

**CABINET GREEN-LIGHTS TOURISM PROJECTS > PAGE 3**

## ON WATCH



Officials are on alert for illegal migrant workers arriving in Phuket. Photo: The Phuket News / file

### AS PHUKET REOPENS, OFFICIALS ON ALERT FOR ILLEGAL MIGRANT WORKERS

The Phuket News  
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Phuket officials are asking employers with any migrant workers not vaccinated to bring them to any of the five government hospitals on the island to receive vaccination injections.

The workers may be brought to Vachira Phuket Hospital, Chalong Hospital, Patong Hospital, Phuket Provincial Hospital and Thalang Hospital every Monday-Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm, “except for lunch break”, the Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO) has announced.

“However, if it is an AZ [As-

traZeneca] vaccine, registration is required,” the notice added.

The move comes after a week of announcements by Phuket officials regarding migrant workers in Phuket, confirming all migrant workers must be registered, and any movement of migrant workers into Phuket must be first approved by the Phuket Labour Office – both conditions that have been legally required already for a long time.

A revised provincial order was issued last week, tightening entry provisions for migrant workers to enter Phuket. The order, issued on Nov 15, noted, “Migration of migrant workers from 3 nationalities (Myanmar,

Laos and Cambodia). There must be a necessity to do the job and must be a legal migrant worker, including a permit to move migrant workers from the province of origin.

“The employer must submit a request to move migrant workers and present evidence at the Phuket Employment Office in advance before moving migrant workers into Phuket.”

Migrant workers entering Phuket from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Songkhla, Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani “and other areas subject to change” must be reported to the Phuket Labour Protection and Welfare Office and quarantined for not less than seven days in a pre-arranged loca-

tion, and a negative ATK test must be performed prior to commencement of the procedure, the order confirmed.

“Employers must apply for migration of foreign workers at the Phuket Employment Office in advance before the migration of foreign workers into Phuket,” Phuket Provincial Order 7234/2554 stated.

The call for business owners to present their migrant workers also follows months of intensive efforts by local officials to track down and ensure all migrant workers on the island have been vaccinated for COVID-19.

The crackdown saw camps locked down under the “Bubble & Seal”...

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**NEWS** PAGE 2

Infections at schools from families: PPHO



**LIFE** PAGE 8

A homecoming of rock at the Hard Rock Cafe



**SPORT** PAGE 16

Bangers beat Vagabonds in ACG showdown



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## News



**Student blames Sinovac for hair loss > p4**

# COVID reaches young students

The Phuket News  
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**M**ueanprae Boonlom, Deputy Chief of the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO), has gone public to assure parents that new COVID infections among staff and children found at Phuket schools since Nov 1 have come from family members, not new clusters at the schools.

“When on-site classes resumed on Nov 1, there were no new infections,” Dr Mueanprae, who previously served as Patong Hospital Director and as Acting PPHO Chief before current chief Dr Kusak Kiattikoon arrived, explained in a short video posted online.

“Since school classes resumed, the infections have come from family members. There have been no outbreaks at the schools, which have been enforcing strict measures since the reopening of classes



Health officers tested 489 young students at schools across Phuket last week in tracking down the infections. Photo: PPAO

on site,” she said.

Dr Mueanprae noted that infections had been confirmed as “about 11 schools” across the island since Nov 1.

However, she did not identify at which Phuket schools

infections had been confirmed, or how many infections had been confirmed at the schools.

“There are intensive COVID-19 measures among students, and ATK [antigen test kit] tests have been randomly

conducted in accordance with the requirements for reopening on-site classes,” Dr Mueanprae said.

“There have also been disease investigations of high-risk contacts, which have been

mostly family members,” she added.

“Therefore, students have been found infected with COVID-19 at such schools, but there are not many,” she said.

“However, I would like to emphasize that students must strictly follow the DMHTT self-defense measures [against COVID-19],” Dr Mueanprae continued.

“In addition, all public health offices and educational institutions have standard measures to control and prevent the spread of disease in accordance with the steps laid down.

“If an infection is found at a school, measures will be taken to deliver treatment and control the outbreak, along with preventing any recurrence in accordance with [the required] procedures.

“Therefore, parents are asked to be confident, not panic, and emphasise to their children to practice regular

self-protection measures to keep them safe from COVID-19,” she said.

Dr Mueanprae’s public announcement follows Darasamuth Phuket School closing this past week, after a cluster of seven students and one home room teacher were found to be infected with COVID-19. The school reopened on Monday (Nov 22).

The Phuket News was informed by a concerned parent over the weekend of 13 young students at Baan Sapam School in Koh Kaew being taken to “hospital” quarantine after confirmation of infections there.

The concerned parent provided photos of the students being accompanied by adults onto songtaew buses provided by Koh Kaew Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor) as they were being taken to quarantine.

No officials in Phuket have publicly recognised any infections at that school.

## Concerns raised as migrant workers return for Phuket reopening

Continued from page 1

...mandate, not allowing any migrant workers to leave their camps or other “worker accommodation” after 6pm at night, and migrant workers were tested and vaccinated en masse at worksites across the island.

No explanation has been provided as to which migrant workers in Phuket would not have been presented for vaccination, though it comes as thousands of Myanmar nationals have been pouring across the border into Thailand in recent weeks, mostly to seek work.

The deluge of Myanmar nationals into Thailand comes as Phuket businesses have been slowly reopening since the entry requirements for tourists to enter the country were eased under the launch of the Test & Go scheme on Nov 1.

Before the pandemic, many businesses in Phuket were dependent on migrant workers in order to remain financially viable. Many local administrations and municipalities also rely heavily on foreign labour for much of the manual work required to be done.

Under current entry requirements, any people entering Phuket must be vaccinated with a vaccine

recognised by the government – or they must have tested negative for COVID-19 by RT-PCR method or antigen test kit (ATK) within seven days before arriving.

The current slew of announcements appear to explain everything except that migrant workers will be allowed into Phuket to work, and if they are not already vaccinated, then the provincial government will ensure that they will be.

The tacit “imported migrant worker vaccination campaign” comes as the push to vaccinate island residents appears to have stalled, again.

According to the PPHO update for the mass-vaccination campaign, as of last Sunday (Nov 21), of the total 547,584 people recognised to be vaccinated (the total raised only after it was recognised the children 12-18 years old are to be included in the campaign), 470,046 people (85.84%) had received one vaccination injection.

Of those, 448,337 (81.88%) had received a second injection, and a further 258,579 people (79.42%) had received a third-dose “booster” injection.

### AVOIDING SANCTIONS

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong on Nov 18 chaired a small meeting attended by key officials



V/Gov Pichet at the anti-human trafficking meeting last week. Photo PR Phuket

and business leaders involved in migrant workers being brought onto the island. The aim of the meeting was to set goals for local officials for 2022, “to accelerate key projects in line with the policy of the government to take good care of the labour sector against human trafficking in order to upgrade Thailand to Tier 1”.

Much of the discussion at the meeting, held at the Phuket Labour Protection and Welfare Office, focussed on migrant workers in Phuket’s fishing industry.

It was reported that 1,923 migrant workers were currently working in the local fishing industry, operating out of 18 piers and ports in Phuket. Of those 1,877 were

Myanmar nationals, 43 were Cambodian nationals and 25 were Laos nationals.

Vice Governor Pichet pointed out that Thailand remained on the Tier 2 Watch List of the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report released by the US State Department in July. That was an improvement on last year, he said.

The TIP report marked, “The Government of Thailand does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.”

The report also noted, “Corruption and official complicity facilitated trafficking and continued to impede anti-trafficking efforts. NGOs’ perceptions of corruption made them reluctant to work with the government or certain agencies in some cases. Some police may have purposely compromised investigations and failed to provide prosecutors sufficient evidence to prosecute trafficking cases. Some law enforcement officials were reluctant to investigate influential boat owners and captains, as well as other offenders who were or had connections to high-ranking government officials.”

“The Thai government attaches great importance to anti-human

trafficking, which is on the national agenda. This action in Thailand is for the benefit of Thai society and to raise standards of protection and prevention of Thais, foreigners and migrant workers in Thailand from becoming victims of human trafficking,” V/Gov Pichet said.

Of note, the importance follows the threat of economic sanctions against Thailand if it does not improve its efforts against human trafficking. The EU has already previously suspended seafood imports from Thailand over the human rights issue. After further reviewing Thailand’s efforts, the EU later revoked its ban on Thai seafood.

“In this regard, tackling human trafficking in Thailand has made concrete progress over the past several years,” V/Gov Pichet said.

“Thailand also saw significant qualitative improvements in all three areas. Prosecution was more efficient and less time-consuming with more than 90% of the trials being completed within a year; the punishment for offenders is higher, more than 67% of all offenders served five years in prison. There is a focus on prosecuting government officials who have committed offenses, and a new form of online anti-trafficking in persons during the COVID-19 situation,” he said.



# Tourism projects get approval

The Phuket News  
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The Cabinet at its mobile meeting in Krabi last week approved a slew of tourism and development projects, including officially approving for the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) to submit a bid for the rights for Phuket to host a World Specialized Expo 2028.

The move to bid to host the expo was in line with Phuket's long-term development strategy, said Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana, spokesman for the Prime Minister's Office, after the meeting on Nov 16.

"It is expected that the economic impact will reach B49.231 billion, and create 113,439 job positions," Mr Thanakorn said.

"The government will gain revenue from tax collection of B9.512bn during the event," he added.

The approval came as Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha chaired the meeting on economic and social development in the southern provinces of the Andaman Coast (Krabi, Trang, Phang Nga, Phuket,

Ranong and Satun), held at the Sofitel Krabi Phokeethra Golf & Spa.

Present for the meeting were chairpersons and representatives from the Chambers of Commerce throughout Southern Thailand, and the Federation of Thai Industries in Phuket, among other leading figures.

"I am glad to see progress and the area feel alive after the government policy to open the country on Nov 1," PM Prayut said. "The important thing that we need to do next is to track and facilitate travel in and out [of Thailand]. Management of airports must be convenient and fast.

"Today, the trend of the number of new infections and deaths has decreased. All of this is a joint responsibility of the government, the public, including business owners and the private sector, who must help each other in implementing public health measures to prevent and control the spread of the epidemic to make tourism safer," he added.

The prime minister also commended the private sector's work in proposing urgent projects.

"This will allow relevant



agencies to expedite the consideration of urgent needs and to operate in accordance with the budget limit," he said.

The Cabinet approved seven projects of "urgent need", with a total budget of B494 million. Among the projects approved were the Phuket Health Sandbox Project under a budget of B85mn to link databases of public hospitals throughout the Andaman provinces.

The other projects approved comprised:

- A Health and Environmental Health Service System Development Project, Koh Lipe, Satun Province
- A Learning Center Development Project for the conservation and restoration of

dugongs and rare marine life, Trang Province

- The development of historical and environmental tourism sites in Ranong Province

- A Center for Tourism and Coastal Recreation in Phang Nga Town, called "The Park Khaolak"

- The improvement of the passenger port-tourist port at the mouth of Klong Jilad in Krabi Province

- A project to develop a source of water treatment spa at the Khlong Thom hot springs, in Krabi

The Prime Minister also agreed "in principle" to a slew of local tourism development and economic recovery projects.

The Ministry of Public Health Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and other "relevant agencies" were all tasked with considering and determining the work plan and to draft proposals for projects including:

1. Remedial, rehabilitation and assistance to those affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, namely:

- ANDAMAN ECONOMIC TOURISM (Andaman Tourism Economic Zone)

- ANDAMAN GO GREEN Create a model using the concept of bio-economy development focussed on sustainable economy and green economy principles

- Proposal to host the 33<sup>rd</sup> SEA Games (2025)

Tourism projects including:

- Upgrading and developing the capacity of command centres and medical systems to support tourists in southern Andaman provinces

- Upgrading of health tourism and health product services in the Southern Andaman Provinces Group

- Development of historical tourist attractions (renovating the old governor's

quarters) Phase 1

- Khaolak Surf Town - Developing Khaolak Area in Phang Nga Province to become a surf town

- Developing and restoring the potential of historical tourist attractions in Phra Narai Park area linking Andaman cultural heritage

- Development of Trang Municipal Stadium to international standards

- Landscape improvement in Phang Nga Canal

- Marina Industry Development

Other projects approved in principle included "a study of transportation networks to solve traffic problems in urban areas and support tourism strategies in the southern provinces of the Andaman Coast".

Also slated for further progress were:

- Construction of underground cable system in the conservation area of the old commercial district in Phuket Province

- Upgrading Krabi International Airport to Cargo Hub; and

- Construction of RO [reverse-osmosis] water supply system on Phi Phi Island, in Krabi

## OrBorTor elections bring alcohol ban

RESIDENTS IN AREAS administered by any of the Tambon Administration Organisations (OrBorTor) in Phuket will be subjected to a ban on the sale of alcohol this coming weekend as OrBorTor elections are held throughout Thailand.

All OrBorTor in the country go to the polls this Sunday (Nov 28), with residents in Cherng Talay, Kamala, Koh Kaew, Mai Khao, Sakhu and Thepkasattri casting their votes on that day.

An alcohol ban will be in effect in all OrBorTor election areas in Thailand from 6pm Saturday (Nov 27) through to 6pm Sunday (Nov 28).

The Phuket office of the Election Commission of Thailand (PEC), led by Nippon Phokabutr, has spent months preparing for the upcoming elections. Last Friday (Nov 19), the office conducted mass training of election officers and volunteers who will be staffing the polling stations this weekend. Further training was conducted at Phuket Rajabhat University.

PEC Deputy Director Mr Nippon has called for people casting their votes on Sunday to be aware of the COVID-19 prevention measures in place.

The polling stations, which



The Phuket election office has been holding serious training sessions for officers and volunteers staffing the polling stations this Sunday (Nov 28). Photo: PEC

will be open for people to cast votes from 8am to 5pm, will be organised to maintain social distancing. Ballot boxes will be at least two metres apart. People present will be required to remain at least one metre from each other. Seats provided for people waiting will be spaced 1.5m apart, Mr Nippon said.

People will be required to clean their hands with alcohol-based sanitiser before and after casting their votes, he added.

People are also asked to bring their own pens to mark their ballots. No pens will be allowed to be shared at the polling stations, Mr Nippon said.

"Face masks must be worn at all times. Polling booth staff

may also wear a face shield," he said.

The number of people allowed at any polling station at any one time has been reduced to 600, down from the original 1,000, Mr Nippon confirmed.

### BY-ELECTION BRINGS ANOTHER BAN

Residents in the area administered by Thepkasattri Municipality – which adjoins the area administered by Thepkasattri OrBorTor – will be subjected to another alcohol ban of their own as they go to the polls to elect a new mayor.

The office of Thepkasattri Mayor became vacant after Prasong Trairat resigned, after he was elected to office on Mar 28.

The by-election will be held on Dec 4. The polls will be open from 8am to 5pm.

In accordance with election law, a ban on the sale of alcohol will be in effect in the area administered by Thepkasattri Municipality from 6pm the night before the election through to 6pm the day of the election.

The penalty for breach of the alcohol ban is a fine up to B10,000 or up to six months in prison, or both.

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Wind 11 m/s

MON NOV 29



High: +30°

Low: +25°

Wind 7 m/s

TUE NOV 30



High: +28°

Low: +24°

Wind 11 m/s

WED DEC 1



High: +30°

Low: +25°

Wind 14 m/s

THU DEC 2



High: +30°

Low: +25°

Wind 14 m/s

## Student loses hair after Sinovac jab

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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A 19-year-old student in Phuket has gone public to explain his hair falling out in clumps after he received his second injection of the Sinovac vaccine.

The diagnosis was confirmed by a doctor, Bodin Saeliang, a first-year vocational school student in Phuket, told reporters at his rented room in Chalong on Nov 17.

Mr Bodin explained that his family lives in Tambon Phru Nai, in Koh Yao District, Phang Nga, but he stays in Phuket to study.

He went back to his home province for his first and second COVID-19 vaccination injections because his home is there.

"The first dose of vaccination had no side effects, everything was normal. My hair was still black and shiny as before," he said.

"About three days after the second vaccination, the hair on my head began to fall out in clumps. And when I woke up in the morning, a lot of hair had fallen out and was all over my pillow," he added.



Mr Bodin's hair has yet to grow back after receiving his second Sinovac injection on July 16. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

"I was shocked," he said. Mr Bodin received his second Sinovac vaccination on July 16.

Mr Bodin went to see a doctor at a private clinic to determine what was causing the condition. "The doctor

said it was [due to] side effects from the vaccine," Mr Bodin said.

The vaccine had also reacted with his white blood cells, resulting in him being immunocompromised, Mr Bodin added.

"The doctor said it was similar to the disease that affected Winai Kraibutr [Thai actor from Krabi famed for his role in 'Bang Rajan']," Mr Bodin continued.

"Most importantly, the doctor said to be careful, try to avoid certain foods and get enough rest. From 5pm I must rest. I must get plenty of sleep, and not go to bed late at all," he added.

"The reaction to the vaccine had impaired my immune system. Many germs could affect me at any time as the door was open for germs to enter my body, making any germs dangerous all the time while I am recovering from the vaccination injection," Mr Bodin said.

Mr Bodin explained that he thought it was important for people to know his condition, as he did not know that there were any other people like him.

Mr Bodin is recovering, but his hair has not grown back and he now must wear a hat whenever he leaves the house.

"When I go to school, I wear a hat. At school, my friends understand that there is no problem, but when I walk into the mall, people are constantly staring. It can be embarrassing," he said.

## Body search team finds dead dugong

A TEAM OF RESCUE workers scouring the waters off Mai Khao Beach for the body of a man who had jumped from Thao Thepkrasattri Bridge received a scare last week when they spotted the body of a dugong floating in the water.

Acting Lieutenant Wanlop Boonchan, a volunteer with the Kusoldharm Foundation rescue unit based at the Sarasin Bridge, was leading his team on the search for Piyant Kamnerd, 25, on Nov 16 when at about midday he saw a body floating in water, directly offshore from Wat Mai Khao.

The team had been searching the waters in front of various beaches, such as Sai Kaew Beach, Mai Khao Beach and the surrounding beach areas, Mr Wanlop explained.

Mr Wanlop and his team were at first startled by the find, but then realised the body was that of dugong, he said.

The dugong, almost one metre long, was estimated to weigh more than 80 kg.

Mr Wanlop estimated that the sea mammal had died at least three to four days earlier. No signs of attack were found, he said.



The dead dugong was found off Mai Khao Beach. Photo: Acting Lieutenant Wanlop Boonchan

The dugong's body was brought ashore and taken to the Sireetarn Marine Endangered Animal Rescue Center, based at the Phuket Marine Biological Centre (PMBC) at Cape Panwa, to investigate the cause of death, Mr Wanlop confirmed.

The team were in their fourth day of searching for Mr Piyant, from Takua Thung in Phang Nga, who parked his motorbike halfway across the bridge leading onto Phuket and jumped over the side into the fast-moving water below on Nov 13.

Rescue workers have been searching for him since.

Eakkapop Thongtub

## Teen prevented from jumping off bridge

QUICK ACTION PREVENTED another young man from jumping off one of the bridges joining Phuket with the mainland last week.

Police at Tha Chatchai received a call from the young man's parents on Nov 16, warning them that their son Kittsak (last name withheld), 19 years old, was on his way after calling his girlfriend to say goodbye, and to tell her that he was going to jump off one of the bridges.

Soon at the scene to assist officers were Panuphan Jindapol, Phu Yai Baan (village head) of Moo 5, Mai Khao, and rescue workers from the Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation stationed at the bridge, led by Acting Lt Wanlop Boonchan.

At about 8:10pm, the officers recognised Mr Kittsak and his motorbike from the description given by his parents. He had parked part-way along the Thao Srisoonthorn Bridge, leading off the island. They were able to intervene and restrain him from jumping off the bridge.

His parents arrived from the family home in Thai Mueang District, Phang Nga, soon after.

Mr Kittsak was taken into protective custody and transported to Takua Thung Hospital, in Phang Nga.

Two men already this month have jumped from a bridge at the north end of the island into the dangerous fast-moving water in the channel below.



Photo: Courtesy of Acting Second Lieutenant Wanlop Boonchan, Kusoldharm Phuket Foundation volunteer

Piyant Kamnerd, 25, from Takua Thung in Phang Nga, parked his motorbike halfway across the bridge leading onto Phuket and jumped into the water below on Nov 13.

Rescue workers have been searching for him since.

Buncha Suksunit, also 25, a resident of Baan Pru Sompan in Moo 8, Tambon Thepkrasattri, in Phuket, parked his pickup truck halfway across Thao Srisoonthorn Bridge, leading off the island, and jumped over the side late on Nov 3.

The bodies of the two men have yet to be found.

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

Eakkapop Thongtub



# Ombudsman orders action over Kata Hill

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National Ombudsman Assoc Prof Issari Hunsajaronroj has instructed the Phuket office of the Highways Department to expedite its project to make the road over Kata Hill, from Chalong to Kata, safer following the outside lane collapsing in October last year.

Assoc Prof Issari arrived in Phuket in person to inspect the state of the road on Nov 19, accompanied by Phuket Highways Office Chief Samak Luedwonghat and his superior Yasin Chonpatathip, Director of the Office of Highways Region 17, along with Suebpong Paisanwattana, Director of the Office of Safety Administration.

Phuket Highways Office Chief Mr Samak in April this year assured motorists that the road is safe to use, despite the westbound section of the road being reduced to one lane.

Mr Samak explained to Mr Issari that his office had reduced the westbound traffic to one lane for safety. Reflective markers and warning signs had been installed, and a non-slip surface had been added to the steep downhill section of the westbound lane for added safety, he said.

However, accidents still occurred on the downhill section, Mr Samak admitted,



National Ombudsman Assoc Prof Issari Hunsajaronroj at the scene to inspect the road over Kata Hill. Photo: PR Phuket

ted, but noted that most accidents were attributed to motorists driving too fast.

Regardless, national Ombudsman Mr Issari pointed out that his office had received a formal complaint about the dangerous state of the road, and instructed Mr Samak to ensure that the required budgets were sought in order to improve safety at the dangerous site, locally called "Sator Curve".

Mr Issari instructed the Phuket Highways Office to install additional reflective markers and warning signs advising drivers of the sharp curve and

steep downhill slope ahead.

"The Phuket Highways Office is also to engage with the relevant agencies to integrate solutions to prevent risks that may arise from road subsidence; for example, strict checking of the weight of trucks and other heavy vehicles that are using the road over the hill," he said.

"Alternative routes for tour buses and other vehicles that are too heavy to use the road over the hill, as well as regular motorists and tourists should be identified to reduce accidents and the loss of life," Mr Issari said.

## Foreigners warned over face masks

FOREIGN VISITORS HAVE been warned that not wearing a face mask in public may incur a maximum fine of B20,000.

Many foreign visitors were not wearing face masks and gathering in groups, said Dr Apisamai Srirangson, spokeswoman for the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA), on Monday (Nov 22).

Not wearing face masks while in public areas or when joining group activities was a violation of COVID-19 disease control regulations, she said.

Foreigners will be prosecuted if they fail to comply, she added.

Natapanu Nopakun, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Information and Deputy Spokesman of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, confirmed the same warning in the English-language presentation from the CCSA meeting on Monday.

"Under the Disease Control Act, you are required to always wear masks while you are in public spaces or while doing activities in groups," he said.

"There is a maximum B20,000 fine for failing to do so," he repeated.



Foreigners are being warned to wear face masks while in public areas. Photo: The Phuket News / file

However, Dr Apisamai and Mr Natapanu in their presentations made no mention of incrementally increasing fines for repeat offences.

By Monday afternoon, however, the CCSA posted another notice explaining the incremental fines, as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> time - not more than B1,000; 2<sup>nd</sup> time - more than B1,000 but not more than B10,000; 3<sup>rd</sup> time onwards - more than B10,000 but not more than B20,000

Patong Mayor Chalerm Sak Maneesri last Friday (Nov 19) had already expressed concern about foreigners not wearing face masks while in public areas in Patong. He issued a notice specifically asking foreigners in Patong to wear face masks at all times.

The Phuket News

## Pangolin caught in Kamala

RESCUE WORKERS FROM KAMALA Tambon Administrative Organisation (Or-BorTor) were called to the Water Production Plant in Kamala last week after local residents spotted a pangolin emerge from the jungle.

After being notified of the odd find, Kriengsak Boonlang on Nov 16 led his rescue team to the Khlong Nam area, where they found the female pangolin, weighing about four kilogrammes, curled up asleep under trees beside the canal.

The rescue team soon easily - and safely - had the pangolin in hand, and took the scaly mammal to Kamala Police Station to record its discovery.

From there the rescue team transported the pangolin to the Khao Phra Thaeo Nature and Wildlife Education Center in Thalang,



Photo: Kamala OrBorTor rescue team

operated by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

Pangolins are protected in Thailand under the UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which has voted to universally protect all eight species of pangolins.

Eakkapop Thongtub

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# Rehabilitation options for SMEs

Dr Paul Crosio

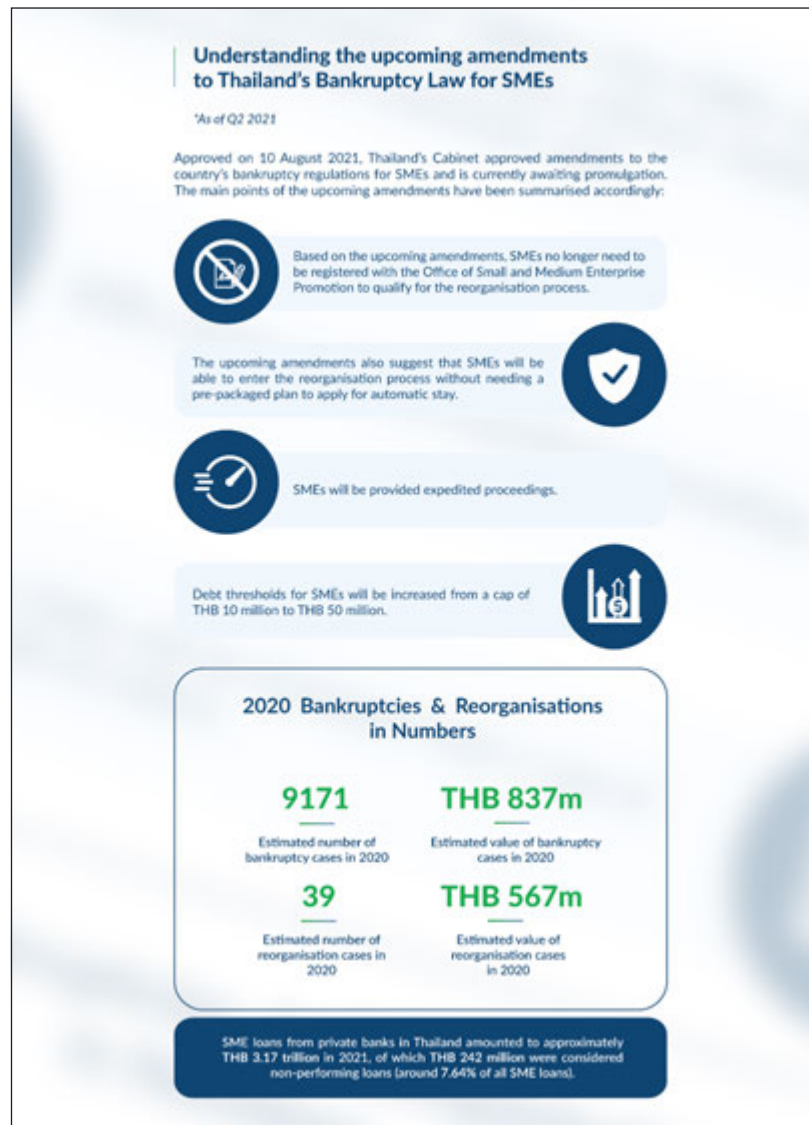
One way to measure business distress is the number of bankruptcy applications filed, which have risen sharply in 2021. Often seen as a last resort, many businesses see filing bankruptcy as the best option for their businesses to survive.

Although only a small portion of these filings was for rehabilitation, unlike liquidation, the rehabilitation process gives a business time to reassess its long-term strategy and develop a viable plan for survival, which creditors can approve or reject.

Importantly, the SME process can be done relatively quickly and cost-effectively, yet still provides court protection against liquidation and lawsuits between the filing and the approval of the rehabilitation plan.

The government on Aug 10 recognised that SMEs need additional help, and has proposed amendments to current bankruptcy laws. Aranya Thongnamtako, Director-General of the Legal Execution Department, stated in the Thai media that the goal of amending the bankruptcy law for SMEs and entrepreneurs was so that they can enter the rehabilitation process easier than ever.

If the current proposals are implemented, then to qualify you simply need to be classified



as an SME under the Ministerial Regulations on the Designation of the Characteristics of Small and Medium Enterprises Promo-

tion Act B. E. 2562 (2019), which is determined by the number of employees and value of assets.

A petition for business rehabili-

tation may be filed by an SME if they meet two requirements: 1) are insolvent (have insufficient cash to meet immediate debts); and 2) meet a debt threshold which is dependent on the type of creditors but range from B2 million up to B50mn.

Under this proposal, the SME can submit a rehabilitation petition to the court, without having to prepare a business rehabilitation plan. The debtor can then immediately apply for temporary protection from creditors and stop court proceedings even before the court formally considers the rehabilitation. The debtor has three months to submit their plan and gain creditor support. Even if rejected, the debtor can submit a second request without conditions from six months after the court dismissed the first petition.

To get approval for a reorganisation plan, it must be supported by creditors. In addition, the business reorganisation must allow creditors to receive payment(s) not less than if the debtor entered bankruptcy liquidation. A trained professional should draft this plan, as the outcome must provide both the SME and creditors with a clear path forward.

There is now also a way to speed up the rehabilitation process. SMEs can submit a request to expedite the process by presenting an agreed rehabilitation plan together with

evidence showing that the creditors have approved this plan. The courts may quickly confirm this plan and allow the SME to continue business without drawn-out legal processes.

A typical reaction to mounting debts of "toss the keys and run" means as a company director, you could be held criminally liable for actions under a variety of Thai laws, which expressly provide for a director's criminal liability for acts or omissions on behalf of the company. The proposed amendments give distressed companies options and give entrepreneurs a way to turn around their businesses.

Engaging professionals at an early stage to help you through this process is important and gives you the ability to preserve your hard work, investments and reputation. Knowing your rights and the benefits of these new SME regulations means you get relief from creditors and time to rebuild your business.

*Paul Crosio is a founding partner of Silk Advisory (SilkAdvisory.com) and a practising Australian lawyer with over two decades of corporate experience in turn-around management as well as international and Thai distressed assets and other special situations. Paul has post-graduate qualifications in finance (including Sharia finance) as well as advanced degrees in business and law.*

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## Phuket eyes small luxury cruises

ADM CHUM ARWONG, second vice chairman of the Senate Tourism Committee and chairman of the Marine Tourism Sub-committee, last week inspected the main ports and piers in Phuket to assess their readiness to receive tourists on small luxury cruises.

Adm Chum during his visit on Nov 18 was briefed on the facilities and procedures ready to receive tourists, including immigration, customs formalities, public health measures, baggage management and other services to be carried out at the ports. Also reviewed were transport links between the ports and the airport, hotels and tourist attractions.

"The ports readiness is important for the promotion of tourism in Phuket, especially concerning our readiness to receive small cruise ships carrying up to 700 passengers," Adm Chum said.

Adm Chum inspected the new building at Phuket Deep Sea Port built as part of the port's expansion plan, which was announced years ago but finally got underway just before the COVID pandemic broke out.

Other ports and piers inspected by Adm Chum included Phuket Namchai Pier (also



Photo: PR Dept

called "Visit Panwa Pier") and Phuket's main marine passenger port, Rassada Pier.

Joining Adm Chum were executives from Phuket Port Management (Phuket Deep Sea Port Company), the Superintendent of Phuket Immigration, Phuket Customs officers, Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) personnel and the Director of Phuket Provincial office of the marine Department.

It was explained to Adm Chum that Phuket Deep Sea port was originally built as a port for only transporting goods, namely exporting rubber wood, smoked rubber and palm oil.

However, the facilities have since been upgraded to now properly cater to tourist arrivals with a new terminal building

covering 980 square metres.

Adm Chum noted that it would bode well for Phuket to be able to open the Deep Sea Port as a fully functioning international passenger port of arrival.

"There must be an immigration process, vehicles waiting to pick up tourists, expanded areas to accommodate taxis for tourists, prayer rooms, hospital rooms, duty free centers, coffee shop zones, and so on," he said.

"If it can be opened as a home port for small luxury cruises in accordance with international tourism development guidelines, it will meet the national strategy of attracting high-level tourism because cruise ships will increase tourism revenue more," he added. *The Phuket News*



# PM sets out national development vision

## BANGKOK

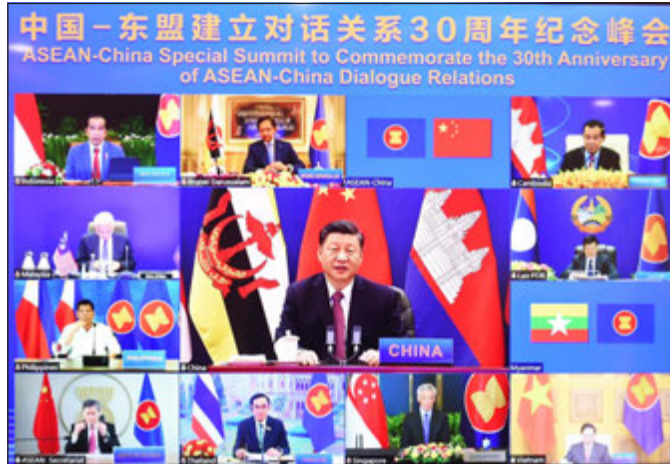
Bangkok Post

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha told the virtual Asean-China Special Summit on Monday (Nov 22) that Thailand has set out a national development vision with a view to elevating people's quality of life and improving their capacities to be ready for the 21st century.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and other pressing challenges, the country is advancing into the "Next Normal by reinventing Thailand", he said. Prayut suggested three priorities the summit should attach the utmost importance to.

First, Asean can exchange with and learn from China's achievements in several areas, such as sustainable agriculture, including in manufacturing, processing, and value-adding for agricultural products. The same could be done with China's achievements on poverty and hunger eradication, food security promotion through the "Clean Plate" Policy.

Prayut said Thailand sup-



Asean leaders attend a special virtual summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday (Nov 22). Photo: Government House

ports China's continued and constructive role in narrowing development gaps both in Asean and the sub-regions, particularly the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation framework, under which Thailand will assume co-chairmanship with China in 2022, and the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy, of which China is one of the key Development Partners.

Second, Asean and China should focus on enhancing socio-economic resilience from the grassroots. This in-

cludes reforming the learning processes and development potential of people of all ages by utilising science, technology and innovation in an appropriate and safe manner.

Third, sustainable and environmentally-friendly development is necessary for the survival of mankind. Thailand reaffirms its commitment to continuing a proactive role in advancing cooperation in this field both at regional and global level, by focusing on promoting a balance of all things and sustainability in

all dimensions, Prayut said.

Prayut also reiterated the importance of maintaining and promoting regional peace and stability.

Lastly, he reaffirmed Thailand's unwavering commitment to helping forge partnerships that were more secure, prosperous and sustainable. In this regard, Chinese President Xi Jinping confirmed his support for Thailand hosting Apec 2022.

Meanwhile, Xi reassured the participating nations that Beijing would not "bully" its smaller regional neighbours, amid rising tension over the South China Sea.

Beijing's territorial claims over the sea clash with those of several Asean countries and have raised concerns from Washington to Tokyo.

But Xi said China would never seek hegemony nor take advantage of its size to coerce smaller countries, and would work with Asean to eliminate "interference".

"China was, is, and will always be a good neighbour, good friend, and good partner of Asean," Xi said.

## New points system aims to promote safe driving

### BANGKOK

THE DEPARTMENT OF Land Transport will rigorously enforce a points-based system next month for drivers in the transportation industry to promote safer driving, it said.

While a similar system has been in place for several years, it has only been loosely applied.

However, from December, the department will fully implement two regulations targeting drivers of taxis, tuk-tuks and motorcycle taxis, according to its director-general Chirute Visalachitra.

The second of these will see their licences suspended or withdrawn if the offender runs out of points.

The drivers will initially be awarded 100 points with deductions of 10, 20 or 30 points for traffic violations depending on the severity of the offence.

Anyone who breaks the law and does not have any points left on their licence will have it suspended for 90 days. Two suspensions in three years will result in them losing their licence for 180 days.

Some offences will result



Safer driving is the goal. Photo: Bangkok Post

in the immediate loss of all points they have left. These include the use of narcotics, using a suspended licence, harming others' safety or causing accidents that result in fatalities.

Drivers with deducted points can recover 50-100 points by joining two four-hour training sessions.

Their points will be returned on the day of the examination following the training. If they do not pass, they will be given three opportunities to take the test again within seven days. Drivers can attend one training session per year.

Those who wish to recover their points can file a complaint with transport offices across the country using their driving licences or ID cards.

These measures will not be applied to drivers of private cars for personal use, the department said.

Bangkok Post

## PM confident of reaching vaccine goal by year end

### BANGKOK

THE PRIME MINISTER HAS EXPRESSED satisfaction with Thailand's COVID-19 vaccination rollout, stating he is confident the vaccination target of 100 million doses can be reached before the end of this year.

With the number of new deaths from COVID-19 staying below 100 daily for more than a month, Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha has expressed his satisfaction with the country's vaccination program that has effectively reduced the severity of COVID-19, particularly in terms of severe symptoms and deaths.

Since the start of the current COVID-19 wave earlier this year, 29 coronavirus-related deaths were recorded on Monday (Nov 22), the lowest in five months.

Government Spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said this success is a result of the government's crisis management and cooperation from health officials and the general public.

He said the Prayut is satisfied with the outcomes of the country's inoculation campaign, particularly the adoption of the heterologous vaccine regimen where vaccines of different platforms are used. He cited a study which claims that the primary two-dose vaccination approach using the Sinovac vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine, as well as the use of AstraZeneca vaccine as a booster, is 80-90% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19.

The study also claims vaccine mix-and-match schedules are even more effective



The government says it is on track to meet its vaccine target of one million people by the end of the year. Photo: NNT

than two doses of AstraZeneca which the study says are 70-80% effective.

At least 86.8mn doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered nationwide, leaving 12-13mn doses remaining until the target is met and the government is currently encouraging unvaccinated people to get their jabs.

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is holding a "vaccination week" from Nov 27 to Dec 5, while proactive vaccination teams will be sent out to improve vaccine access for the elderly, bedridden patients, and migrant workers.

Additionally, provincial governors are working to bring unvaccinated members of target groups to receive the shots by using incentives such as prizes and handouts. The business sector is also holding incentive campaigns that provide discounts or souvenirs to people who are able to present evidence of vaccination.

The MoPH now anticipates that the 100mn dose target will be achieved one month earlier than expected. NNT

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# Homecoming at Hard Rock



## PHUKET MUSIC SCENE

Andy Tong Dee

If you have never heard of the Hard Rock Café, then you must be an alien visitor from another planet who needs to get out more, for there are nearly 200 of its establishments now around the world. Hard Rock Phuket opened on November 29, 2009, 12 years ago now, but the first Hard Rock started up in London in 1971. I can still remember my excitement when I first went there in 1979 just after I left university. So I was delighted to be invited to Hard Rock's official reopening ceremony in Patong on November 1, arguably the jewel in the crown of Phuket's live music scene.

Hard Rock's success as a brand is built on a number of factors, just one of which is providing live music of the highest quality. I was pleased to meet Tom Prior from Florida, the Hard Rock's general manager for the last six years, who has huge enthusiasm for rock music. It seems the frustrations of the pandemic have made him like a

compressed spring, desperately awaiting release. I listened intently to his plans for the future, plans that involve ambitious events headlined by famous Thai and Western acts I can't mention here by name at the moment. So watch this space!

However, the main reason I was so happy to be there was that it marked the homecoming of my friends in February Cherry, Hard Rock's Filipino house band, after 18 months away. The band was formed originally in 2016 by Josef and Liza, the band's lead guitarist and vocalist. I first saw them play at the Hard Rock before it closed because of COVID-19 and I often wondered how they survived the frustrating, ensuing cycle of lockdowns. I would see them perform somewhere for a time, only for them to suffer the frustration of yet another lockdown soon after.

Josef told me, "The pandemic taught us a lot. It was a very tough time for us, but there was a positive side to it. We gained a lot of new friends and followers and this helped us survive the crisis. There were so many kind-hearted people who supported us during that time for which we will always be thankful."

Tom told me about how he first saw their potential, hired them and nur-



For local rock band February Cherry, the reopening of the Hard Rock Cafe in Patong has been a homecoming. Photo: Hard Rock Cafe Phuket

tured them as an act. Showing a fine example of how managers should treat their musicians, he quickly became a much-loved father figure for them. No wonder the band spoke to me emotionally that day as "coming back home", such is their affection for Tom and the Hard Rock.

However, "coming back home" is no certainty in a competitive business world. It took February Cherry a lot of commitment and hard work to do so, and... perhaps some divine help from above? As Josef explained, "During the pandemic, we did our best to keep our talent intact. The most valuable lesson that we learned is that we should never stop loving and learning music because it resonates with our souls and helps us

achieve our dreams. In such ways, the pandemic brought us closer to God."

To conclude, the Hard Rock is back, providing a high-class venue for Phuket's acts to aspire to playing in again, thereby raising the standard of live music here. Not only that, the Hard Rock's reopening marks a crucial milestone in Phuket's rebirth post-COVID, a highly-visible statement that Phuket is now open again for business and that we can party again.

So, it's goodbye from me for now. I'm off to rock at the Hard Rock!

*Expat Andy Tong Dee is a live music enthusiast and musician living in Phuket. You can follow him at [www.phuketmusicscene.com](http://www.phuketmusicscene.com)*

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## Thangton makes LAZ iCON finals

Phuket 17-year-old Thangton "TT" Prattrasanti, a Year 13 student of Headstart International School, is in a race to be chosen among five members for Thailand's new boy band.

Thangton applied and auditioned for The LAZ iCON talent quest. He auditioned against over 5,000 competitors in Bangkok, successfully and got through the auditions and into the final 35 in Round 1.

Not only does he sing and dance, he also plays guitar. He has been taking various dance classes and music lessons for a number of years: Hip-hop and popping dance classes for 10 years, guitar lessons for five years and singing lessons for a year. He has also done a short course in modelling.

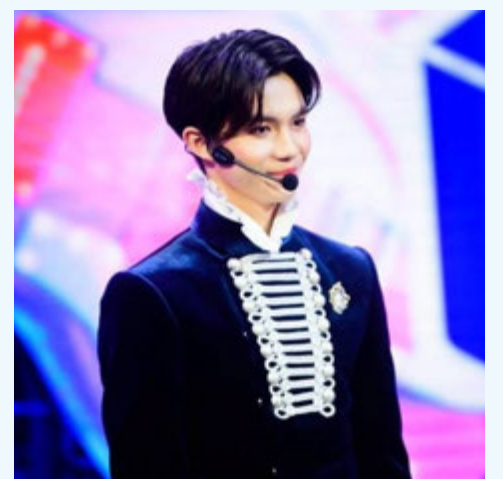
As part of The LAZ Icon show he has had to perform live on TV. The show is televised on Channel One31 every Saturday at 8:15pm, and also on LazLive on the Lazada app.

The contest asks viewers to vote through LAZiCON on the Lazada app and contestants getting through each round is based on public vote.

On live TV on Nov 13, the bottom 10 boys were eliminated, but TT was saved and made it into the final 25 and into Round 2.

Thangton needed to stay in the Top 15 to avoid elimination last Saturday (Nov 20) when competitors in positions 16-25 were eliminated.

Results of Round 2 will not be an-



Phuket 17-year-old Thangton 'TT' Prattrasanti live during the LAZ iCON talent quest.

nounced until the live show airs on One31 and on Lazada Live at 8:15pm tomorrow night (Saturday, Nov 27).

TT's performances so far prompted a rally of support for him across the island. Anyone who uses the Lazada app and clicks on LAZiCON automatically gets two votes, but there are also simple options available to obtain up to 18 votes daily, such as by liking, commenting, sharing, watching a one-minute video and even shopping of certain items.

Whether or not Thangton makes it through to the next round, he already can be proud of his achievements. As one reader of *The Phuket News* said, "Let's help our youngsters realise their dreams, by encouraging and supporting them!" *The Phuket News*



# Putting stray dogs on the pill

## Vet Chula, Soi Dog research new method of dog contraception

### Soi Dog Foundation

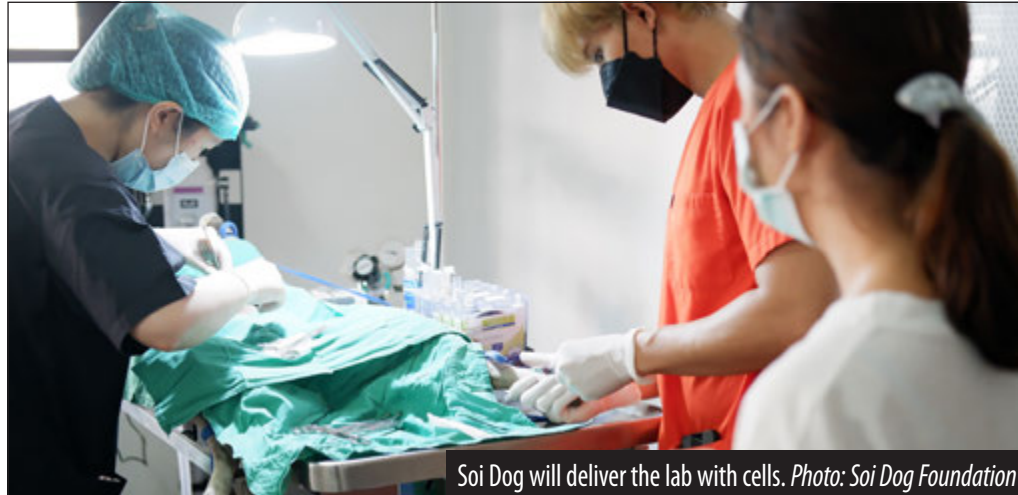
A PhD student at Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Veterinary Science (Vet Chula) is researching a new non-surgical method of dog contraception in collaboration with animal welfare organisation Soi Dog Foundation.

Titled "A study of canine reproductive proteins associated with the development of oocytes" the research project aims to produce a more accessible and affordable alternative to spay/neuter surgery for the benefit of stray dogs in particular.

Larinthorn Udomthanaisit, the student heading up the project at the university's Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproduction, explained that the focus of the research is on the proteins responsible for fertilisation and pregnancy in the fallopian tubes of female dogs.

"If we can figure out which proteins cause egg cells to expand, then we may be able to create anti-fertilisation drugs or hormones," said Larinthorn.

"We might find a new method of population control that does not require sterilisation surgery. If we can block or halt proteins from doing their job, the egg maturation process would be disrupted, and those female dogs would be unable to reproduce."



Soi Dog will deliver the lab with cells. Photo: Soi Dog Foundation

Since 2010, only three papers in the global research database have looked at proteins in the reproductive system of female dogs. Findings show that the formation of egg cells (oocytes) after ovulation is a crucial component in determining whether or not the dog will fertilise. However, scientists are yet to determine what causes the egg cells to expand.

Soi Dog will be collecting ovaries, uteruses, endothelium cells and blood samples from 60 of the dogs they encounter through their large-scale spay/neuter programme and passing them to Larinthorn and her team for examination. Research is expected to take a year to generate accurate results.

At present, the most common meth-

ods of dog contraception in Thailand are spay/neuter surgeries, which carry a high operating cost, and the contraceptive injection, which can cause dogs to develop endometritis (inflammation of the uterus which can be fatal). This research therefore marks an important starting point for the future development of a safe, effective and affordable hormonal pill alternative.

"Pet owners would be more likely to sterilise their pets in the future if there is a safe and inexpensive method of doing so," said Soi Dog's Animal Welfare Director Dr Alicja Izydorczyk. "This is important given that pet abandonment is still a major problem in Thailand."

Soi Dog estimates that approximately half of the owned dogs they encounter

are allowed to roam freely, and many are not spayed/neutered or routinely vaccinated, leading to the birth of unwanted puppies and the spread of infectious diseases.

Many of these puppies will die after a short life of suffering and, coupled with the regular abandonment of pet dogs on the streets, an endless cycle of suffering is being created. Dr Alicja stresses the importance of large-scale sterilisation and education in breaking this cycle and welcomes the innovation of Larinthorn and her team.

Sterilisation is – and always has been – at the forefront of Soi Dog's work and has so far proven to be the most ethical and effective way of controlling street dog and cat populations. Since 2003, the foundation has spayed/neutered and vaccinated over 620,000 dogs and cats throughout Thailand – more than any other organisation in the world.

*Soi Dog Foundation is located at 167/9 Moo 4, Soi Mai Khao 10, Tambon Mai Khao, Amphur Thalung, Phuket 83110, Thailand. The shelter is open to visitors Monday to Friday – mornings from 9am until 11:30am and afternoons from 1pm until 3:30pm. Guided tours commence at 10am and 1:30pm. The foundation also welcomes both short- and long-term volunteers. Further information is available at [www.soidog.org/volunteer](http://www.soidog.org/volunteer)*

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## POP QUIZ

1. What was Buzz Aldrin's mother's maiden name?
2. English musician Anthony Ernest Pratt invented which board game?
3. Which is the longest suspension bridge in the world?
4. What is the state capital of California?
5. Including 'No Time To Die', how many James Bond movies have there been?

Answers below, centre

## SUDOKU

Medium

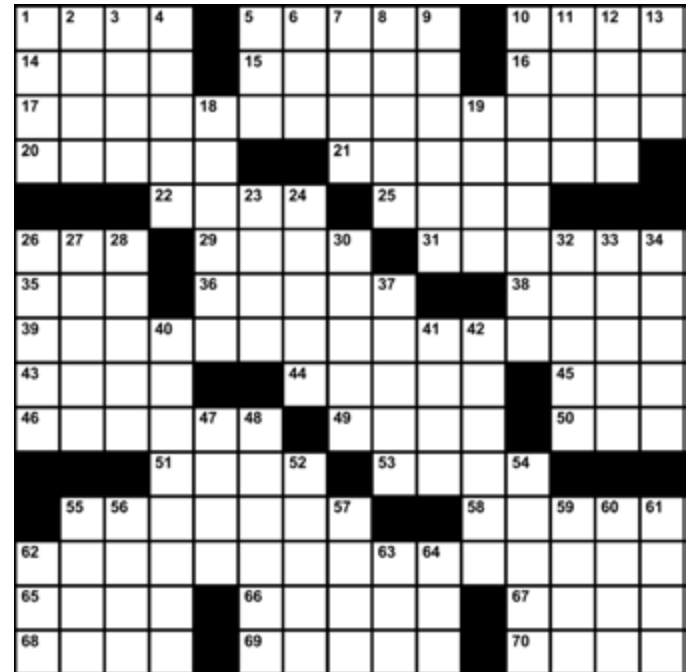
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				8				

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Awestruck
  5. Gelling agents
  10. Kind of car
  14. Box
  15. Nine performers
  16. Roulette bet
  17. Auto list
  20. Besmirch
  21. Sound entrance point
  22. Metallica drummer, Ulrich
  25. Limerick, e.g.
  26. Good, in the 'hood
  29. Insect stage
  31. Female demons
  35. Altar avowal
  36. Period
  38. As recently as
  39. Auto list, part 2
  43. One of the Simpsons
  44. Rolls' first aero engine
  45. Between pi and sigma
  46. Enduring forever, old way
  49. Cozy retreat
  50. Bit
  51. Math term
  53. "La Scala di \_\_\_\_" (Rossini opera)
  55. Anonymous guy in
- Down**
1. Short court figures?
  2. Bit of physics
  3. 100%
  4. Kind of wave
  5. "Wheel of Fortune" purchase
  6. "The Bourne Supremacy" opening locale
  7. Add to the pot
  8. Chart anew
  9. Chole or ergo followers
  10. Rare
  11. Music category
  12. Cork's place
  13. Like some humor
  18. Milkshake
  19. Perlman of "Cheers"
  23. German industrial
- court**
58. Rarin' to go
  62. End of auto list
  65. India setting
  66. Deceived
  67. Little biter
  68. Cravings
  69. Parkinson's treatment
  70. Pianist, Dame Myra
- region**
24. "The final frontier"
  26. Religious book
  27. Acknowledge
  28. Throw the ice bucket
  30. Geo-political org.
  32. Dead to the world
  33. Island greeting
  34. Church assembly
  37. Borders
  40. Naturally formed methane
  41. Different
  42. Hunting dog
  47. Diamond complement
  48. Ultimate object
  52. Put an edge on
  54. Expression of disgust
  55. "Light My Fire" singer, Feliciano
  56. Father of Balder
  57. Tropical plant
  59. Heredity carrier
  60. Geologists' studies
  61. Vermin
  62. "Waterloo Bridge: Gray \_\_\_\_" by Monet
  63. Criminal's nemesis
  64. Santa \_\_\_\_ winds

## Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Moon; 2) Cluedo; 3) Clue; 4) Akashi-Kaikyo Bridge in Japan (central span 1,991m; total length 3,911m); 5) Sacramento; 6) 27



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

## Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

4

in 10 professional UK soccer players have decaying teeth and 1 in 20 has irreversible gum disease, according to a British health study in 2015.

12

minutes is the average time a plastic bag is actually used before being discarded.

60

doors in total were destroyed by Jack Nicholson for his iconic "Here's Johnny!" scene in 'The Shining'.

50,000

to 70,000 thoughts are experienced by the average person every day.

1.5

million

people worldwide were killed by tuberculosis in 2014, making it a greater cause of death than AIDS.

Source: Uberfacts

## ISLAND VIEW



Tropical silhouettes at Kata Beach. Photo by Luke Gullins

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

## This week in history

Nov 26, 1922

Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon become the first people to enter the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun in over 3,000 years.

Nov 27, 1895

At the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris, Alfred Nobel signs his last will and testament, setting aside his estate to establish the Nobel Prize after he dies.

Nov 28, 1582

In Stratford-upon-Avon, William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway pay a £40 bond for their marriage licence.

Nov 29, 1972

Atari releases Pong, the first commercially successful video game.

Nov 30, 1982

Michael Jackson's sixth solo studio album, *Thriller*, is released worldwide. It will become the



best-selling record album in history. (See photo.)

Dec 1, 1960

Paul McCartney and Pete Best are arrested (and later deported) from Hamburg, Germany, after accusations of attempted arson.

Dec 2, 1930

First Great Depression: US President Herbert Hoover proposes a \$150 million (equivalent to US\$2.197 billion in 2017) public works program to help generate jobs and stimulate the economy.

Source: Wikipedia



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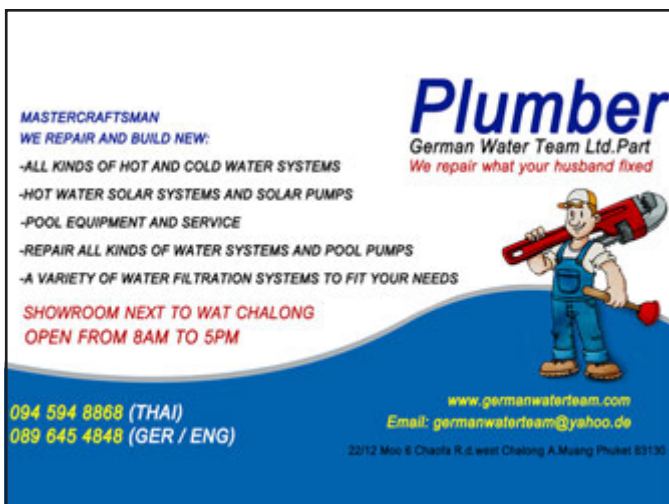


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FRI

26 NOV



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26 NOV

18:00 - 21:00 hrs

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Friday 26 November 2021

5:00 PM - 9:00 PM

SAii Laguna Phuket

500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members. Limited capacity, so book early to avoid disappointment. For registration code for Australian Alumni members, please contact AustCham team at 02 109 9616 or email to office@ austchamthailand.com

Joint Chambers Phuket Sundowners hosted by AustCham

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 "Phuket Sundowners" at SAii Laguna Phuket, on Friday 26 November 2021, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. All attendees are asked to bring their COVID-19 vaccination proof or certification to show on entry to the event. 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members. Limited capacity, so book early to avoid disappointment. For registration code for Australian Alumni members, please contact AustCham team at 02 109 9616 or email to office@ austchamthailand.com

SAT

27 NOV



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SUN

28 NOV



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29 NOV



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WED

1 DEC



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FRI

3 DEC



The Grow Boating Networking Evening for December 2021

The Grow Boating Networking Evening for December 2021 will be held at the Port of Call restaurant and Bar at the Ao Po Grand Marina on Friday the 3rd of December from 5pm. We are delighted to announce that Paul Poole (South East Asia) Co., Ltd. - The Sponsorship Experts will be the drinks sponsor for the evening. Enjoy a drink or two on Paul Poole (South East Asia) Co., Ltd. as The Sponsorship Experts wish all industry stakeholders a prosperous 2022 and look forward to seeing everyone on the boardwalk at the Thailand International Boat Show, 6-9 January 2022, Royal Phuket Marina. See www.paulpoole.co.th There will be a light buffet sponsored by the Port of Call restaurant and Bar and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available. Come and join in the fun, everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to growboatingphuket@gmail.com 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

SAT

4 DEC



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A Night At The Popra

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SUN

5 DEC



SUNDAY 5 DEC

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Launch of charity thrift shop Pre Loved Too

Christmas Market

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FRI

17 DEC



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THU

23 DEC



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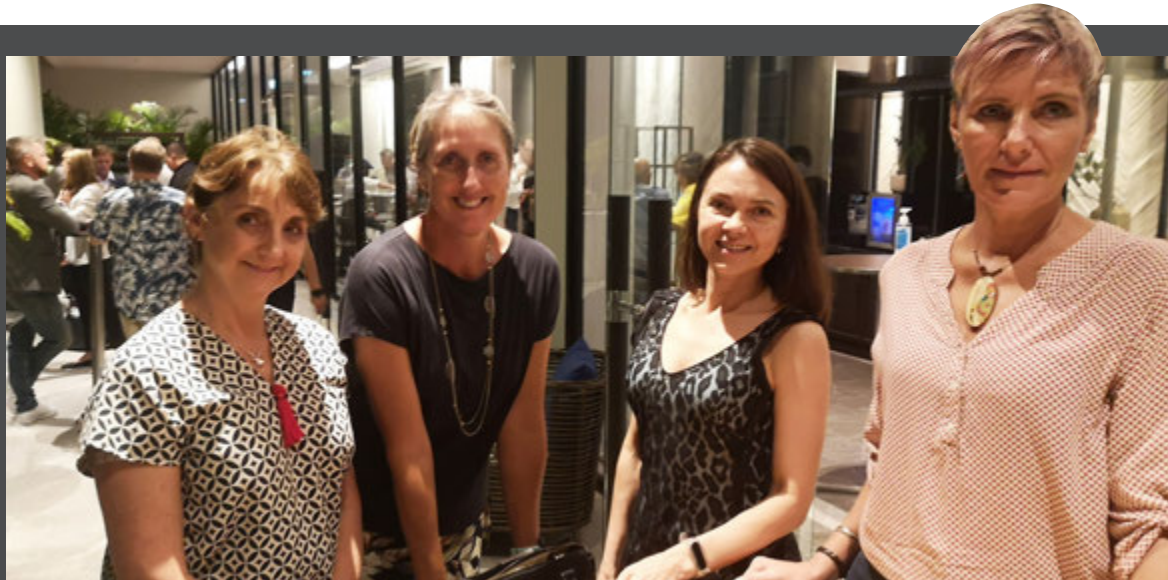
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## SKAL PHUKET AGM & COCKTAIL EVENT

Skal International Phuket held their AGM at the Four Points by Sheraton Phuket Patong on Nov 18, 2021, showcasing the benefits of being a SKAL member as well as hearing from respected industry expert and advisor Philip Schaetz, Founder and MD of CUBE, on the current state of tourism in Asia.





# Hamilton now title favourite

## FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato  
michael@boxofneutrals.com

Lewis Hamilton still trails Max Verstappen in the championship ahead of the double-header season finale, but his run of sparkling form in the last two rounds makes him difficult to resist as the title favourite.

Formula 1's action-packed tri-continental triple-header in Mexico, Brazil and Qatar has been decisive, but in true F1 2021 style the script has been enthusiastically flipped and expectations smashed.

Having wrestled back the lead in October, Max Verstappen had what looked like a trio of Red Bull Racing-favouring circuits to set himself up with championship points for the December Saudi Arabia-Abu Dhabi finale. An emphatic victory in Mexico carried him along that path, and second in the Sao Paulo sprint blew out his advantage to 21 points.

Lewis Hamilton was down and out. His car had been controversially excluded from qualifying and sent to the back of the Saturday grid, and Mercedes was coming under fire for what Red Bull Racing has been forcefully suggesting is an illegal rear wing that unfairly boosts straight-line speed. His championship destiny seemed certain to be



In Qatar last Sunday (Nov 21) Hamilton's pace made him simply untouchable. Photo: AFP

wrenched from his hands.

Yet just eight days later Hamilton has reasserted control, and after passing 24 cars in two days en route to victory in Brazil, in Qatar that same pace made him simply untouchable from pole.

An impressive almost half-second up on Verstappen in qualifying at the new-to-F1 Losail circuit, his race speed meant he was never challenged in banking 25 points for a remarkably easy victory, slashing his deficit to just eight points.

Instead of setting up Verstappen for triumph, this run of three races has swung the pendulum against him.

## RIP-ROARING

Hamilton has long had a habit of saving his best for last, keeping titles close before finally firing up and obliterating the opposition. But the seven-time champion's rip-roaring performances in Brazil and Qatar have been on another plane altogether compared to his early-campaign form and his flurries of seasons past.

"They have woken up the lion on the Saturday at Interlagos," Mercedes boss Toto Wolff enthused, having turned his team's difficult weekend with the stewards in Brazil into a galvanising motivator since. "I think

when adversity happens it takes him to a place where he's able to mobilise superhero powers.

"He's absolutely on it, brutal and cold-blooded. This is the best in Lewis."

Through the season til now Hamilton has worn the highs and lows of Mercedes's relative competitiveness on his sleeve. There have been times when he's appeared more bruised by defeat than Verstappen, who has steadfastly maintained that winning or losing the title won't change his life.

But there's been a clear renewed steeliness in Hamilton as the cham-

pionship has entered its final quarter, and since Mexico the weight of the fight has been replaced by only a calm determination that he can be the difference between triumph and defeat.

"It's a great feeling, but there's no time to celebrate, there's no time to rest," Hamilton said in Qatar. "We keep our head down and we keep chasing."

After seven years of being hunted, you get the sense that Hamilton is finally enjoying the pursuit, and with his car at last in a sweet spot and with a pair of potentially Mercedes-favouring circuits to close the season, he has every reason to feel optimistic that he's been able to use the triple-header to turn the tide in his favour.

How will Red Bull Racing respond? Team boss Christian Horner has continued to accuse Mercedes of wrongdoing and to stoke the flames of his fractious rivalry with Wolff, but without evidence for his claims and without a reaction from Toto his actions look increasingly like attempts to deflect from his team's late-campaign difficulties.

And with Hamilton in such sparkling form, it's hard not to see Horner's behaviour as a tacit admission that even he now sees the Briton as favourite to claim this most sought-after world championship.



Thai sailors celebrate their success at the end of the 2021 Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship in Pattaya on Nov 13. Photo: Bangkok Post

## Plain sailing for impressive Thais

### SAILING

THAI SAILORS ENJOYED huge success at the recent 2021 Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship, which ended on Nov 13 at the Royal Varuna Yacht Club in Pattaya.

A total of 64 boats from eight nations participated in the tournament, with Turkey crowned champions in the team racing championship followed by runners-up Thailand 1 and Thailand 2.

Thailand 1 won the overall Asian Team Racing Cup, ahead of runners-up Thai-

land 2 and Singapore.

Thailand 1 members were Kan Kachachuen, Nat-takan Somdee, Noppassorn Khunboonjan and Thanapat Sirichareon.

Thailand 2 sailors were Weka Bhanubandh, Prin Su-bying, Patcharaphan Ongka-loy, Pitipoom Jaroenpon and Nanvatorn Supaamphonwit.

Weka won the gold medal in the individual event, ahead of silver medallist Ege Erdemli from Turkey and bronze medallist Wylder Smith of the US.

Turkey's Madine Tatlican was the overall champion in the Women's Cup with

Patcharaphan second and Prin third.

Weka also won the Asian Cup ahead of Soshi Fujita of Japan, who was second, and Chanatip.

Thailand swept the medals in the Asian Women's Cup with Patcharaphan taking gold, Prin silver and Noppassorn.

In all, Weka was first overall and Asian events while Chanatip was fifth overall and fourth among Asian sailors.

In the women's competition, Patcharaphan was 14<sup>th</sup> overall and first in the Asian categories. *Bangkok Post*

## Thai shuttlers win Indonesia Masters

### BADMINTON

DECHAPOL PUAVARANUKROH and Sapsiree Taeratanachai claimed their ninth career mixed doubles title after winning the US\$600,000 (B19.7 million) Indonesia Masters in Bali last Sunday (Nov 21).

The top-seeded Thai pair defeated eighth seeds Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet of Hong Kong 21-11, 21-12 to claim the gold medals at the BWF World Tour Super 750 event at Bali International Convention Center.

It was their second successive title this month, fifth this year and ninth overall.

Dechapol and Sapsiree won the Hylo Open – a Super 500 event – in Saarbrücken, Germany, earlier this month.

The duo, who began playing together in 2015, won their first title at the 2017 Swiss Open. They picked up three more titles in 2019 at the Macau Open, Korea Open and Singapore Open.

They started off 2021 by winning three successive Super 1000 tournaments – the Yonex Thailand Open, Toyota Thailand Open and World Tour Finals – in Bangkok in January.



Sapsiree and Dechapol pose with their medals following their victory at the Indonesia Masters. Photo: AFP

Meanwhile the Japanese dominated the Bali event, the first tournament in Asia for 10 months, with three titles.

World No.1 and top seed Kento Momota took home the men's singles crown after he defeated Danish third seed Anders Antonsen 21-17, 21-11 in the championship match.

Momota avenged his loss to Antonsen – the Dane's only win in six meetings – at the Indonesia Masters 2019 final.

Unseeded Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi clinched the men's doubles crown with a shock 21-11, 17-21, 21-19 win over top seeds Marcus Gideon and Kevin Sukamuljo as the home team ended the tournament empty-handed.

Fourth seeds Nami Mat-

suyama and Chiharu Shida also triumphed in the women's doubles event after beating Jeong Na-Eun and Kim Hye-Jeong of South Korea 21-9, 21-11 in the title decider.

However women's top seed Akane Yamaguchi was unable to cap off a perfect day for the Japanese contingent after she went down to Korean rising star An Se-Young 17-21, 19-21 in the women's singles final.

An retired during her Denmark Open final against Yamaguchi last month.

The Indonesia Masters is one of three back-to-back tournaments, culminating in the season-ending World Tour Finals, that are taking place in Bali.

*Bangkok Post*



# Carrick in charge after United sack Solskjaer

## FOOTBALL

AFP

Michael Carrick said on Monday (Nov 22) he is relishing the “privilege” of taking temporary charge at Manchester United as captain Harry Maguire demanded the players take responsibility for the disastrous results that led to the sacking of Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

Solskjaer was sacked on Sunday (Nov 21) after a dismal run of one win in seven Premier League games, which included heavy defeats to Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester City and Watford.

Carrick, 40, was part of the Norwegian's coaching staff, but will take caretaker charge while the club work on plans to appoint an interim manager until the end of the season.

“To see Ole unfortunately lose his job yesterday was tough for me and tough for a lot of people at the club,” said Carrick, who won a clutch of major trophies as a United player between 2006 and 2018.

“You could tell by the emotion around the place yesterday what Ole meant to everyone.

“We understand and Ole understands it's a results business so as much as you build the right foundations and environment and you show people the way, you sometimes don't get what you deserve.”



Michael Carrick (left) will take caretaker charge of Manchester United following the sacking of Ole Gunnar Solskjaer last Sunday (Nov 21). Photo: AFP

Solskjaer was also initially put in temporary charge following Jose Mourinho's sacking in December 2018, but a run of 14 wins in his first 19 games earned him the job.

“The focus now is on flipping our mindset very quickly and that's something this club has done very well historically,” said Carrick.

United captain Harry Maguire, who was sent off during last Saturday's 4-1 humiliation at Watford, accepted the players had to accept responsibility for costing their former manager his job.

“The players need to take responsibility for everything on and off the football field. We're the ones that cross over the

white line,” he said.

“Ultimately, the manager's paid the price and we're all disappointed for that. Of course, we take huge responsibility, we haven't been good enough.”

Solskjaer addressed the United players during a two-hour meeting on Sunday after being told he would be relieved of his duties.

“We respect thoroughly what Ole has done for the club – he is a legend of the club and he will remain a legend at the club,” said Maguire.

“One thing he did say is that he will be supporting us and wanting us to win every game of football, which obviously shows the values of the man.”

# Thais meet Timor in Suzuki Cup opener

## FOOTBALL

THAILAND WILL FACE Timor Leste in their first match at the AFF Suzuki Cup in Singapore next month after Brunei pulled out of the event.

Brunei said they had withdrawn from the qualifier against Timor Leste as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic left them unable to prepare for the Southeast Asian championship.

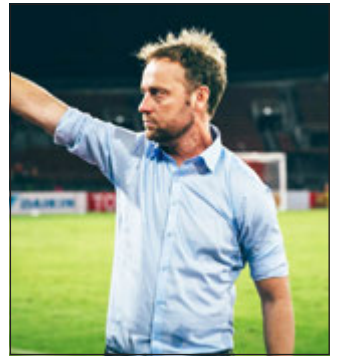
Brunei had been due to face Timor Leste on Dec 1 in a play-off for a place in the group phase of the championship to be held in Singapore.

“The pandemic has unfortunately had far-reaching effects on our team's preparations for the tournament,” said Matusin Matasan, president of Brunei's football association (FABD).

“While all efforts have been put forth to resolve the difficulties, it proved to be too complicated at this late juncture.”

Timor Leste will now play in Group A alongside five-time champions Thailand, hosts Singapore, Myanmar and the Philippines.

Defending champions Vi-



Thailand head coach Mano Polking. Photo: Bangkok Post

etnam have been drawn in Group B with Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos.

The tournament is due to begin on Dec 5 with the final on Jan 1.

The event is normally played on a home-and-away basis but the AFF has decided to organise the championship in one country due to the coronavirus pandemic. The 2020 edition of the regional tournament was postponed due to COVID-19.

The tournament will be Mano Polking's first assignment after being appointed coach of Thailand a few months ago.

The German-Brazilian coach has vowed to bring the Suzuki Cup back to Thailand.

Bangkok Post

# Vagabonds humbled at ACG

## RUGBY

Continued from page 16

“The 10-a-side format provided us an opportunity to not only improve on our fundamental skills but to also provide plenty of game time for some of our new recruits. We continue to improve with each outing and look forward more opportunities to develop in the coming weeks and months,” he added.

The ACG provided an ideal venue for the tournament, with one of the best pitch surfaces on the island and exemplary hospitality from the club house team.

ACG General Manager Neil Quail was delighted to host the event and praised his team in his post-match comments: “Since the Vagabonds established the ACG as its home ground over a year ago, an exciting sporting dynamic continues to evolve, not only drawing in players from around the island but also in developing the club's youth rugby academy, many of whom thoroughly enjoyed Satur-



Photo: Thanawat Phumipraphat

day's gripping encounter against the Bangers.

“Being able to host the Bangers in association with the Vagabonds was a privilege, while I am also extremely proud of, and grateful for, the efforts made by the ACG team and supporters of the club in relation to ground preparation and servicing such a large crowd of enthusiastic spectators.

“We are very much looking forward to further successful rugby events, and with the continued exceptional dedication of players, coaches and management,

rugby at the ACG is set to thrive well into the future.”

For those who missed out, there is still more live rugby to come for Phuket in 2021, with the Bangkok Southerners returning to our island shores next Saturday (Dec 4) for a much anticipated rematch following an earlier encounter in March.

The Vagabonds will then travel to Krabi on the weekend of Dec 11 and 12 to defend their title as Southern Thailand's 7s Champions.

Further information on all events can be found at the club website [www.phuketvagabonds.com](http://www.phuketvagabonds.com)

**Phuket News**

# English Premier League Predictions

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



editor3@classactmedia.co.th

# Sport



**Solskjaer gets the sack at United > p15**

## BANGERS & SMASH

**‘Capital punishment’ as Vagabonds lose series in epic encounter at ACG**

Action from the Bangkok Bangers and Phuket Vagabonds encounter at the ACG on Nov 13.  
Photo: Thanawat Phumipraphat



### RUGBY

Anthony van Sleeuwen

The Phuket Vagabonds were unable to snatch a win from the visiting Bangkok Bangers in a thrilling and physical afternoon of 10-a-side rugby at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) on Saturday, Nov 13.

In weather conditions perfect for ducks and rugby, the two clubs brought out the big hits and hard runs for a large gathering of spectators eager to once again enjoy some live rugby action.

Having split their squads

into two 10-a-side teams, with four games over 80 minutes, there was plenty to enjoy from the grandstand. It was the visitors, however, that claimed the day, winning all four games despite some tight contests.

The losses aside, many of the Phuket Vagabonds stood tall in their efforts with team captain Paul Rothwell putting on a show of pace and agility to best a splintered Bangers defence and run through for a try between the posts from just over halfway in game three.

Dan Ashburn was at his rampaging best taking up position in his preferred number 12 jersey, consistently breaking

the defensive line and was of course at the centre of an all-in push and shove late in the day.

The Vagabonds scrum had vastly improved from earlier in the season with new forward recruits Florian Lounnas and Jim Hawthorne providing some added strength and experience, whilst Louis Greef provided some fast feet and brutal defence in the backline with his first outing in Vagabonds colours.

However, it was a standout performance from young Darren Brooks, playing in his first game for the Vagabonds, who was voted player of the tournament by his own team

and nominated as best Phuket player on the day by the opposition.

Special mention also to Luc Briand for some excellent involvements in his first ever rugby game, and for his completely illegal and yellow card deserving tackle on a runaway Banger without the ball. Also to Jon Rolt for making his rugby debut in the pack for the Vagabonds White team, a solid first hit out with the bruises to prove it.

Whilst the day was theirs, the Bangers team captain Travis Clements was full of praise for the local side in his comments after the match. “Epic is the only word that

comes to mind when I think about the past weekend of rugby, socialising and cold beverages,” he said.

“The Phuket Vagabonds stood up to us with roaring intensity and physicality, and we were able to hold them off in some very tight games. A huge thanks must go out to the organisers, sponsors, spectators and the Phuket Vagabonds. We appreciate the hospitality of everyone involved during our tour and we can’t wait to build a closer relationships with the Vagabonds.”

Vagabonds head coach Dave Walker, who was grateful for the hit out against the

experienced Bangkok squad, said, “It was a pleasure to welcome the Bangkok Bangers to Phuket for some rugby 10s.

“They played some good hard rugby, with great defence and excellent use of quick ball, which won them the day. Great to see these two clubs showcasing some great rugby and also giving opportunities with their development teams. Much fun was had by all afterwards too!”

Anthony van Sleeuwen, President of the Vagabonds Club, said, “It was fantastic to once again provide some live rugby for all of our supporters in Phuket...

*Continued on page 15*

## Rolling on with singles championship at Kamala Bowls Club

### BOWLS

AFTER A SERIES OF INTER-club friendlies and the return of many previously exiled bowlers and former champions, the prestigious “Majors” season got underway at Kamala Lawn Bowls Club last Monday (Nov 15) with the annual Club singles championship.

With 18 entries from seven nations, the early stages consisted of a series of 6 x 3 bowl “scrambles” with the group winners plus two lucky losers advancing to the quarter finals.

Four previous “major” winners

were early casualties and out of the eight remaining hopefuls six were in with a chance of appearing on the honour’s board for the first time.

The quarter-finals all produced comprehensive winners. Advancing to the semi-finals were Ron Blackwood, Paul “Nobby” Styles, Duncan Kennedy and Suwanna “Mimi” Promsit, who was making a welcome return after a long period of absence through maternal duties.

Both Ron and Mimi outclassed their semi-final opponents by massive 15-3 scorelines and, based on the quality of bowls they produced, the stage was set for an

enthralling final.

In the early stages of the final Ron surged into 6-2 lead. Holding the jack, he then delivered a series of super leading bowls, forcing Mimi to play a determined counter-attacking game.

With Ron craftily defending his lead bowl time after time, Mimi was left in an almost impossible position and soon found herself chasing an unassailable 11-2 lead after eight out of the possible 10 ends had been played.

Ron therefore managed to retain the club championship he had won last year with relative ease, even if the scoreline did not

necessarily reflect how close the contest actually was. It was Ron’s crucial early lead and ability to protect it that was the ultimate deciding factor.

In the “plate” final for first-round losers, relative newcomer Suneer “Aon” Sriraksa defeated seasoned campaigner Derek “Dr Rock” Chalmers 7-6.

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 on Lawn bowls in Phuket contact the club on 0991307299. Robert Knight



Major winner Ron Blackwood (left), competition organiser Ken Sampert and plate winner Suneer ‘Aon’ Sriraksa. Photo: Robert Knight