985," he added.

Mr Lidureau called for speedboats to also be banned from entering the area where divers are in the water.

"Speedboats with divers should be made to use dinghies or be banned from dive sites as they have two or three engines, and captains do not have a 360-degree view around the speedboats and below the sea level," he noted.

The Phuket News

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## PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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SUN DEC 26

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Wind 18 m/s

MON DEC 27

High: +32°  
Low: +26°  
Wind 14 m/s

TUE DEC 28

High: +31°  
Low: +25°  
Wind 11 m/s

WED DEC 29

High: +32°  
Low: +26°  
Wind 11 m/s

THU DEC 30

High: +32°  
Low: +26°  
Wind 11 m/s

## Army steps in over parking

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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ISCO Region 4, the military oversight organisation for all of Southern Thailand, has intervened over a Thai woman tourist arriving at a restaurant in Phuket to enjoy a meal with friends being confronted and intimidated by a drunk parking attendant.

The issue arose after the tourist posted a video on social media on Dec 13 showing the parking attendant, Cherdchai "Chai" Chatsom, 45, confronting her over where she was allowed to park as a customer of a restaurant near Laem Hin Pier, as the adjoining parking area is for a private boat company.

The tourist was very polite and apologetic, yet Cherdchai continued with his behaviour, prompting her friends in the car to tell the woman to close the window and leave. The man was dangerous, they said.

The woman and her friend returned to the parking area later in daylight to explain to Cherdchai that she had already paid B30 to park in the area and that she had no idea the adjoining



Col Surasak Phuengyam, head of the Region 4 ISOC arrived at the parking lot to resolve the issue. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

area was private parking only.

That made no difference to Cherdchai, who dismounted his motorbike and continued his tirade at the woman, and her friends.

A video of the group's second encounter was also posted on social media, fuelling calls by viewers online for officials to fix the problem "before Phuket has no tourists left".

At 9am the next day (Dec 14), Col Surasak Phuengyam, head of the

Region 4 ISOC (Internal Security Operations Command), along with Kok Kao Subdistrict Chief (Kamnan) Jetsada Naennian and a host of other officers arrived at the restaurant to resolve the issue.

Also present was Lt Col Winyu Boonmee, Deputy Chief of Phuket City Police, and officers from Koh Kaew Municipality.

They met Cherdchai and presented another video clip to him, this time

showing him angry and arguing with Thai tourists dining in a raft near the pier.

After being presented with video evidence, Cherdchai admitted to his behaviour, saying he was drunk at the time. It was his day off, and he just wanted to help out, he said. In the second video showing him in the car park in daylight confronting the tourists, he plainly said he was not drunk.

Cherdchai told the Army Region chief, police and other officers present that he was "ready to apologize", but pointed out that the many scolding comments about him posted online by other people and said that the videos did not show the initial encounters, only the later times.

He said that the posting of the video was illegal under the Computer Crimes Act, as it had damaged his reputation.

Regardless, Cherdchai has already lost his job as a parking attendant after his employer, "Ms Lek", learned of the repeated incidents. He has also been banned from returning to the area.

"Such an incident had never happened in this area before," she said.

## Phuket chosen for COVID data project

PHUKET HAS BEEN SELECTED as one of five provinces to pilot a project to develop a real-time database so that policy decisions regarding COVID prevention measures can be made quickly, concisely and appropriately for the situation at the time.

"On behalf of Phuket, I would like to thank the National Research Office for choosing Phuket as one of the five pilot provinces of system development to study the COVID-19 epidemic," Phuket Vice Governor Piyapong Choowong said at an event held to announce the project on Dec 14.

"Moreover, for giving the funding to the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency to develop the COVID-19 iMap Platform and Dashboard to develop links between agencies and to manage data better," he said.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, Phuket tourism has been the most affected, so managing COVID-19 has been extremely challenging for Phuket," Vice Governor Piyapong said.

"The formulation of measures and the enforcement of measures must be considered from a database of precise facts. Therefore it is important to prepare to link the



Photo: PR Phuket

information from relevant agencies in prompt time," he added.

Kandasri Limpakom, Deputy Director at Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency, explained, "The COVID-19 iMap Platform was created to be a tool for the Security Emergency Operation Center and Provincial Center for Disease Control by connecting a large amount of geo-informatics data and developing the platform to be data centre.

"The platform aims to assist in the monitoring and analysis of data related to COVID-19 issues and support decision making in managing public health resources, and in recovering from COVID-19 situations by having information for decision-making to manage the situation immediately," Ms Kandasri said. *The Phuket News*

## Motorbike changing lanes after U-turn leaves woman in critical condition

POLICE HAVE YET TO DETERMINE who, if anyone, is at fault in an accident that left a 66-year-old woman on the road and her passenger companion in critical condition with head injuries after the motorbike they were riding was struck by a car Thepkrasattri Rd on Dec 15.

Lt Col Pongpipat Khamchompoo of the Thalang Police was called to the scene, the U-turn near Thai Wat-sadu on Thepkrasattri Rd in Moo 3, Srisoonthorn, at about 1pm.

Officers and rescue workers arrived to find a black Honda City sedan, registered in Songkhla, stopped in the middle lane of the road. The car had sustained damage to its front left bumper and its windshield was cracked.

The driver, Chuwit Sae-ng, 23, was at the scene waiting for police.

Just metres away was a grey Honda Wave 125 motorcycle, registered in Prachinburi, lying in the middle of the road.

Its driver, Suda Nooboonmee, 66, was still sitting on the road injured. She had suffered minor injuries from the collision.

However, her passenger, Wanwisa Pathumwan, also lying in the middle of the road, had suffered serious head injuries.

An ambulance transported both



Bystanders assist the two women. Photo: Srisoonthorn Municipality

women to Thalang Hospital.

Ms Wanwisa was deemed to be in critical condition and was transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town.

Col Pongpipat noted that from CCTV footage that had recorded the accident it could be seen that Ms Suda had rounded the U-turn and was moving slowly across the lanes.

However, she moved back into the right lane as a bus was coming through in the middle lane. The Honda car being driven by Mr Chuwit, heading northbound, then struck the motorbike from behind.

Col Pongpipat reported that officers were continuing their investigation and had yet to charge any person involved for the accident.

Eakkapop Thongtub



# The Peaks reduced to rubble

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The Peaks Residences, ruled by the Supreme Administrative Court as illegally occupying protected forest land at Kata Noi, on Phuket's southwest coast, has been demolished.

The demolition began on Sept 13, confirmed Sarayut Wasinanon, an engineer at Karon Municipality.

The court ordered the company to remove all structures and restore the site to its original condition within one year, Mr Sarayut confirmed.

"But the company submitted documents to inform [the municipality] that it will take time, within 180 days.

"The demolition is expected to be finished in February 2022," he said.

"If there are any problems, the company can request to extend the time for the demolition since it is expected to take about one year," he added.

The demolition has proceeded swiftly. All the major buildings that were under construction at the site have been reduced to rubble, Mr Sarayut confirmed.

The project was promoted



The buildings at the site of The Peaks Residences have been demolished. Photo: Supplied

to feature 435 units in 23 buildings, though the project masterplan showed that the site was to feature more than 46 separate structures.

Unit prices started at B5.5 million apiece, giving the completed project a base value of B2.39 billion.

Previous estimates of the completed and sold-out project including a resort were tabled at around B30bn.

Developer Kata Beach Co Ltd is covering all costs of the demolition and removal of the rubble that now remains, Mr

Sarayut confirmed.

Karon Municipality is not providing any of the funds or support to remove the buildings.

"The full cost is paid by the company," he said.

There have been no issues with the demolition of any of the buildings, Mr Sarayut added.

However, he noted that Karon Municipality is responsible for only the removal of the buildings.

The restoration of the area to its original state, including

the planting of trees, is the responsibility of the Department of Lands and Royal Forest Department, he said.

Manassanan Nararattanawee, CEO of Kata Beach Co Ltd, in February last year went public to assure investors that his company would "take care" of people who have already paid deposits for units.

Mr Manassanan also explained that some buyers had agreed to have their monies transferred to take up units at another project located at Surin Beach.

The Supreme Administrative Court ruling was handed down in December last year.

Bangkok MP Sira Jenjaka, who also serves as the Chairman of the House Committee for Law, Justice and Human Rights, travelled to Phuket to personally hand a formal "request" to the Phuket Provincial Government to ensure that the Supreme Administrative Court's order is fulfilled.

Present to receive the request was Phuket Vice Governor Piyapong Choo Wong.

Mr Sira has spearheaded a campaign against construction of The Peaks Residences after he received death threats for conducting a preliminary investigation into the project after receiving a formal complaint from the public.

MP Sira has repeatedly vowed to take action against all officials found to have been involved in illegally issuing official documents related to The Peaks condo project.

The Supreme Administrative Court ruling last year found that the land deed presented by Kata Beach Co Ltd had been issued illegally, and that Karon Municipality had illegally issued the building permit for the project.

"I will keep investigating people who commit wrongdoing, especially the officers at Karon Municipality who issued the construction permit and those who issued the title deed," Mr Siri said on national television in announcing the court ruling last December.

"The House Committee for Law, Justice and Human Rights will continue to follow up on the progress of these issues," he said.

The investigation into The Peaks began in 2018, when Cheewapap Cheewatham, a former Chief of Sirinath National Park who also defied death threats for acting against illegal occupiers of state land in the national park, received a complaint on behalf of the Royal Forest Department.

That investigation saw Lt Gen Kittisak Boonsuk, Deputy Director of the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) Operations Coordination Center 4, leading a team of military officers from Bangkok to Phuket in March to inspect the site.

During that visit Gen Kittisak confirmed that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha had ordered an investigation into the project.



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# Phuket private jet terminal opens

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The private jet terminal at Phuket International Airport finally formally opened on Dec 15 with an event led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health Anutin Charnvirakul.

The terminal, called the "SIAM LAND Private Jet Terminal", aims to serve high-end visitors landing on the island.

Present for the occasion were Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew, Treasury Department Director-General Prapas Kong-ied, Airports of Thailand President Nitinai Sirismatthakarn, and CP Group Chairman Soopakij Chearavanont.

"The opening of the Siam Land Private Jet Terminal is good for stimulating the economy after the COVID-19 pandemic because Phuket airport is a complete international airport. It is contemporary and roomy," Anutin said.

"I am sure that after the COVID-19 situation, Thailand will be the leader in the recovery of the world economy and tourism. More tourists will be coming to Phuket," he said.

"I would like to thank everyone who participated



The high-powered consortium joined the launch event on Dec 15. Photo: AoT Phuket

in driving Thailand to be a stable economy and a country of interest. After this, I would like to ask everyone to keep working together to make Thailand more developed in the future," Anutin concluded.

Kachorn Chiaravanont, Executive Vice Chairman of Siam Land Flying, noted that launch of the five-star services terminal marked another milestone in the company's business activities.

"We have witnessed a

steady increasing trend in the private charter aviation sector, particularly during the COVID-19 outbreak," Mr Kachorn said.

"The private charter business is even more popular among VIP tourists who put safety first. So, private jet is the new option of 'New Normal travel' [for VIP tourists], which is reassuring for tourism because it decreases the risk of exposure from congestion within the airport and during

the voyage," he added.

"Siam Land Private Jet Terminal also further reinforces confidence among private jet travelers in terms of safety, service that meets international standards, a complete range of comfort, and convenience.

"It can also elevate the first impression of a visit to Thailand, especially the important tourist attraction of Phuket, which is a destination that travelers around the world have been waiting

to experience," Mr Kachorn continued.

"It is the pride of Siam Land Flying to contribute to the country's benefit and we support government policies to expand the Thai tourism market, opening new opportunities from tourist groups with high purchasing power to generate income and shopping within the country as well as creating jobs for people in the area," he said.

Greg Martin, Chief Executive Officer of Siam Land Flying Co Ltd, noted, "The Private Jet Terminal of Siam Land Flying Phuket is fully equipped to provide a premium service for our VIP guests in a discrete and safe manner. The Private Jet Terminal building situated on a 17-rai area of land in Mai Khao, Our 1,200-square-metre terminal features several VIP lounges and all of the services required for smooth travel both internationally and domestically with Immigration, Customs and Disease Control services available on-site.

"Our comprehensive services and our world-class facilities cement Siam Land Flying's determination to enhance the very first experience amongst our guests

once they reach Thailand. And at the Siam Land Private Jet Terminal we have made significant investments in fully electric ground support equipment including aircraft tow tugs, ground power units and support vehicles.

"This helps achieve our sustainability goals as most other facilities around the world use diesel powered equipment," he added.

The terminal is complemented by approximately 7,000sqm of hangar space and 12,000sqm of apron space to provide safe parking for large-sized private jets, for example up to seven Gulfstream G650s can be accommodated, as well as being able to accommodate ultra large-sized private jets such as the Boeing Business Jet or Airbus Corporate Jet. Maintenance support can be provided by the licensed aircraft engineers who are part of the Siam Land Flying team.

In addition, the terminal provides other services such as a shuttle service, hotel reservation and coordination, tourism and recreation consultancy, in-flight food and beverage service, VIP lounges for departing and arriving passengers as well as crews.



## NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION

### NEW YEAR'S EVE | 31 DECEMBER 2021

#### BAZAAR

THB 3,500++ per person (buffet, soft drinks and water)

THB 1,275++ per child (6 - 12 years old), including complimentary access to Camp Hyatt Kid's Club

THB 2,000++ per person, including beverage package

#### RECEPTION

Time : 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Where : ONE80° POOL BAR  
Pass-around canapes with welcome drinks.

#### DINNER

Time : 8:00 PM - 10:30 PM  
Where : POOLSIDE  
Food stalls, beverage stations and live entertainment.

#### COUNTDOWN PARTY

Time : 10:00 PM - 1:00 AM  
Where : WHITE CANVAS  
Live entertainment.

### THEATRICAL MIZU

THB 8,500++ per person (adults only), including beverage package

#### RECEPTION

Time : 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
Where : ONE80° POOL BAR  
Pass-around canapes with welcome drinks.

#### DINNER

Time : 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
Where : MIZU TEPPANYAKI  
Premium set menu and beverage package.

#### COUNTDOWN PARTY

Time : 10:00 PM - 1:00 AM  
Where : WHITE CANVAS  
Live entertainment.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY BRUNCH | 1 JANUARY 2022

#### THE POOL HOUSE KITCHEN

THB 2,500++ per person, including soft drinks and beverage package

50% off for children aged 6 - 12 (soft drinks and fruit punch)

THB 3,000++ per person, including soft drinks and beverage package

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE EARLY BIRD OFFER

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## New year gift basket cheats targeted

OFFICERS FROM THE PHUKET Provincial office of Commercial Affairs are inspecting major retailers across the island to ensure that gift baskets are being sold in full compliance with trading laws, including having their actual prices displayed.

Phuket Commerce Chief Woranit Aphirattjirawong, joined by Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong, led a team to inspect the Makro store in Kathu on Dec 15.

Gift baskets are very popular items before the Christmas and New Year holidays, Ms Woranit explained.

The inspections are being carried out to ensure retailers are not taking unfair advantage by not displaying accurate prices, or using gift baskets as a way of clearing out old stock, she said.

The inspection at Makro found no infringements.

"Price tags on the products were clearly displayed in line with the criteria set by the Ministry of Commerce," Vice Governor Pichet said.

"Officials from the Ministry of Public Health also inspected the quality of the products packed in the gift baskets, which must be in accordance with the criteria set by the Ministry of Public Health. The important thing is that the products included in the gift basket must have expiration dates of more than six months," he added.

Joining the inspection was Somnuk Hasem, an officer at the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO).

"The PPHO has campaigned for people to give baskets that focus on health. We



Photo: PR Phuket

should choose products that have less sugar, oil, salt and campaign to reduce obesity and prevent chronic, non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, high blood fat, etc," Mr Somnuk said.

Ms Woranit explained that in order to prevent the taking advantage of consumers during the Christmas and New Year holidays, merchants must comply with the law.

Gift basket sets must be labelled to show the retail price of the product and each item in the basket, including each product's size, unit weight, packing quantity, and the price of each item and the cost of the basket itself.

The list showing the prices of such goods must be font size 16 or equivalent size. The items in the basket must have expiration dates of more than six months.

The price tags at the point of sale or at the gift basket sets must be accurate and clear so that people can compare the quality, type, quantity, and price of the product, she said.

If any business operators break these laws, they will be liable to fines of up to B10,000, Ms Woranit added.

The Phuket News



# Quarantine returns amid Omicron variant concerns

## BANGKOK

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Government announced on Tuesday (Dec 21) that mandatory quarantine measures for overseas visitors will be reinstated due to concerns over the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

A Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) meeting chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha confirmed a suspension of quarantine-free entry for overseas visitors as of Tuesday until Jan 4.

The decision will be reviewed again on Jan 4, confirmed Deputy Prime Minister Supattanapong Punmeechaow.

This will result in the "Test & Go" initiative, which allowed tourists from 67 approved countries, being scrapped and visitors having to undergo hotel quarantine between 7-10 days.

"Sandbox" programmes will also cease nationwide aside from in Phuket, con-



Visitors arrive at Suvarnabhumi airport on Monday (Dec 20). Photo: Varuth Hirunyatheb / Bangkok Post

firmed deputy government spokeswoman Rachada Dhanadirek.

"After Dec 21, there will be no new registrations for 'Test and Go', only quarantine or Phuket Sandbox," she said.

The news came weeks after the country reopened to fully vaccinated tourists on Nov 1 and a day after the first confirmed case of local transmission of the Omicron variant.

Government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said that

visitors who had previously received approval on their quarantine waiver and Sandbox program, estimated at around 200,000, will still be eligible and that roughly 110,000 had already arrived.

However, they would need to undergo two PCR tests while in the country, one on arrival and another on day seven of their stay.

"This is not to shut off tourists but to temporarily suspend arrivals," Thanakorn said.

Public Health Permanent Secretary Dr Kiatiphum

Wongrachit, said that the last group of previously approved arrivals via "Test & Go" and "Sandbox" would arrive on or before Jan 10.

Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul claimed reintroducing a complete lockdown would be a last resort.

"We are prepared for the situation and will respond promptly so there will be no need to worry about closing businesses," he said.

"We will protect as much as possible and we must make Thailand safe."



Photo: AFP

## BA suspends UK flights to Bangkok

### BANGKOK

IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED that British Airways has suspended all direct flights from the UK to Bangkok until October 2022.

The decision came after a sharp decline in the demand for travel during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Rumours had been circulating on various online forums for the past few weeks and it was officially confirmed by the airline last Friday (Dec 17).

"We apologise to customers whose travel plans are disrupted," commented a spokesperson for the airline.

"Where a customer's flight is cancelled, we always contact them to offer options including a full refund. Customers who are unable to travel, or choose not to, can also continue to change their flights or request a voucher for future use as part

of our Book with Confidence policy, which has been available since the beginning of the pandemic."

The airline had announced earlier this month that over 2,000 scheduled flights were being dropped including domestic UK flights in addition to short haul and long haul travel.

Passengers immediately affected by any cancellations were advised to consult the BA website or customer service channels for the status of their bookings.

One initial alternative for passengers booked to travel to Bangkok was the offer of flights to Doha with Qatar Airlines and to then take a connecting flight onto the Thai capital.

Any passengers scheduled to travel prior to Aug 31, 2022 were informed they can apply for a voucher which will be valid until Sept 30, 2023.

The Phuket News

## Children aged 5-11 allowed Pfizer shot

### BANGKOK

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) on Monday (Dec 20) gave the green light to allow children aged 5 to 11 to receive Pfizer's Comirnaty vaccine so as to build body immunity against COVID-19.

The Comirnaty vaccine is the first COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved by the administration for young children, said FDA secretary-general Paisarn Dunkum.

Previously, the FDA only permitted the vaccine to be used on those aged 12 and over. For children aged 5 to 11, the dose in the vaccine will be reduced to 10 microgrammes, Dr Paisarn said.

Apart from the Comirnaty vaccine, FDA deputy secretary-general Dr Surachoke Tangwiwat on Saturday (Dec 18) said that the FDA has considered offering inactivated vaccines produced by China's Sinovac and Sinopharm to children.

Safety data and information has been obtained from studies in Indonesia, South America and the Middle East, he said.

The studies have looked into immune responses and appropriate vaccine doses best suited for children in various age groups: 3-5, 5-12 and 12-18 years old, Dr Surachoke said.

Meanwhile, the permanent secretary of the Public Health Ministry, Dr Kiattiphum Wongrajit, said vaccination in Thailand has reached the targeted 100 million doses which was an attempt to reduce the severity of infections and lower death rates.



Masked pupils at Kulawansuksa School in Bangkok. Photo: Pornprom Satrabhaya

As of last Sunday, COVID-19 vaccines had been administered to 50.57 million people as a first jab, 44.39mn for a second jab, 5.02mn for a third jab and 66,722 for a fourth.

Public Health agencies, however, will keep searching for unvaccinated people, especially those in high-risk groups – people aged 60 years or older, those suffering from underlying illnesses, and pregnant women.

The agencies will also work with local administrative organisations to ramp up a proactive approach in administering vaccines to hill-tribe communities and bedridden people, as well as both legal and illegal migrant workers.

As the pandemic situation steadily improves, the ministry will propose that the government consider easing measures so as to help people resume their normal life as much as possible, Dr Kiattiphum said, adding this will help with economic recovery.

Bangkok Post

## NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA DINNER

Join us for our Gala Buffet Dinner from 8 pm at Cosmo Restaurant. Festivities will be accompanied by latin sounds from renowned band EKA Soundz all against the amazing backdrop of Naiharn Beach.

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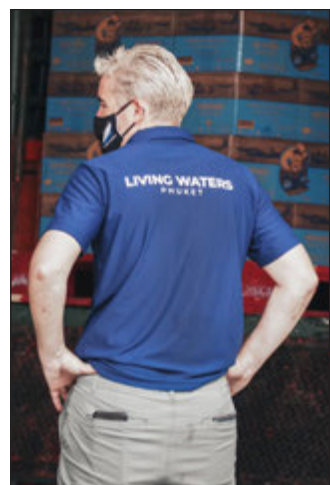
# Building brighter futures



Multiple Living Waters community projects already completed within 6 weeks of launch

## ADVERTORIAL

Joanna Matlub



Living Waters Phuket has been providing financial grants and completing projects investing in sustainable community solutions across Phuket and the surrounding islands.

Living Waters Phuket is a brand-new Foundation which was set up to build brighter futures for communities in need. This Foundation provides financial grants to projects around essential relief areas including sustainable food security, education requirements, renewable energy and environmental issues. It was established to help registered charities, foundations, private companies and government organisations by funding community projects.

Grants are currently and continuously being awarded to community groups, charities, Not-For-Profit organisations (NFPOs) and individuals who want to help the community by finding solutions to the aforementioned challenges in Phuket and the surrounding areas. The independent board of advisors at Living Waters Phuket reviews each grant application they receive objectively, fairly and impartially. With

financial grants being awarded each week, there are a lot of exciting opportunities to help the communities in need, here in Phuket and beyond.

### Sustainable Farming Project

The Foundation was involved from the start in supporting a Sustainable Education on Farming and Food Production programme for the Kathu Wittaya School.

This long-term initiative was designed around teaching almost 1,000 children about the process of producing and harvesting food, and came to fruition due to funding from Living Waters Phuket Foundation.

This project is the first of its kind in Phuket, and teaches students how to farm the land using proven Thai techniques and processes. It truly is a full circle sustainable farming initiative and something that the Foundation is extremely proud to support.

These types of initiatives aim to give disadvantaged children the lifelong skills to be self-sufficient, and take this knowledge back to their communities in the hope of a better and more sustainable future.

With the Sustainable Education on Farming and Food Production project complete, Living Waters Phuket are now providing grants for Phase 2; the construction of buildings to store produce and a shopfront from which to sell from.

### Education Assistance for Disadvantaged Children

Living Waters Phuket Foundation funded and provided brand new IT equipment for over 500 disadvantaged children at the Phuket Has Been Good To Us (PHBGU) School. This project was funded in order for teachers, volunteers and administrators to be able to deliver their English classes more effectively and efficiently. The previous equipment was old, unreliable and often shut down mid lesson making classes increasingly difficult to hold.

The newly installed equipment will help teachers deliver higher quality lessons, printed materials and content. This initiative aims to help students progress further with their education, giving them a brighter future for employment options, thus helping their families and communities also.

The grant to provide new IT equipment for teachers, volunteers and administrators for this children's charity has been completed, and all IT equipment has been funded, delivered and set up.

### Super Life Bags

The Foundation marked its official Phuket launch on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 with an unparalleled financial grant for a sizeable collaborative food dona-

tion programme. This consisted of more than 8,700 'Super Life Packs' to help families in need.

Living Waters Phuket, together with 5 Star Marine granted a substantial financial aid package for these Super Life Packs each containing enough staple food items to feed a family of 4 people for an entire week.

This funded project marked the largest single food bag donation to date, and the execution was a collaborative effort between Living Waters Phuket, 5 Star Marine, the Phuket Red Cross, Phuket Has Been Good To Us as well as various government departments.

Distribution of these Super Life Bags was aided by the Government officials and 5 Star Marine, and went out to several areas in Phuket including Kathu, Patong, Chalong, Rawai and Baan Phara among others.

### Clean Energy Project

Living Waters Phuket has recently completed the installation of solar panels for the Good Shepherd Phuket Town (GSPT) Learning Centre.

Living Waters Phuket is based around finding and funding sustainable solutions to food security, education and environmental issues. So, solar energy for this charity organisation sits well with their funding criteria.

This initiative will allow the Learning Centre to save money by removing the high electricity costs they were paying previously to run the centre. This completed project now uses a clean and sustainable energy solution that the Foundation is proud to have been able to provide funding for.

### Living Waters Phuket Foundation – Building Brighter Futures

"Phuket has needed a well thought out Foundation for a long time, and I am excited to see many positive initiatives get the opportunity to come to fruition in such a short space of time. Living Waters Phuket is open for grant applications and much needed donations to carry on our work. We look forward to being able to continue to support the community by providing funding for sustainable solutions not only to food security but in areas of education and environmental issues." said Shaun Stenning (CEO and Founder of 5 Star Marine).

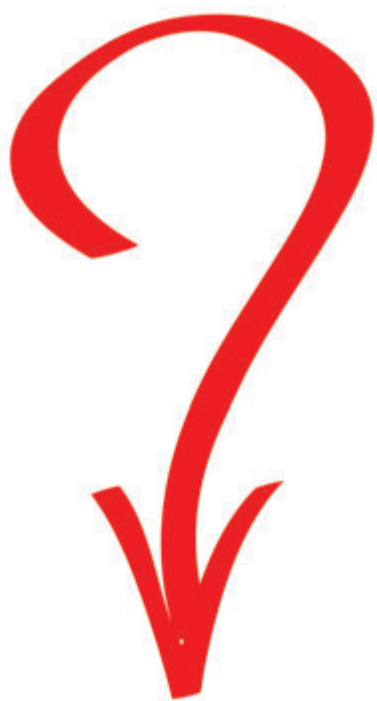
### Donations

You can donate to the Foundation's Weebon page to help fund more sustainable, community projects where you will also find weekly updates on initiatives. Please go to weebon.com and search for 'Living Waters Phuket'.

See also LivingWatersPhuket on Facebook and Instagram.



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# Spidey home for Christmas

David Griffiths

It is always hard to gauge a Marvel movie by going on the company's promises. Every time a new Marvel movie is coming out they promise that it is bigger and better than the last one. Like all repeated promises, sometimes they deliver and sometimes they don't, but believe me you have to believe the hype when it comes to *Spider-Man: No Way Home*. Not only does the film deliver a new level of being epic, this is one film that is guaranteed to become a fan favourite... perhaps Marvel have finally found the way to create a film that true fans are going to love while still making that elusive cinema buck.

Directed by Jon Watts (*Cop Car*), the film picks up in the very seconds after the ending of *Spider-Man: Far From Home*. Peter Parker's (Tom Holland – *The Impossible*) identity has been exposed to the world by Mysterio (Jake Gyllenhaal – *Nightcrawler*) and online journalist J. Jonah Jameson (J.K. Simmons – *Whiplash*).

Not only that but Peter Parker finds himself being investigated for the death of Mysterio and it seems like the world is turning against him. He turns to his support network of Aunt May (Marisa Tomei – *The Wrestler*) and Happy Hogan (Jon Favreau – *Chef*) for support, but when the impact of the investigation affects him, his girlfriend MJ (Zendaya – *Dune*) and best friend Ned



Photo: IMDB

(Jacob Batalan – *Spider-Man: Homecoming*) in a major way, he decides that something needs to be done.

Peter then turns to Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch – *The Power of the Dog*) for help but the resulting spell that is cast has catastrophic ramifications. Suddenly Peter and his crew find themselves in a battle as foes from the multi-verse land in New York led by Doc Ock (Alfred Molina – *Boogie Nights*), Green Goblin (Willem Dafoe – *The Card Counter*) and Electro (Jamie Foxx – *Horrible Bosses*).

What Jon Watts has created here is a very special film for comic-book fans.

If you are a casual Marvel movie fan then you are going to like this film, but if you are a die-hard Spider-Man fan then you are going to LOVE this film because this is something so special that the only one to describe it is that it is a once in a generation film.

There are some very special moments in this film for true Spider-Man fans, we will leave that at that so there are no spoilers, but it is how everything else that comes together in this film that takes it to the next level.

Somehow Watts and screenwriters Chris McKenna (*Ant-Man and the Wasp*) and Erik Sommers (*Jumanji*:

*Welcome to the Jungle*) manage to pack a lot of things into this film without making it feel crowded or letting it run past its welcome. They also bring the right blend of things to the film – nostalgia, epic action sequences, characterisation and just the right amount of humour. They have pretty much made the perfect comic-book movie.

The result is a film that makes Spidey fans gasp at times throughout the film – and in the screening we were in there were even rounds of applause and screams during some of the film's big revelations, and that is something that you rarely see in modern-day cinema.

It also feels like the actors here know they are acting in something special. We have known that Tom Holland is something special ever since his performance in *The Impossible*, but here he takes his acting to a whole new level. He almost has to as Willem Dafoe comes into the film bringing his A-Game.

There are too many special moments in this film to mention and many of them would be spoilers so the best thing to say is that this is a film that Spider-Man fans are going to truly embrace and adore. This is the one time that Marvel has delivered something very special indeed for comic book fans everywhere.

*Spider-Man: No Way Home* opens in cinemas in Phuket on Dec 23 and has yet to be classified.

5/5 Stars

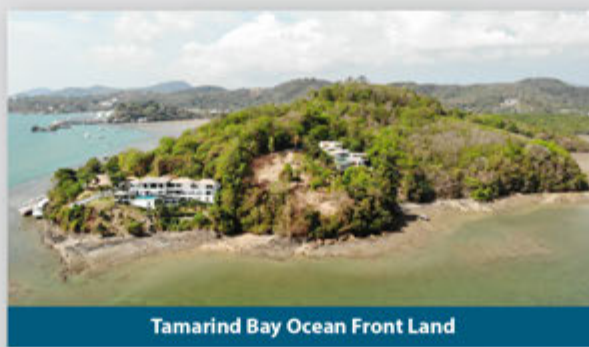
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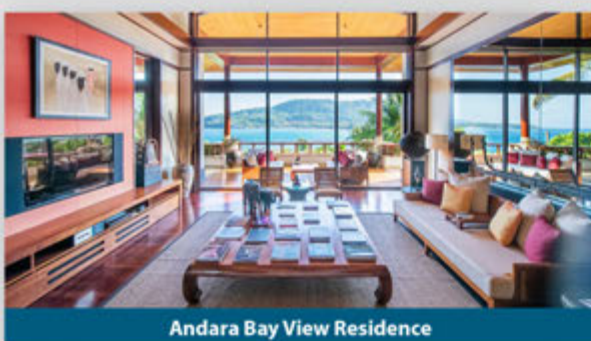
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POP QUIZ

1. What Xmas product did Sir Henry Cole produce in 1843?

2. In the Christmas film 'Gremlins', what did Billy name the mogwai given to him as a gift?

3. Which traditional Christmas vegetable is a cross between a cabbage and a turnip?

4. According to the song, what did my true love bring to me on the third day of Christmas?

5. Santa originally had only eight reindeer. Which reindeer was created – and added – in 1939?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

1. Like some columns

5. Strike

9. Cheerless

13. Paella pot

14. Maintain

15. Not fine

16. Acquisition method

19. Ones at the helm

20. "You don't say!"

21. "\_\_\_ time"

22. Old Icelandic literary work

23. Snubbing

31. West Indian folk magic

32. Catch

33. Farm call

34. Fabric

35. Acadia National Park locale

37. Bakery buy

38. Extreme suffix

39. Foofaraw

40. Ism

41. Eluding an officer

45. Feeder filler

46. Legal org.

47. Catalog

50. Eccentric

55. Kamikaze run?

57. X-Men villain, and

namesakes

58. Place

59. Big name in pineapples

60. Eyelid woe

61. Leavings

62. Abreast of

lose?

25. Boxing blows

26. Not dis

27. Kind of jack

28. Candidate's concern

29. Standards

30. Reached

35. Unaccompanied compositions

36. Passage

37. Lookout point

39. Aggravation

40. Harsh Athenian lawgiver

42. King Mark's bride

43. January's birthstone

44. Old calculator

47. Does something

48. Dirty coat

49. Cut down

50. Coconut fiber

51. African antelope

52. Play thing

53. Capital near the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel

54. Adult-in-waiting?

56. U.N. workers' grp.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14				15				
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55						56							
57						58				59			
60						61				62			

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

Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

3

days a year – Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter – are when Americans watch the least amount of pornography.

13

nanometers in size is still large enough to be detected by human touch.

15

minutes is how long it took Mariah Carey to write "All I Want For Christmas Is You", which has earned her US\$60 million in royalties.

923

words in the English language break the "i before e" grammar rule and only 44 words actually abide by it.

29.9 billion

US dollars is expected to be spent on gift cards in the US this holiday season.

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Kamala Beach. Photo by Rainer Volz

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

This week in history

Dec 24, 1826

The Eggnog Riot at the United States Military Academy West Point begins, involving more than one-third of the cadets by the time it ceased on Christmas morning; 20 of them were court-martialed.

Dec 25, 336

First documentary sign of Christmas celebration in Rome.

Dec 26, 1991

The Supreme Soviet of the So-

Dec 27, 1845

Ether anesthetic is used for child-birth for the first time by Dr Crawford Long in Jefferson, Georgia. His wife, Caroline nee Swain, was the grateful recipient.

Dec 28, 1768

King Taksin's coronation is

Dec 29, 1911

Mongolia gains independence from the Qing dynasty, enthroning the 9th Jebtsundamba Khutughtu as Khagan of Mongolia.

Dec 30, 1916

Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin, Russian mystic and advisor to the Tsar, is murdered by a loyalist group led by Prince Felix Yusupov. His frozen, partially-trussed body was discovered in a Moscow river three days later.Source: Wikipedia



Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin.

achieved through conquest as king of Thailand and Thonburi established as the capital.



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25 DEC

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**THB 3,333 NET PER PERSON**

**Christmas Gala dinner at Cosmo**

Enjoy the magic of Christmas whilst taking in the stunning view across Nai Harn Bay, over a sumptuous Buffet Dinner complete with all the trimmings at 7:30pm. South African singer - songwriter Eric Canham will entertain you with festive songs throughout the evening while Santa Claus and his helpers will greet children with gifts. THB 3,333 net per person. Children under 2 years eat free; from 2 up to 11 years at 50% off. Reservation, Cosmo at The Nai Harn Phuket, [fbreservation@thenaiharn.com](mailto:fbreservation@thenaiharn.com), 076 380 200

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**Bottomless Boxing Day Grande Indian Brunch**

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MON

27 DEC

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WED

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1 JAN

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AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC) and the Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), is delighted to invite you to join us for "Australia Day Phuket Sundowners" at JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa, on Friday 28 January 2022, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. A celebration of all things Australian, join us for your favourite Australian food & beverages, and welcome in the New Year as the first business networking event in Phuket of 2022. Please note that the attendees will be asked for their COVID-19 vaccination or ATK / RT-PCR certification to show on entry to the event. Price: 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members.

FRI

7 JAN

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

The Grow Boating Networking Evening for January 2022 will be held at the Isola Restaurant, at the Royal Phuket Marina on Friday the 7th of January from 5pm. There will be a light buffet sponsored by the Isola Restaurant and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available. Drinks sponsorship is available for the event. Sponsorship costs 10,000 baht and includes a generous media package from our media partner The Phuket News. Message us for more information. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome. There is no entry fee, just drop your business card or register at the bar. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to [growboating-phuket@gmail.com](mailto:growboating-phuket@gmail.com) Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/growboatingphuket/> Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See [www.thephuketnews.com](http://www.thephuketnews.com)

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## SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PHUKET CHRISTMAS CHARITY LUNCHEON AT THE BOATHOUSE KATA

Valued Skål Phuket member, Eric Weber, GM The Boathouse and his F&B team, put together a superb menu for an enjoyable afternoon on Thursday Dec 16, 2021. Funds raised, by donations from members, went to support Phuket Sunshine Village.

Francois Laing, President Skål Phuket, welcomed new members - Gilbert Melki, Bruno Lespurque, Khun Ampapon Sakampee, Thomas Powell, Helcio De Melo and Khun Sukij Thipatima as the latest members of Skål Phuket.





## Witchuphan dominates Karon powerboat comp

### PHUKET

WITCHUPHAN KEAWKUI dominated the competition at the Phuket Thailand Powerboat Princess's Cup 2021 at Karon Beach last weekend (Dec 18-19).

Witchuphan finished first in three of the four categories, winning the F5 class, Sport 40Hp Open and Scooter 30Hp Open. Rachan Aramwong won the Jetski PAO 650cc class event.

The winners' trophies were awarded on behalf of Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn at the closing ceremony which included a mini-concert at Karon beach on Sunday evening.

The two-day event was officially opened by Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong who was joined by Charoon Keawmukdakul of the Phuket Tourism and Sports office and Karon Mayor Jadet Wicharasorn.

Racers from 67 different national teams competed across the four classes. In the F5 race class there were a total of 15 teams compet-



Photo: Royal Thai Navy Facebook

ing from Chonburi, Hua Hin, and Rayong. Ten teams from Chanthaburi, Chonburi, Rayong, Cha-am, and Hua Hin contested the Sport 40 Hp Open, 17 teams from Chanthaburi, Phetchaburi, and Rayong took part in the Scooter 30 HP Open and 25 teams from Chonburi, Rayong, Chanthaburi and Trat contested the Jetski Pao 64-CC class.

"This water sports event has been allocated a budget from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports for the rehabilitation of the grassroots industries that have been affected by COVID-19, in order to bring sports events to be held in Phuket and to stimulate tourism and revitalise Phuket's economy," Mr Charoon said at the opening ceremony on Saturday (Dec 18).

*The Phuket News*

# Girl power rules in Kamala Open Singles Championship

### BOWLS

Robert Knight

History was made at the Kamala Lawn Bowls Club on Dec 13 as the final of the Open Singles Championship was an all female affair for the very first time with Nidnoi Worada and Dot Barker contesting a game of the highest calibre for the title.

With the afternoon sun blazing down, 16 hopefuls took to the green for a straight forward sudden death knockout format which saw five former champions perish in the first round.

Dot and Nidnoi managed to navigate their respective quarter-final ties to set up a semi-final line-up that was dubbed "battle of the sexes" with Dot facing Phuket Open 2021 champion Ulf (Ue) Egerstad and Nidnoi facing Geoff "Sharpy" Sharp.

After falling behind 4-1 early in her match, Dot responded with a crucial 4 pointer to sneak ahead and then claimed the spoils in the ensuing 4 ends to move into



Keeping it in the family: Nidnoi and Glenn with their trophies and organiser Ken Sampert (centre). Photo: Robert Knight

an unassailable 13-5 lead.

In the other semi-final Nidnoi and Sharpy were also tied after 5 ends before Nidnoi managed to pull away to win 9-5.

The standard of bowling by both Dot and Nidnoi was nothing short of sensational and meant it set an historic and momentous occasion with the first ever all female final!

After 7 ends the score was

tied at 5-5 before Nidnoi edged into a 7-5 lead leading into the critical final end.

Dot knew that she needed to score 2 points to take the match into extra time or 3 points for victory and with her final 4 balls she managed to serve up two superb "touchers" to level the game.

Nidnoi's third bowl out of four was an accurate forced drive that split Dot's two

touchers and left the Thai holding the shot. With her other bowls scattered, Dot's only chance was to bowl another two "touchers". However, it was not to be on this occasion as Nidnoi added a further 2 shots on that end to deservingly win her first major tournament with a 9-5 score.

It was a fantastic final of the highest calibre played in the best of sporting spirit, something evident at the climax by the rousing round of applause from the spectators and fellow competitors.

Glenn Collins took the plate competition contested between the first-round losers with a comprehensive 11-2 victory over Dean Lambert. Glenn's victory ensured it was a clean sweep on the day and the trophies were kept in the family as he is, in his own words, Nidnoi's "insignificant other half!"

Kamala lawn bowls is open five days a week from Monday to Friday. All are welcome to have a go at this cheap and enjoyable sport and all equipment is provided. For further details contact the club on 0991307299.

2020/21 PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS 2020/21

Premier League CHAMPIONS 2020/21

The Phuket News

# English Premier League Predictions

thephuketnews.com/predictions.php

## Schools take the weight in King's Cup

### WEIGHTLIFTING

ASPIRING YOUTH WEIGHTLIFTERS descended on Phuket last weekend as the island hosted the national King's Cup.

The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) Youth Weightlifting Championships, 2021 was held between Dec 15-18 at Saphan Hin Sports Center. The competition was organised in conjunction with the Amateur Weightlifting Association of Thailand in honour of His Majesty King Vajiralongkorn (Rama X) and is designed to help select athletes for national representation in the sport.

A total of 27 clubs sent athletes to compete at the tournament, which was divided into seven male weight categories and seven female weight categories. There were five rounds of competition each day, starting at 9am with a total of 126 medals at stake (42 gold, 42 silver and 42 bronze).

Team A from Nakhon Sawan Municipal Sports School finished first overall in the male and female classes to win the trophy and weightlifting equipment worth B180,000. The school's Thitikorn Saetan won all three gold medals in the men's 89kg category, breaking his own national youth record in the process. His colleague, Chonthicha Sihathap, also excelled in winning three gold medals in the women's 71kg category.

Chonburi Provincial Sports School and Bangkok Sports School finished second and third and received weightlifting equipment worth B90,000 and B56,000 respectively.



A female competitor at the King's Cup. Photo: PR Phuket

Team A from Bangkok Sports School won the female class overall and Team A from Sisaket Provincial Weightlifting Association won the men's class.

The best male athlete award went to Weeraphon Wichuma from the Surin Weightlifting Club. Poy-Sian Yodsarn from Suksa Songkhro Surat Thani School won the best female award.

Athletes will also be selected in due course to progress and represent the national weightlifting team, based on their respective performances and results.

The event was inaugurated by Pichet Panapong, Vice wGovernor of Phuket, who presided over the opening and closing ceremonies. He was joined by Saroj Angkanapiban, Mayor of Phuket City, selected officials and athletes from the competition.

Mr Saroj said that Phuket Province was honored to be selected by the Amateur Weightlifting Association of Thailand to host the event which respected COVID-19 health and safety protocol at all times.

*The Phuket News*



# Premier League to play on during COVID chaos

## FOOTBALL

Kieran Canning

Premier League clubs decided against a temporary halt to the season on Monday (Dec 20) despite a surge in coronavirus cases that has forced mass postponements and threatened to derail the season.

Just four of last weekend's scheduled 10 games went ahead as Britain battles record numbers of positive COVID cases due to the new Omicron strain.

The Premier League board has been considering applications for postponements on a case-by-case basis but there has been criticism over the decision-making process, with fears it jeopardises the sporting integrity of the competition.

There had been talk of a potential "firebreaker", with suggestions that the middle round of the festive fixtures from Dec 28-30 could be postponed.

But on Monday the English top flight, following a shareholders' meeting involv-



Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel is concerned with the current situation, citing risks to the health and safety of players. Photo: AFP

ing representatives from the 20 clubs, said games would continue through the busy festive season.

"It was confirmed at a Premier League club meeting today that while recognising a number of clubs are experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and challenges, it is the league's collective intention to continue the current fixture schedule where safely possible," the Premier League said in a statement.

"The health and wellbeing

of all concerned remains our priority and the League will continue to monitor and reflect public health guidance, always proceeding with caution."

The statement also said 84% of players had had at least one dose of vaccination.

### TUCHEL FEARS

Chelsea asked to have last Sunday's match at Wolves called off but their plea was rejected despite seven positive COVID cases.

"We were put in a huge

risk of health and safety to the players, not just because of COVID but also physically," Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel said last Sunday.

"From a medical point of view, I'm very worried because we have had four consecutive days of positive tests in the squad.

"How will this stop if we carry on and pretend it's not happening? This is my opinion and it's the medical opinion but it's not the opinion of the Premier League, so we have to play."

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has called for more transparency over the decision-making process.

The Gunners were forced to play at Brentford on the opening weekend of the season despite four players testing positive and lost the game 2-0.

"We want to play all under the same rules," said Arteta after Arsenal thrashed a depleted Leeds 4-1 last Saturday. "That's where I think they have to come forward. Whatever they decide is best for the competition has to be explained." AFP

## War Elephants charge for Suzuki Cup title

### FOOTBALL

THAILAND WILL NEED to overcome defending champions Vietnam if they are to achieve their pre-tournament goal of winning the Suzuki Cup.

The War Elephants were drawn against Vietnam in the last four after topping Group A with three straight victories against Myanmar, the Philippines and hosts Singapore.

They were set to play their first leg of the semi-final against Vietnam yesterday (Dec 23) with the second leg scheduled for Sunday (Dec 26).

They go into the games unbeaten and full of confidence with star striker Teerasil Dangda, who has scored four times in the tournament so far, now established as the all-time top scorer of the Southeast Asian championship with 19 goals, overtaking retired Singapore forward Noh Alam Shah.

Vietnam finished second in Group B behind Indonesia who managed to beat Malaysia 4-1 last Sunday (Dec 19) to secure top spot in the group.

Indonesia's first leg semi-final game against Singapore



Teerasil Dangda is the highest scorer in the tournament's history. Photo: AFP

was played on Wednesday (Dec 22) with the second leg to be played tomorrow (Dec 25).

The tournament was rescheduled from last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is being held in Singapore to minimise travel as per the usual home and away basis.

Thailand are the most successful side in the tournament with five titles followed by Singapore with four.

Desperate to win back the title, Thailand manager Nualphan Lamsam has promised to give the team B20 million in bonus if they are crowned champions. The winners will also get about B10mn in prize money. *The Phuket News*

## Aussies unchanged for remainder of Ashes

### CRICKET

AUSTRALIA NAMED an unchanged 15-man squad for the three remaining Ashes Tests against England on Monday (Dec 20) with captain Pat Cummins and fast bowling partner Josh Hazlewood rejoining the team in Melbourne this week.

The home team resisted any changes after demolishing England in the second Test in Adelaide to go 2-0 up in the series, leaving the visitors' dreams of winning back the hallowed urn in tatters.

Cummins, the world's number one Test bowler, missed the day-night Adelaide Test after being a close contact of a positive COVID case at Adelaide restaurant.

He was supposed to isolate in the South Australia capital for seven days but was permitted to return to Sydney on a private charter flight.

Hazlewood was ruled out with a side strain, with Jhye Richardson and Michael Neser replacing them in the starting eleven in Adelaide.



Australian players celebrate their second Test win against England in Adelaide. Photo: AFP

England slumped to defeat by nine wickets in the first Test in Brisbane and the Adelaide loss means their hopes of winning back a trophy they last secured on Australian turf in 2010-11 are all but over.

Joe Root's men will head to Melbourne for the Boxing Day Test starting Sunday (Dec 26) knowing that the only instance of a team coming from 2-0 down to win the Ashes was Donald Bradman's Australia way back in 1936-37.

"The reason it's disappointing is because we made the same mistakes. I think we could have bowled a lot fuller, and with the bat we need to be better, make big-

ger scores and apply better," said Root.

"The second innings is the attitude and desire we need. It's frustrating because we know we are better. Lessons learnt, we have to be better in the next game."

England's chances of victory had been nigh on impossible – no team had ever posted such a big fourth innings score to win in Test cricket history, with the West Indies' 418 for seven in beating Steve Waugh's Australia at St John's in 2003 the highest.

"In hindsight, you might say we should have picked a different side," said England bowling coach Jon Lewis.

AFP

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# Sport

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Women rule in Kamala Bows singles > p14



Komkrit Khiadnin (second left), Thammawat Wongcharoenyot and Orawipa Innurak (right). Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

## BEST IN COUNTRY

### Phuket wins national award for sports development and promotion

#### PHUKET

The Phuket News  
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The Phuket Sports Association has won the “Outstanding Provincial Sports Association” award for its achievements in the development and promotion of sports across the island.

The award was presented by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha last Thursday (Dec 16) at an event held at the Indoor Stadium Huamark, the home of major indoor sporting events held in Bangkok for the past five decades.

Present in person to re-

ceive the award was Phuket Sports Association President Thammawat Wongcharoenyot accompanied by members of the association’s board of directors. The association operates under the Phuket office of the Sports Authority of Thailand (Phuket SAT).

The event was held to honour outstanding athletes and outstanding sports personnel on the occasion of National Sports Day 2021.

Guests of honour at the event included Minister of Tourism and Sports Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Ministry of Tourism and Sports Permanent Secretary Chote Trachu and Governor of the Sports

Authority of Thailand (SAT) Kongsak Yodmanee.

Two Phuket athletes were honoured at the event for their achievements.

Komkrit “Kris” Khiadnin was bestowed the Outstanding Male Athlete Award for his achievements. Komkrit won a bronze medal in the 56kg men’s Contact Ju-Jitsu at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ju-Jitsu Asian Championship 2021 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, in September this year.

Orawipa Innurak was also recognised for her achievements in fencing. Orawipa placed third in the sabre category at the Thailand Fencing Championship 2020. Her competition was Bundita Srinuan-

nad, Tonkhao Phokaew and eventual winner SEA Games 2019 gold medal holder Phonphon Ngerungruangrot.

In its push to support Phuket’s tourism recovery, the Phuket SAT has been instrumental in Phuket hosting a wide range of local and international sporting events, including two major golfing competitions of the Asian Tour played at Laguna Phuket and Blue Canyon Golf Course, and the Golden Fly Series pole vault and long and triple-jump event at Patong Beach earlier this month.

Mr Thammawat and his team were also involved in Laguna Phuket hosting three

major beach volleyball events, with the FIVB Under 19 Men’s World Championship held earlier this month and the FIVB Beach Volleyball U20 World Championship concluding on Thursday.

The Phuket SAT was also involved in bringing the Toyota Motorsport racing at Saphan Hin on Dec 4 as well as the Princess Cup powerboat racing at Karon and King’s Cup weightlifting competition at Saphan Hin last weekend.

The association is also instrumental in seeing the return of major athletics events on the island, with the Thanyapura Trail Run seeing more than 1,000 runners turn out on Dec

12, and the Laguna Phuket Marathon and Laguna Phuket Triathlon set to return in 2022.

Furthermore, the Phuket SAT organised a WBA boxing match between Thailand’s Knockout CP Freshmart and Robert Paradero of the Philippines on Dec 14 as the centrepiece of an event held to help boost tourism and assist local residents with their living costs.

The event continued with the Muay Thai bonanza “In the Siam Fight Laguna Phuket” at Laguna Grove, Laguna Phuket, Chong Talay, with Thai Muay Thai fighters taking on boxers from abroad, including from the US, the UK, France and Myanmar.

## Dechapol and Sapsiree make history as world champions

#### BADMINTON

DECHAPOL PUAVARANUKroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai capped off a remarkable year with their first ever world title at the BWF World Championships in Spain, last Sunday (Dec 19).

The duo became the first Thai players to win the mixed doubles world championship title. The

only other Thai to win a world title is women’s singles star Ratchanok Intanon in 2013.

The world No.1 pair claimed their fifth successive title and eighth overall this year after beating arch-rivals Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino of Japan 21-13, 21-14 in the 46-minute final at Palacios de los Deportes Carolina Marin in Huelva.

Dechapol and Sapsiree won the

Hylo Open in Germany in November before winning the last three events of the 2021 World Tour season held in Bali, Indonesia, ahead of the World Championships.

They started the year with three successive wins on home soil in the 2020 season-ending tournaments in January.

“I would like to congratulate Dechapol and Sapsiree for winning the world title,” said Badminton boss

Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul after their victory.

“It is a historic achievement as both are Thailand’s first ever mixed doubles world champions and they have also won five successive tournaments.

“They are a great example for a new generation of athletes to follow in their footsteps. Their victory is also a New Year’s gift for Thai people,” she added. *Bangkok Post*



Dechapol (left) and Sapsiree celebrate after winning the BWF World Championships in Huelva, Spain. Photo: AFP