



Friendship Unity Foundation (Thong Sia Siang Thung) Hat Yai

Press Conference of Hat Yai Charity Event and Lunar New Year Celebration 2023

On January 5, 2023, Friendship Unity Foundation (Thong Sia Siang Thung) Hat Yai held the press conference of Hat Yai Charity Event and Lunar New Year Celebration 2023. It is an honor to have Mr. Ekachai Lertwibullak, Deputy Governor of Songkhla Province, presided at the press conference, as well as Pol.Lt.Gen. Sakorn Thongmune, Mayor of Hat Yai; Ms. Manthana Putharak, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Hat Yai Office; Mr. Pichai Wattanapayungkul, President of Thai-Chinese Association, Songkhla Province; Major General Wara Vechapinan, commander of the Songkhla Provincial Police; and Mr. Arunchai Sirimahachai, President of Friendship Unity Foundation (Thong Sia Siang Thung) Hat Yai; together with the private sector and other organizations who attended.

Mr. Arunchai Sirimahachai revealed the background of 2023 procession of gods and misfortune-dispelling ceremony that the Foundation was firstly founded because of the people who had faith in Luang Pu Tai Hong Zhou Si. They contributed to the construction of the Foundation, medicines for those in need, and coffins for unclaimed bodies. In the past, the Foundation would repay the donors by giving a blessing and visiting their house to play music for them every Lunar New Year. But the number of believers and donors has considerably increased, thus the way of expressing gratitude to them has changed. In addition, no events were allowed in the past few years due to the COVID-19 situation in Thailand. However, now the pandemic situation is unfolding, and COVID-19 control measures have recently been much more relaxed.

This year, the Friendship Unity Foundation (Thong Sia Siang Thung) Hat Yai decided to arrange the greater misfortune-dispelling ceremony as well as Lunar New Year celebration than it ever had to celebrate the Foundation's 65th anniversary. The event takes place on **January 21-30, 2023**, for 10 days and 10 nights. All tourists and Hat Yai citizens are welcome to join. There will be hundreds of shops selling local products (OTOP), including spectacular performances and concerts every night.

Highlights of the event:

- January 25-27 (19:00) - Spectacular multimedia performance (Light & Sound) by Supakson, a leading company in light and sound production in Asia
- January 28 (18:00) - Sacred procession of the gods around Hat Yai accompanied by various performances (Dragon Dance, Lion Dance, Eng Kor Udon Thani, etc.) The Foundation has asked for cooperation from companies and shops along the route to set up altar tables during the procession to receive blessings.
- January 29 (18:00) - Fire-walking ritual
- January 30 (10:00) - Celebrate the day of the birth of Jade Emperor (Tian Gong)
- January 30 (19:00) - Join the ceremony to ward off bad luck and receive blessings from the gods