

**OLD PRISON TO PROVIDE 'TWILIGHT ZONE' EXPERIENCE > PAGE 4**

# PASS & GO



Tourists queue to have their documents checked at the Thailand Pass counter at Phuket airport. Photo: Phuket Quarantine

## NO COVID TESTS ON ARRIVAL FOR TRAVELLERS FROM MAY 1, BUT THAILAND PASS TO STAY

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

From May 1, all international travellers – vaccinated and unvaccinated – will no longer be required to show proof of a pre-arrival negative RT-PCR test and will not be required to undergo a test on arrival.

However, they will still be required to register for a Thailand Pass with a Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination and a COVID insurance policy with coverage of no less than US\$10,000 (reduced from US\$20,000).

The easing of the entry restrictions for foreign travellers was announced by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha after chairing a meeting of the Centre

for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) at Government House last Friday (Apr 22).

Once they arrive in Thailand, vaccinated travellers will be allowed entry and will be free to go anywhere in the country.

Likewise, unvaccinated travellers who submit proof of a negative RT-PCR test within 72 hours of travel to the Thailand Pass system will be allowed entry and will be free to go anywhere in the country.

However, unvaccinated international travellers – and that includes those deemed to be “not fully vaccinated” – who do not submit proof of a negative RT-PCR test will be still required to submit to the Thailand Pass system evidence of a five-day

hotel booking.

Further, once they arrive in Thailand, they must observe five days in their accommodation quarantine and undergo an RT-PCR test on Day 5 of their stay.

The new measures finally bring Thailand into line with many competing tourist destinations in the region. However, the move to maintain the Thailand Pass approval still drew much criticism as to, when compared with many other high volume tourist destinations, why the pre-registration system was still needed at all.

While not required to undergo a test on arrival, all vaccinated and unvaccinated arrivals from May 1 will be asked to monitor their health and self-test for COVID by antigen

test kit (ATK) if they suspect they are infected.

“Tourism is recovering and antigen tests will be more convenient and faster for visitors,” Gen Prayut said last Friday.

“Many countries are relaxing travel restrictions significantly and our country depends considerably on tourism to support our economy,” the prime minister admitted.

CCSA spokesman Taweessilp Visanuyothin later said that the compulsory tests under the Test & Go entry scheme could be lifted because statistics showed a very low infection rate among foreign arrivals, only 0.46%, through Test & Go this month, Dr Taweessilp said.

For arrivals by land, visitors who...

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# News



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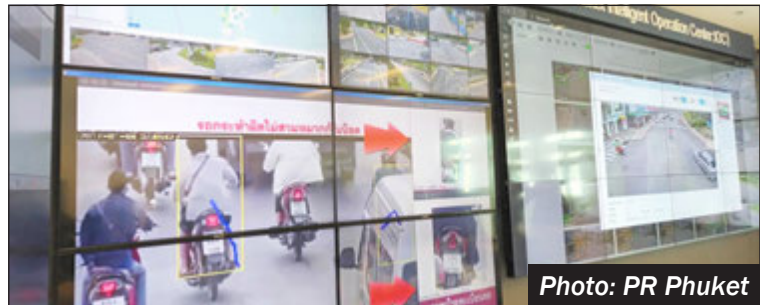


Photo: PR Phuket

## State of public surveillance CCTV network reviewed

OF 775 CCTV CAMERAS across the island connected to Phuket's surveillance network, 617 are usable, a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall was told last week.

The news came at an inspection visit on Apr 20 by Paphasmon Amralikit, Inspector-General of the Prime Minister's Office Government Inspectorate Area 6 office, in Phuket to review government expenditure under a budget of B18 million.

Phuket's CCTV network, which has been instrumental in apprehending many criminals, in both high-profile and low-profile cases, has been rolled out over years through a slew of projects assigned to a wide range of law-enforcement and government agency offices explained a report of the meeting by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

However, the report gave a breakdown of only selected projects through which CCTV public surveillance cameras have been installed across the island.

The provincial government project comprises 120 CCTV cameras and four licence-plate capture systems, while an automated traffic-monitoring system includes 37 licence-plate cameras and 31 general surveillance CCTV

cameras, the report said.

Surveillance at the Tha Chatchai checkpoint for screening people coming onto or leaving the island is provided through 14 cameras and a "Smart Card" system that feed directly to the Phuket Provincial Police's "Command Center and Command Control" system. The surveillance at the checkpoint includes three licence-plate detection cameras, four face-detection cameras and seven general surveillance cameras.

Phase 1 of the Phuket Smart City project has seen 30 licence-plate detection cameras and five general surveillance cameras installed across the island, while Phase 2 of the Phuket Smart City has seen a further 20 licence-plate cameras and 16 general surveillance cameras installed.

Connected to the government's surveillance network are a further 128 cameras operated by the Tourist Police and 547 cameras installed by local government (municipalities and OrBorTor), including 130 cameras installed by Kathu Municipality, 84 cameras installed by Phuket City Municipality and 330 cameras installed by the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO).

The Phuket News

## B10mn damage sustained as blaze guts luxury yacht

The Phuket Marine Office has ordered for the catamaran that caught fire at Yacht Haven Marina last weekend to be salvaged so officers can continue their investigation into the cause of the fire.

The 12-metre catamaran 'Jimmy Blue' was gutted by a fire and sank at Phuket Yacht Haven Marina in Thalang last Saturday (Apr 23).

The fire was reported about 1pm, said Pol Lt Col Sornthip Chukaew of the Tha Chatchai Police. Firefighters and civilians helped put out the flames, which spread from the stern to the bow. By the time the fire had been doused the boat was partially sunk, with only the prow of the vessel above water.

There were no people on board when the fire started, and no casualties were reported. Oil boom barriers were placed in the water to prevent potential oil spills.

The catamaran can carry up to 17 people – 14 passengers and three crew members. It was permitted to sail in local waters between Ranong and Satun provinces after receiving a licence in 2014.



Photo: Phuket Marine Office

Phuket Marine Office Director Nachaphong Pranit later clarified that was estimated to be about B10 million.

The boat had been berthed at the marina for "a long time", Mr Nachaphong said.

"The cause [of the fire] appeared to be a short circuit from a 220-volt power supply that was connected to the boat and the switch was still on," he said.

"The condition of the boat indicates that it has not been used for a long time.

The boat was registered in 2014 and was recorded as worth about B16mn at the time. It was used for tours for about seven years. It is estimated that the damage should be no more than B10mn," he added.

The boat was moved away from its berth at the marina for safety. The boat will be salvaged and taken to the Premier Boat Yard in Mai Khao, Mr Nachaphong said.

Officers are continuing their investigation, Mr Nachaphong added.

"We have confirmed with

the marina manager that the person responsible was at the scene within an appropriate time. The person attempted to extinguish the fire, but was unable to, despite using fire extinguishers from the boat and provided by the marina," he said.

"However, the yacht and marina managers will be invited to answer more questions about the fire. This is to fully understand what happened so we can aim to prevent any similar incidents in the future," Mr Nachaphong said.

## Tourism council president calls for Thailand Pass to be scrapped

Continued from page 1

...intend to stay no longer than two days must be fully vaccinated and pass self-antigen tests. Otherwise, they could not enter the country, Dr Taweessilp noted.

Land arrivals who intend to stay longer, vaccinated travellers will not be quarantined if they pass antigen tests, while unvaccinated travellers will be quarantined for five days, he said.

The CCSA last Friday also acknowledged the Public Health Ministry's decision to relax disease controls nationwide from May 1, ending control (orange) zones in 20 provinces. As a result, the number of close surveillance (yellow) zones would rise from 47 provinces to 65 provinces, Dr

Taweessilp said.

In addition, the number of tourism pilot (blue) zones would increase from 10 provinces to 12 provinces, with Songkhla and Rayong the new additions. (See page 7)

As of Tuesday (Apr 26), five days after the major announcement by the prime minister, Phuket officials, including Phuket Governor Narong Woonciw, had not made any public comment on the move to ease the entry measures. The silence was a major departure from the usual trumpeting of any policy changes that could help boost tourism to the island.

The previous "easing" of entry restrictions failed to spur any major increase in the number of foreign tourists to Phuket, with Test & Go



Tourists wait to be processed for entry after arriving at Phuket airport. Photo: TAC Phuket

arrivals struggling to exceed 2,000 a day. The TAT continued to include Alternative Quarantine arrivals and people arriving in Phuket on Transit only in their daily report to help boost the number of arrivals reported.

Meanwhile, the Tourism Council

of Thailand (TCT) said the Thailand Pass scheme should be scrapped from June 1 to gain an additional 2 million tourists from tour groups and help the country to achieve 10mn tourist arrivals this year.

TCT Vice President Vichit Prakobgosol said the Thailand Pass still obstructs tour operators from bringing inbound tour groups due to the high level of paperwork which agencies have to submit individually, even though other restrictions are set to be lifted starting May 1, reported the Bangkok Post.

If the Thailand Pass system is revoked by June, the country will definitely gain 10mn arrivals this year.

The number of tourists might even reach 12mn under the best-case

scenario in which the Chinese market would be able to resume outbound trips by the end of the year.

He said this scenario depends on the Chinese government, particularly its stance towards its zero-COVID policy after a surge in infections recently.

However, the number of inbound tourists could be as low as 8mn if the Thailand Pass scheme still remains in June.

He said the additional 2mn tourists could be fulfilled by tour groups. "July is summer break for the short-haul market because families will plan overseas trips, particularly to celebrate after university entrance examinations, so Thailand has to prepare in advance to capture this opportunity," Mr Vichit said.



# Support builds for Patong Bay Hill

The Phuket News  
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More than 150 people turned out to support the Patong Bay Hill Hotel on Monday (Apr 25) following the nightlife venue at the hotel being ordered to close for 15 days for breach of the Hotel Act for late trading.

The order to close was issued, and came into effect, last Friday (Apr 22). The hotel operator has yet to be handed down punishment for breaching COVID regulations and making excessive noise.

The hotel came under scrutiny after lawyer Sittra Biabangkard posted a video clip on his Facebook page on Apr 16, forcing local officials to take action, despite the fact that the hotel venue regularly holding entertainment events late into the night was commonly known throughout Patong.

The gathering on Monday brought flowers and held up placards bearing messages in support of hotel owner Preechavude 'Prab' Keesin, who has openly defended the move to have the venue operate as a means of providing much-needed incomes to people in the town (see page 8).

Mr Preechavude addressed the gathering by video call, as he was in Bangkok to help drive support for improving Phuket's tourism situation.

He thanked those present for



PEBA President Mr Weerawit addresses supporters gathered at the hotel on Monday (Apr 25). Photo: PR Phuket

their support. "As a child of Patong, I am ready to keep fighting," he said.

Mr Preechavude assigned Pakarat Tamchu, Chairman of the Patong Development Foundation, a charity organisation that Mr Preechavude founded, to receive the bouquets of flowers on his behalf.

Weerawit Kreuasombat, President of the Patong Entertainment Business Association (PEBA) openly admitted that the Patong Bay Hill hotel venue had remained open beyond the COVID-mandated closing time of 11pm.

However, Mr Weerawit also pointed out that entertainment operators had lobbied the government for 20 years to extend the trading hours for entertainment venues in Patong to cater to tourists. Many tourists do not venture out to enjoy the nightlife until after 10pm, he said.

"We will continue to submit the proposal – again – even though after all these years there has been no change. Operators will continue to do it, but it will still be considered illegal," he said, alluding to how local law enforcement tends

to choose to allow the practice to continue at some venues at some times, but not others.

"I don't want to look at just extending the trading hours. It is about more than that. I also want to look at, if it [the changes] is done right, it will generate income and employment," he said.

"It's no different from saying that you don't want to have casinos, but there are a lot of casinos open and operating. Is it just a channel for certain people in particular?" he posed.

## AS ORDERED

As detailed in the official police report No.2727/2565 issued on Apr 22, the White Lagoon poolside restaurant at the hotel was deemed to have violated emergency decree laws relating to limiting the spread of COVID-19 by breaching the official closing time of 11pm.

Additionally, the venue was found to have violated Section 56 of Article 38 of the Hotel Act pertaining to causing civil unrest by creating undue noise and nuisance which carries with it a fine between B20,000-100,000.

It was also confirmed that the hotel had been caught in possession of baraku (an alternative type of tobacco use otherwise known as hookah), which contravenes Consumer Protection Board Order No. 9/2015 dated Jan 18, 2015 and will see another fine imposed.

The order stated that a further fine would be charged for the venue operators admitting but not reporting the incident to officials, although the exact amount has yet to be clarified. The two-week closure of the restaurant came into effect as of Apr 22.

Of note, local Thai media failed to name either the White Lagoon restaurant or the Patong Bay Hill Hotel in their reports, despite both venues being clearly stated in the official report released by authorities.

## Ukrainians arrested at Phuket villa, face extradition to US

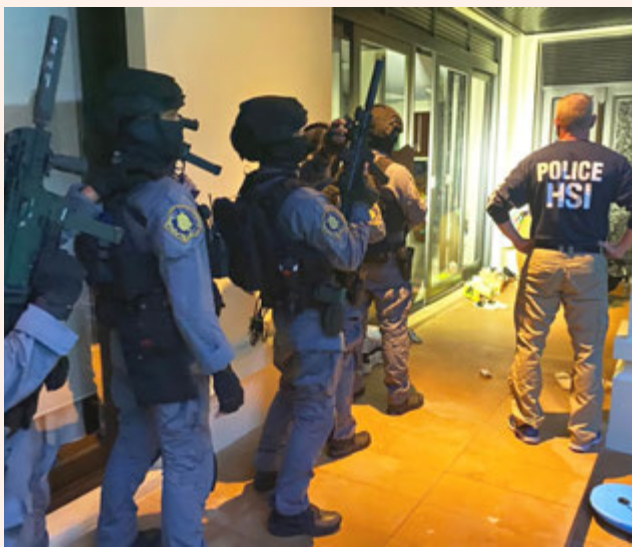
TWO MEN WHO RAN job placement agencies in the United States and are accused there of colluding in sheltering illegal migrants, money laundering and tax fraud have been arrested in Phuket.

The arrests were announced jointly on Apr 21 by Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) commissioner Pol Lt Gen Jirabhop Bhuridej, Crime Suppression Division (CSD) chief Pol Maj Montri Khetkhan and Eric McLoughlin, the US Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) regional attache.

The two men are Oleksandr Yurchyk, 37, and Oleg Olynyk, 39, both Ukrainian nationals.

The suspects were wanted on arrest warrants in the US for colluding in providing shelter to illegal migrants, money laundering and tax evasion, Maj Gen Jirabhop said.

The HSI had sought co-operation from the CIB in tracking down and detaining the two men, who fled to



Crime Suppression police raid a villa in Phuket on Apr 19 to arrest two Ukrainian men wanted in the US for allegedly sheltering illegal migrant workers, money laundering and tax evasion. Photo: Supplied

Thailand after committing the alleged offences between 2007 and 2021,

They ran job placement agencies in Florida and allegedly placed hundreds of illegal migrant workers in jobs at hotels, bars, restaurants and other places. They had allegedly illegally earned the equivalent of about B2.25 billion and allegedly evaded US taxes equal to B337

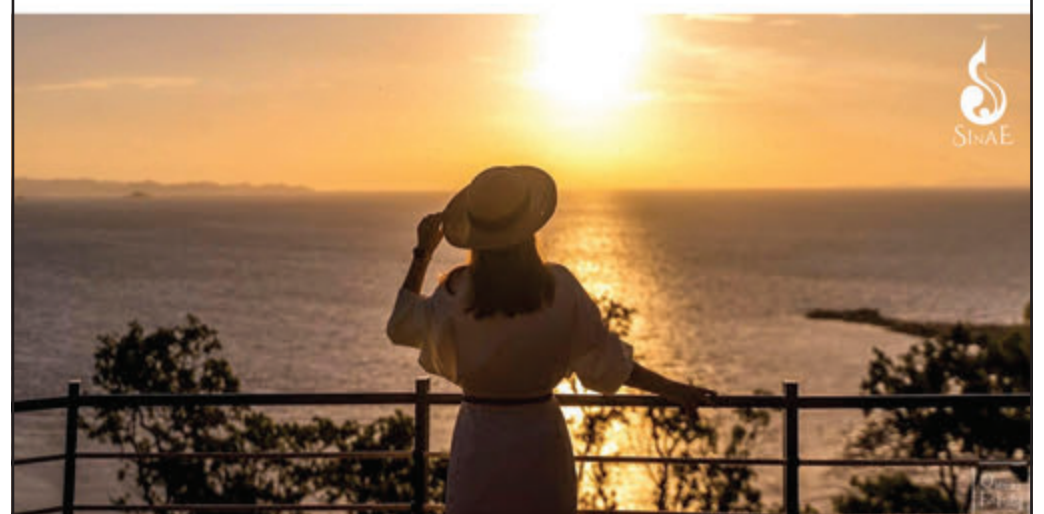
million, the CIB chief said.

The police investigation led to the arrest of the two suspects at a villa in Phuket province on Apr 19.

The two men were questioned with the help of an interpreter. They allegedly admitted they were the people named in the US arrest warrants and said they would fight the case in court.

Bangkok Post

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## PHUKET SEVEN DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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FRI APR 29

High: +30°  
Low: +26°

Wind 4 m/s

SAT APR 30

High: +30°  
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

SUN MAY 1

High: +30°  
Low: +26°

Wind 7 m/s

MON MAY 2

High: +29°  
Low: +27°

Wind 4 m/s

TUE MAY 3

High: +28°  
Low: +26°

Wind 4 m/s

WED MAY 4

High: +30°  
Low: +25°

Wind 7 m/s

THU MAY 5

High: +30°  
Low: +25°

Wind 7 m/s

## Phuket gaol to provide 'Twilight Zone'

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The old Phuket Prison in Phuket Town is to be transformed into an "eco-tourism attraction" that has been touted to provide a 'Twilight Zone' experience for people to appreciate what it was like there in the past.

The project was announced at an 'all-star' press conference at The Pago Design Hotel in Phuket Town on Apr 21, chaired by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew, joined by Vice Governor Anupap Rodkwan Yodrabam and Provincial Palad Somprat Prabsongkhram. Also present were Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong and Rear Admiral Kanokpol Pimthong, Deputy Director of the Phuket branch of the Internal Security Operations Command (Isoc), the Thai military's internal security organisation.

Chanthaburi Prison Director Krisana Thipayachon, now also current Chief at Phuket Provincial Prison, explained that the move to transform the old prison into a tourism attraction came under the direction of Ayut Sindhapphan, Director-General of the Department of Corrections.

Built some 120 years ago, the



Image: PR Phuket

prison remains one of the oldest remaining prisons still standing in the country. The prison covers just over 41 rai, with much of the site undeveloped as the buildings clustered close to Damrong Rd, he said.

"By designating the development of the prison area for public use to become a green area, it will become the lungs of Phuket Town," Mr Krisana said.

"Currently, this Prison is not used for inmates, but it is worth preserving for future generations to learn about the wisdom of the craftsmen in the past, both in architecture and the tools and materials used in construction.

"People generally can't see or touch such real things from the past; some

people call it 'Twilight Zone,'" he said. "Developing the 'Twilight Zone' to be an eco-tourism attraction and a 'live museum' learning centre will give tourists and local people a learning experience about correctional work in the past," he continued.

"The prison will also serve as a source of education for those interested in correctional work and will be used as a professional training venue for inmates who are undertaking vocational training before release," he added.

The prisoners allowed at the old prison will be those undertaking pre-release vocational courses, such as how to provide traditional massages, how to operate a stall selling coffee

and other drinks, and those learning embroidery, Mr Krisana said.

Phuket City Mayor Mr Saroj said that as the old prison, which has the official address of 11 Damrong Rd, is within the Phuket Municipality area, the municipality will be supporting the project.

"Along with supporting plans to improve the area to bring the prison back to life and allow people to continue to use them together," he said.

PPAO Vice President Mr Anuparp said that the PPAO is ready to support the budget for the project to renovate the former prison as an eco-tourism destination "to provide a public space that people can use together in a sustainable way".

However, Mayor Saroj and Mr Anupap did not reveal how much money will be spent on the project.

For nigh two decades the old Phuket Prison was notoriously overcrowded, spurring the move to spend B789 million on building the new Phuket Provincial Prison in Srisoonthorn, Thalang. The new prison opened in December 2020.

The old prison, however, most recently served as a community 'COVID Care Center', where COVID-19 patients not sick enough to be admitted to hospital were required to stay.

## Girl, 9, safe after swimming incident at Similan Islands

A 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL IS SAFE after a swimming incident with her family on an island tour at the Similan Islands, north of Phuket, last Sunday (Apr 24) left her with serious breathing difficulties.

Officers at the Similan Islands National Park called the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command at 3pm to request assistance.

National park officers and an EMS medical team from the Navy's Phang Nga base arrived at the island, Koh Phat, by speedboat at 3:25pm, reported the Third Area Command.

The girl was experiencing tightness of the chest and a shortness of breath. Family members said the girl was playing in the water when she began choking on water, causing her to panic.

They rushed to pull her out of the water, but by that time her breathing was severely affected.

The Navy report did not confirm whether or not the girl was asthmatic, but did report that the family members, presumably her parents, had administered a bronchodilator, but the girl's symptoms



Photo: Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command

did not improve.

The Navy medical team administered oxygen to help the girl breathe and monitored her vital signs. By 4:10pm the girl's condition had improved to the state that she was free to go with her family.

The Third Area Command explained that many tourists, "including children, adults and elderly people", were traveling to the Similan Islands on tours.

"The Navy Third Area Command would like to inform parents who bring children to closely supervise your children while traveling on a boat or while swimming," said the Navy report of the incident.

Eakkapop Thongtub

## Man toting gun loaded with blanks accosts tourist on Bangla Rd

A MAN WIELDING A FIREARM loaded with blanks who accosted a tourist on Bangla Rd in Patong has been arrested, police have confirmed.

Patong Police were alerted to the incident of a man aiming to intimidate tourists with a gun around 5pm last Friday (Apr 22) and rushed to the scene only to find the man had already departed.

Using a combination of eyewitness accounts and local CCTV footage, police were able to identify the perpetrator as Kittipong 'Bank' Chanthawong, a 25-year-old native of Nakhon Sri Thammarat.

Shortly afterwards, around 6pm, Mr Kittipong surrendered to police, meeting a team of officers under the direction of Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Col Peerapong Chai-arun, who is currently Acting Superintendent at Patong Police Station, and Pol Lt Col Ekachai Siri of the Phuket Tourist Police near a water shop next to Prince of Songkla University Phuket Campus in Kathu.

On searching Mr Kittipong, police discovered the firearm and the blank ammunition that had been used in the incident earlier on Bangla Rd.

Mr Kittipong also escorted officers to his rented property at 57 Soi



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Maneethong, Ratchapatanuson Rd in Patong, where police discovered the white long-sleeved shirt and pants that he admitted had worn during the incident.

The clothes, firearm and blank bullets were confiscated by police and Mr Kittipong was taken into custody at Patong Police Station for further questioning.

The tourist that had been accosted earlier that day by Mr Kittipong was present and identified his aggressor to officers. It was not confirmed whether there were any other tourists that Mr Kittipong had approached or threatened.

Neither was it confirmed why Mr Kittipong had behaved in such a threatening manner, what his motives were or what charges he may face.

Eakkapop Thongtub



# Even farmers need tourism

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Even poor farmers in Phuket need tourism to lift their incomes above subsistence level, a senator on a fact-finding visit to the island was told last Friday (Apr 22).

Senator Somchai Sianglai, Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee for People in the Southern Provinces, heard the news first-hand while talking with villagers on Koh Maphrao (Coconut Island), off Phuket's east coast.

Koh Maphrao has an area of more than 2,000 rai. The island is home to some 180 households, and has a population of over 700 people.

Of note, Baan Koh Maphrao is one of the villages off Phuket that has needed the support of the One Phuket initiative and the Living Waters Phuket Foundation in providing "Life Bags" of essential household items to villagers in need. The island, under the administration of Koh Kaew Municipality, lies less than 500 metres off the east coast of Phuket.

Before the pandemic, 80% of the villagers on the island earned income from tour-



Senator Somchai Sianglai speaks with villagers on Koh Maphrao on Apr 21. Photo : PR Phuket

ism due to the abundance of natural attractions, and fresh seafood from fishing, the villagers explained at a meeting set up under the shade of a large tree beside one of the idyllic beaches on the island.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the people of the island suffered. Without tourism, the villagers had no market to sell their catch, produce and wares, Senator Somchai was told.

Baan Koh Maphrao is one of a handful of villages that was singled out for special support under a project launched by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew. The aim of the project was to help the island become sustainable through focussing on four aspects: the people, the island's economy, the infrastructure and the environment, explained Mukda Limnukulpattanan.

Suban Rakthong, of the

Phuket Provincial Agriculture Office, pointed out that his office had provided support through a B248,400 project to assist 52 farmers on the island by promoting their produce and increasing the efficiency of agricultural production.

"The project included two prototype plots as learning centers so that people can develop them as supplementary occupations," he said.

Yet, the villagers still

suffered under the current economic pressure, Senator Somchai was told.

Mr Somchai praised the efforts of the 'Coconut Island Model' of self-reliance based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. "But from listening to the villagers, it was found that tourism has to support them. There is an obvious dependency," he said.

"Therefore, it is recommended that government agencies prepare the data set based on the principles according to the needs of the villagers according to the current reality so we can create awareness of the situation, and we would like to see [government agencies] helping villagers in terms of community development and agriculture in Phuket," he said.

Mr Somchai did point out that the villagers had a specific advantage in how they continue to live their lives according to their traditional lifestyle.

"Coconut Island can make a valuable difference, it has a valuable soft power," he said.

One day earlier, at a meeting at the old Provincial Hall on Narisorn Rd in Phuket Town on Apr 21, Senator

Somchai was especially welcomed to Phuket by Governor Narong so the senator could see first-hand the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on local livelihoods.

"In 2019, Phuket province generated more than B442.9 billion in income from tourism. From the COVID-19 situation, that income [from tourism] has been reduced by more than 96%, causing people to suffer from acute poverty," Governor Narong explained.

"Phuket Province must adjust its five-year provincial development plan to be in line with the 13<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development Plan and the economic and social conditions to be able to continue living without relying on the one-way economy that comes from the tourism sector," Governor Narong said.

"In addition, Phuket is ready to push Phuket to be the centre of not just tourism, but also education and service innovation at an international standard, and working towards sustainable development by upgrading the grassroots economy so that people have the chance to be aware of changes to their sources of income," he said.

## Trash continues to plague Nai Harn beachfront area

LITTER LEFT STREWN ACROSS THE ground in areas near the Nai Harn beachfront continues to blight one of Phuket's best-known beaches.

Despite repeated messages for local administrations to clean up their areas, and a mass employment campaign launched by Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew to help clean up the island, the litter has been left on the ground while workers hired by Rawai Municipality rake up "unsightly" leaves.

The issue of cleaning up the island has been especially highlighted by provincial officials not just for the hope of attracting more much-needed tourists to the island, but also for Phuket's bid to host the World Specialized Expo and to host APEC sideline meetings to be held in Phuket this year. The APEC meetings are to focus on Trade and Investment, Finance, Tourism, Agriculture, Women's Affairs and MSME Promotion (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises).

One local resident who has lived in the area near the Nai Harn beachfront for 10 years told *The Phuket News*, "Rawai Municipality has in recent years lifted their game in their attempts to clean up Nai Harn and its surrounds and they should be congratulated for that.

"However, it breaks your heart and defies belief when you see the cleaners spending hours, day in day out, raking leaves off the beach, footpaths and road when plastic bottles and rubbish remained



Every photo of rubbish at the Nai Harn beach area supplied to *The Phuket News* was taken within 50 metres of the beach. Photo: Supplied

untouched," he said.

Road sweepers do make their way through the area each day, but only to sweep up leaves, not pick up litter, including plastic trays left discarded by the water at the lake or even trash left on the ground right beside a public garbage bin.

"I'm at a loss to understand the municipality's logic to prioritise the sweeping of leaves off the footpath and road over the removal of plastic bottles and rubbish that not only detracts from the beauty of the place but invariably ends up in the ocean," the local resident said.

"The municipality throws good resources at cleaning up the area but it is definitely neither effective nor productive when genuine rubbish is ignored. Perhaps an hour or two picking up the real rubbish wouldn't go astray?" he noted. *The Phuket News*

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# Pandemic impact hits hotels

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

Thailand's battered hotel sector is showing increased signs of fatigue as the global pandemic enters its third year. Nowhere is this more apparent than Phuket, where over 73% of new hotel developments either lay dormant or have been put on hold, reports Bill Barnett of hospitality consultancy C9 Hotelworks.

According to data in the newly released Phuket Hotel Market Update 2022 from C9 Hotelworks, the once robust island hotel pipeline has owners now suffering from 'fear factor' as they continue to reel in the wake of a volatile marketplace and unclear future outlook.

Negative sentiment and stressed liquidity have impacted development, which has seen an incoming supply of 33 hotels with 8,616 rooms facing an unknown future, Mr Barnett said in a release issued on Apr 21.

"Drilling down on the pipeline data, 55% of the hotel projects are mixed-use, or hotel residences with rental-based investment schemes that target

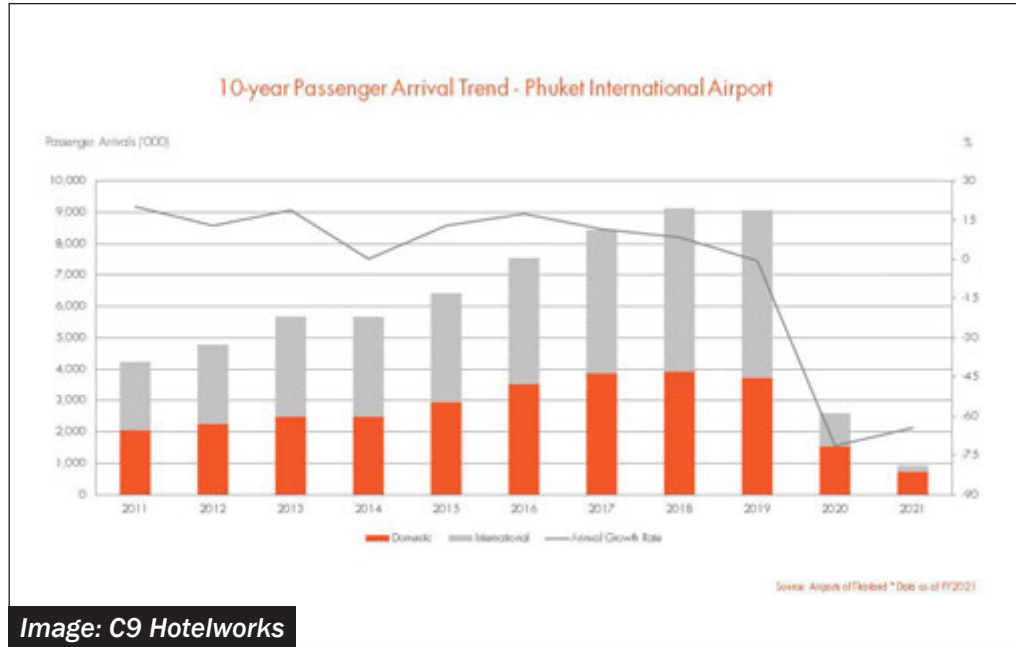


Image: C9 Hotelworks

individual investment buyers. In light of the economic climate, C9 research indicates that some of these real estate-led hospitality projects are unlikely to return to the pipeline," he said.

"While glossy tourism campaigns that focus on quality versus quantity are the new mantra across the country, reality bites hard on an island that went from hosting over 9 million passenger arrivals at Phuket International Airport in 2019 to just over 900,000 in 2021," he added.

"The sizable 90% decline, coupled with the fact there are already 1,786 registered tourism establishments and 92,604 hotel rooms in current supply mean empty beds that need tourists.

"Over 40% of the island's international visitors two years ago were either from China or Eastern Europe including Russia. While I'm asked daily about when will Phuket recover, the truth of the matter is we are pushing out our estimates of a cyclical return to 2025," Mr Barnett

said plainly.

"The elephant in the room for the moment is China. The conundrum is that while I fully expect Phuket stabilised numbers to return given its favourable geographic location, tourism-oriented infrastructure and demonstrated airlift capacity but macro political and economic issues are clouding the short-term horizon," he concluded.

Phuket led all of Southeast Asia in a remarkable effort of widespread vaccinations and the pioneering Sandbox re-

entry program. But a look at the current situation which has seen a return to seasonal trading and departure of winter snowbird travelers dissipate, now has the island looking for replacement markets. As other regional neighbours such as Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines roll out quarantine-free travel, Thailand remains in an uncompetitive situation given its beleaguered Test & Go process, finally to be waived from May 1.

Hoteliers in Phuket have been quick to address damage control from the Ukraine-Russia crisis, but most of the Russian market falls away in March historically. Three notable source markets that are ramping up airlift to Phuket are Australia, India and the Middle East, and these remain bright spots, though none have demonstrated traffic to match the mass Chinese market.

While Phuket's tourism-leveraged economy has survived the first two years of the pandemic largely intact, Mr Barnett said, "The remainder of 2022 and beyond is already seeing a rapid escalation of hotels coming up for sale. Most of these are not at highly distressed levels but what it

indicates is that legacy investment sentiment in hospitality assets is experiencing a changing of the guard.

"The number of Thai hotel owners and also foreign investors that are retreating from the sector is expected to grow. C9's opinion of the slowdown in the pipeline and high activity in the transaction market is that this is not an entirely bad thing and will likely reframe supply and demand over the medium term in a return to a more solid, rational and less speculative marketplace."

Another change in attitude for island hotel owners has been a wave of conversions of independent properties to brands given that many of the highest performing properties during the Phuket Sandbox reopening and growth in domestic travelers was to branded hotels. While another outcome has also seen a number of internationally managed properties converted from management to franchises.

"This reality of owners operating under global brands and a new influx of white label management has been a trend that was coming anyway and has only been accelerated by the pandemic," he noted.

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## Phuket prepares to host Thailand Travel Mart 2022

PHUKET PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ASKED to prepare to host more than 350 representatives from travel and tour agencies and media from around the world are expected to join the Thailand Travel Mart (TTM+ 2022) to be held in Phuket on June 8-10.

The event has been held every year since 2001, but canceled in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, explained Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong on Apr 19 at a meeting of the working group selected to organise Phuket hosting the travel trade fair.

Joining the meeting were Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket office Director Nanthasiri Ronnasiri, Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation (PPAO) President Rewat Areerob and Phuket Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) chief Dr Kusak Kukiattikoon.

"Phuket is an area that is ready to host the TTM+ 2022 event and is a continuation of the success of Phuket Sandbox scheme and guarantees the island's image as a leader in Thailand's tourism in managing the safety of tourists at a high level," V/ Gov Pichet said.

"In addition, Phuket has a strong public health system. There are airports and hotels [in the area] with accommodation of the appropriate standard ready to support the participants," he added.

"The objective of Phuket hosting the TTM+ 2022 event is to promote the readi-



Photo: PR Phuket

ness of Phuket as a prime destination that is ready to welcome tourists and play a part in driving the Thai tourism industry," V/ Gov Pichet continued.

During the event travel and tour operators, and members of the media, will be able to freely observe the quality of tourism attractions and services on the island, he said.

PPAO President Rewat noted, "In the past, successful Thailand Travel Mart Plus (TTM+) events have seen many foreign travel business partners take part.

"For this event, the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organisation has supported a budget of B4 million for organising activities," he added.

"Phuket residents are invited to be a good host to welcome more than 350 agencies and media from around the world who will join the Thailand Travel Mart event," he said.

The Phuket News



# Scandal pushes more Democrats to resign

## BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The beleaguered Democrat Party continues to bleed members as two more stalwarts have quit key party posts in the wake of the sex scandal involving former party deputy leader Prinn Panitchpakdi.

Mallika Mahasuk formally resigned as party executive in a letter she submitted to Sutham Rahong, the Democrat director. The letter dated Apr 23 said the resignation was to take effect on Monday (Apr 25).

Mr Sutham said Ms Mallika did not give a reason for stepping down and the Election Commission will be informed of her resignation as party executive. Her resignation was made known shortly after Kanok Wongtrangan tendered his resignation as deputy party leader over the scandal that has tested the Democrats' unity.

The two bowed out of the executive board after former Democrat deputy leader Wit-



Former Democrat Party deputy leader Prinn Panitchpakdi. Photo: Bangkok Post

thaya Kaewparadai left the party last Friday (Apr 22) and demanded its executive committee show political responsibility for the sexual misconduct accusations which have sullied the party's reputation.

There were unconfirmed reports that seven or eight more executive committee members, most of them women, had also expressed their intention of resigning.

Mr Kanok, who remains as a list MP, posted notice of his resignation on his Facebook page on Monday.

He said in the message,

without naming anyone, that since a high-level party executive had been accused of sexual misconduct, with cases against him now in the judicial process, many people had expressed their discontent and abhorrence over the matter. People saw it as a serious breach of moral principles.

This also led to many questions being raised over the collective responsibility of the party's executives. The party leader's response to the matter was unacceptable and counter to the expectations of the public, Mr Kanok wrote, referring to Jurin Laksanawisit.

"With a moral obligation, which is of high importance to a politician in performing his duties, I hereby resign as a deputy party leader, with immediate effect," Mr Kanok wrote.

Actions taken to address the problem by party leader Jurin Laksanawisit, who is also deputy prime minister and commerce minister, have so far defied public expectations.

Mr Jurin earlier quit as head of two government panels on women and gender policies under pressure from rights activists. He has stopped short of resigning as party leader, citing the need to remain at the helm to tackle problems arising from the scandal.

Last week, Mr Witthaya said party executives should do more to maintain high ethical standards as they, along with party leader Mr Jurin, made the decision to elevate Mr Prinn to the key party role of deputy leader.

On Monday, Mr Kanok dismissed as mere rhetoric Mr Jurin's insistence that he must stay on to deal with the scandal's fallout.

# COVID ease allows extra drinking hour

## BANGKOK

AS PART OF THE RELAXING of COVID-19 controls nationwide, restaurants will be able to serve alcohol until midnight from May 1, the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration announced last Friday (Apr 22).

Spokesman Taweelap Visanuyothin announced alcohol consumption at eateries and similar establishments that met disease control standards would be moved from 11pm to midnight following a CCSA meeting chaired by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.

This would go hand in hand with the CCSA's decision to redesignate COVID-19 control (orange) zones in 18 provinces as surveillance (yellow) zones from May 1.

The number of yellow zones would then rise from 47 provinces to 65 provinces.

CCSA also resolved to increase the number of tourism pilot (blue) zones from 10 provinces to 12 provinces, with Songkhla in the South and Rayong in the East, formerly orange zones, to be newly included.

The 10 other tourism pilot



Photo: NNT

provinces are Bangkok, Krabi, Kanchanaburi, Chon Buri, Chiang Mai, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Phang Nga, Phetchaburi and Phuket. Other provinces will be yellow zones from May 1 onwards.

Yellow zones limit the number of participants in an activity at 1,000 while blue zones have no restrictions for business and activities.

However, entertainment venues such as pubs, bars and karaoke shops will still be barred from reopening unless they are modified to operate as eateries.

The CCSA also reduced home quarantine for COVID-19 cases and people in close contact with them from seven days to five days, followed by five days for self-health observation and distancing from others.

Bangkok Post

# Police motorcyclist gets 1 year, 15 days jail for killing 'Mor Kratai'

## BANGKOK

THE CRIMINAL COURT ON MONDAY (Apr 25) sentenced motorcyclist Pol L/Cpl Norawich Buadok, 21, to one year and 15 days in jail without suspension for running over and killing ophthalmologist Waraluck Supawatjariyakul on a zebra crossing in Bangkok three months ago.

He was later released on B200,000 bail pending an appeal. His father, a police sub-lieutenant and his immediate commander, used his position as guarantor to secure his release.

The court was told that Norawich, of the Metropolitan Police Bureau's Protection and Crowd Control Division, was driving the Ducati Monster big bike that hit Dr Waraluck, of the faculty of medicine at Chulalongkorn University, on a pedestrian crossing on Phaya Thai Rd in Bangkok on Jan 21.

Norawich was found to be driving at 108-128km/h, well above the 80km/h speed limit. Dr Waraluck, known by her nickname 'Mor Kratai', died of her injuries.

Norawich was charged with nine counts: driving a vehicle with no licence plate, using a vehicle without paying the registration fee, having no third-party insurance, driving a vehicle with no side mirrors, failing to keep to the left lane, speeding, driving without due regard for safety, failure to comply with traffic signs, and reckless driving causing death.



Norawich Buadok (right) and his lawyer arrive at the Office of the Attorney-General to hear the prosecutors' decision on Feb 23. Photo: Varuth Hirunyatheb

The court initially sentenced him to two years and 30 days in prison and fines of B8,000. He was jailed for 15 days for speeding and for driving without due regard for safety and sentenced to two years for reckless driving causing death.

Norawich was fined B2,000 on each of four minor charges – driving a vehicle with no licence plate, using a vehicle without paying the registration fee, having no third-party insurance, and driving a vehicle with no side mirrors.

The court found him guilty of all nine charges although the initial sentence of two years and 30 days in prison was reduced to one year and 15 days' imprisonment without suspension after Norawich confessed to all of the charges. The fine was also reduced to B4,000.

After hearing the court's decision, Norawich's lawyer submitted a request to forward the case to the Appeal Court.

Bangkok Post

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# Defending Patong late trading

Chutharat Plerin  
thai@classactmedia.co.th

Phuket businessman Preechavude 'Prab' Keesin has defended the opening of the Patong Bay Hill hotel beyond the COVID-mandated 11pm closing time, saying the hotel operating its nightlife venues at least brought some financial relief to people in need, people who are suffering due to the economic impact of COVID regulations.

The hotel came under scrutiny after lawyer Sittra Biabangkard posted a video clip on his Facebook page last Saturday (Apr 16), saying he had received complaints from Phuket residents that the hotel had opened its entertainment venues beyond the legal closing time for years, annoying the public with excessive noise.

Assistant national police chief Lt Gen Surachate Hakparn arrived in Phuket the next day (Sunday, Apr 17) and announced that five top-ranking officers at Patong Police Station, including Patong Police Chief Col Sujin Nilabadee, had been transferred pending an investigation into allegations that police had allowed the venue to remain open late.

A "fact-finding police panel" is to investigate whether the hotel violated the rules and question senior police responsible for the area, Maj Gen Surachate said.



Preechavude 'Prab' Keesin.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew on the Monday (Apr 18) spoke carefully when responding to questions about the incident, which made national headlines during Songkran. Instead of railing upon the "offender" for breach of the COVID regulations and the late trading, which is the normal stance

taken by officials, Governor Narong said people needed to understand the situation of all people involved, including foreign tourists on holiday in Phuket at the time.

Governor Narong said that legal action was being taken against the "offender", but did not explain further. Mr Prab has yet to confirm what legal action the hotel is facing.

Speaking to *The Phuket News*, Mr Prab, President of the Pisona Group of companies that owns and operates hotels and other tourism-related businesses in Patong, said that having the hotel operate its nightlife venues had provided incomes to more than 400 employees.

Hundreds of employees took to Bangla Rd themselves last Saturday night to protest for their right to earn a living.

The key complaints were noise and trading beyond the 11pm closing time – a COVID-19 prevention measure nationally mandated by the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) in Bangkok.

The government has done its own fancy dancing when it has come to allowing pubs and bars in Phuket to open. While the rest of the country under the order of the CCSA were forced to have pubs and bars shut down, Phuket officials allowed pubs and bars to reopen last year under the guise of operating as "restaurants".

The CCSA did nothing to shut them down, openly ignoring the worst-kept secret in the country that Phuket pubs and bars were operating despite the measures ordered. Ironically, the CCSA later allowed entertainment-venue operators in other provinces the same latitude, as long as certain token registration and compliance mandates were met.

"The complaint part is interesting. We have noted who the complainant is, because local residents in Patong have long known that we [the Pisona Group] have been holding activities to stimulate the tourism economy, and events to help people by handing out survival bags and providing cash allowances to

the elderly," Mr Prab said.

"Those who come to rent space at the hotel to take part in the activities are charged very cheap rent," he said.

The fact that the hotel was operating its nightlife venues late and loud was no secret among those in Patong, Mr Prab said, questioning whether the lawyer was acting on behalf of someone else. "Are the local residents actually complaining, or a certain group that stands to benefit?" he posed.

Some 400 "operators" stand to have their incomes affected by the shutdown, Mr Prab said. "In total, about 700 workers, including waiters, cashiers, tuk-tuk and taxi drivers are affected," he noted.

Those people having their incomes affected would in turn affect thousands of people who depended on those incomes to meet living expenses, he added.

"The number of affected people is estimated to be around 3,000-4,000. They need that income to have food to eat, have opportunities, and have hope for life," Mr Prab said.

"What worries about the economy is social stress, suicides, and safety. People don't have money to send their children to school. There is no money to buy medicines and many people are unable to send money to family members at home. It will have a fairly wide impact," he said.

Mr Prab also defended the accusations of the loud noise emanating from the hotel at night. "The location of the hotel is more than 200-300 metres from the local community and the sound should reach no more than 80-100m," he said.

However, he added, "We are happy to make any corrections necessary."

Responding to allegations of corruption, Mr Prab noted that it is difficult to accomplish anything without the blessing of those in positions of power in Patong.

"Finally, I would like to leave a message to the lawyer, who has come to help. Please help drive [this issue] with sincerity and earnestness. If no benefits are to be involved, I want you to help push the law to make it right. Don't discriminate. Let's help make Patong move forward as a tourist city," Mr Prab said.

"If there is a proper legal arrangement by the right person, it won't be a problem if it actually improves the situation. There would be no need for various kickbacks and we would be able to solve corruption problems in the long run," he added.

"We can have a good, sustainable economy with the right framework. Today we say we have opened our house to tourism, but there are too many rules to follow, which need to be revised and improved in the future," he said.

Of note, Mr Prab also serves as Chairman of the Patong Development Foundation, which through its 'Patong Pansuk' ("Patong Cupboard") project has distributed essential foods and household items to local residents in need all throughout the COVID-regulated pandemic.

However, Mr Prab has now confirmed that the Patong Pansuk donation activities, which were held at the hotel, have been suspended indefinitely, starting last Sunday (Apr 24).

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# Helping his family leave Afghanistan

## UWC Thailand alumnus hoping for help in funding sisters' exit to safety

Samantha Gayfer

A GoFundMe campaign has been launched on behalf of a UWC Thailand alumnus Nasratullah Elham, originally from Afghanistan, to help 11 members of his family flee death threats to a safe haven in Pakistan.

The family is in danger because both of Elham's older sisters (who we will call "Fahima" and "Aliah" to protect their safety) have husbands who worked with US forces and the Afghan government to fight for democracy. When the Taliban assumed power in August 2021, anyone who assisted the US or worked with the Afghan government became a target. After receiving death threats for not just the men, but also their families, they decided they must find a way to leave.

"Their safety is our greatest concern, but it's also more than just their lives that are in danger. My youngest sister is brilliant – she has smashed all the academic records in our family and she wants to be a doctor – but now she is 14 and is no longer allowed to study in Afghanistan," Elham explains.

"Farah" (not her real name) is one of very few Afghan girls whose father supported her pursuing an education, but that came to an abrupt end when the Taliban assumed power. Six of the



Elham with one of his sisters when she was much younger.

minors are Elham's young nieces and nephews.

Elham's family has had to make strategic decisions to separate from one another to protect their most vulnerable. With no specific threats of retaliation looming, his parents and his brother's families will remain in Afghanistan and try to rebuild their lives there. Those in danger have been in hiding while they pursue a path as refugees to Canada, the US, or Europe; but the road is long, and each day they remain in Afghanistan they are in danger.

In the interim they have secured safe passage to Islamabad, Pakistan,

but will not have permits to work while they wait, which is what prompted Elham to begin fundraising for the family's basic needs. The budget to provide for all 11 family members is roughly \$1,500 a month. This budget includes "Farah's" school fees and books to continue her education.

Elham aims to raise enough to last them for 20 months – US\$30,000 – while pursuing every possible refugee route. The decision to base the budget on 20 months takes into consideration that war in Ukraine means some of the most refugee-friendly countries are waiving many of the visa requirements for Ukrainian refugees, but not for

Afghans. This is expected to increase their wait time.

The GoFundMe campaign was created by Elham's host family who he met when he was on scholarship for his last two years of high school at Phuket's UWC Thailand International School. He was awarded the scholarship based on his passion for peace and the environment. In fact, Elham has become a powerful voice in the fight for climate change in developing nations.

He was selected from a global pool of thousands to attend the first-ever UN Youth Climate summit in New York, but as an Afghan, his visa was denied. Frustrated and angry, Elham and the school worked to find other ways he could share his message for change. That once disheartening denial resulted in Elham's story being covered by Al Jazeera, Insider, local Thai media, South African radio, and even on a live broadcast for Democracy Now. Recently, his writing on climate change was published in The London Magazine.

Of course these achievements, and his subsequent scholarship to Concordia, will pale in comparison to being able to successfully extract his sisters from Afghanistan. If you are able to help, you can find Elham's fundraiser "Help Elham's Family Leave Afghanistan" web page on Go Fund Me (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-3-sisters-their-families-leave-afghanistan>).



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# POP QUIZ

1. George Washington was the first American President. Who was the second?
2. In which year did *The Simpsons* first appear on television?
3. Secretary's Day, first celebrated on April 21, 1952, is now known as what?
4. Queen Elizabeth II and French President François Mitterrand officiated the opening of what in 1994?
5. Which country is Elon Musk originally from?

Answers below, centre

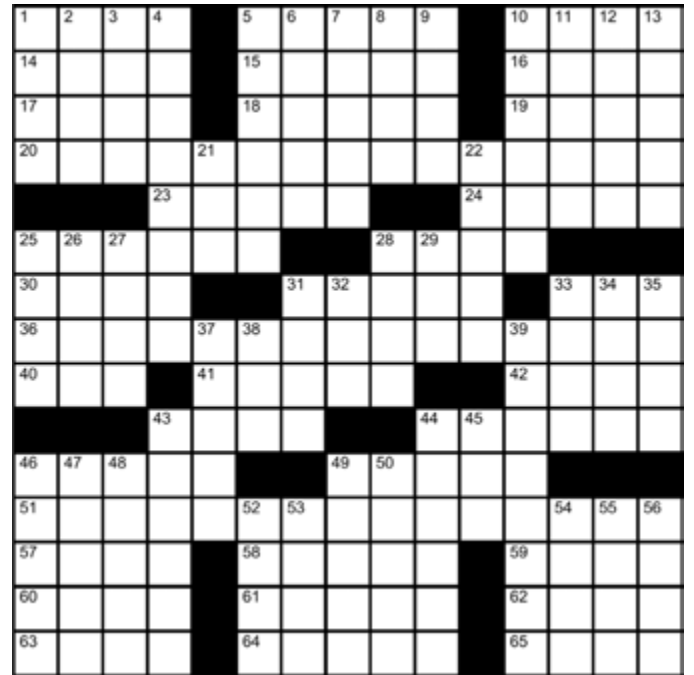
## SUDOKU

Hard

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

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Classified information?
  5. One way to be taken
  10. Fly, e.g.
  14. "It was \_\_\_ mistake!"
  15. Parlor piece
  16. Head or night starter
  17. Film unit
  18. Cockamamie
  19. Battering wind
  20. One way to move
  23. Rock fracture
  24. Gardener's soil
  25. Whips
  28. Astringent
  30. Achieving Moksha is one of its goals
  31. Rivera product
  33. Elusive one
  36. One way to move
  40. Balancing pro
  41. Order
  42. Chills and fever
  43. Hordeolum
  44. Monovalent radicals
  46. Île de la Cité locale
  49. Free-for-all
  51. Every which way
- Down**
1. Rattles
  2. Promise, e.g.
  3. Cheese variety
  4. Playa
  5. Farewells
  6. Double
  7. "Stop!"
  8. Empty talk
  9. Had down cold
  10. Organized persecution
  11. Duck
  12. Goes (for)
  13. Deuce toppers
  21. Ate
  22. "Be-Bop-\_\_\_"
  25. Accord
  26. Campus store
- 27. Indian tourist stop**
28. Chichi
  29. Kind of partner
  31. Just
  32. G8 member
  33. Provocative
  34. Jewish month
  35. Strong cleaners
  37. More than unpopular
  38. Crooked
  39. Illegal shares of profits
  43. Rat
  44. Nuptial sites
  45. Island ring
  46. Flies alone
  47. Chew the scenery
  48. Indigenous Canadian
  49. Peach \_\_\_
  50. Pomp
  52. Does in
  53. Alternative to steps
  54. "Blue" or "White" river
  55. Avon anti-aging brand
  56. Historic Virginia family



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

## Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

in three children in the US live in homes without their biological fathers.

10

companies in total control nearly every large beverage and food brand in the world: Nestlé, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Danone, General Mills, Kellogg's, Mars, Associated British Foods and Mondelez.

70

percent of millionaires do not consider themselves to be "wealthy".

2003

was the last time Jupiter's outermost moon was seen. It's currently considered "lost".

4

trillion

pounds of TNT exploding is the equivalent energy released by a Magnitude 9 earthquake.

Source: *Uberfacts*

## ISLAND VIEW



Longtails at Bang Tao. Photo by Natalia Shamina

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

**April 29, 1992**

Riots in Los Angeles, after the acquittal of police officers charged with excessive force in the beating of Rodney King. Over the next three days 63 people are killed and hundreds of buildings are destroyed.

**April 30, 1975**

Communist forces gain control of Saigon. The Vietnam War formally ends with the unconditional surrender of South Vietnamese president Dương Văn Minh.

**May 1, 1994**

Three-time Formula One world champion Ayrton Senna is killed in an accident whilst leading the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola.

**May 2, 2011**

Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind the September 11 attacks and the FBI's most wanted man, is killed by the United States special forces in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

**May 3, 1978**

The first unsolicited bulk com-



Rodney King assaulted by L.A. Police.

mercial email (later known as "spam") is sent by a Digital Equipment Corporation marketing representative to every ARPANET address on the west coast of the United States.

**May 4, 1970**

The Ohio National Guard opens fire on students protesting the Vietnam War at Kent State University, killing four unarmed students and wounding nine others.

**May 5, 1980**

Operation Nimrod: The British Special Air Service storms the Iranian embassy in London after a six-day siege and kill six gunmen campaigning for Arab national sovereignty in Khuzestan, Iran.

Source: *Wikipedia*



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## SKAL INTERNATIONAL PHUKET MONTHLY DINNER

Held at the Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort in Kamala on Apr 22, 2022, members and guests dined poolside under the stars, and enjoyed a fantastic meal prepared by Executive Chef Kreation Cutajar and his team.



## ST GEORGE'S DAY - ANOTHER LITTLE BRITISH GET-TOGETHER

After a wildly successful inaugural Brit get-together last month at Bollywood, the second installment, to mark St George's Day, was held at the Grapevine Lounge on Apr 23. The evening included a short talk on getting your will done by Khun Gay of Island Technology & Paskorn Law Office.



## Thai athletes head to Deaflympics in Brazil

### DEAFLYMPICS

THAI ATHLETES SET to compete at the upcoming Deaflympics have been given a good luck send-off by officials ahead of the competition in Brazil next month.

Dr Kongsak Yodmanee, Governor of the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT), welcomed the athletes to the SAT's Bangkok headquarters where he delivered a speech of encouragement last Tuesday (Apr 19).

Also present were President of the Phuket Sports Association Thammawat Wongcharoenyot and Wathanyu Sodsai, President of the Deaf Sports Association of Thailand (DSAT).

The 24<sup>th</sup> Summer Deaflympics will take place in Caxias do Sul, Brazil, from May 1-15. Thailand has athletes competing in eight different sports including golf, karate, taekwondo, table tennis, badminton and cycling.

Previously known as the World Games for the Deaf, the Deaflympics occur every four years, allowing athletes with hearing impairments to compete at a range of sports



The athletes. Photo: Sports Association of Phuket

at an elite level.

The Deaflympics are sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and first took place in Paris in 1924, making it the longest running multi-sport event in history after the Olympics.

The Deaflympics were originally due to take place between Dec 5-21, 2021 but had to be rescheduled due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thailand first competed at the Deaflympics in 2005 in Melbourne where Nattachai Unsomsri won a silver medal in the men's singles badminton final.

At the last Deaflympics, held in 2017 in Samsun, Turkey, Thai pair Siriwat Mattayayuma and Ittikorn Punyanganam won gold medals in the men's badminton doubles final and Phongsathat Phantib won gold in Kata Karate.

Ben Tirebuck

## Homecoming blues for Ferrari

### FORMULA ONE

Michael Lamonato  
michael@boxofneutrals.com

It wasn't the homecoming Ferrari was expecting but the Italian team is still in control of both championships despite a late-race crash after an aggressive strategy move cost Charles Leclerc a podium in Imola.

Ferrari hadn't arrived in Italy leading both championships since its heady days of domination way back in 2004. A hero's welcome was on the cards from the sold-out crowd, and with the car competitive, title leader Leclerc in a rich vein of form and Red Bull Racing on the brink of a reliability crisis, all signs pointed to a big weekend for world motorsport's most famous team.

But when things seem too good to be true, they probably are – especially if you're a modern Ferrari fan.

Red Bull, equipped with a reliability and aerodynamic upgrade and having taken a course of weight saving, dominated the weekend from start to finish. Max Verstappen took pole on Friday, beat Leclerc to victory in the Saturday sprint and commanded the Sunday



Ferrari's Charles Leclerc navigates a turn at the Imola Grand Prix last Sunday (Apr 24). Photo: AFP

grand prix, leading every lap and setting the fastest lap to score maximum points for his second career grand slam.

Ferrari's weekend couldn't have contrasted more starkly with Carlos Sainz crashing out of both qualifying and the main race and Leclerc, biting the kerb after attempting a rare overtaking manoeuvre, hitting the barriers at Variante Alta. He was lucky to emerge with only minor damage, and after a pit stop for repairs he could continue to a subdued sixth-place finish.

It was the kind of error that characterised his early years

in F1, when his phenomenal speed wasn't matched by his machinery, often prompting him to overdrive and crash.

But this year it's not a matter of the same desperation. In 2022 he clearly has the car beneath him to contend for wins and the championship. Instead it's a more philosophical question for the Monegasque and his Italian team to answer: how much do they want to risk?

Leclerc still comfortably leads Verstappen in the title standings with a 27-point advantage, albeit down from 46, but the season is long and

the gap is bridgeable.

Leclerc noted after the race that he might miss the seven points he lost late in the race, but it might be equally true that come November he'll miss the additional seven points he came so close to snatch from second-place Perez. It's too soon to play the numbers game; he must make hay while the sun shines.

In its first legitimate title campaign in years, Ferrari is choosing to go bold – it has to if it wants to beat the experienced Red Bull Racing team. But it'll have to learn its limits first if it wants to pull it off.

## Panipak and Chatchai-decha win Swat awards

### ALL SPORTS

OLYMPIC TAEKWONDO CHAMPION Panipak Wongpattanakit and boxer Chatchai-decha Butdee have been named the best female and male amateur athletes of the year by the Sport Writers Association of Thailand (Swat).

Footballer Chanathip Songkrasin and golfer Patty Tavatanakit were selected as the best men's and women's professional athletes of 2021.

The winners or their representatives received the awards at a ceremony in Bangkok last Friday (Apr 22).

Panipak, 24, was Thailand's only gold medallist at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics with her success in the 49kg division, becoming Thailand's first ever Olympic champion in taekwondo.

In his last Games appearance, Chatchai-decha had the best Olympic result of his career when he reached the quarter-finals in Tokyo. He also won a silver medal at the world championships.

Chanathip, dubbed the "Thai Messi," played for Japanese side Consadole Sapporo last year when he was included in the J-League's team of the season before moving to current champions Kawasaki Frontale.

He captained the AFF Suzuki Cup-winning Thai side which were named the best team of the year by the Swat.

Patty claimed her maiden LPGA Tour title at the ANA Inspiration, the year's first major. She also won the LPGA's rookie of the year title and the Annika Major Award.



Chatchai-decha Butdee, left, and Panipak Wongpattanakit with their trophies. Photo: Bangkok Post

Ferrari Fairtex won the best Muay Thai fighter award with three wins and one loss in 2021.

Badminton stars Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai received the best pair award after winning the mixed doubles title at the world championships. They also won the best professional duo award after winning six World Tour titles.

Their coach Tesana Panvisvas was the best coach for professional athletes.

The coach of the year for amateur athletes was national taekwondo coach Chatchai Choi, formerly known as Choi Young-Seok.

Weightlifter Weerapol Wichuma and badminton player Sirada Rungpibulsophit were the best male and female youth athletes respectively.

Wheelchair racer Pongsakorn Paeyo received the best disabled male athlete award after securing three gold medals at the Tokyo Paralympics.

The award in the women's category went to taekwondo player Khwansuda Phuangkitcha, who won bronze at the 2020 Paralympics. Bangkok Post

2020/21 PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONS 2020/21

Premier League CHAMPIONS 2020/21

The Phuket News

# English Premier League Predictions

thephuketnews.com/predictions.php



# Nerves jangling at both ends of Premier League

## FOOTBALL

AFP

Liverpool closed the gap on Premier League leaders Manchester City to one point as the quadruple chasers pushed Everton deeper into relegation trouble with a 2-0 win last Sunday (Apr 24).

Jurgen Klopp's side had to work hard to break Everton's stubborn resistance in a fractious Merseyside derby at Anfield and couldn't muster a shot on target until Scotland defender Andrew Robertson scored with a second-half header.

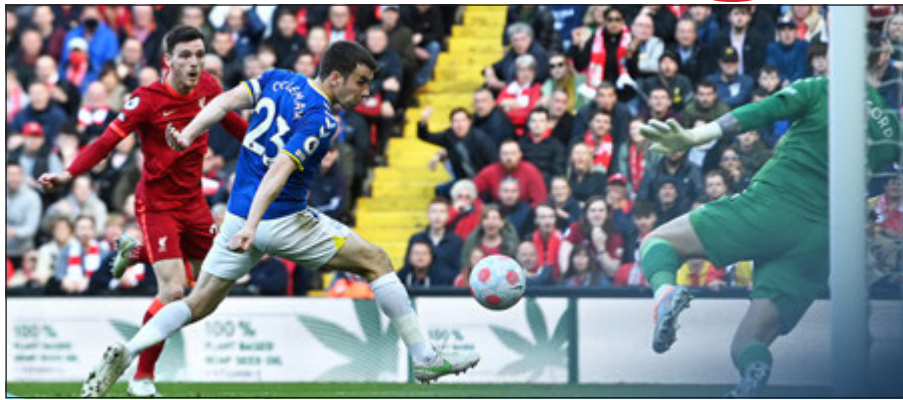
Divock Origi's late strike ensured Liverpool kept the pressure on champions City, who had crushed Watford 5-1 on Saturday to move four points clear at the top.

With five games left for both Liverpool and City, the title race looks destined to go down to the wire.

"A football game has two halves, thank God," Klopp said. "In the first half, we didn't pass quick enough. At half-time, I told the players it was easy to improve. We had to work hard for it, but all good."

Everton have lost eight successive away games for the first time since 1948 and are in grave danger of relegation to the Championship.

Frank Lampard's men were dumped into the relegation zone by Burnley's 1-0



Liverpool's Andrew Robertson (left) scores the opening goal during the 2-0 win against Everton. Photo: Paul Ellis / AFP

win against Wolves earlier in the day.

They sit two points behind Burnley with a game in hand as they try to avoid playing in the second tier for the first time since 1954.

Elsewhere, Chelsea eased their top-four anxieties with a late 1-0 against West Ham.

The Blues looked set for more angst on home turf when Jorginho's penalty was saved by Lukasz Fabianski.

But Christian Pulisic came off the bench to score for third-placed Chelsea, lifting them, at time of press, five points clear of fourth-placed Arsenal and seven clear of fifth-placed Spurs in the fight to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish.

"It feels like a giant step. It was necessary and I'm glad," Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel said after the game.

Arsenal had overcome Manchester United 3-1 at the Emirates Stadium on Saturday, further exposing the latter's frailties after they had been hammered 4-0 by Liverpool four days previous.

At time of press, United remain in sixth-place, six points adrift of the Gunners having played a game more, and interim boss Ralf Rangnick admitted their hopes of a top-four finish are now over.

"For me even before that game it was not very likely, but after today's result the top four is gone," he said.

Newcastle's fine form since being able to splash the cash of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund in January continued as Joelinton scored twice in a 3-0 win at bottom-of-the-table Norwich.

Bruno Guimaraes was also on target as the Magpies climbed into ninth in the table.

## Ten Hag confirmed as new Man United boss

### FOOTBALL

MANCHESTER UNITED have confirmed Erik ten Hag as their new manager on a three-year contract.

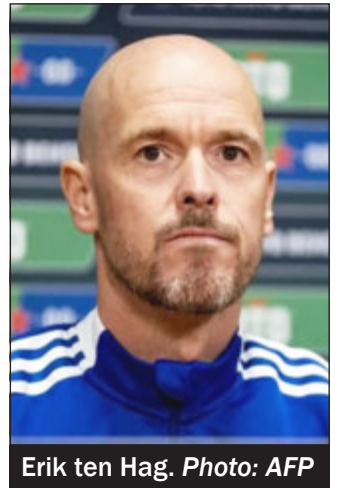
The 52-year-old Dutchman will leave Ajax Amsterdam after four successful years in charge to take charge at United next season.

However, he steps into a challenging situation at Old Trafford as the club continues to toil following years of domination domestically and in Europe.

Ten Hag boasts an unblemished managerial record from his unconventional route to one of the sport's most prized jobs.

In his first role as a manager, Ten Hag got Go Ahead Eagles promoted to the top flight of Dutch football although he then left to take charge of Bayern Munich's reserve team. His tenure there coincided with Pep Guardiola's time as Bayern boss and Ten Hag learnt much from the acclaimed Spaniard.

He returned to his homeland for a two-year stint at Utrecht before taking over at Ajax in 2017 where his team dominated the Eredivisie,



boasting an overall 74% win record.

United will be a different proposition altogether though. Despite having one of the largest wage bills in world football, they have not won a trophy for five years, are unlikely to be playing in next season's Champions League and require a major overhaul of the playing squad.

Ten Hag will need time to build a capable squad and impose his own style and philosophy – but time is a commodity that we all know is rapidly disappearing in the modern game where the pressure on attaining instant success is bigger than ever.

Ben Tirebuck

## Has the 'Gypsy King' exited the ring for the last time?

### BOXING

TYSON FURY SAYS HE CAN WALK away from boxing after winning "every belt there is to win" following a moment of brutal magic to stop Dillian Whyte and retain his WBC heavyweight crown.

The unbeaten fighter produced a vicious uppercut at the end of the sixth round of the all-British fight last Saturday (Apr 23), sending a crowd of 94,000 at Wembley Stadium into raptures.

The 33-year-old then told his adoring fans he was sticking to his plan to hang up his gloves – forgoing the opportunity to become the first undisputed heavyweight champion since Lennox Lewis.

Fury said he had promised his wife, Paris, after his third fight with Deontay Wilder in October that he would quit but owed it to his fans to fight one more time on home soil.

"This might be the final curtain for the Gypsy King. And what a way to go out," he said post-fight.

"I've won every belt there is to win, there's nothing more I can do. If this was a computer game it would definitely be completed for sure."

If this was to be the last official bout of his colourful career, Fury went out with a bang, revelling in the passionate support of an adoring crowd.



Fury (right) unleashes a fierce uppercut to stop Dillian Whyte in the sixth round of their heavyweight title clash. Photo: AFP

Ever the showman, Fury entered the arena decked in the red and white of the English flag, before posing on a golden throne as fireworks pierced the darkness.

The giant fighter then discarded his robe and jogged to the ring, where he dominated the fight before the decisive moment left Whyte on the floor and unable to continue.

"I'm going to retire as the second heavyweight in history after Rocky Marciano to retire undefeated," he said, before adding: "All roads led to the Gypsy King and I was unbeatable at this game."

However, Fury will surely be tempted by a unification bout against either fellow British fighter Anthony Joshua or Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk, who holds the WBA, IBF and WBO belts.

This is not the first time he has announced his retirement, only to come back for more. AFP

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# Sport



It's a knockout for the 'Gypsy King' > p15

## RUGBY 10s IS BACK



The Singapore Bucks battle it out against the Asian Japanese Dragons at a previous Phuket Rugby 10s tournament. Photo: Pat Cotter

### RUGBY

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

After the trail of disruption that COVID-19 left in its wake during the past two years it is with great relief and anticipation that the Phuket Rugby 10s has been confirmed to go ahead next month.

Over 30 teams will be flying in to Phuket from Australia, Arabian Gulf, Cambodia, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand for the weekend tournament

that runs May 13-15 at the Thanyapura Sports Club.

With teams from around the world competing for honours in the open, veterans, over 45s and a ladies category, rivalry will be fierce on and off the pitch, promising to deliver one of the most competitive occasions in the tournament's long history.

The Athena Siam Coffin Dodgers vets kick off proceedings on Friday, May 13 before the Men's Open Tournament the following day. This will see 16 teams competing in 4 groups of 4 teams with a round robin stage of 3 games per team on

the Saturday, and a minimum of 2 games per team during the knockout stages the following day.

The Ladies Open will see 4 teams competing with 3 games per team on the Saturday with a minimum of 2 games during the knockout stages on Sunday.

Jean-Luc Joel will be refereeing and his team of officials will be keeping order on the pitch and creating mayhem, off it!

"We are so excited to be back," commented Phuket 10s organiser Pat Cotter. "After two years in the wilderness, rugby

is now back up and running in most countries and one thing that the past has taught us, it's how much we have missed our freedoms and, in particular, our sports.

"With 30 teams from around the region flying in to Phuket for the tournament, it will bring some much-needed relief for a lot of business owners, as well as providing some spectacular sporting action on the pitch," Pat added.

Mindful of the detrimental impact of COVID-19, the tournament is proud to continue their long association

and support of the Asia Center Foundation, who have continued to support underprivileged communities across Phuket throughout the pandemic and who are also celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. Funds raised over the weekend will be donated to the ACF scholarship program providing underprivileged children on the island the chance of a better future.

Other supporting sponsors include the Aussie Bar, Athena Siam Limited, The Phuket News, The Sheraton Four Points Patong Beach Resort and World Flair. DJ Kensei will spinning

tunes all weekend and the action will be live streamed by Jed Thian and his Interception Management production crew.

Entry for spectators is free so why not come along and support local team the Phuket Vagabonds as they seek to win the championship after finishing runners-up last time out. For more information visit: [www.phuket10s.com](http://www.phuket10s.com)

For more details on donating to the ACF scholarship program visit <https://asiacenterfoundation.org/> or contact Roelien Muller at [roemuthai@gmail.com](mailto:roemuthai@gmail.com).

## English duo lift Kamala Pairs Championship in season finale

### BOWLS

AFTER SEVERAL COVID-induced cancellations and postponements, the Major Bowls Championship season finally concluded last Friday (Apr 22) with the Kamala Pairs Championship.

Adopting a shortened knockout format due to the searing heat and with pairings drawn at random from the field of 16, the title race was truly wide open as Ulf "Ue" Egerstaad and Ray Austin advanced to face the all-female team of Dot Barker and reigning Phuket singles champion Nidnoi

Worada in the first semi-final.

The second semi-final was between Pat Ailm and Duncan Kennedy and English duo Carl "Cow!" Mesham and Rob Knight.

The encounters weren't as close as anticipated as Ulf and Ray and Carl and Rob eased past their opponents 13-6 and 13-2 respectively.

In the final showdown Carl and Rob took control of the jack early on and set a 7-0 lead, varying the length of the ends throughout in an attempt to ensure their opponents did not get used to the length and speed of the green.

Crucially, when Ray and Ue eventually got on the score sheet

they made the mistake of throwing a foul jack, leaving their opponents to once again dictate the length of the end and establish a 12-3 lead.

Carl and Rob then claimed the 9<sup>th</sup> end by a point, meaning that they were victorious without having to play the final end.

Having previously won the Nations Cup, Carl and Rob's triumph here helped restore some pride for the English contingent after a small period without any success in the Majors competition.

In the Plate final for the first-round losers, Sunee "Aon" Sriraksa and Ron Blackwood defeated George Aasanow and

Derek "Rocky" Chalmers 13-6.

The finals honours board for this high season's Majors: Kamala Open singles champion: Ron Blackwood; Phuket Open singles champion: Nidnoi Worada; Nations Cup champions: England; Kamala Pairs Open champions: Carl Mesham and Rob Knight.

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

Rob Knight



Jubilant champions Carl (left) and Rob lift the winner's trophy. Photo: Rob Knight