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Bangkok, 28th February 2020: The spirit and energy of boat racing returned to Bangkok today with the start of the Elephant Boat Race and River Festival, taking place by the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

On land, the evening festivities kicked off with a live graffiti display by celebrated street artist Alex Face, the main stage was headlined by top bands and DJs and a spectacular fireworks display illuminated the Bangkok skyline. On the water sixteen teams are competing for coveted trophies across the youth and main categories, which included teams from the Royal Thai Navy as well as provincial teams. Each team was paddling a specially commissioned boat decorated with artistic elephant heads rising elegantly above the water, and tails inspired by traditional Thai fish motifs.

Each race takes place across 200m with 4 teams per heat, the first to cross the finish line wins and progresses closer to winning the royal trophy graciously granted by His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua.

While the teams battle it out on the river; entertainment at the riverside festival includes the Indoor Rowing Tournament with amateur rowers demonstrating their prowess by rowing their fastest time for the chance to win luxury Anantara prizes. Visitors to the three day event are also treated to luxury champagne tents, an interactive display from Thailand Kite Association, and musical concerts by top Thai artists including Paradox, Oat Pramote and a line-up of international DJs. The foodie village is well stocked with a host of pop up food stalls by a selection of Thailand's top restaurants and Bangkok's favourite chefs.

Tapping into its conservational expertise, Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas is aiming to raise significant charitable donations through ticket sales that will in turn all be donated to elephant

related projects throughout Thailand.

List of Sponsored Teams

1. Raja Navy (Royal Thai Navy) - Citi
2. Singburi - JW Blue Label
3. Samut Prakarn - PWC Thailand
4. Nonthaburi Municipality - Moose
5. Thailand National Sports University Lampang Campus - Casillero Del Diablo
6. Phet Nava - Bangkok Bank
7. Suratthani - Chang
8. Pradu Thong Goddess - Keith and Kym