

PUSH FOR MEDICAL TOURISM CENTRE REVEALED > PAGE 3

BAR NONE

BANGLA NIGHTLIFE PRESIDENT BLASTS REOPENING RULES FOR PUBS, BARS

Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA) President Weerawit Kreuasombat takes a stand on Bangla Rd on Tuesday (June 23). Photo: Tanyaluk Skoot



The Phuket News
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The President of the Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA) has blasted the list of rules released earlier this week for bars and other nightlife entertainment venues to follow if the reopening of such venues is allowed in the coming week.

Pubs, bars and clubs in Patong's nightlife district, if allowed to reopen at all, will reopen regardless whether or not they can implement all the rules, PEBA President Weerawit Kreuasombat told *The Phuket News* on Tuesday (June 23).

The 22 rules were leaked to the public on Monday as a draft list to be presented to the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) in Bangkok, which at the time of going to press was expected to announce its decision today (June 26) on whether or not to allow entertainment venues to reopen.

Among the rules are that all staff must wear face masks and face shields, but performers may wear face shields only. No bottles are to be served, all drinks must be served in glasses. No pool table games (including snooker and billiards) and no playing of darts are to be allowed.

Further, the number of guests is

to be restricted to allow for social distancing, with at least two metres between tables, or partitions installed, to ensure patrons are seated at least one metre away from each other.

Undermining the main reason people frequent such popular venues, the draft rules also called for groups to be limited to five persons, and guests were to be prohibited from dancing and singing, gathering, shouting and wandering around the premises.

The list of 22 rules is too tough for operating entertainment businesses, Mr Weerawit said politely, before launching into a tirade against the quality of thinking behind such an exhaustive list of precautions.

"I want to ask those who did this draft what was their thinking and what part of the brain did they use?" an angry Mr Weerawit asked *The Phuket News*.

"This draft for entertainment businesses is too tough. We want them to be more flexible. Think, the risk could be anywhere where people are around, and I have not seen any reason to come up with draft rules like this," he said.

"If you make rules like this, you might as well not provide music entertainment. The singer wears a face shield while performing? That is not a great idea. And prohibiting people from singing while they are...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

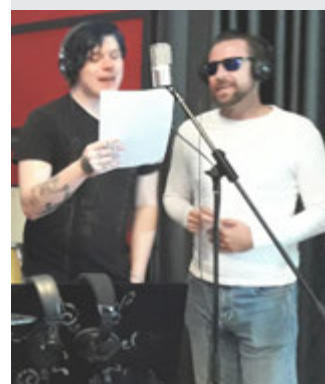
NEWS PAGE 5

New Governor arrives, sights top priorities



LIFE PAGE 7

Local artists hit 'Lean on Me' for COVID relief



SPORT PAGE 12

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News



Local markets
reopen to 'new
normal' > p5

New bar rules 'too tough to enforce'

The Phuket News
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Continued from page 1

...at the venue? People staying at home is better, right?" he posed.

Mr Weerawit believed that entertainment venues were being singled out with more stringent precautions to follow.

"We understand that the goal is to reduce the risk of COVID-19 from spreading, but the prevention must be strict and clear from the beginning, when the tourist arrives in Phuket.

"And tourists do not immediately come directly to the entertainment zone. They go somewhere else, such as a shopping mall, first. These rules, if applied in full, must not apply only to here [the entertainment zone]," he said.

"Entertainment businesses are not able to follow all the rules in this draft. It is impossible," Mr Weerawit said plainly.

"We will still open next



A staffer readies a bar on Bangla Rd for reopening, hopefully by July 1. Photo: Tanyaluk Sakoot

month anyway, even if we are not able to follow all these rules. If they want to shut down the entertainment industry because businesses are not able to follow these rules, then let's do that. I don't care," he dared.

LACK OF SUPPORT

Mr Weerawit also blasted the lack of support from the government for entertainment venue operators.

"The government collects

tax from us, but there is no help. The government never helps or supports us with anything for our industry. All they have done is provided some payments through the Social Security Office, but that was only for employees, not the business owner," he said.

Government assistance is key to helping businesses find their feet again and to stand a chance of future survival, insisted Mr Weerawit.

"The Phuket provincial office needs to act as an intermediary and be able to negotiate with the business owner, landlord and banks," he said.

"They should also have the authority to engage and talk with the Bank of Thailand for tax and fee exemption purposes, ideally once bar owners have opened their business for three months.

"Also the government should provide electricity and water free for three months to help provide some relief from operating costs while the businesses struggle to restart," he urged.

The unemployment situation in Phuket is so dire that Phuket Chamber of Commerce President Thaunsak Phungdet has already submitted a formal request to the Ministry of Interior to provide people in Phuket left without any income due to the government ban on inbound tourists another three months of social security support.

"I have asked for the most social security support in the country. I submitted an application for the 90 days of social security support for people left without income due to

the COVID-19 situation to be extended to a total of 180 days.

"The support for the first three months – March, April, May – is running out, and our request for the support to continue through June, July, August is now being considered," Mr Thanusak said.

That was on June 10. On Tuesday (June 23), Mr Weerawit said no officials had contacted him about the extra social security support for former entertainment industry workers left without any income.

Meanwhile, Patong Municipality only last Saturday handed out yet another 1,000 "community bags" of essential items to people in need living in Patong.

Mr Thanusak earlier this month pointed out that according to current estimates, the fallout from the COVID-19 crisis may end up costing Phuket more than B280 billion in lost revenues.

Calling COVID-19's damage to the Phuket economy 'unprecedented' Mr Thanusak in earlier this month said that by the end of May COVID-19 had already cost Phuket about B120bn in lost revenues..

A NEW ROAD

Patong Mayor Chalermluck Kebsup told *The Phuket News* on Monday that business operators were allowed to enter the Bangla nightlife area to prepare their venues in anticipation of being allowed to reopen.

"But they must inform me first before they will be allowed to enter the area," she said.

The Bangla nightlife area remains the only geographic area on the island that is still under full COVID-19 lockdown.

"I think the CCSA will approve to lift the lockdown on Bangla Rd because there has not been any new cases of infection," Mayor Chalermluck said.

The PEBA had asked Mayor Chlermuck to support their request for entertainment businesses to reopen on July 1, she added.

"I agreed with them, and sent the request to CCSA last Friday [June 19]," she explained.

However, special measures will be taken to prevent Patong, and the Bangla area in particular, from becoming a "red zone" for COVID-19 infections again, Mayor Chlermuck said.

"Thermal scanners will be set up at each end of Bangla Rd," Mayor Chalermluck said.

"Entertainment venue operators also must follow the guidelines [expected to be approved by the CCSA] and must set up Thai Chana QR code at the entrance to their businesses so guests can register their attendance there.

"And they must manage their visitors inside the venue to allow for four to five square metres per person," she added.

"I will inform them of the details of what is required again later," she said.

Meanwhile, while Bangla Rd has been under lockdown, Patong Municipality has installed new drains underground along both sides of the road, and will complete the resurfacing of the road in time for July 1, Mayor Chalermluck explained.

"The road is nearly finished. All we need to do is paint the line markings on the road. The whole road has already been cleaned up," she added.

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Govt push for medical tourism

Plan for 'International Medical Hub Centre' unveiled

The Phuket News
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The Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket) has announced a plan for the government to develop an international medical centre to be built on 140 rai near the Phuket Check Point in Tha Chatchai, at the northernmost tip of the island.

PR Phuket announced the plan in a post on its official Facebook page on June 19, saying that "reporters" had explained basic details of the project.

However, *The Phuket News* had previously confirmed from a source that the concept was discussed on June 4 at a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall attended by 16 consuls and honorary consuls in Phuket, but was unable to obtain any official confirmation of the project.

The PR Phuket report noted that the project was proposed by former Phuket Governor Phakaphong Tavipatana, along with Dr Chalermpong Sukhonthaphon, Director of Vachira Phuket Hospital, and Dr Thanit Sermkaew, chief of the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) and "various sectors", which were not identified.

The plan is to build the medical



An artist's impression of what the international medical hub centre will look like. Image: PR Phuket

centre on state land near the That Chatchai Police Station, said the report. The site is the same area where the "international convention and exhibitions centre", dubbed "ICEC", was proposed more than 10 years ago.

The project is being proposed as a way of attracting more tour-

ists to the island by "developing international medical and public health services to create safety and value-added tourism, and in line with the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021), "which places emphasis on the direction of development aimed at transitioning from a middle-income

country to a high-income country with stability and a happy society".

The report also noted that the site would reduce the distance needed to be travelled by visitors to Phuket, thus reducing risk of transmission of COVID-19, in line with "new normal" requirements to help prevent the spread of the disease.

"The project has the objective to develop Phuket as a centre for high-priced medical services connected with international tourism. The centre, as an 'International Medical Hub in a world-class destination', would enhance the readiness of medical infrastructure technology and medical services to support the treatment of important communicable diseases, emerging diseases, recurrent diseases, tropical diseases as well as serving as a quarantine centre for dangerous communicable diseases in accordance with international health and hygiene laws and research products on infectious diseases and diseases with significant problems," the report said.

The project would also "provide long-term employment for people in the area and create investment opportunities in response to changes that lead to new normal, as well as to revitalize the economy by promoting health products and products linked to tourism or other service sectors," the report added.

"If supported by a government budget, it will be both a selling point and strength of healthy tourism in Thailand and Phuket, which will draw quality tourists from around the world to Phuket," the report concluded.

Taiwanese man rescued from drowning

LIFEGUARDS AT PATONG Beach rescued a 25-year-old Taiwanese man on Monday morning (June 22) after scouring the waters offshore for some 30 minutes.

Lifeguards at the beach confirmed to *The Phuket News* that they were unaware that the man was missing, last seen in the surf at the southern end of the beach, until notified by police.

Maj Chanan Makchai of the Patong Police explained that he was notified of the missing Taiwanese man, who he declined to name, at 7:30am.



The Taiwanese man back ashore alive. Photo: Patong Surf Life Saving Club

Lifeguards were informed at 7:45am, and the search began.

However, with the man not found in the waters off the southern end of the beach, the search was soon expanded, and the man was brought ashore near Loma Park, some 1.6 kilometres further north, at

about 8:15am, Maj Chanan said.

The man who called police was a fellow Taiwanese national, and a friend of the man rescued today, Maj Chanan added.

The friend told police that he last saw the man drunk and walking around at the southern end of the beach, Maj Chanan said.

The friend explained that the man was in deep grief as a close uncle of his had just died.

"He was depressed and wanted to commit suicide by walking to the sea and drown," Maj Chanan said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

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'Grooming' rape investigated

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Police are investigating a rape complaint filed against a construction foreman who worked in Sakoo, the area just south of Phuket International Airport, for allegedly repeatedly raping a 15-year-old girl by deciving her that he had romantic feelings for the girl.

Thalang Police Deputy Chief Lt Col Anukul Nuket confirmed that the mother brought her 15-year-old daughter to Thalang Police Station to file the complaint on June 17.

The mother explained that the man, 50 years old and originally from Chiang Mai, was a foreman at a construction site where the mother worked.

He had repeatedly raped her daughter at the office at the construction site, the mother told police.

The mother said she learned of her daughter's ordeal only after seeing her crying uncontrollably on June 5, and asking what was wrong. The man had been raping her daughter since November last year, she explained.

The ongoing ordeal began when the man asked the daughter to come to the office,



The rape complaint was filed at Thalang Police Station on June 17. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

where he gave her B1,000, after which the girl went back home, the girl told police.

Two days later, the man called her back and said he would give her more money. When she arrived at the office, the man dragged her into the room and raped her, and gave her B200.

The same continued for months. Sometimes the man gave the girl some money, other times he did not, the girl explained.

Each time, the man used "various tricks" to convince

the girl that he had romantic intentions, including telling her that he was going to divorce his wife. He even proposed to marry the girl, police were told.

The last time the man raped the girl was on April 19, the man's birthday, when he called the girl to come to the office, where he raped her in the bathroom.

"That was the last time I saw him," the girl said.

The incident on June 5 that led to the mother learning of her daughter's ordeal began

with her daughter receiving a phone call from the man, who had returned to Chiang Mai, the mother told police.

The man told the girl that he was not going to divorce his wife. He also explained that his wife had discovered that he had transferred money to the girl many times, the mother said.

The man's wife also called the girl, telling her that she was going to report to the police that the girl was having an affair with her husband. That prompted the

girl to tell her mother.

The girl told police that she never told her mother about the man "because he forbade it and said he would explain it to my mother himself".

"But after his wife found out, he was difficult to contact. He did not answer chat [messages]," the girl said.

The issue came to a head on June 16, when the man called the girl's father "in order to clear the incident". However, the man accused the girl of being in the same type of relationship with "many other men, not only him".

The man offered to give B20,000, but the girl's father refused and the mother brought her daughter to the police station to file the rape complaint the next day, Lt Col Anukul noted in his report.

Lt Col Anukul advised the mother to take her daughter to file a complaint at Sakhu Police Station, as the incident had occurred in their jurisdiction.

"I have spoken to officers there, and had the mother and daughter give to the officers chat messages and audio recordings of conversations between the man and the girl as evidence," Lt Col Anukul said.

Myanmar man found hanged

POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING THE death of a Myanmar man who was found hanged outside the restrooms of a Korean restaurant in Kathu, after the man's friends said the victim was depressed as he had no income due to the COVID situation and he was not allowed to return home to his wife in Myanmar.

Capt Peerawat Yodtor of the Kathu Police was called to the Tae Guk Ki restaurant off Wichit Songkram Rd at 11pm last Thursday (June 18) after he was notified by the 191 national police hotline.

Capt Peerawat and fellow officers, along with a medical team from Vachira Phuket Hospital and Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation rescue workers, arrived to find the body of Ye Htet, 41, on the ground in front of the restrooms at the back of the restaurant.

Mr Ye's friends told police that they were alone in the restaurant after the restaurant closed at 10pm, Capt Peerawat reported.

Mr Ye had called his wife in Myanmar and told her that he wanted to come home, but that he could not because of the COVID-19 situation, and that he had very little money, his friends said.



Rescue workers at the scene. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Mr Ye had excused himself and left the group, and when he did not return his friends went searching for him, and found him hanged by a nylon rope in front of the restrooms. The group of friends brought him down and despite their efforts were unable to revive him, his friends explained.

"From the initial physical examination, there were no signs that Mr Ye was involved in any struggle," Capt Peerawat reported.

Regardless, Mr Ye's body was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for post-mortem examination, he said.

Police are working gaining access CCTV camera footage from the restaurant, as they continue their investigation into the death Capt Peerawat noted. Eakkapop Thongtub

Vigilance key to recovery

New Phuket Governor arrives, targets food security as top issue

The Phuket News
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On his first day as Governor of Phuket, Narong Woonchiew called on all people on the island, but especially business operators, to be vigilant against the spread of COVID-19 so the island can recover as quickly as possible from the economic impact of the restrictions introduced to contain the disease.

Governor Narong made his plea last Friday (Jun 19) at the Phuket Public Health Office (PPHO), where he was briefed on the COVID-19 situation on the island and told that that at the time there had not been a confirmed case on Phuket for 26 days.

Governor Narong thanked Phuket's health officials for the work they have done to counter the spread of COVID-19, and said that he appreciated their efforts.

"That includes every village health volunteer," he said.

However, Governor Narong still called on all people to do their part to keep



New Phuket Governor Narong Woonchiew arrives at Phuket Provincial Hall last Friday (June 19). Photo: PR Phuket

the island COVID-free.

"The situation still cannot be trusted. I would like to ask for cooperation from people to take care and protect yourselves [from infection] and cooperate with government agencies. Business operators, service locations and service recipients must follow disease control measures under the regulations of the Ministry of Public Health," he said.

Governor Narong also received a policy proposal from the PPHO to set up a working group with a deputy governor as the head.

The working group, to meet every Tuesday, will discuss issues and come up with solutions to problems with the top priority of improving people's quality of life under COVID-19.

Governor Narong, who

previously served as Governor of Chaiyaphum province, arrived at Phuket Provincial Hall at 9:30am last Friday to take up his post as Bangkok's top-ranking official on the island.

The welcoming party was out in force, with many officials present to greet him with flowers.

"I will do my best for Phuket, to develop and lead

Phuket to move forward," Governor Narong told the press as he entered Provincial Hall.

Governor Narong was immediately aware of the plight many people on the island are suffering without any income amid the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Today, I will start working with Phuket people on the suffering situation. Please unite and work together for a better future, strong and bright," he said.

"The first step is to restore Phuket's economy, but you must be aware of COVID-19 and keep [new infections] to zero right now. You must observe social distancing, wear face masks and clean your hands," he added.

Asked what his first action will be, Governor Narong replied, "I cannot tell you right now. I need time to educate myself and conduct some surveys first. Then I will keep updating people later."

Just days before Governor Narong's arrival, Minister of Interior Gen Anupong Phaojinda via a video conference

with every provincial governor in the country instructed the Phuket government to ensure that the 'new normal' health regulations are in effect at all venues, especially beaches, so that the province is ready to safely welcome tourists again.

Gen Anupong specifically asked about beach management after reopening in Phase 4, and discussed the B400 million budget to be deployed under the national economy and social development policy. He also called for all provinces to be prepared for natural disasters.

"I believe that if everyone follows the regulations, we will be able to get through this crisis well and move forward to develop the national economy," he added.

Former Phuket Governor Phakaphong Tavipatana arrived in Phuket on Oct 1, 2018, amid the economic fallout from the 'Phoenix' dive boat disaster of July 5 that year that killed 47 Chinese tourists. He has been transferred to Phetchaburi province, where he now serves as Governor.

Lard Yai Walking Street market to return

THE POPULAR LARD YAI Walking Street market that before the COVID-19 outbreak was held on Thalang Rd in Phuket Town every Sunday will return on July 5.

The announcement came on Monday (June 22), confirming that the street market, long popular with local residents and visitors to the island, will be held at the regular time from 4pm to 10pm.

The Lard Yai Walking Street market was just one of the major mass-gathering events across the island that were cancelled or postponed



The Lard Korjan market in Phuket Town returned under the 'new normal' guidelines. Photo: PR Phuket

in March to help stave off the spread of the COVID-19. Also announced as cancelled at the time were the official Songkran Thai New Year festivities in Patong, along with the annual Phuket Bike Week event.

The return of the Lard Yai street market follows the weekly Friday "Lard Korjan" market, in front of the Phuket Vocational College near the Korjan Bridge, reopening last Friday (June 19).

The return of the markets has been much welcomed, with local residents turning out while observing the "new normal" requirements, having their temperatures checked, registering their attendance and cleansing their hands with sanitiser before entering the market, explained Phuket City Municipality. *The Phuket News*

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BLAZING SADDLES

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The morning of Tuesday, June 9 dawned with celestial pools of limpid blue sky interspersed with scudding rain clouds roiling around above the Big Buddha atop the Nakkerd Hills. But as we had been locked-in and disbarred from visiting any of Phuket's glorious beaches for over two months, we were hell-bent on getting on our bikes and cycling to Nai Harn Beach, whatever the Gods of Monsoonal Chaos were conspiring to do with the weather.

By 7am we approached Chalong Circle, long notorious for its horrendous traffic mayhem and pollution during the construction of the now-completed underpass, through which cars and trucks were now hurtling during this swelling dawn. The traffic was light and exhaust pollution almost undetectable thanks to the absence of tourists. Noticeable by their absence were the usual fume-belching tour buses and hurtling mini-buses, so roundly hated by Phuket's cyclists during 'normal' times.

Such gains in the purity and cleanliness of Phuket's air should be 'locked in' through forward-looking government policy, once 'normality' again comes to call. But will that be a priority once

tourists start to return to these blessed parts? We can only hope.

Up and over Rawai Hill we pedalled then down to the Rawai waterfront itself where a brooding flotilla of long-tails was moored a little way off the beach. "Where are the day-trippers and pleasure seekers?" they seemed to be wondering as they gently rocked at silent anchor on the susurrating tide.

Finally, we rode over one final steep hill and down to the Nai Harn Lake, with much of it still cordoned off by metal barriers. A scattering of morning joggers, dog walkers and enthusiasts using the exercise machines enlivened the scene as we cruised around the perimeter road and finally came to a halt overlooking the beach beside the Nai Harn Resort's beauteous portals.

Nai Harn's sands looked as clean and pristine as we have ever seen them, while many visibly happy early morning visitors were walking, jogging, playing with dogs and even swimming in the pounding monsoonal spume, as a cluster of life guards looked attentively on from their tented station.

It was indeed a glorious sensation to be back again on this iconic beach and made us realise how much we often took such things for granted in our pre-virus world. To have the opportunity to end a hot bike ride with a beach walk and sea swim in crashing waves, is indeed a great privilege of island life, and yet one which by dint of everyday repetition is often rendered



Biking back to the beaches is a privilege now restored.
Photo: Supplied

quotidian and barely merits attention. Only when removed, as so much has been as a result of COVID-19, have we come to treasure such pleasures and re-evaluate them for the utter privileges that they actually are.

Coincidentally, just three months earlier my Blazing Saddles article had appeared concerning biking and breakfasting at Rock Salt, the restaurant overlooking the sands from The Nai Harn resort. That now seemed like a dispatch from a former universe which had long since vanished.

I dropped in to see the genial GM Frank Grassman to get his thoughts about 'things getting back to the new,

post-pandemic, normal'. Frank said he thinks that it will be a long haul and from the Nai Harn's perspective, it's far more important to get things right and safe, than to rush back into urgent commercial activity.

Walking along our wonderful Nai Harn Beach once again, then having a cooling romp in the thrashing surf, I couldn't help but agree. In addition, if we can keep the sense of reverence and stewardship for our region's magnificent natural resources which having been deprived of them has engendered, that will at least be one significant positive to come out of this tragic pandemic.



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Phuket sings 'Lean On Me' for COVID relief

The Phuket News

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About 30 Phuket musicians have recorded a special version of 'Lean On Me' to raise funds for the people on the island left without any income or means to support themselves due to the economic impact of the restrictions enforced to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The artists recorded their song at the Legend Music Recording Studio in Koh Kaew, owned and operated by producer and composer, and long-term Phuket expat, Gary Crause over last weekend (June 13-14).

"Drums were tracked on the Saturday with the rest of the instrumentation and vocals tracked on the Sunday," Gary told *The Phuket News*.

"The sessions were filmed in their entirety for a music video that will be released in the week of the 21st of June, and in the spirit of following the current social distancing rules, the Sunday recordings were broken into three parts with a maximum of 10 people per session," he added.

Contributing to the sessions were well known Phuket musicians Rockin' Pat from Rockin' Angels Blues Café in Phuket Town, Colin Hill, George Cordi-ero, Violin virtuoso Alex Gregg and famed author, set designer and Blues Shouter Jimmy Fame.

Joining the more experienced musicians were an eclectic mix of younger up and coming artists in AndreaH,



AndreaH

Blaze KC and Dasha D'Aria who have all released original music in the past 12 months, as well as students and teachers from the Phuket Academy of Performing Arts and UWC Thailand.

Whilst the day was a lot of fun, the reason behind the recording and filming of the track were never far from the participants minds, with some making financial contributions on the day towards the Lean On Me Food Donation campaign run through the local Villa Market stores, Gary explained.

Not ones to sit on their laurels or waste any time, Daniel Wolf set about editing a short promo clip together on Monday, whilst producer Gary got to terms with editing, mixing and mastering the massive audio project.

Asked what brought the project



The song was recorded at Legend Music Recording studio in Phuket over last weekend, and is available now. Photo: Legend Music

about, Gary explained, "We had visited with Yvonne Symons [Villa Market] and Kath Cumming [Help Phuket Today] and they had been telling us about the extreme and urgent need for food donations in pretty much every community in Phuket as so many people had lost their jobs or ability to earn an income because of the effects of the virus.

"It left me thinking that we had to make it as easy and as seamless as possible for people to contribute, so the next day I contacted Villa Market to see if they would be interested in partnering as they have the infrastructure to facilitate that. They were on board immediately. It all kind of spiraled into action from there!

"It seems to be easier for people to buy into an idea when we give it a

name. I contacted a bunch of my closest musician friends and asked if they would like to assist with recording a song for the promotion of the campaign, and unanimously the response was 'Hell Yes!'" Gary concluded.

The Lean On Me single can already be heard on Phuket radio station Live 89.5 FM as well as inside the Villa Market stores. The single is free for download from the Phuket Academy of Performing Arts SoundCloud page to anyone that would like a copy.

All the Phuket Musicians Collective ask in return is that you scan the barcode in support of the Lean On Me initiative the next time you purchase something from your local Villa Market.

A teaser video has been released and the full music video will be out soon!

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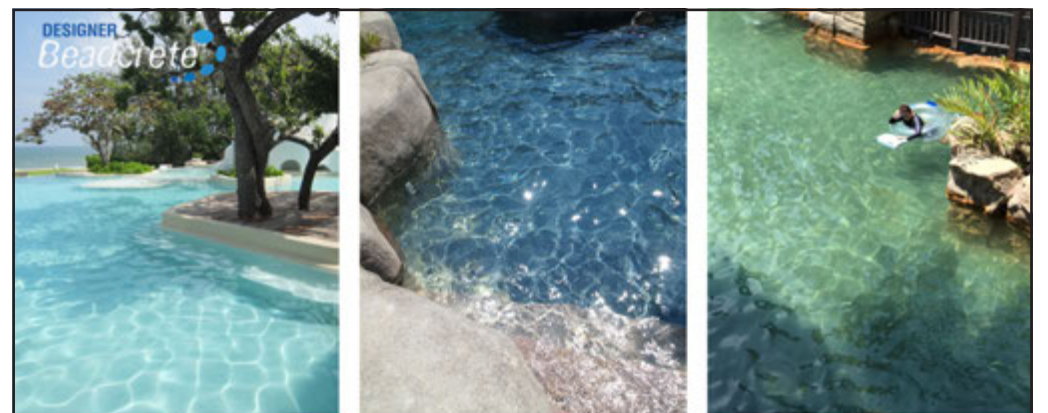
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POP QUIZ

1. What is Jamie Foxx's real name?
2. Which UK city hosts the world-famous fringe comedy festival each August?
3. Where does the current Dalai Lama live?
4. Entomology is the study of what?
5. Which car maker created the "Kangoo"?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Hard

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

Across

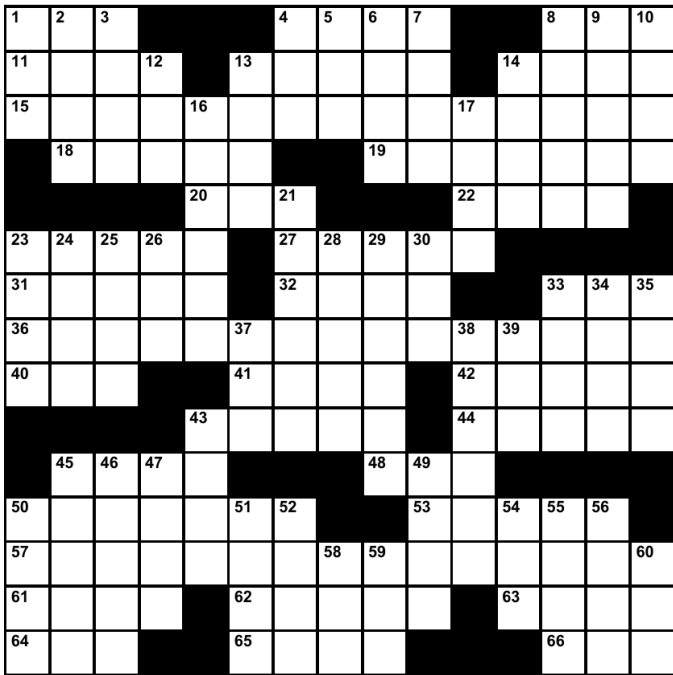
1. U.S. Army medal
4. Grayish
8. Favorite uncle
11. Some candy, to a Brit
13. Hardy to Laurel
14. Comedian Kaplan
15. Dream locations
18. Salad ingredient
19. Classifies
20. Programming language
22. Newcastle's perhaps
23. Tennessee footballer
27. Rent again
31. Without self-control
32. Grab onto
33. ___gow poker
36. Virtual world for some sports fans
40. Trademarks, abbr.
41. Got off a horse
42. Angelic auras
43. "Ryan's Hope" actress ___ Kristen
44. Bob Marley music
45. Adult-to-be
48. Frat letter
50. Knotting technique
53. Conger catcher
57. Apparition in spirit

Down

1. 601, in old Rome
2. Unpleasant guy
3. Shade of black
4. ___ mode (served with ice cream)
5. Camera type (abbr.)
6. Howdy
7. Slangy assents
8. "___ bleu!"
9. Encourages
10. Dining hall
12. Animation platform (abbr.)
13. Flat
14. Lockup, in Liverpool
16. President's daughter
17. Future atty.'s hurdle
21. Like some socks
23. Sherman served with him
24. Officiating

25. Wine casks

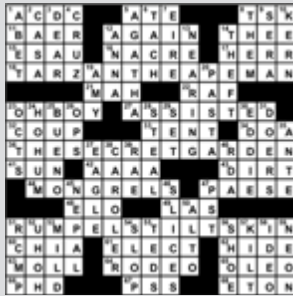
26. Function
28. Sprite-like
29. Crook during a power outage
30. Expressive rock genre
33. Friends
34. Oodles
35. Rick's beloved
37. Pitcher Maglie
38. Violent struggles
39. Farm sound
43. ___ the finish
45. Chevy truck model
46. Élève's place
47. ___ while
49. Dickens's Uriah
50. People in charge, abbr.
51. M.'s counterpart
52. Observed
54. Article written by Proust
55. City west of Tulsa
56. Dudley Do-Right's org.
58. Mobile electronic gadget, briefly
59. Strange
60. Dermal opening



Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Eric Marion Bishop; 2) Edinburgh; 3) McLeod Ganj, India; 4) Insects; 5) Renault

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

2

packs of cigarettes a day is how much the woman who provided the legendary voice for E.T. smoked.

4

out of 5 firefighters in the US are overweight or obese, and about half of the firefighters killed in the line of duty suffered heart attacks.

20

times is how much more likely men are of having a fatal injury at work than women.

276

people surveyed by the University of Cambridge in England indicated that people who swore the most also tended to lie the least.

4

million

US dollars is how much each square foot of Jackson Pollock's painting "No. 5, 1948" is worth. It is 32 square feet in size (8' x 4').

Source: Uberfacts

ISLAND VIEW



Chalong Bay storm. Photo: Robin F Brown

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

This week in history

June 26, 1843

Treaty of Nanking comes into effect, Hong Kong Island is ceded to the British "in perpetuity".

June 27, 2007

Tony Blair resigns as British Prime Minister, a position he had held since 1997.

June 28, 1880

Australian bushranger Ned Kelly is captured at Glenrowan.

June 29, 1975

Steve Wozniak tests his first prototype of the Apple I computer.

June 30, 1972



Ned Kelly in 1880.

The first leap second is added to the UTC time system.

July 1, 1979

Sony introduces the Walkman.

July 2, 1822.

Thirty-five slaves are hanged in South Carolina, including Denmark Vesey, after being accused of organizing a slave rebellion.

Source: Wikipedia

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England anthem under fire

Origins of popular anthem 'Swing Low' connected to US slavery

RUGBY

Julian Guyer

The sound of 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot' being belted out by an 80,000 crowd at Twickenham could become a thing of the past after the Rugby Football Union said it was looking into the singing of the song by England fans amid suggestions many supporters are unaware of its origins as a tale of American slavery.

England followers have previously been accused before of "cultural appropriation" when 'Swing Low' has both echoed round the RFU's London headquarters and been heard at away games.

But the recent Black Lives Matter protests, which included the toppling of a statue of a slave trader in the English city of Bristol, have led many British organisations to examine their historic links to slavery.

"The RFU has stated we need to do more to achieve diversity and we are determined to accelerate change and grow



'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot' has been a familiar song at Twickenham for more than 30 years. Photo: AFP

awareness," a spokesperson for the English governing body said on June 18.

"The Swing Low, Sweet Chariot song has long been part of the culture of rugby and is sung by many who have no awareness of its origins or sensitivities.

"We are reviewing its historical context and our role

in educating fans to make informed decisions."

England forward Maro Itoje, one of several black and mixed race players in the current squad, recently said: "I don't think anyone at Twickenham is singing it with malicious intent.

"But the background of that song is complicated."

Reportedly written by American slave Wallace Willis sometime in the mid-19th Century, 'Swing Low' is first believed to have been sung at Twickenham when Martin 'Chariots' Offiah (his nickname derived from the Oscar-winning film *Chariots of Fire*) was playing in the 1987 Middlesex Sevens tournament.

It became popular with England fans the following year when Chris Oti, another black player, scored a hat-trick against Ireland at Twickenham.

But former England hooker Brian Moore, who said he could remember Swing Low being sung in junior rugby clubs during the 1970s, insisted he would have no qualms about it being banned by the RFU – even though the lyrics can currently be seen all round Twickenham.

'Hated it'

"I have always hated it," he told the *Telegraph*. "It is not appropriate. It has slave connotations and if the RFU makes that ruling I would be pleased."

An anonymous source told the *Telegraph* one option was to "stop this being sung at matches".

But Daniel Hannan, a British Conservative politician and a former member of the European Parliament, said talk of a ban was "demented", adding no-one listening to it had been hurt.

"Why do people keep

looking for reasons to be offended?" he added.

Meanwhile others questioned how the RFU would enforce a ban while Jack Duncan, a member of London rugby club Harlequins, tweeted the furor "felt like a dog whistle from the right-wing press to give people an excuse to turn on BLM using the whole 'where will it end!?' angle".

This is not the first time rugby fans have faced calls to stop singing a favourite song.

'Delilah', a hit for Welsh pop star Tom Jones in the late 1960s, is a familiar sound at Wales games.

But Chris Bryant, a Labour MP from Wales, has said Delilah should no longer be heard at Cardiff's Principality Stadium because the song glorifies violence against women.

RFU chief Bill Sweeney said the organisation had to do more "to achieve diversity across all areas of the game including administration", with former England women's international Maggie Alphonsi the only black member of its 55-strong council. AFP

Thai champ Wanheng not retiring

BOXING

THAILAND'S WBC MINIMUMWEIGHT champion Wanheng Menayothin is not hanging up his gloves, according to promoter Piyarat Vachirarattanawong.

Wanheng made the announcement on his Facebook page on Sunday (June 21). However, Piyarat told the *Bangkok Post* that Wanheng confirmed his decision was stress related during the COVID lockdown and that he had not consulted with anyone. He would have a check-up and let medical experts decide if he could continue fighting.

Wanheng signed a five-bout contract with US-based Golden Boy Promotions and was scheduled to defend his title against the Philippines' Marco Remontizo in California last



Photo: Wanheng Menayothin / Facebook

month until COVID intervened. Piyarat hopes Wanheng can return to the ring in September.

Wanheng secured the title by defeating Mexico's Oswaldo Novoa with a ninth-round stoppage in November 2014 and has won 18 consecutive bouts, including 12 title defences, since then.

He is the longest-reigning active world champion with an unblemished record of 54 wins, 18 via knockout. *The Phuket News*

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Sport



Rugby song hopes swing low > p11

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FOOTBALL

Ben Tirebuck

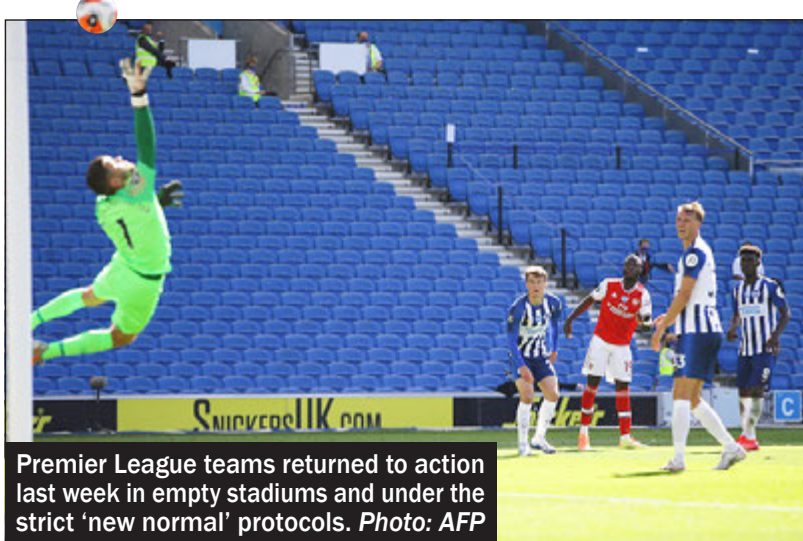
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The Premier League's era of 'new normal' was ushered into effect last week after a coronavirus induced 100-day lockdown with several teams creaking back into action and showing signs of struggling to adapt to the new environment.

It was to be expected that the enforced suspension of play and the subsequent lack of preparation time would take its toll and so it transpired as a series of tepid games played out to empty stadiums up and down the land.

Strict health protocols, mandatory water breaks in each half and five permitted substitutions also added to the strange feeling of uncharted territory.

The influence of off field matters was evident too as the Black Lives Matter campaign took centre stage with players, coaching staff and of-



Premier League teams returned to action last week in empty stadiums and under the strict 'new normal' protocols. Photo: AFP

ficials at every game taking to one knee prior to kick-off, imparting a powerful sign of support worldwide.

Celebrations on hold

Liverpool, within touching distance of securing their first Premier League crown, faced off against bitter rivals Everton on Sunday (June 21). Merseyside derbies are typically passionate, heated affairs but this goalless draw was uninspiring with

the sluggish Reds missing the cutting edge of key players Mohamed Salah and Andrew Robertson.

The result, coupled with two impressive Manchester City victories in six days, means that, at time of press, any Liverpool title celebrations are still on hold.

The break did not seem to have affected Pep Guardiola's troops as they dismantled Arsenal 3-0 and Burnley 5-0 with young England

starlet Phil Foden scoring in both games. City looked back to their imperious best and will be eagerly awaiting starting competition afresh again next season.

Arsenal looked pitiful in both their games, as the City defeat was followed three days later with a painful, injury-time defeat at lowly Brighton where goalkeeper Bernd Leno incurred what looked like a serious knee injury and signs of petulance and dissent was evident among several of their players. The only positive for them is that there are only seven games remaining until the season is over.

Wolves, whose season started at the end of July 2019, looked anything but jaded with a consummate performance in beating West Ham 2-0. Mexican forward Raul Jimenez became their record Premier League goalscorer and the energiser bunny that is Adama Traore once again tore his opponents to shreds after coming off the bench.

Newcastle also looked to have experienced no ill effects from the

break with a fine 3-0 victory against a lethargic Sheffield United. Their £40mn (B1.5 billion) record signing Joelinton scored only his second league goal of the season, suggesting he much prefers playing in the less pressurised fan-free environment.

Chelsea also looked well oiled as they coasted to a 2-1 win at Aston Villa, the scoreline belying the fact that the Londoners completely dominated the game. With RB Leipzig's young German forward Timo Werner joining Chelsea's ranks next season they have much to be excited and confident about.

Villa, Bournemouth, Watford and West Ham all displayed erratic form in their first games back and continue to hover around the relegation zone. Norwich, hammered 0-3 at home by Southampton, need a near miracle to avoid the drop.

The games will continue to come thick and fast in the coming weeks and it is inevitable the lethargy will subside as teams find their feet and come up to speed. Just over one week back and it's still all to play for.

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