

**EMBASSY LETTERS NEEDED FOR STAYS AFTER SEPT 26 > PAGE 3**



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

Deputy Prime Minister Jurin Laksanawisit went on the defensive last Sunday (July 26) after being forced to face a slew of complaints from leading Phuket figures pointing out the lack of support from the central government to help people and businesses on the island suffering from the COVID-19 economic crisis.

Deputy PM Jurin, who also serves as the Commerce Minister, was in Phuket to hear firsthand the current economic situation in Phuket.

“Phuket is hurt more than other provinces. We are ready to welcome tourists and we have asked to be able to manage our own affairs, but there has not been any response to this at all,” said Phuket Tourism Council President Sarayut Mallam.

“I want you to inspect Patong and Karon. It has never been like this before. Today is the worst. The situation in Phuket will affect the country’s economy. There is no income to tax, and people’s hearts are sinking, some of them enough to commit suicide,” he pointed out.

Feeling the tension in the room, the

main meeting auditorium at Phuket Provincial Hall, Deputy PM Jurin curtly asked Mr Sarayut: “What do you want?”

Mr Sarayut replied, “I want the government to look at Phuket, and pay attention to what is happening here. Phuket province provides a lot of tax for the government, you get all our taxes. Now Phuket is in a hard situation... and the government does not care.”

“There is no money from the government to help Phuket. We have asked many times, but we are always refused. The only response we get is

that the government must take care of the whole country.”

One business representative at the meeting chimed in, pointing out, “We have spent our own money supporting other people and we have helped ourselves since Feb 28. We have donated food and supplies to people. We have been doing all these things by ourselves.”

“Now you are here in Phuket. You are still asking for money from us, and asking what we can do to help Phuket... Are you still looking for money from Phuket to hand back to us to help us recover? What is the...

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# News



**Veg Festival gets COVID care > p5**

## Govt under fire over COVID

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...government doing to help Phuket?" she asked.

Angry, Deputy Prime Minister Jurin replied, "You do not blame me! I am here to solve your problem. I am asking around because I want to find a way to solve your problem."

"I have not even started, and you blame me. I will ask the official offices, then I will know how much they have right now," he said.

Mr Jurin then asked Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew, "How much budget money do you have?"

Governor Narong replied, "There is none."

Thanusak Phungdet, President of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that about 160,000 residents had registered with the Phuket Social Security Office to receive unemployment benefits



**Phuket Tourism Council President Sarayut Mallam.**  
Photo: PR Phuket

under the project to support to workers who were forced to accept reduced pay – or lost their jobs entirely – due to the COVID-19 lockdown policies.

Of those, only 62% had received financial support from the office, Mr Thanusak said and repeated his request to extend the unemployment support a further 90 days, a formal request he filed with the central government in May, to which he has still yet to receive a response.

## Students target government in protest at Saphan Hin

**Eakkapop Thongtub**  
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**S**ome 350 students turned out for an anti-government rally at Saphan Hin on the outskirts of Phuket Town last Sunday evening (July 26) calling for the government to step down and criticising its handling of the COVID-19 economic crisis and the ensuing mass unemployment that has arisen throughout the country.

The protest, which began at about 5:30pm, was held by the "Phuket Liberation" youth group, with many protesters holding placards criticising the government's rule of the country, claiming that a "dictator" was ignoring the democratic rights of citizens.

Many of the protesters carried placards featuring messages such as "Wake up Phuket", "Sovereignty belongs to the people" and "Can't de-



Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

mocracy comment?", as well as many featuring a photo of Wanchalerm Satsaksit, the Thai pro-democracy activist who fled Thailand after the 2014 coup who was last seen being abducted by armed men outside a condo where he was staying home in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on June 4.

The Wanchalerm posters were also labeled, "Cause of disappearance: abducted by the state".

Rally leader Chuchawet Diddarak said the gathering was held to exercise the con-

stitutional right of association for citizens exercising civil rights under the constitution to provide a forum for Phuket people to voice their demands, which he listed as: "1. The dissolution of the House must be announced. 2. Draft a new constitution or amend the constitution 3. End the threat to the people"

"The new constitution must be amended, the government must release the power to Phuket province, to be self-managed by tourism organizations and able to empower for

full ability," Mr Chuchawet also said.

He also called for more people to exercise their right to gather to voice their opinion.

"Democracy has to be open, people must have areas where young people can voice their opinions. Young people need to know that they can voice their demands, this is a democratic right. Not just follow the rules given by one established leader.

"Everyone here has come together to demand their democratic rights," he said.

Military police were present at the rally, but the protest concluded peacefully.

However, one man on a saleng (motorbike with sidecar) arrived and started shouting angrily at the protesters, but was escorted away from the rally by military security personnel.

*Additional reporting by Tanyaluk Sakoot*

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**ALCOHOL MAY BE A HEALTH HAZARD!**



# Embassy letters are required

The Phuket News  
editor@classactmedia.co.th

The Immigration Bureau has confirmed that letters from embassies are needed for short-term visa holders to be granted a 30-day extension to stay after the 'visa amnesty' expires on Sept 26.

The Cabinet last week approved the 'visa amnesty' automatic visa extension for all visa types, previously set to expire on July 31, to be extended until Sept 26.

However, the Immigration Bureau announced late last Friday (July 24) that all short-term visa holders who wish to remain in Thailand after Sept 26 due to a lack of flights or other circumstances preventing them from returning home due to the COVID-19 pandemic must apply for an extension to stay before Sept 26.

Applicants must present a letter from their embassy in order to be granted an extension to stay after that date.

If short-term visa holders are unable to leave the country after Sept 26 due to illness, they are to present a medical certificate to the local immigration office where they are applying for an extension to stay, the announcement said.

"In case of having other obstacles such as no flights or having an outbreak situation – contact an embassy or consulate for issuing a

## Announcement

Aliens have to submit an application for extension or prepare for departure and make a 90-day notification of residence within the specified period of time.

1. Short-term visa holders (TR, TS, VOA) and those granted a visa exemption have to prepare for departing the Kingdom within September 26, 2020 except in case of having a reason of necessity as follows:

- 1.1 In case of illness
  - Bring a medical certificate to contact a local Immigration office
- 1.2 In case of having other obstacles such as no flights available or having an outbreak situation
  - Contact an embassy or consulate for issuing a letter of confirmation and request for a temporary stay and bring it to contact a local Immigration office

Each permission shall be granted no more than 30 days.

2. Long-term visa holders have to submit an application for extension in accordance with a reason of necessity of each visa type.

**Remark:** An application for extension shall be submitted at each local immigration office from now until September 26, 2020. All types of visa extension will be effective from September 27, 2020. (In order to reduce overcrowding, please come earlier.)

3. Notification of residence A 90-day notification having a due date from March 26 to July 31, 2020 must be made from August 1 – 31, 2020 through specified channels.

1178
Immigration Bureau

The announcement posted by the Immigration Bureau.

been informed that they require a letter from their Embassy to do this," Matthew Barclay, Australian Consul-General to Phuket, told *The Phuket News* on July 17.

"It is our intent to ensure that we are not an obstacle in this process. As a result, we will be issuing letters (at no fee and via email) to those Australians who send their passport biodata page to Consular.Bangkok@dfat.gov.au. People should expect a reply within one to two working days," he added.

As always, anyone with queries about their visa circumstances should direct these to Thai Immigration, Mr Barclay advised.

Meanwhile, the Immigration Bureau announcement posted last Friday confirmed that all long-term visa holders whose permits to stay expired after Mar 26 also must submit an application for an extension to stay "from now until September 26, 2020".

"All types of visa extension will be effective from September 27, 2020. In order to reduce overcrowding, please come earlier," the announcement read.

Long-stay foreigners whose 90-day notification of residence "having a due date from March 26 to July 31, 2020" must submit 90-day notifications "from August 1-31, 2020 through specified channels", the announcement added.

letter of confirmation and request for a temporary stay and bring it to contact a local immigration office."

Each permission shall be granted no more than 30 days, the announcement said clearly.

Australian Ambassador to Thai-

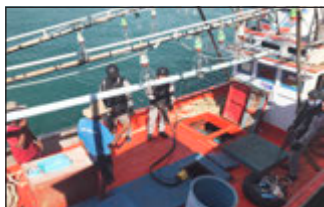
land Allan McKinnon earlier this month confirmed that the Australian Embassy in Bangkok is providing letters to assist Australian nationals seeking to extend their visas. At that time it was deemed a prudent precaution.

"While there has been no announcement on the future of the visa amnesty to date, we understand many people have gone to Immigration to extend their existing visas (or to convert their visas) ahead of the deadline. Many have

## Navy nabs diesel smuggler

A ROYAL THAI NAVY drone searching for Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing vessels last Friday (July 24) identified a modified fishing boat that was later seized while delivering illegal diesel to other fishing boats east of Phuket.

The Navy's Orbiter 3B UAV drone was conducting search operations off Phuket's east coast and along the Krabi coast when one fishing boat believed to be acting suspiciously was spotted near the Koh Yao Noi islands at 10am, said the report by the



The fishing boat was found to be carrying some 1,400 litres of illegal marine diesel. Photo: Eakkapop Thongtub

Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command, based on Phuket.

The HMS *Sriracha* was dispatched to intercept the boat, which was found five nautical miles east of Koh Yao Yai at 10:15am, said the report.

An inspection of the boat, the 'S. Petch Samut 1', found that it had been modified and was not a fishing vessel as registered. Instead it was carrying about 1,000 litres of green-coloured diesel in the bow and another 400 litres in the boat's own fuel tank, the report added.

According to the report, the boat's captain, Eakkaluk Anbut, said the diesel was to be distributed to two fishing boats and their mother ship: the 'Petch Samut 11', the 'Petch Samut 9' and the 'Petch Samut 99'. Eakkapop Thongtub

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## Covid Crash: The real deal

## THE PHUKET PROPERTY GUIDE

Thai Residential  
phuket@thairential.com

In this series of articles we have presented detailed, reasoned and logical explanations for why we believe in the buoyancy of the Phuket property market, but our interpretation of real-life trends and data has been dismissed by some as self-serving propaganda for the property industry.

We accept that it is impossible to reach everyone, but we hope people will have read these articles with an open mind and recognise that a lot of thought has gone into dissecting the arguments for and against a "Covid Crash" in Phuket property. We have never claimed that 2020 is going to be a banner year for real estate on the island, but



In the current market, the Phuket property owners are still holding all the cards.  
Photo: The Creative Exchange / Unsplash

we also do not believe that the market is going to be offering historically deep discounts any time soon.

We would like to use our final article in this series to address some specific arguments presented to us by those convinced we will soon find bargains galore. Some of our responses will obviously revisit what we have already

written, so if you think you've read some of this before, well... you probably have.

1. Property professionals talk property up, not down. That may be, but we have not simply said: "things will be fine because we say so." We have devoted almost 5,000 words to explaining what we believe to be an informed position.

2. An agent has told me to

be ready to snap up bargains. Is this just sales hype? Yes and no. There will be some bargains, but for the most part yes, a market offering bargains galore similar to a property crash in Western markets is just sales hype.

Wherever most property markets have collapsed, a lack of liquidity has almost always been a factor. Rising interest rates, banks not lending, foreclosures create imbalances in property markets leading to widespread bargains. Because properties in Phuket are almost entirely bought for cash, the market is far less susceptible to a crash.

Further, property sales here are driven by tourism. There have been nearly a dozen events in the past 25 years that have damaged tourism here which people thought would affect the property market. The Asian Crisis in 1997 may have had an impact because there was greater borrowing at that time, but the property market in Phuket was in its infancy then, and foreign borrowing is almost non-existent now.

3. We've not yet seen the full economic implications of a protracted lockdown (e.g. job losses, rental losses, bankrupt businesses, higher taxes to claw back government handouts, depreciating property values in other countries, negative equity, mortgage default, negative sentiment, fear).

No we have not, but let us address each of the above:

Job Losses – If someone is still paying the instalments for a new build budget condo, and their finances are extremely tight to begin with, then this could happen. We have conceded this point already. But most people buying condos in Phuket own property elsewhere, and are liquid enough to buy a property for cash. Unless that person's only remaining asset in the world is their Phuket condo, a job loss will not force them to sell.

Rental Losses – The vast majority of rental property owners in Phuket have them to augment their income, not as their sole source of income. In a pinch, they will sell their far more liquid stock and bond portfolios before any properties.

Bankrupt Businesses – Anyone whose business goes bankrupt will have their per-

sonal assets legally separated from their business assets. Bankruptcy would not force the sale of their Phuket condo, unless it was owned by the company. Apart from that, the same would apply to anyone who lost a job (see "Job Losses" above).

Higher Taxes – raising taxes on those who can afford it to recoup some of these stimulus payments will not damage the economy. Vast wealth inequality is far more destructive to an economy than forcing the wealthiest individuals and corporations to pay higher taxes. The notion of taxes as an economic evil is a supply-side myth which has sadly come to be accepted as gospel.

Depreciating Property Values in Home Countries/ Negative Equity/Mortgage Default – the assumption here, we can only gather, is depreciation sends the property into negative equity, which leads to mortgage default. Again, this has zero impact unless their Phuket property is the only thing they have left to sell.

Negative Sentiment/Fear – we've never known masses of people to sell their properties because they were scared.

4. You refer to Phuket returning to normal. It will in time, but this economic damage is unprecedented and the full implications are not yet clear – It is widely accepted that this economic downturn will be the worst since 1929 (if it is not already), and we do not dispute this, but if someone's life is turned upside down financially, and they decide to put their property on the market, they will not immediately reduce their price if the property is not selling. Eventually, they might drop the price by 5% or 10%, but this is not Marbella, Las Vegas or Florida. Phuket has never been a boom-and-bust market, and we don't expect the COVID downturn to turn it into one.

This article was provided by Thai Residential, creators of the 2018/2019 Phuket Property Guide. The 2019/2020 guide is free online and is a comprehensive guide for anyone looking to buy real estate in Phuket safely. Contact Thai Residential directly at Email: [phuket@thairential.com](mailto:phuket@thairential.com) or Tel: +66 9484 11918.

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# Vegetarian Festival takes a COVID hit

**Tanyaluk Sakoot**  
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Fire-walking, bladed-ladder climbing, hot oil bathing and crossing “bridges of nails” have all been banned at this year’s Phuket Vegetarian Festival following a directive from the Phuket Communicable Disease Committee.

However, the committee has made no such rulings on the face piercings that have made the festival famous.

“This year, there will be no supernatural ablutions of faith and flesh – including fire-walking, bladed-ladder climbing, hot oil bathing and nail-bridge crossing,” Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Dr Chalermpong Sukontapol, who sits on the Phuket Communicable Disease Committee, told Chinese shrine administrators at a meeting last week.

People may join the popular street processions, but the ‘Mah Song’ spirit mediums are not permitted to walk the streets. Instead, they may travel in vehicles as part of the procession, Dr Chalermpong said.

“If people would like to walk in a procession, they



can do so but they must wear a mask and keep social distance,” he said.

Health officials will watch over the crowds and take action if necessary, he warned.

“Officials will remove people from the procession if there are too many people joining the parade,” he said.

A key concern is the large crowds that mass at

the raising of the ‘Go Teng’ poles at each participating shrine at sunset the evening before the nine-day festival gets underway.

The festival this year is

to be observed from Oct 17-26, meaning the ceremonies to raise the Go Teng poles will be held from about 6pm on Oct 16.

“During the raising of the

Go Teng poles at the shrines on Oct 16, this event must be re-organized in accordance with the ‘New Normal,’” Dr Chalermpong said.

Screening points to check people for high body temperatures must be set up at the entrance to each shrine, all people joining the ceremony must wear a face mask and social distancing must be observed, he noted.

“People must take action to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and only one Mah Song is to join each activity,” Dr Chalermpong said.

Mah Song assistants are to be kept to a minimum, must wear a face mask at all times and must try to observe social distancing as much as possible.

“All shrines must limit the number of people to allow five square metres per person present,” he added.

As for crowd control at the shrine kitchens during the festival, Dr Chalermpong explained that a raft of health regulations for them is being drawn up.

The rules were to be presented to the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office in the following week, he said.

## Another turtle nest found north of Phuket

OFFICERS AT THE KHAO Lampi – Hat Thai Mueang National Park have reported finding another nest of leatherback turtle eggs, the third such nest found in the area in recent weeks. The three nests have all been laid during the southwest monsoon, which is considered out of season for turtles to lay eggs.

Park Chief Haritchai Ritichuay reported that officers last Sunday (July 26) had found leatherback turtle tracks on the beach about two kilometers south of Khao Nayak, where a turtle nest was found earlier this month.

Officers followed the tracks



The nest was found two kilometres from where another nest was discovered on July 7. Photo: Khao Lampi – Hat Thai Mueang National Park

and found the nest some 90 centimeters deep in the sand.

After confirming that turtle eggs had been laid, the officers covered the nest back up and built a protective enclosure around it to protect it from predators,

Park Chief Haritchai added.

“To let the eggs hatch naturally, officers will not move the eggs,” he said.

A leatherback turtle nest was found on the beach in front of Khao Nayak, the “resident reef” at Khao Lak, on July 7. That nest contained nearly 100 fertilised eggs that are expected to produce younglings.

Just one week earlier, a nest of leatherback turtle eggs were found on Thai Mueang Beach, north of Phuket, which was believed to have been laid by the same turtle that came ashore at Mai Khao Beach just days earlier. Eakkapop Thongtub

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# Sleeping with COVID

## HEALTHY HABITS

Craig Burton

**C**COVID-19 has been linked with worsening mental health worldwide through increasing rates of anxiety, depression and insomnia. Sadly sleep is often underestimated in its role for supporting health. In this article, I will share my thoughts on why sleep is a number 1 priority for anyone seeking to be healthy and lose weight.

A recent survey by SleepStandards titled "Sleep Habits Post Quarantine in the US (2020)" examined sleep habits both before and after lockdown measures caused by the pandemic. Though results are from the US they reflect trends worldwide, even on our beautiful island paradise of Phuket – no place has been untouched by this epidemic and its consequences on many levels. According to the survey:

- 53% indicated they spend less time sleeping than before the pandemic
- 67% believe their sleep was healthier before the beginning of lockdown
- 98% have developed new sleep problems post-lockdown
- 68% feel stress or find it hard to sleep, even after lockdown measures were lifted

### Why is sleep so important?

Sleep is an integral part of the circadian rhythm – a sleep-wake cycle. For millions of years, we evolved and developed according to this circadian rhythm. The sun came up and we went to work and the sun came down and we slept to recover from the work and prepare for the next day.

Sleep is the process that allows us to repair, grow, heal and process information. Therefore quality sleep is linked with: Slowing the aging process; preventing cancers; enhancing brain function like memory and cognition; supporting the immune system; repairing the damage to cells and tissue; and maintaining healthy body fat and retaining muscle mass.

### The Sleep – Body Fat Connection

"If your goal is to lose fat, skipping sleep is like poking sticks in your bicycle wheels," said study director Plamen Penev MD PhD, whose sleep study was published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

There are many reasons why sleep affects fat loss – most to do with creating hormonal imbalances. For example, sleep deprivation leads to cortisol (stress hormone) issues and there is a clear link between stress and fat storage. The thyroid, our master gland of metabolism is also affected and doesn't help burn that fuel as well as we need it to be done. Then sleep affects all the sex hor-



Getting a good night's sleep has been harder for nearly everyone since COVID-19 broke out. Photo: Alexandra Gorn / Unsplash

mones like testosterone that could lead to muscle wastage, and less muscle equals lower metabolism. We now realise that we burn more muscle than fat for fuel when we are sleep deprived and stressed.

### How much sleep is ideal?

In a study involving 9,000 people between 1982 and 1984 (NHANES I), researchers found that people who averaged six hours of sleep per night were 27% more likely to be overweight than their seven-to-nine hour counterparts; and those averaging five hours of sleep per night were 73% more likely to be overweight.

### When should I get to bed?

My advice for those wanting to get healthier and leaner is to make getting to bed earlier (before 10:30-11:00 pm, if possible) and sleeping longer (7-8 hours) just as much a priority as your diet and exercise.

### Does counting sheep work to get to sleep?

Researchers from Oxford University asked 50 insomniacs to try different distraction techniques on certain nights, to see which helped them fall asleep more quickly. Group one used a tranquil and relaxing scene such as a waterfall or being on holiday. Group two counted sheep. Group three did what they wanted.

And the winner... those picturing a relaxing scene fell asleep over 20 minutes earlier than on nights they didn't try the technique.

The loser... poor old sheep counting which took us longer than normal to fall asleep. "Counting sheep is just too

mundane to effectively keep worries away," says researcher Allison Harvey.

### Then what works?

Here are some suggestions for a good night sleep:

- Start slowly – try getting to bed 10-20 minutes earlier each night.
- Sleep in a completely dark room and dim the lights – make your bedroom like a cave as the sleep hormone Melatonin is affected by light
- Food can play a big role in falling asleep and the quality of sleep. Late big meals are one classic issue.
- Exercise is great just as long as it is not too late or exhausting.
- Turn off the computer as TV, and as many electrical devices as early as possible as it affects pineal gland to secrete less melatonin.
- Write in a journal before bed, or as I call it "download the day".
- Use essential oils like lavender and chamomile, and, if necessary, try supplements, like Valerian root.

Sometimes the simplest things in life are often the best solutions. For me getting good sleep is a no-brainer and it is all about consistency, not perfection. This doesn't mean joining a temple, there is still room to enjoy late nights – but like junk food, the problem lies when it becomes the norm, not the exception.

*Craig Burton (BSc, NASM, CISSN) is a practicing Clinical and Sports Nutritionist with over 20 years' experience as a health practitioner. He holds an array of qualifications in nutrition, as well as in health, fitness, mental and lifestyle coaching. To find out more about Craig or contact him go to [www.craigburtoncoaching.com](http://www.craigburtoncoaching.com)*



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# Let's clear the air



## SUSTAINABLY YOURS

Palmer Owyong

**W**hile COVID-19 has brought the world economy to a halt it has also brought the unexpected benefit of clean air. The normal white haze of Phuket has been supplanted by beautiful clear blue skies punctuated by stunning sunsets. Although closing the airports to foreigners is not a long-term solution, perhaps there are a few lessons that we can learn to keep the air clean for the future.

### The Problem

According to a 2014 study by the World Health Organization (WHO) about 7 million people annually die prematurely from air pollution, which leads to respiratory and cardiovascular disease and cancers. COVID-19 has stressed the necessity of clean air as several studies have shown that symptoms from the virus worsen the more polluted the air is.

Evidence also suggests that air pollution is connected to mental health issues, poor academic performance, increased anxiousness, irritability and aggression, which all have a measurable economic and social impact on a community.

### The Problem in Phuket

Phuket generally scores between the low

20s to the 50s on the AQIS (air quality index score), a commonly used metric to rate pollution levels, (anything over 25 is considered unhealthy by the WHO). While it's not as bad as Bangkok, which ranges between 40 and 80, we could improve on it.

The principal causes of poor air quality in Phuket are motorized vehicles, burning of agricultural waste and the incineration of the 800 to 1,000 tons of garbage produced per day on the island.

### Solutions

**Restrict motorized vehicles** from two to three streets near the center of every town on Phuket. Prior to COVID-19, major cities around the world were already restricting cars in the central business districts to fight climate change, reduce air pollution and make the cities more livable. Banning cars also reduces pedestrian deaths, obesity and stress-related diseases, and provides space for housing or parks. In most cities, 40-50% of the centre is allocated to parking.

There are already restrictions on vehicles on the weekends in Patong and Phuket Town. Most of the villages on the island also have at least one street that could be turned into bike lanes, walking paths and gardens. Further, a study by Melbourne University shows that bike lanes positively affect real estate values and increase the revenues for retail stores and restaurants in the area.

**Plant Trees and hedges** to replace parking spaces in the city centres of Phuket with



Roadside fires are a common sight across Phuket, but many also have plastic dumped onto them. Photo: The Phuket News / file

green spaces that improve air quality, reduce noise pollution, cool the ambient temperature, while providing shade and making the area more walkable and visually appealing. A 2016 study by the WHO provides evidence that urban green spaces have a positive impact on the immune system, reduces obesity, improves cognitive function and health conditions including skin cancer, asthma, allergies, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and other stress-related conditions.

**Compost** is made from organic waste and can be used as fertiliser. Some 50-60% of garbage is compostable, which means composting can substantially reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfills, leaking methane gas, or being burned in incinerators. It also results in less polluted waters as it reduces dependence on fertilisers made from fossil fuels and creates an additional revenue stream from our garbage.

**Stop Burning Agricultural Waste.** Across the island you often see smoke bil-

lowing from roadside fires burning organic waste from trees or agricultural waste from farming. These fires are bad enough as they release volatile organic compounds which can cause asthma, COPD and other respiratory diseases. However, plastic is also often added to them, which releases dioxins that can cause cancers, developmental problems in children, and damage our immune systems.

Instead, the organic waste can be turned into compost and bio-gas, which can generate energy or be used for cooking, while the plastic can be recycled.

Although COVID-19 has devastated Phuket's economy it has also given us an opportunity to rethink how we live on the island. Clean air is a basic human right and is fundamental to our physical and mental health. If done correctly, cleaning it up will not only improve the quality of life on Phuket but also improve our social and economic well-being.

*Palmer Owyong is an environmental activist working with the Kamala Green Club and the Global Sustainability Hub.*



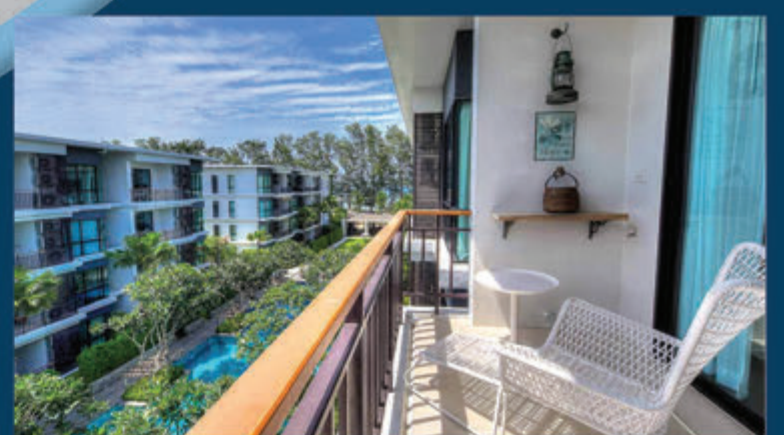
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## POP QUIZ

1. How many stars are there on the New Zealand flag?
2. What is the world's tallest grass which can grow up to 90cm in a day?
3. Who wrote the classic novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*?
4. How many bones does an adult human have?
5. In which country was the world's first female Prime Minister elected in 1960?

Answers below, centre

## SUDOKU

Medium

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

## Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

- Across**
1. Driven transport
  5. Jewish teacher
  10. Kind of instrument
  14. "By yesterday!"
  15. Betelgeuse's constellation
  16. "Cogito, \_\_\_ sum"
  17. Rarely
  20. Back
  21. Outdo
  22. Annexes
  25. Dates
  26. Chop (off)
  29. Piques
  31. Can't stand
  35. "The \_\_\_ Daba Honeymoon"
  36. Andrea Doria's domain
  38. Arabic for "commander"
  39. Fab Four film
  43. Otherwise
  44. Character
  45. Poetic meadow
  46. Mideast capital
  49. Goose speech
  50. Time zone
  51. Froth
  53. Big laugh
  55. Astronomer
  58. Choker
  62. Destination of the disgruntled?
  65. Dirty coat
  66. Sea gear
  67. Ball field covering
  68. Barley beards
  69. 1980's-90's ring champ
  70. Cut down
- Down**
1. Golden Triangle country
  2. "\_\_\_ She Lovely?"
  3. Disabling spray
  4. "La Bohème," e.g.
  5. Howard of "Happy Days"
  6. Victorian, for one
  7. Food collectors?
  8. Dense mass
  9. Accustomed
  10. Learn again
  11. "Aeneid" figure
  12. These may be inflated
  13. Family head
  18. Deep blue
  19. Old weapon
  23. Attracted
  24. Taste, e.g.
  26. Cake part
  27. Ancient editorial marks
  28. Buddy-buddy
  30. Pole position?
  32. "South Pacific" hero
  33. Trig functions
  34. Foot the bill
  37. Dislike intensely
  40. Flyers
  41. Like old recordings
  42. Obliquely
  47. Slay
  48. Most healthy
  52. Compassion
  54. Licks
  55. Cultivate
  56. Long, long time (var.)
  57. Sonata, e.g.
  59. Daunting exam
  60. "Buona \_\_\_" (Italian greeting)
  61. Glimpse
  62. Fed. construction overseer
  63. Blood group system
  64. Gabriel, for one

## Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1. Four; 2. Bamboo; 3. Thomas Hardy; 4) 206; 5) Sri Lanka

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20							21							
				22		23	24		25					
26	27	28			29			30		31		32	33	34
35					36			37			38			
39			40						41	42				
43						44						45		
46					47	48		49				50		
				51			52		53			54		
	55	56					57			58		59	60	61
62								63	64					
65					66						67			
68					69						70			

## Solutions to last week's puzzles:

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

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

## GOT YOUR NUMBER

1

American on average consumes the same amount of resources as 32 Kenyans in a year.

38

times Mike Tyson had been arrested by the time he turned 13 years old.

90

percent of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive today.

1,639 million

is India's estimated population by the year 2050, nearly equal to the current populations of the US and China combined.

29 billion

US dollars is how much the Mexican drug cartels combined made in 2010 – about the same as Google at the time.

Source: Uberfacts

## ISLAND VIEW



Wat Patong cat. Photo: Robert Tosh

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

## This week in history

July 31, 30 BC

Battle of Alexandria: Mark Antony achieves a minor victory over Octavian's forces, but most of his army subsequently deserts, leading to his suicide.

Aug 1, 1981

MTV begins broadcasting in the United States and airs its first video, "Video Killed the Radio Star" by The Buggles.

Aug 2, 1870

Tower Subway, the world's first

underground tube railway, opens in London, England.

Aug 3, 1492

Christopher Columbus sets sail from Palos de la Frontera, Spain.

Aug 4, 1975

The Japanese Red Army takes more than 50 hostages at the AIA Building housing several embassies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The hostages include the US consul and the Swedish Chargé d'affaires.



The Buggles: Video Killed The Radio Star

The gunmen win the release of five imprisoned comrades

and fly with them to Libya.

Aug 5, 1981

President Ronald Reagan fires 11,359 striking air-traffic controllers who ignored his order for them to return to work.

Aug 6, 1991

Tim Berners-Lee releases files describing his idea for the World Wide Web. WWW debuts as a publicly available service on the Internet.

Source: Wikipedia



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**SAT** 1 AUG



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# Cricket's pilot scheme offers sports fans hope

## CRICKET

AFP

Surrey cricketers Mark Stoneman and Ryan Patel last Sunday (July 26) experienced something no other sportsmen in England have enjoyed since March when they strode to the wicket at The Oval – applause from a crowd desperate to witness live action in the flesh after the coronavirus lockdown.

The Premier League football season has been played out in empty stadia with cardboard cut-outs of fans at some grounds proving no substitute for noise and atmosphere.

Frankie Dettori and wonder mare Enable were applauded into the winners enclosure at Ascot after a historic third victory in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes on July 25 by 30 people – all on-course staff, trainers and owners.

Stoneman and Patel had 1,000 members – mostly from Surrey but some from rivals Middlesex – to cheer them on a day that even the



Surrey welcomes the first members of the public to a live sporting event in England since the coronavirus pandemic swept through the country in mid-March. Photo: AFP

unpredictable British weather did not wish to ruin with the sun making welcome if sporadic appearances.

The spectators sat in alternate rows due to social distancing rules.

Those who came as a group or a couple could sit beside each other in the 1845 Stand named after the year the club was founded.

Richard Gould, the long-serving Surrey chief executive, said lessons had already been learned from Sunday's pilot scheme.

"Primarily how you allocate seats," he said.

"Normally with online ticketing systems you fill your boots in terms of selling seats but this is a different scenario.

"We looked at a variety of models regarding socially distanced seating and that has been a challenge."

The outcome of cricket's pilot scheme will no doubt significantly impact and shape the future of how spectators are re-integrated and experience a range of live sports events.

Gail Hadley has been com-

ing to see Surrey for "donkey's years" as a fan said she was very impressed with the way Surrey had dealt with the social distancing.

"I think the way they've done it, it's really well done," she said.

That's music to Gould's ears who acknowledges hosting such a pilot scheme is no bad thing for the profile of the club.

"Always good for the profile," he said smiling. "We like to show off sometimes, everyone does."



The US Grand Prix has been scrapped. Photo: AFP

## F1 in Americas cut

### FORMULA ONE

THE GRANDS PRIX IN the United States, Mexico, Brazil and Canada have been scrapped this year but three races in Europe have been added to the coronavirus-affected season, Formula One said last Friday (July 24).

The US Grand Prix in Austin, Texas, had been scheduled for Oct 23, with a race in Mexico City a week later and Brazil on Nov 13, but with coronavirus infections rising in all those countries, organisers have abandoned attempts to hold races there.

The race in Canada had originally been scheduled for June, but plans to hold it later in the season have been

scrapped because Canadian travel restrictions make it impossible to hold the race. The race at the historic Nurburgring circuit, which last saw F1 action in 2013, will take place on Oct 11.

F1 said it still intended to hold between 15 and 18 races "and end in the Gulf in mid-December".

The sport was hit hard by the pandemic, with the season postponed just hours before the opening practice of the traditional curtain raiser in Melbourne in March.

The season finally got underway this month with two races in Austria then Hungary last weekend. The next two races are at Silverstone in England today (July 31) and Aug 7.

AFP

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# Sport

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**Cricket fans lead return to matches > p11**

## AND THAT'S A WRAP!

### FOOTBALL

**Ben Tirebuck**

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The longest season in Premier League history finally drew to a close last Sunday (July 26) as the fate of several teams was sealed on a dramatic day of action.

Liverpool were crowned champions last month but for there was still much to play for elsewhere in the final 90 minutes of a campaign that started on August 9 last year and was interrupted by a three-month coronavirus shutdown.

Manchester United and Leicester City went into their game knowing that, with the correct result, either team could finish the day in a top four position and therefore qualify for next season's Champions League.



Liverpool players celebrate as they lift the Premier League trophy. Photo: AFP

United seized the opportunity as goals from their inspirational January signing Bruno Fernandes and Jesse Lingard secured a 2-0 victory, resulting in a third place finish in the table.

Chelsea finished one spot

behind them after a 2-0 win over Wolves thanks to goals from the resurgent Olivier Giroud and the hugely impressive youngster Mason Mount.

The Blues have had a fine campaign under former player

Frank Lampard in his debut season in the hot seat and also have the chance of landing silverware tomorrow when they face Arsenal in the FA Cup Final at Wembley.

After a run of poor form post lockdown and the United

defeat, Leicester finished in fifth and will play in the Europa League next season. They will be joined by Spurs whose 1-1 draw with Crystal Palace was enough to secure sixth spot.

### Relegation dogfight

There was genuine drama at the bottom as Aston Villa, Bournemouth and Watford all fought against the remaining two relegation spots.

Villa managed to salvage a 1-1 draw at West Ham thanks to captain and talisman Jack Grealish's fine strike which, ultimately, was enough to keep them in the top flight for another year.

Watford were 0-3 down to Arsenal inside 33 minutes and, despite pulling two goals back, were resigned to their fate.

Bournemouth were the third and final team to be rel-

egated, despite a 3-1 victory at Everton. Questions will now be raised as to whether manager Eddie Howe will remain in charge or be given the chance for an immediate return to the top flight.

On the individual awards front, Leicester's Jamie Vardy won the Golden Boot with 23 goals, edging out Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Southampton striker Danny Ings by one goal. In doing so, 33-year-old Vardy became the oldest player to win the award.

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson won the Football Writers' Association Player of the Year and his manager Jurgen Klopp received the League Managers' Association Manager of the Year after the Reds' were generally imperious in landing their first domestic league title in 30 years.



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