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Life goes on

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PATONG: Just five days after the tsunami hit Patong Beach, astonishing progress had been made with the clean-up of the resort town.

Tourists were back in the water or strolling along the sand, though the view was very different from the clutter that existed before the wave hit. With no beach chairs or umbrellas, one could see along the entire three-kilometer stretch of sand.

A few boats dotted the bright blue sea, flat calm after the massive upheaval on December 26, but gone were the jet-skis and para-sailing speedboats.

It was quieter, too, with no vendors selling soft drinks, no motorbikes, no rental cars and no tuk-tuks to disturb the town's new-found peace. It was almost as though the beach had been sent back in time to 20 years ago.

On the other side of the beach road, however, the damage from the tsunami was all too evident, with huge piles of rubble dotting the landscape.

Workers from Patong Municipality were working alongside employees of local businesses cleaning up the area around their workplaces.



Within days of the disaster, tourists were back on the beach in Patong and elsewhere on the island.

Sadly, many of the trees that were such a feature of the beachfront, offering welcome shade from the sun, were fated to die. Yellowing leaves carpeted the brown grass as too much salt in the ground took its toll.

Panu Maswongsa, Marketing Director of Patong Beach

Resort and Vice-President of Marketing of the Phuket Tourist Association, told the *Gazette* that the occupancy rate of the resort before the tsunami was about 70%, but after the wave hit, all the guests were moved to others hotels. The resort was closed for repairs and renovation.

"The water was about waist-deep and damaged guest rooms, the generator, the swimming pool and the air conditioning, so we will be closed somewhere between a month and three months.

"I believe the damage to Patong overall is about 30% – mostly the businesses next to the beach," K. Panu added.

Deputy Mayor of Patong Municipality Chairat Sukabal said that damage had been estimated at about 3 billion baht, and that it would take two months to restore the area, especially the beachfront.

K. Chairat said, "To repair the public infrastructure, such as fixing the roads, sidewalks and to "re-beautify" the area, we will have to ask for funds from the central government.

He added that whether jet-skis and parasail operators, as well as rental vehicle operators and other vendors, will be allowed to ply the beachfront again was also a decision for the central government in Bangkok to make.

"We will hold a public hearing to ask for the opinions of local people about whether beachfront vendors should return," he added.

Kamala clean-up well underway

KAMALA: The small beach community of Kamala, on Phuket's west coast, is picking up the pieces left behind by the December 26 tsunami.

Kamala was the area on Phuket worst hit by the wave. There, it claimed some 65 lives, including nine foreigners, left 50 families homeless and damaged a further 200 homes.

By December 31, the beach was mostly clean, but infrastructural damage was readily apparent, with large bites taken out of the beach road by the tsunami.

The area behind the road was a scene of devastation. The wooden school vanished when the wave smashed its way across the main road and into the vil-

lage beyond. The nearby *wat* was also severely damaged.

Soldiers, Kamala council workers and local people worked hard to clear up the area, and Sajaphol Thongsom, Chief Administrative Officer of the Kamala Tambon Administration Organization, said that the beach was now clear and that tourists could come to swim and relax.

"A private company has been hired to clear away all debris and ruins by January 10," he said, adding that the tsunami had caused damage of about 1.2 billion baht in Kamala.

"I believe it will take about five years to restore the area [to its previous state]. About 30% of the total area of Kamala was

Continued on page 2



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The clean-up continues along Kamala's beachfront, where the road was severely damaged.

Kamala clean-up under way

From page 1

damaged," he said. "As for the businesses in Kamala, I believe it will take no longer than two years for them to recover fully."

K. Sajaphol said that most business owners were not deterred from staying in the area, and that most of them wanted to rebuild their businesses.

However, he said that some

business owners were worried about investing in reestablishing their businesses for fear that they might be wiped out all over again.

K. Sajaphol added that Kamala would take advantage of the "ground zero" situation to regulate beach vendors and to keep redevelopment of the beach area under control.

Early warning center 'by end of month'

PHUKET: A disaster warning center aimed at reducing the death and injury rate in any future tsunami may be established as early as the end of this month, the *Gazette* has learned.

Smith Dharmasaroja, newly assigned to the office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for examining what can be learned from the events of December 26, told a January 3 press conference at Phuket Provincial Hall that he was unable to give details of the centre before he had

spoken with Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

But a source told the *Gazette* that the center might be established by the end of January.

K. Smith did, however, reveal the results of five days of research and cooperation between Thai and Japanese experts.

The priority, he said, was to set up an effective way of monitoring wave activity, coupled with an efficient system – possibly through television and mobile phones – for warning people that a tsunami was on its way.

TAT to launch drive to publicize recovery

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET CITY: Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Governor Juthamas Siriwan said on January 3 that any delay in recovering from the December 26 tsunami will cost the country 10 billion baht a month in lost tourism revenue.

As a result, she said, "We are in a hurry to let people abroad know that [any danger from] the tsunami has already passed, and many tourist destinations [that were damaged] are recovering and are expected to be fully operational within a month," she said at Phuket Provincial Hall.

"We have to send out teams to publicize the facts about the damage and our recovery efforts, especially to places such as Sweden."

TAT officials would visit Sweden to offer official condolences for the many Swedish nationals who lost their lives in the disaster, she added.

"On January 24, media and tour agencies from Japan will visit Phuket. They will be among the first groups to arrive. We also have contacted Austrian media and have asked them to visit as well," she said, adding that, with good cooperation from everybody, the Thai tourism industry would recover soon.

The announcement followed some anger brewing in Patong about the depiction of the town by the media. A member of a Marine Security unit sent by the US Embassy in Bangkok to help with the clean-up, echoed those feelings when he said he was not happy with the media, especially TV, for showing only pictures of the damage.

"Many people have been helping to clean up Patong since the first day and many employees are back at work, but the television stations still show pictures of the damage. In fact, everything looks much better now. In Patong only [the beach] road and some hotels were damaged but the beach looks so beautiful.

"Why don't they update their pictures?" he asked.

Phuket Tourist Association President Pattanapong Aikwanich said, "People in other countries do not have the same information as us. They do not know that we are not a dangerous place that no one can visit any more. The number of booking cancellations is rising with this kind of news, which is terrible."

K. Pattanapong said the first priority is to clear up damaged areas so people could visit. He accepted that a lot of damage was done, but added that it could be quickly repaired.

"Karon, for example, suffered little damage, and there are many places in good condition. Even in Patong, there are businesses along the beach road that

are still in good condition, and the hotels are ready for tourists.

"The second priority must be restoring the infrastructure, such as power and water supply, and communications and Internet access systems, which I think will not take long.

"It will take a few months to get everything back to the situation before the disaster. I think most of the business owners who had their businesses totally destroyed can rebuild their businesses by themselves a little," said K. Pattanapong.

"But I think that the government must help them by cooperating with financial institutes and getting them to offer loans to fix damaged businesses."

Dive boss slams 'shameful' report

PHUKET: Dive operator Jeroen Deknatel, owner of Fantasea Divers and the live-aboard boat *Ocean Rover*, slammed US TV network CBS for a report in its evening news on January 3 that "paints the wrong picture about the true level of coral damage in the Similans."

He complained that negative comments were given undue weight in the news report, and that footage of undamaged reefs, shot after the tsunami, was misused.

"Footage was [used] in a 'before and after' arrangement that was not consistent with the real situation.

"All the beautiful 'before' footage shown by CBS was actually filmed *after* the tsunami," Mr Deknatel fumed.

"CBS should be ashamed of what they did here," he added.

At the time of going to press the *Gazette* was unable to get a comment from CBS.

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DNA centers set up to help ID victims

PHUKET: The Scientific Crime Detection Division (SCDD) of the Royal Thai Police has set up three centers in Phuket and one in Krabi to facilitate the collection of DNA samples from relatives of missing people in an effort to identify the victims of the tsunami.

Wachira Phuket Hospital, Patong Hospital and Phuket City Hall are the island's sampling centers, while Krabi Meritime Hotel is the mainland center.

A doctor speaking from Krabi, who identified himself only as Dr Ongkarn, said that the procedure was simple, requiring either a mouth swab or a hair sample to be taken from relatives.

"Samples have also been carefully taken from the deceased, and forensic specialists have already begun the process of trying to match up samples," he said.

All samples will be sent to the SCDD headquarters in Bangkok for mapping, matching and storage.

Telephone numbers for the centers are as follows:

- Wachira Phuket Hospital 66 (0) 4-7746070
- Phuket City Hall 66 (0) 6-5083857
- Krabi Meritime Hotel (special call center) 66 (0) 75-620028-46
- National Police Office, Forensic Science Division, Bangkok 66 (0) 2-2051744, 66 (0) 2-2527930

English-speaking staff are manning the phones and the centers.

Sompong Boonsri, an officer from Mai Khao Tambon Administration Organization explained that all the bodies currently stored at the Sea Gypsy cemetery at Mai Khao have been tagged with as much identifying information as possible and that records will be kept until identification can be made.

— *Searching for a missing person: page 23*



Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and Interior Minister Bhokin Bhalakula listen to local people's pleas for assistance.

Bodies 'will be kept until identified'

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET: Interior Minister Bhokin Bhalakula has stressed that the bodies of foreign victims of the tsunami will not be cremated or buried before they can be identified.

His announcement rescinded an earlier statement by Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura that burials would begin by December 30 at a site in Mai Khao.

Speaking at a press conference at the emergency center at Phuket Provincial Hall on New Year's Eve, K. Bhokin said the bodies of foreigners are now being kept in six cold storage containers at Mai Khao, on the left side of the main highway leading off Phuket, approximately one kilometer be-

yond the Tah Chat Chai police checkpoint.

The Minister said more containers were on the way, as more bodies continue to arrive at the site from Phang Nga.

"Victims' corpses will be stored so that they can be identified and returned to relatives for proper funerary rites, in accordance with their own religious beliefs," he said.

TAT gets B20m to support tourists

PHUKET: The Government has given the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) permission to spend 20 million baht on supporting tourists in the six provinces affected by the tsunami.

Tourism and Sports Minister Sontaya Kunplome said the money would be used to finance

Local tsunami relief funds

PHUKET: Worldwide, hundreds of relief funds have been set up to help victims of the tsunami.

Following are bank account details of some major local funds.

Earthquake Rescue Fund (administered by the Governor of Phuket): Krung Thai Bank, Phuket Branch; Account name: Earthquake Rescue Fund; Account number: 805-0-02275-7; Swift code: KTDTHB. Donors are asked to email info@lynxmgmt.com or fax 076-200-552 after depositing funds.

Phuket Red Cross Soci-

ety: Krung Thai Bank, Phuket Branch; Account name: Red Cross; Account number 805-1-46915-1.

Kusoldharm Rescue Foundation: Bank of Ayudhya, Phunphon Branch, Phuket City, Phuket; Account Name: Kusoldharm Foundation; Account Number 297-108886-3.

Rotary Club of Patong: Bangkok Bank, Patong Branch, Phuket. Account name: Rotary Club of Patong Beach; Account number: 563-0-316460; Swift code: BKKBTHBK.

Central Internet resource set up for victim information

PHUKET: A central Internet resource for information on victims of the tsunami has been set up by the Royal Thai Police at www.csiphuket.com.

The police site, "The Official Thai Tsunami Information Center", has Thai, English, Japanese, Chinese, French, German and Spanish versions and contains long lists of people injured or found dead since the tsunami struck Ranong, Phang Nga, Phuket, Krabi, Trang and Satun.

There is also a section for posting details of missing people, and a links page listing a large number of other resources on the Internet relating to the disaster.

Pol Col Paween Pongsirin, Superintendent of Phuket City Police Station, said that at least 20 programmers from the Royal Thai Police, along with volunteers, are constantly updating the website from the Information

Center at Phuket City Police Station. He explained that people can search not only for names but also for details about the injured and the dead.

"For example, we are including details such as rings on victims' fingers, photos of the deceased and locations where bodies were found."

The site warns that some of the photographs are "horrendous and revolting".

Col Paween added that at least 10 officers are on duty at Phuket Provincial Hall to receive reports from Thais or tourists about lost passports, ID cards or other personal documents.

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Khao Lak's terrible aftermath

Following the tsunami, the rising star of Thai tourism, Khao Lak, is now a disaster area.

The resort was pounded by a massive wall of water estimated by experts to have been 12 meters in height, compared with the waves of five or six meters that swept over coastal regions of Phuket and Krabi.

The reason for the differ-

ence in wave heights was attributed to the slope of the continental shelf off Phang Nga, said an international panel of experts studying the tsunami.

Nearly all structures along the beach were devastated, the waves ravaging everything in their path and pushing wreckage back all the way back past Highway 4, the main road through the area.

Before the tsunami, the road was lined with vegetation along much of its length. Now it affords an open view of devastation stretching kilometers.

A fisherwoman, K. Sa- waad, told the *Gazette*, "I saw the huge wave come more than one kilometer onto the land. It was as high as the casuarina trees that lined the beach." She lost her home and two family members and now has nowhere to live.

In the days following the disaster, dead bodies awaiting removal were lined up in rows under a makeshift marquee, many with their limbs frozen through rigor mortis in grotesque positions. On several, arms and fingers point skyward as if frozen in a final, terrified plea to God – a plea that went unanswered.

The reek of rotting flesh from unrecovered bodies, min-



The devastation is so complete that it is now difficult to tell what once stood along low-lying areas such as Bang Niang Beach.

– Photo by Tassaporn Srisod

gling with mud and stagnant pools of seawater, permeated everything.

One of the many volunteer relief workers was Dusit Duangmanee, a teacher at Satee Phang Nga School.

He said local people who survived were still in shock for days after, with many refusing to come down from hillsides out of fear that more giant waves would hit the shoreline.

As the area was cut off from traffic and telecommunications were down following the disaster, rumors spread unchecked among the survivors, he added.

Some feared that a weapons armory in the Royal Thai Navy base in Tab Lamu, just south of Khao Lak, would explode.

Others attributed the waves to the wrath of Mother Nature, saying the disaster was punishment for disregarding the environment during the area's headlong rush to develop as a tourist destination in recent years.

Even among the least superstitious, the idea appears to have some eerie resonance; the devastation was so complete in many areas that it appears never to have been built upon at all.

As news of the devastation

finally began to reach the public days after the event, the rescue effort was brisk, with aid units arriving from all over Thailand and abroad.

But the task ahead of them was overwhelming. Official figures put the confirmed dead at 4,077, with 5,597 injured and 958 still missing.

Rescue worker Tiina Saarikoski of the Finnish Red Cross said some 200 Finns were still missing 10 days after the tsunami, and that a Finnish police team was still trying to identify corpses.

"Now we have completed our mission. We have got all the dead and injured Finns back to Finland. Now we are starting another mission, assessing the medical facilities in the area, possibly to help in rebuilding them."

"When I was first here on December 29, it was chaos. But now it is much better organized. The local people have done a great job here ... everything seems to be under control."

"It's nice to come back and see everything working so effectively."

Given the scale of the damage, the long-term prospects for Khao Lak are far less encouraging than for Phuket.

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A somber start to the new year

PHUKET: About 500 people gathered at Central Festival Phuket on the outskirts of Phuket City on New Year's Eve, in a somber and emotional candlelit gathering to remember those killed by the December 26 tsunami.

Interior Minister Bhokin Bhalakula, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura and government officers also attended the memorial gathering.

Each person received a candle and a white rose. Songs, in both Thai and English, were sung to encourage survivors and commemorate those who died.

At midnight the candles were lit and there was a moment of silence for the victims.

In Patong, a couple of dozen people assembled on the beach to light candles. Couples hugged tearfully as they looked out at the sea from which the destruction had thundered in just six days earlier.

The numbers might have been greater had it not been for the heavy police and private security presence along nearby roads, with cars being prevented from driving into the area as part of measures to stamp out looting.

13 held for looting Patong businesses

PATONG: Police arrested 13 people for looting damaged businesses in the Patong area.

Pol Col Teeraphol Thipjaroen, the Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, told the *Gazette* that since December 26 his officers had arrested nine Thais and four Burmese for looting.

"People engaged in theft at a time of crisis like this are subject to severe penalties and will not receive bail. They have already appeared in court and are now awaiting further hearings before the judge," Col Teeraphol added.

Under Thai law, anyone found guilty of theft "...by taking advantage of ... distress or calamity, or by taking advantage of public panic" faces imprisonment of up to five years and a fine of up to 10,000 baht.

He noted that the owners of a shop on the beach road had reported that some of the jewelry

in it had been swept out onto the beach and into the sea by the receding tsunami, but that the shop's safe, containing cash and gems worth about 3 million baht, had been stolen.

Col Teeraphol added, "At night, police officers are standing guard around shops that have been damaged to prevent looting. Business owners have also employed private security companies to do the same."

However, he added, the situation in Patong has improved greatly. Tourists can travel in safety to the town, and there is still plenty of accommodation that was not damaged by the tsunami.

"The beach is clean, the water is fine for swimming and the entertainment area in Soi Bangla is already open again for business," Col Teeraphol added.

— *Dead robbed on Phi Phi: p6*
— *Editorial: p18*



Candles lit in a hole dug on Patong Beach in remembrance of the dead are also a reminder of the fragility of life.

A strained atmosphere pervaded nearby Soi Crcocodile where hundreds jammed the bars, trying hard to put the horror of 2004 behind them and celebrate life in 2005, not always with success.

Many watering holes have reopened after rapid repairs. Jum, a waitress at a bar in Soi Katoey, told the *Gazette* that most bars in Soi Bangla and the side-sois were only lightly damaged, and many were open again three days earlier.

"On the first night we reopened there were only a few tourists who came to drink," she said, "but tonight there are lots of them."

Her words were almost drowned out by the racket of firecrackers as bar owners sought to drive out evil spirits.

At midnight, fireworks were let off by a number of hotels along the waterfront in Patong and Kalim. Reflected in the calm sea, their beauty was eerily sad.

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To those who helped and are helping

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After the fact: Andaman coast to

The government will appoint Smith Tumsaroach, formerly of the Meteorological Department, to take charge of installing a tsunami warning system, in a bid to prevent a repeat of the catastrophe triggered by the killer waves of December 26, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said.

K. Smith had been warning about the possibility of giant waves striking Thailand's west coast since 1993, but his warnings fell on deaf ears. Many ridiculed him, some even suggested that he was crazy.

K. Smith is to take the post of Vice-Minister to the Prime Minister's Office and will coordinate with local and foreign seismologists to establish a system suitable for the country, the PM added.

The prime minister pledged full financial support for a tsunami warning center in the Andaman Sea, saying his government could afford to spend the 1.2 billion baht needed to establish a system similar to those already in place in Hawaii and Japan.

"Warnings should not be limited to tsunamis and earthquakes, but [the system should] also offer warnings of other calamities, such as storms and floods," said K. Smith, adding that the system would consist of seismographic buoys off the country's western shoreline.

Collateral damage: Softened soil could trigger landslides and sinkholes in the provinces overrun by the December 26 tsunami, the Mineral Resources Department warned, adding that it had sent geological survey teams to inspect the quake impact on the provinces.

Phi Phi looting: In Krabi, 200 members of a "rescue" foundation abruptly left the Phi Phi islands after police searched them and found looted items on some of them.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova gives PM Thaksin Shinawatra a check for US\$10,000 to help Thai tsunami victims. She later went on to defeat former world No 1 Venus Williams 6-4, 6-3 in the Tourism Authority of Thailand Tennis Invitational in Chiang Mai on January 2.



tion abruptly left the Phi Phi islands after police searched them and found looted items on some of them.

Somkiat Kittithornkul, general manager of the Phi Phi Island Cabana Hotel, said some rescue workers were seen taking valuables from dead bodies.

A police search found that some 20 of the workers had valuables looted from the dead.

The looting prompted the provincial administration to deploy police to man the piers on the island and the mainland, in order to search rescue workers leaving the island and to check whether people had disguised themselves as rescue workers before boarding boats to the islands.

Many bodies had no identification cards or documents, mainly because their wallets

were missing, said Pol Maj General Sermphan Singthong, Krabi's police chief.

No relief: Thieves stole donated goods from a relief center where the goods were being kept pending distribution to surviving villagers in Khao Lak, said Somkiat Boonprasarn, head of the donation unit operating in Phang Nga province.

K. Somkiat said there was insufficient manpower to prevent the theft of donated goods, adding that most officials were too busy with rescue operations to guard stocks.

DNA analysis: Two 24-hour DNA analysis centers have been set up at Bangkok International Airport and in downtown Bangkok to collect DNA

samples from relatives of those who were killed or went missing in the December 26 tsunami, to allow for match-up and identification.

The services were set up on January 1 and will run for at least a month, said Pol Maj Gen Chuan Vorawanit, head of the Scientific Crime Detection Division.

Thais and foreigners may have their DNA analyzed at the centers, which are located on the arrival floor of Terminal 2 at the airport and at the division's offices on Henri Dunant Rd in Bangkok.

Officials will collect hair strands and tissue samples from inside the mouth, analyze them and compare the results against the DNA taken from bodies believed to be those of relatives. Each analysis will take about two days to complete.

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get warning system

Salt licked: A village headman on the island of Koh Phra Thong in Phang Nga expressed concerns about the fate of about 40 rare sambar deer living on the island, where fresh water in natural reservoirs had been turned salty by seawater from the giant waves that swept the province on December 26.

"The deer are becoming thinner and lethargic," Neramit Meepien said. He called on animal lovers to help save the deer. He said that only 40 sambar deer lived in his area, co-existing in harmony with locals.

"We have always taken care of them and prevented outsiders from hunting them, but now they're facing death after the giant waves," he said.

State of alert: Despite the agony of Thailand's Andaman coast provinces, armed separatists have been plotting coordinated attacks in the three southernmost provinces to mark the first anniversary of their violent insurgency, intelligence sources warned.

"They have targeted checkpoints and security force bases.

They plan to use heavy weapons to launch simultaneous attacks on officers in various areas," the sources said.

Bomb and arson attacks against schools and government agencies are also planned, the sources added.

The ongoing separatist violence, which has killed more than 500 people, erupted a year ago with an early January raid on an army camp and the torching of 20 government schools.

The intelligence sources said they and their colleagues had called on all relevant agencies to step up their security measures and to be on high alert.

Cracking up: Villagers in Nakhon Sri Thammarat found a huge crater in the ground, which was probably caused by last week's big earthquake in Sumatra.

The crater which is four meters deep and seven meters long, was found by Boonsit Dechthim near his home in Krung Ching district.

Officials from the Department of Mineral Resources inspected the crater and said it was

almost certainly caused by the Indonesian earthquake on December 26 2004 that triggered the tidal wave.

Similar craters have also been found in Satun province.

Park damage: The financial damage caused by the tsunami to seven marine national parks off Thailand's eastern coast in the South is estimated at over 200 million baht, according to the Permanent Secretary for the Natural Resources and Environment, Petipong Pungbun Na Ayudhya.

All seven national parks have been closed indefinitely and are facing a lack of drinking water and ecological impacts of the tsunami on local marine life, K. Petipong said.

Sixty-six Thai and foreign tourists were killed in the seven national parks, including Bok Kharanee National Park in Krabi and the Chao Mai Beach in Trang province.

Around the Nation news roundup is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Devastation across the bay

Gus Reynolds, owner of the Lai Thai Resort and Encore Café in Ao Nang, Krabi, and the *Gazette's* correspondent in the small tourist town on the east coast of Phang Nga Bay, filed this report on December 28, two harrowing days after the tsunami hit.

Christmas was celebrated at Lai Thai Resort with family, friends and guests. A lamb roast and carol singers made for a pleasant evening. At 10 pm the Encore Café staged a Beatle-maniacs' Christmas Rock 'n' Roll show and we retired to bed about 4.30 am.

The following morning, a lot of groggy heads decided to cancel their boat and diving trips – a decision that would ultimately save their lives.

At around 10 am I took a customer to the beach on my motorbike. As we approached the beach he said, "Wow, look at those waves!"

There are never any waves in Ao Nang – in fact on most days the water is as flat as glass – but

that day they were two or three feet high. On the horizon we could see the whitecaps approaching and when a sailing yacht capsized, we knew there was trouble on the way.

I went to Encore Café, which thankfully is in the second row of shops on the beach front, and evacuated the two staff cleaning the restaurant.

By the time we locked the front door, the waves had breached the sea wall and I drove the two on my motorbike along the sidewalks.

The wave knocked motorbikes, people, and trees down. I took the staff about two miles away and left them to be picked up by their families. I couldn't return by the same way I had taken to get there, so I took a circuitous route to get back to



ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds



Longtail boats at Haad Napporat Thara were washed up the klong where they were moored and smashed against the bridge. It is believed that nearly 400 longtails were lost in the tsunami there.

Lai Thai, which, at 800 meters from the beach, was safe.

I returned to the beach area to make sure that Encore was still standing and secure. By then the first set of waves had passed and the entire beach road was filled with trees, driftwood, pieces of boats and even huge boulders and concrete blocks. Mud and silt, a foot deep, was everywhere.

I then heard a lot of yelling and saw – a mile or so out at sea – the second set of waves approaching. Everyone ran like hell.

The stories of death and destruction caused by the second set of waves are too numerous and grim to recount here, but one must look at the positives and one thing is for sure: The Ao Nang sea wall – built three years ago and roundly criticized at the time for its design and construction

quality – saved many lives and prevented even more damage.

The beach immediately north of Ao Nang, Haad Nappora Thara, doesn't have a seawall in place; the foundations were just being laid.

That beach and its buildings were severely damaged, with longtail boats and concrete pilings from the seawall flung across the beach road like toys.

After the initial adrenaline rush finished – about 24 hours after the event – we faced the task of cleaning up and taking care of the injured and homeless.

Ao Nang is the administrative headquarters for Phi Phi Islands, which, by all accounts, were destroyed – Phi Phi Don pretty much cut in two by the tsunami. The death toll, if one can ever be accurately assessed, will be terrifying.

The survivors and corpses are being brought onto Ao Nang Beach to be taken to the hospital, with the evacuation of the latter discreetly taking place at night.

All the schools have been closed to house the homeless, and we are all involved in providing food, clothing and blood to the local hospitals.

Several international relief efforts are in operation, as well as locally-based ones, centered around and for Krabi Hospital. Since many hospitals in Phuket are full, there has been an added burden on the local hospitals here.

If anyone would like to make a donation to the hospitals in Krabi, I can arrange it. You can reach me through the *Phuket Gazette*. We want to thank you all for your thoughts and support.

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(Clockwise from top left): Boy Scouts at Phuket Provincial Hall; Volunteers keep their energy levels up in Patong; Taiwanese rescue personnel muster at Provincial Hall; Some of the hundreds of blood donors at Wachira Phuket Hospital; South Korean rescue workers gather before an all-night operation; Members of the French GSSA team prepare to head off on a mercy mission.





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Local – and not



Top left: The GSCF rescue squad from France and Royal Thai Navy crew just ahead of a sortie.

Above left: Ladies from the Jungceylon development help clear Patong Beach.



Above: The German rescue team arrives at Phuket International Airport



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so local – heroes



Above: K. Prachacheun of the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation hands out food late into the night.



Above: Members of the Japanese Relief Team liaise with colleagues.

Below: RTN sailors grab lunch.



Below: Soldiers take a break from their arduous tasks.



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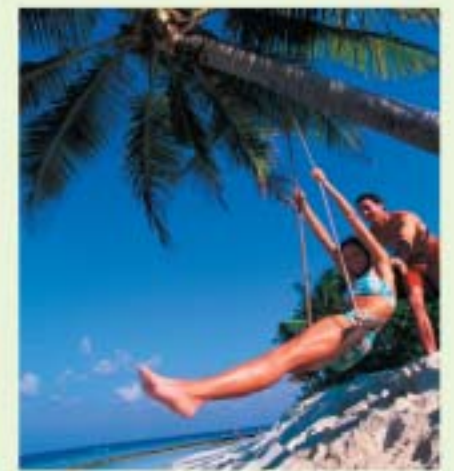
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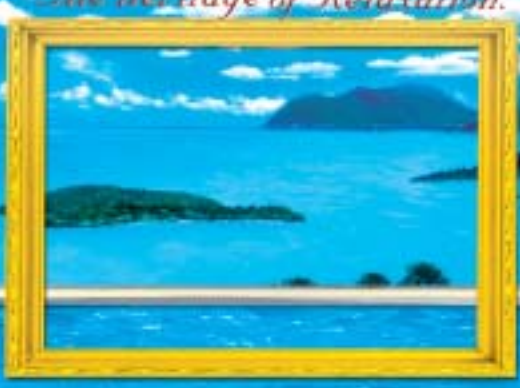


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How to cope with

The advice on these pages was provided to the *Gazette* by Carol Marco, a member of the British Embassy team at the emergency center at Phuket Provincial Hall. Although it is naturally rather general in its scope, it will, we hope, be of use to those suffering loss from the tsunami, and to those trying to help them.

Breaking bad news by telephone

Purpose:

To inform next of kin, in a sensitive manner, of a death or serious injury or other bad news and to offer sincere and thoughtful support.

To assign a designated person to support each family. This is an important relationship that may continue for some time

Objectives:

- Give information promptly and clearly;
- Deal sensitively with reactions – one's own as well as others';
- Anticipate and manage difficulties;
- Offer support and compassion.

Preparation:

- Rehearse the call – what to say and how to say it;
- Ensure you have the correct names of the victim and next of kin;
- Gather as much accurate information as possible: time, place,

and what happened, for example;

- Use a quiet place;
- Allow for sufficient time – up to half an hour;
- Ensure there will be no interruptions;
- Anticipate emotional reactions, such as anger, distress, silence, denial;
- Anticipate difficult questions;

Follow-up procedures:

- Have contact names and numbers to hand;
- Schedule possible times for follow-up phone call;
- Compile a log sheet;
- Prepare yourself – consider your own likely reactions.

The phone call:

Purpose of call:

- To provide information clearly and sensitively;
- To offer support and compassion;
- To handle reactions.

Responses to call:

- No reply: keep trying;
- An answering machine: state your name, that of your organi-

zation, give contact number. Say it is important, but sound calm.

- Someone other than next of kin: Determine relationship. Make every effort to find out how to contact designated next of kin immediately without being alarming.

If this is not possible, leave message as per answering machine. If respondent is not the named next of kin but is close, such as siblings, parent, adult son or daughter, they may press you for information. Use discretion.

The person will quickly sense that there is a serious problem just by the fact of your calling and may attempt to leap to conclusions for which there is no basis.

Breaking the news:

- State your name and that of the organization you represent;
- Ensure that the person you are speaking to is next of kin or an appropriate substitute;
- Say that there has been a disaster and that you have bad news;
- Ask if there is anyone else there to offer support;

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the aftermath of the tsunami

- Give news clearly and concisely, without going into detail;
- Allow time for reaction.
- If respondent becomes silent, stay on the phone for as long as is necessary in order to begin talking again;
- Offer support and sympathy;
- If possible, fill in details by answering their questions;
- Give any further necessary information. Remember that the person is shocked; you can give more information later.
- Give only information that has been confirmed. Do not be pressed into saying more than you are sure of. You can say "We don't know that yet."
- Ensure the person has understood;
- Check again about support. If the respondent is alone, ask whether he or she can phone to other family members or a support network, or offer to do so yourself;
- State what support you can offer and give a contact name and number;
- Say what your initial procedures are;
- Ask if the respondent has any initial instructions or wishes;
- Arrange a time to call back;
- Ensure that this happens, even if there is no further information;
- Say that you will write with all relevant information and contact numbers. Ensure that this is done immediately;
- Log details of the call.

Afterwards:

- Review the call with a colleague;
- What did I do well?
 - What could I have done better?
 - What will I do differently next time?
 - How do I feel now?
 - Would it help for me to talk to a counselor?



Picking up the pieces after the tsunami may take weeks or months – but coping with the mental effects could take much longer.

- What follow-up action needs to be taken: logging the call; the follow-up calls; the letter detailing contacts;
- Confirm who will do this. Ensure it is done;
- Maintain your relationship with the designated family for an appropriate period of time.

Coping with loss and grief

The shock and pain of loss trigger a range of powerful and frightening emotions.

The death of a parent, partner, child or other close person is the most desperate loss that we may ever have to cope with.

The intensity of our feelings and our ability to cope with this kind of loss will depend on various factors, including our degree of attachment to the person and the circumstances.

Numbness and disbelief are often the immediate reactions to a death.

A newly bereaved person may deny what has happened and continue to behave as if the dead person were still alive, for example, shopping and cooking and making arrangements as usual.

The bereaved may feel guilt, self-reproach and remorse: "If only I'd taken better care of him/her; been a better spouse; been more sympathetic; spent more time with them" and so on.

Feelings of rage and anger can also take the bereaved by surprise: "How could she/he leave me alone? How do they expect me to cope?"

The bereaved can be left with a great sense of insecurity and fear, sometimes expressed in panic attacks. The sense of being lost and alone is very frightening and a great yearning for the loved one can be almost overwhelming.

Many people feel a powerful urge to return to some of the places they knew with their loved ones, almost as if they will find them there.

Feeling the presence of a lost person, dreaming of them, imagining they are still at work or in another room, hearing their voice or sensing their presence is not a sign of madness but a very common experience.

The need to talk over and over the events leading up to the death, as if somehow they could be altered, is also very common.

Many people feel needlessly ashamed of their reactions and are discouraged from honestly expressing their painful thoughts and feelings. The fear of "cracking up" or "giving in" often forces people to deny their true feelings – even to themselves.

Well-meaning friends and relatives, often supportive during the first few weeks or months, soon expect to see the bereaved person "getting over it" and urge them to cheer up.

Fear of upsetting children and other family members can force people to put on a brave face and to submerge their grief. This is always damaging. Unresolved grief or inability to resolve emotional tension can result in stress-related illness.

It is estimated that one-third of those who lose a spouse develop health or emotional problems, including loss of sleep, loss of appetite, headaches and general lassitude and tiredness.

A sort of plateau of hopelessness, characterized by depression and apathy, complete exhaustion and even a wish to die, may come sometime during the first year of bereavement, before even the first glimmer of hope and acceptance begins to dawn.

The four tasks of what Freud termed "grief work" are:

- To truly recognise and accept the loss;
- To mourn the loss, giving expression to the grief;
- To perform the new tasks of life that the loss obliges us to take on;
- To look to a new kind of future.

Progress through grief is not orderly. You may feel stronger on some days and then suffer a return to periods of hopeless tears.

There is no timetable according to which the bereaved person will finish grieving and feel better. The whole process may take months, a year or several years.

The emotions of grief, painful though they are, lead to acceptance and healing.

The purpose of grief is to allow a bereaved person to come gradually to an understanding of what the loved one meant to them and an acceptance of a new and meaningful life.

Further advice on coping long-term will be published in the Gazette next week, or may be downloaded now from the Gazette Online at www.phuketgazette.net/news/index.asp?id=3920

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The stars and you

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Drop tactful hints if your birthday falls this week and a wish could come true. Someone special has been puzzling over what gift to buy and will appreciate guidance. Affairs of the heart are well highlighted during January. Single goats are feeling particularly flirtatious at the moment and are sending out all the right signals. The number 5 can be lucky on Thursday.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Aquarians have the ability to come up smelling of roses no matter what kind of mess they've got into. It seems that you've been responsible for weaving a tangled web in your private life, but some careful unraveling should sort things out this week. If a thorn remains in your side it should serve as a reminder to avoid getting into the same sticky situation again. Monday is a good day to investigate the job market.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Start examining different ways of making your money. Bank balances that have remained stagnant during the latter part of 2004 are likely to be boosted during the first few months of this year. Your imagination is easily sparked this

week; ideas that appear totally impractical could hold promise. Pisceans will also be inspired to make changes in their living situations; if this involves a change of décor, try mixing shades of green.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): With recent trials and tribulations behind you there should now be clear reason to expect that this year can only get better. Doubting Arians are advised to work hard this week on sharpening their positive thinking skills. Allow yourself to enjoy some truly tranquil days and meditate on what is good in your life. Business success is highlighted on Tuesday with the possibility of a scoop becoming more real.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Taureans have the chance to go out on a cosmic limb this week-end and experience something totally different. Spontaneity suddenly becomes an attractive idea and could lead to meeting like-minded new friends. Romance isn't likely to figure strongly in your life during this month but

that won't be a problem unless it involves an ardent pursuer who won't give up. You will have to make it very clear that this interest is not shared.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): No matter how hard you dig your heels in the sand, someone is determined to have things all their own way. This week Geminis will be caught in a jam and tactful negotiations must be on the agenda. A more congenial atmosphere is forecast for next week, so try to remain ambivalent until then. Leo is poised to make a move; you will not see this one coming.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): You're ready to rock during the second week of January. You will have enviable amounts of energy; nothing will stand in your path for long. However, if you're enthusiastically planning ahead for 2005, try to remember that you won't always be so fired up. If you keep those aims reasonable, much can be achieved this year. Keep a fire extinguisher handy on Sunday, when passion is set to burn.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Leos who are feeling low this week need to balance their energy output to stave off tiredness. It is more than possible that you will need to take a raincheck on appointments this week; others should understand. There will be more money flowing out than in, but a surprise gift will cheer you up. Family visits will go most smoothly on Thursday when harmonious relationships are highlighted. The color olive green encourages growth.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Home and family occupy your mind this week. This will probably involve contact with those you haven't seen for a long time. Unspoken disagreements should be left aside; a better chance to air your views will come soon. Unattached Virgoans can prepare to meet someone who could become much more than a friend. Money matters are best dealt with on Thursday, when the number 7 is auspicious.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Those born under the sign of Libra should refrain from play-

ing with fire where romance is concerned. Fingers are bound to be burned if you don't distance yourself now. You would be much better off devoting energy to clearing the decks ready for a career change. If you're tired of ploughing the same furrows there are indications that new seeds are about to be sown. The color amber can bring luck this week.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): The way forward is not as simple as you might hope for this week. Scorpions who were hoping to take a shortcut in realizing a business deal will have to contend with frustrating delays; giving in to road rage will not solve the problem of others' inability to indicate clearly which direction they intend to move in. Wear the color ice blue to help maintain your cool.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Your desire for freedom is particularly strong as the year begins. If this feeling comes from the need to be less involved in a personal relationship, be very careful how you put distance between you and the other person. There is danger of jealousy taking root and Sagittarians could be on the receiving end of some bad vibrations. Wearing kid gloves is recommended in all areas this week.

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Normally, this column starts off the year with a sermon as to why you should make a New Year's resolution to begin a weight training program – if you are not already on one.

The list of reasons is extensive indeed, spanning the range of “wellness” (I can't believe I actually used that word), from increased self-confidence all the way to protection from heart disease.

Images from Phuket broadcast around the world of the December 26 tsunami disaster show another important reason to lift weights – being fit can save your life in times of emergency that require strength and endurance for survival.

In one case, video footage captured by a Norwegian man and aired on the BBC caught one victim being swept by the tsunami surge though what appeared to have been the pool area of a hotel in Kamala.

The guy was shown grasping a railing with difficulty but then, using all his strength he somehow managed to pull himself up from the torrent to what appeared to be safety.

We can't know if he sur-

Now we see how fitness really makes a difference



Fitness FANATIC

By Stool Pigeon,
special fitness
correspondent

vived in the end – we can only hope that he did – but if he did manage to survive it was in part because of he had the required level of strength and fitness to save himself.

Other images, of people clinging to trees for dear life, also bear out the need for strength and endurance when your life is on the line. It's no wonder they train military recruits the way they do. But unlike pimple-faced army recruits getting ready for their first tour of duty in Iraq, most of us here in Phuket have to be our own drill sergeants when it comes to getting down to the strenuous business of exercise.

Events like a tsunami are, thankfully, few and far between. But other examples of how strength and fitness can help to minimize injury caused by accidents abound.

Falls from motorcycles result in fewer bone fractures

among those whose bones are strengthened through weight training and proper diet. Lean muscle mass is also the best protection from trauma and protects the inner organs from dangerous impacts far better than a soft (and unsightly) layer of fat.

The improved balance and flexibility afforded by weight training and stretching also helps one to move with greater swiftness and agility, thereby giving one heightened ability to stay out of harm's way in the first place.

It's not just in terms of accident prevention that weight training pays big health dividends; it can also help reduce chronic injuries, such as lower back pain that occurs when stabilizing muscles are allowed to atrophy and grow out of balance – for those who have never experienced it, living with lower back pain is like living in hell.

The tsunami has caused untold stress and suffering on Phuket; no doubt many of us have found ourselves having to abandon our fitness routines for some time.

In the aftermath of the tsunami, we at the *Gazette* found ourselves working furiously in

front of the computer late into the night, chain-smoking and eating junk food, our brains becoming zombified in computer-monitor-induced blotto state. Then, when the end of the day finally came, downing bottle after of bottle of Heineken to wash away the pressure and induce sleep.

The result in my case? Three kilograms of added flab in less than a week – most of which wouldn't exist now if I had just been able to keep up with my one-body-part-per day weight routine.

As things return to normal, however, it's time for all of us to get back down to business and not use the tsunami as an excuse not to get back to weight training.

If you've been off weights for over a week, start back in slowly in order to prevent too much soreness as you bring your muscles back into play.

If, like me, you had been working out different body parts on different days, it might be a good idea to start back with a full body workout, hitting each muscle group with just one set to put a general “cease and desist” order to the inevitable atrophy that you are now no doubt experiencing.

THE RED BADGE OF MONEY

From the desk of the Fearless Leader:

We all know that, after the disaster in the Andaman provinces, we will need to work extra hard to bring back the tourists so that Phuket and its neighbors can resume paying the government their full whack in taxes as swiftly as possible.

I have been examining the question carefully, and it has come to my attention that a number of foreign tourists object to two-tier pricing.

According to K. Defdum-andblind, the former Director of the Office of Tourism, the proportion was around 50%.

I tried to disabuse him of this preposterous notion, but he in-

sisted he was right. I hope he enjoys his new post of Chief Traffic Island Inspector in Wherethe-fukarewe Province.

The Office of Fair Assessments and Liabilities (OFAL) has come up with a cunning plan to be called, simply, Multi-Tiered Pricing. We have decided the best and fairest way to assess tourists is to subject all foreigners entering the Kingdom to a means test.

The bureaucracy needed to operate this is massive and therefore I can confidently say that unemployment will be eradicated. This makes those other so-called Asian “tiger” economies look like VCD vendors in Soi Buakhaw market.

So, not only has your government removed all illicit drugs

and bumped off, er, apprehended, all drug dealers, eliminated poverty, eradicated slum areas, instituted the most wide-ranging and affordable medical cover in the history of the planet, moved deforestation to Cambodia and Laos, and found a cure for the common cold; it has also become the first country in history to eliminate unemployment.

I have appointed my second cousin Taxem Shinsofleather as Director-General of the new Department of Alien Means (DAM). This is not nepotism (my cousin doesn't know the meaning of the word anyway); he has faithfully served the Thais Love Toxic Party for many years now and has all the qualifications needed to take up this sensitive post.

Besides, if it all fails, he gets the blame, not me.

This is how it will work: when tourists are issued with their entry cards for the country, they will be required to fill in a few additional lines asking about their financial status.

We know some unscrupulous people may be tempted to tell lies on official forms, so we will require proof of every tourist's financial situation: evidence such as bank books, property statements, letters from their employer stating their yearly income as well as tax returns for the past three years.

This will mean a longer waiting time to get through Customs and Immigration at the airport, but I have thought of that. We will recruit a few thousand extra Immigration officers and will also allow a selected number of vendors to set up refreshment

stalls near the Immigration queues.

Unfortunately, because tourists won't have been assessed for the financial position by this stage, the price of drinks will have to be at the top end – no discounting.

My third cousin, Takeit Shinsofleather, has been given the refreshment franchise for all Thailand. I can trust him.

Once tourists have been assessed they will be issued with a laminated color-coded card to be worn at all times. Tourists found attempting to buy anything, be it a television or bag of fried insects, without wearing the card will automatically be charged 20 times what a Thai would pay.

Yellow: This indicates an extremely poor foreigner on a budget of little more than a paltry 500 baht a day. They are to be pitied I suppose. Baht buses in Pattaya are able to demand (without menaces) only the standard five-baht fare.

I don't know why someone like this should even bother coming here in the first place. Or how they managed to scrape together enough cash to pay for the airfare. Bunch of losers.

Green: These are the difficult ones. They have “money too much” as a certain singer at the Bar of the Perpetual Virgin used

to say to my former foreign business partners. She'll be happy to know they didn't have quite as much left after I'd stitched up a few deals with them.

I digress. They usually have plenty of cash to spend but they're not profligate, so we'll direct all places to hit them with a

double-price surcharge. It'll still be cheaper than an entry to the Natural History Museum in London (though we're stuffed if they mention freebies like the National Gallery or Towneley Hall in Burnley, England).

Red: They are rich beyond imagination.

These people must not be allowed anywhere without paying 10 times what a poor Thai person would fork out. Therefore, all street stall vendors must charge like wounded buffaloes for any product.

The majority of these people will still think it's cheap and will make vacuous comments like: “Oh Herman, we'd pay triple this amount at home in Bellyache, Alabama.”

With this system in place we'll quietly drop the Elite Card. I have no doubt it will appeal to the ego of every foreigner who has more money than he knows what to do with who'll want to come to Thailand just so he can go back home and show his mega-rich friends his Red card, proof he is among the elite of the elite.



FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA

By Duncan Stearn

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Ryokan and a rollin'

It's a given that foreigners taking up residence in Japan go through three distinct stages.

First, the honeymoon, when newly-arrived *gaijin* love everything about the place. But then, in stage 2, as inscrutable frustrations mount, they start to have second thoughts and murmur angrily of divorce. But finally, in stage 3, the foreigner learns to adapt.

I did a crash course of all three phases in three days in Hiroshima, staying at a *minshuku*, one step down from a traditional inn or *ryokan*.

At first, everything seemed cute. I and the clerk at reception just about managed to communicate: he wrote down the price and I paid him the money. That I had to walk down two floors from my room to the bathroom, in specially provided slippers, was quaint.

So was the room-key with a wooden tag the size of a soup ladle, the television populated by umpteen channels of gabbling, hissing, bowing strangers, the pun-

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

gent smell of the rush matting floor, my patterned *yukata*, a dressing gown that could be worn in the street (or so said the book of regulations in my room), and the gurgling juggernaut that dispensed green tea in the communal dining room.

I slept fully content. As fellow guests – students on a bibulous break – clattered down the corridors late at night I smiled indulgently, remembering my own college days, and slept dreaming of Madame Butterfly and samurai aboard a *shinkansen*, the ultra-Japanese bullet train.

I woke with a crick in my neck and a pressing need to rid myself of the by-products of several cans of beer, bought from the ubiquitous vending machine in the lobby as a nightcap. Rather than



Traditional Japanese inns, or *ryokan*, such as this one pictured above, might be classier, but they are probably less interesting to stay at than their cheaper counterparts, *minshuku*.

being able to swing my legs over the side of the bed, I had to lever my entire 90-kilo frame into the vertical with no assistance from the forces of gravity.

Down in the bathroom a list of rules illustrated by smirking little twits devoid of genitals dic-

tated that I had to sit on a tiny stool to shower before actually getting into the bath, and dry myself with a minuscule towel.

I had to climb those damn stairs again and bend down to pick up my clothes. The prospect of green tea for breakfast was a

cultural bridge too far and the dining area had the air of a prison visiting hall. Staying at this noisy, inconvenient, foreign establishment had been an act of madness on my part, I decided.

But by the third day of residence I was starting to find my feet. I rolled up my clothes into a pillow. The green tea juggernaut had a hidden button which dispensed simple hot water that could be added to Nescafé or Earl Grey tea.

I extricated the room key from its cudgel. The shower had a nozzle halfway up the wall, so I booted the stool out of the way and washed myself and then sat in the tub up to my neck in hot water till I tingled.

Rather as the Japanese take English words and adapt them for their own use – transforming hotel into *hoteru*, and making room service into the exotic-sounding cocktail *rum-sabis* – I'd made my *minshuku ryok-an-roll*. And it was a hell of a lot more interesting than yet another chain hotel. And a damn sight cheaper.

At age 73, John le Carré has just published his 19th novel: *Absolute Friends* (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 2004, 383pp). It is among his very best, right up there with his early Smiley trilogy.

Le Carré was among the earliest and most passionate opponents of the Iraq War – writing a long and corrosive letter to *The Times* of London – and that passion shows through in *Absolute Friends*. It is a grand, sweeping tale that covers 35 years in the friendship of Englishman Ted Mundy and German Sasha, from the heyday of the radical student left in 1969, through the last decade of the Cold War leading to the fall of the Berlin Wall and onward to the aftermath of the American occupation of Baghdad.

The story is told from the point of view of Ted Mundy, born in Pakistan to a drunken British Army major and an Irish nursemaid on the day in 1947 that Pakistan came into being. While studying German at Oxford, he falls in love with a radical Hungarian named Ilse, who spurns him as having a "completely bourgeois heart" when he proposes marriage, but she puts Mundy on to Sasha, a radical student leader, when he transfers to Krueberg University in West Berlin in 1969. Here's the scene:

"In a bullet-pocked former

Another classic from le Carré

factory as high as Paddington railway station hang likenesses of Castro, Mao and Ho Chi Minh. A portrait of the late Che Guevara is draped in black bunting. Hand-daubed slogans on bed sheets warn Mundy that It is For-

bidden to Forbid, urge him to Be Realistic, Demand the Impossible, Accept No Gods or Masters. Strewn across the floor like survivors from a shipwreck, students doze, smoke, breastfeed babies, play rock music, fondle and harangue each other."

Ted Mundy winds up living with Sasha who plots ever more operatic student street demonstrations. During a vicious mêlée with the police, Mundy saves Sasha's life but bears the brunt of a horrible beating. While he is in the hospital, Sasha steals his girlfriend.

Ten years later in London, Mundy is married to a Labour Party activist and is the father of a son. He is employed by the British Council to escort performing artists through Iron Curtain countries. In East Berlin, he is approached by Sasha who had defected to East Germany to spite and embarrass his hated father, a Lutheran pastor who had defected to West Germany and launched a political career there.

In East Germany, Sasha is recruited into the intelligence services by a senior official who is a great admirer of his father – who turns out to be a double agent for the Stasi secret police. Fed up, Sasha now wants to turn double agent himself and spy for the West.

Micro-filmed information provided by Sasha is rated "alpha double plus" by British intelligence who promptly recruit Mundy into MI6 to be Sasha's handler. For the next decade,

Mundy and Sasha work together until the fall of the Berlin Wall. Then their paths split again.

Sasha takes off on a tour of underdeveloped dictatorships, working in obscure academic posts and writing the occasional journalistic piece. Mundy is divorced by his wife, now a Labour MP, and sets up an unsuccessful English language school in Heidelberg.

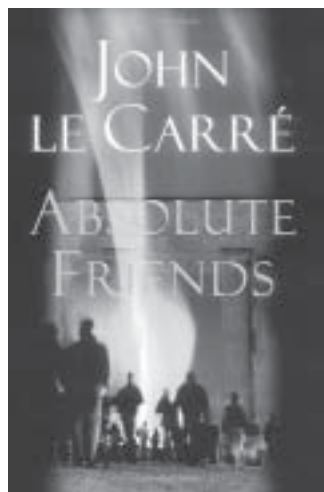
Cheated by his partner and fleeing creditors, Mundy winds up in Munich, where he moves in

with a young Turkish woman named Zara and adopts her 10-year-old-son, Mustafa. To support them, he works as an English-speaking tour guide at Mad King Ludwig's castle in Bavaria. Which is where Sasha

tracks him down in the aftermath of the Iraq War. He is in the service of a mysterious tycoon named Dimitri, who wants to turn Mundy's failed school into an educational center to combat American propaganda about the war.

"We're looking at the oldest America in the book," Dimitri tells Mundy. "Puritan zealots murdering savages in the name of the Lord – how do you get older than that?"

The ending is a shocker. Even more shocking is the media spin that the new American order gives to it. Le Carré's galloping, luminous, impassioned prose, along with his cruel irony, have never been put to better use.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

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Looters must be stopped

The tsunami that struck all along Thailand's Andaman coastline brought terror, horror and heroism. Not the cinematic kind of heroism, but the dogged, never-give-in type evinced by volunteers, from those who fed and clothed the bereft to those who carried out the grisly task of retrieving and wrapping the dead.

The vast majority of people, whether victims or helpers, have responded in the best manner possible, helping those less fortunate than themselves.

But amid the heroism were dark tales of stark, cynical avarice, as opportunistic looters descended on the devastation like so many carrion eaters.

Witnesses have told the *Gazette* of gangs in four-wheel-drive trucks driving through the carnage along Patong's shore, stepping over bodies to plunder shops and homes.

Gold shops, naturally, were a prime target. Once one or two people had smashed their way into a shop, others followed, with near-mob scenes developing. There were also reports of Westerners joining in the free-for-all.

In Khao Lak, one particularly disturbing incident was reported to the *Gazette*: a looter frisking the dead. Flipping open one victim's clothing, he extracted a wallet, took 5,000 baht from it and stowed the money in his pocket, then made a leering *wai* to the corpse and thanked it for its contribution.

Walking away, he tossed the wallet away. Not only had he stripped the victim of cash and dignity; by throwing away the wallet he had also stripped him of his identity. One more family, probably, may never know what happened to a father, brother or son.

What was particularly chilling in this case was that the looter was an officer in uniform.

At the scenes of most major disasters, one function of the army is to protect people's possessions. Often, orders are given to shoot looters on sight.

In Khao Lak, police have been checking vehicles leaving the area laden with possessions in an attempt to prevent looters carrying away the possessions of others. But no one, it seems, is stopping the looting at source. Urgent action must be taken to do so. Looters, in their unconscionable greed, heap more misery upon the already unimaginable misery of those in the stricken areas.

One senior police officer was quoted in the media as saying that anyone caught looting would be arrested and denied bail. That's not enough. Anyone found looting should, perhaps, be given the courtesy of a warning shot. But those who persist in this vulture-like pursuit should be shot. Dead.

— The Editor



Letters

The *Gazette* is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax to 076-213971 or send an email to editor@phuketgazette.net with

your views for publication in our next issue. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Pseudonyms are acceptable only if your full name and address are supplied.

Prayers and offers of help pour in from around the world

The *Gazette* has received, and continues to receive, hundreds of emails from Thailand and around the world, offering financial help, assistance on the ground or simple heartfelt sympathy for the plight of those hit by the tsunami. Here and on the facing page we reproduce some of these emails as a salute to the caring world.

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As the horrible events of the tsunami unfold, the heroism of the Thai people is being reported over and over again throughout Europe.

Scandinavian people who have now returned to their home countries report how they were saved by Thai people who risked their own lives for them, who helped them when they had lost everything and who gave them their food and clothes even if they had almost nothing themselves.

This kind of generosity might seem obvious to the Thais, but through this message I would like to tell them that they have become the heroes of so many Westerners, because of their unselfishness and their great generosity.

I hope you can transmit this message to the Thai people through your newspaper.

Kajsa Tornroth
Sweden

Just read your newspaper and it should be lauded for being level-headed and for reporting the facts instead of stirring up a panic and just plain-out lying. I've been watching CNN and BBC; they

are illustrative of how far mainstream media has sunk – you'd think all of Phuket was wiped out.

And surprise, surprise – most of the journalists flying in to the tsunami-hit areas aren't going to Sri Lanka, India or Indonesia, but going to Phuket.

Hope you aren't too exhausted. Your paper is providing yeoman service to the community.

Steve Evans
Singapore

We are shocked by the devastation we are seeing reported in the media in New Zealand. Tony, my husband, and I travel to Phuket one or two times a year on business. We export paintings back to New Zealand from some of the galleries in Patong, and we have a lot of Thai friends whom we are not able to contact as yet.

We are currently holding exhibitions that are being promoted by the local media to raise money for your area, but we would like to be of assistance in a more practical manner. We are able to travel independently and need only to know that some

form of accommodation is still available in Patong or nearby.

Tony is a builder by trade and I am willing to help in the hospital or wherever I am needed. I have a current St John's certificate as well.

We approached the New Zealand Red Cross but they said they were still assessing the situation and were not ready to send any NZ people to help till [the assessment] was finished.

We would be more than happy to connect up with any other volunteers to form work parties or help in reconstruction work or cleanups.

Tony & Sheryl Brown
New Zealand

Now that everyone realizes the scale of the bad things that have happened, I think it would be great if you could publicize the fact that some areas, such as Kata-Karon are relatively undamaged and are open for business as usual.

The cleanup is 80% complete and there's no disease risk here. All people see is what's on CNN and so on, and it's going to kill all businesses in Phuket.

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published in *Issues & Answers* on the facing page.

Actually, most of our customers say Karon Beach is nicer than it's been in years – Mother Nature made short work of cleaning it out.

Perhaps a little good news about pockets like this will help get business back up and keep Phuket moving forward.

Eric Conger
Karon

I would like to thank and congratulate the *Phuket Gazette* for the unbiased, informative and helpful information that has been sent, by email, on a very regular basis.

This information is so much more accurate than much of what has been reported by international TV news channels.

I would also like to thank all the Thai people who have been extremely helpful and efficient in the handling of the situation.

Joan Watson
Chalong

I am a paramedic from the US with many years of both ambulance and emergency-room experience, and I also speak some Thai. I was already planning a trip to Thailand next week and I am due to arrive in Bangkok on January 8 (but may be able to arrive sooner).

I am available to work in any capacity possible, and would appreciate any assistance that you can give me in finding a way to help. I will be free for several months if needed and am happy to donate my time.

Jason Blackman
US

We pray for you.

Collette Trottier
Canada

Could you, please, help me to thank all those wonderful Thai citizens who gave their help and full support during and after the horrible quake disaster on the December 26.

I am so happy that all my airline crew survived the flood without serious injury. Our thoughts are with those who were not so lucky and we are praying for those who have lost their lives.

Especially, I would like to send my best wishes and thanks to Pol Capt Luecha Polakham from Kathu Police Station, as he helped me and my crew to find a place to stay overnight after this horrible disaster.

I look forward to visiting your beautiful country and its wonderful people as soon as possible and I wish all strength and courage to everyone to overcome this disaster.

Jukka Ruoti
Captain, Boeing 757
Air Finland

Congratulations on keeping the news flowing – you are the best source of news in the area and I appreciate your heroic efforts. My son and his girlfriend are in Phuket right now.

I hope you do not have to pay extra for high bandwidth – I



Bereft of homes and possessions, residents of devastated Khao Lak stretch out their hands for T-shirts handed out by volunteers.

see your traffic is getting very high. Please tell me if I should not be using your site.

David Butcher
California

My wife has just come back to Shanghai from Phuket, narrowly escaping the disaster. Thank the Lord Buddha!

She told me a lot about how the local people in Phuket helped her. Thai people have been so kind, offering anything they can to help foreign tourists. We are so grateful to them. I think there are lots of us who want to say thank you.

Yu Jun
Shanghai, China

As a Canadian who fell in love with Phuket and Patong Beach, I would like to see more pictures in order to see what is still standing.

Our prayers are with all the people of Thailand at this time. I will be heading there as soon as you are ready for your first guest.

Diane
Canada

I found it very easy to get the phone number of your newspaper. Why didn't the people who have earthquake-sensing equipment call and warn the *Gazette*, or at least the Thai government?

It seems to me that the deaths were entirely unnecessary. My understanding is that they knew about the earthquake six hours before the waves arrived in Thailand.

Michael
By email

The horrific images we are seeing are almost too much to bear. The company I work for has set up a relief drive.

I would like to match up individuals and families affected by this tragedy, with people like me who are willing to sponsor for up to a year. The level and type

of sponsorship may vary from match to match.

Please let me know who I might talk to to get this started. I have many friends who would be willing to join in.

God bless you and others during this most difficult period.

Nancy Hills
By email

I have just been reading your news pages about the tragic events. Do you have any news about the Khao Lak Resort Hotel? My wife and I have stayed there often and we are very concerned about the safety of the staff. We can only pray that all are safe and well.

I have read that Khao Lak has been devastated and feel so sorry for all the Thai people who have lost loved ones, their homes and work.

We love Thailand and her people and will be returning as soon as we can. Knowing the strong spirit of her people I am sure that all will be working hard to support the affected and rebuild their lives.

Our best wishes and love to all there.

Michael & Andrea Nicholson
Manchester, UK

I am contacting you to express our sympathy at this terrible time. I am an advertiser on the website and you kindly helped me with my advert.

Is the *Gazette* opening a fund for relief? Please let me know so I can make a small contribution.

Keep strong and be blessed.

Dr Harold Dresner
Karmiel, Israel

I'm in Chiang Mai and I would love to help with the relief effort, but I want to make sure I'm more of a help than a hindrance.

I can't get through to the police or the Red Cross, so I was wondering if you might be able to give me some advice. My

background is in civil engineering and construction management, but I'm willing to do anything, from cleaning out sewers to picking up debris on the beach. Let me know what you think.

Sam Reid
Chiang Mai

We want to help with the clean-up operations. We run a logistics company and at close of business tonight propose to come down to Phuket.

We want to know:

1. Is there anything we can bring down from North East Thailand and Bangkok?

2. Will we be in the way? We have 11 ten-wheel trucks available until we re-open after the holidays.

I am contacting you as you're in the affected area

Ben Rengsomboon
Saha (Loei-Udon) Transport Co
Ltd

Thank you. We have found our son alive. We are very grateful but know the sorrow of others must be traumatic. Thank you for communicating with us in our terrifying search for our son.

May God bless you richly.

John Bullock
California, US

At a time of crisis, when the world needs up-to-date coverage and information, your paper is USELESS.

Ian,
London, UK

[We have a suspicion that "Ian" may need to refresh his view of the *Gazette Online* from time to time – Editor]

We here in Perth are so sorry to hear what has happened to your beautiful town of Patong.

We were very upset when

we saw the news on TV. We have been going to Phuket for about 10 years and when we leave to come home we are planning our trip for the following year.

Over the years we have spent a lot of time on the beach in front of the Holiday Inn, and we have got to know the people who run that section of the beach by their first names.

We are very worried that they may not all have survived the tidal wave, as a few of them are elderly.

I know your reporters must be very busy at the moment, but would it be possible to check on the people and email any information as we are very concerned about them.

The lady who runs the drink-and-umbrella section is known to us as Mama. Also, there is Bourne, Moo, Meow and a few more, who make our trips to Thailand memorable.

I hope you can help. We will be booking in the next few weeks to return in July. I enjoy your paper, your people and your country.

Alan Fordy
Perth, Australia

I recently moved to Phuket and am living at Blue Canyon. I am Canadian and have years of experience as an emergency-room nurse.

In light of the recent disaster to hit this area I would like to be of some assistance in any relief effort but have no idea who I should volunteer my services to. I would like to assist in any sort of relief effort that is being organized. Any direction that you could give me would be greatly appreciated.

Pam Pease
Phuket

Our family have just rung and they are now on their way to Bangkok. Thank you, thank you for your emails; they kept us hoping.

Tina Kenyon
By email

My thoughts and prayers are with all of you now, may God give you the strength to get through this.

Kim Stanifer
By email

I have just completed the IOM-OCRVR mission in Iran for the Afghanistan elections and I would like to know if you need people for relief aid in Southeast Asia. I am interested and available to go and help.

Please could you let me know as soon as possible or could you please tell me who I should contact.

Hannes Delport
Pretoria, South Africa

Thanks for your website, which helped me to locate my friends. I have spoken to someone who has confirmed their safety. I was in Phuket about four months ago, staying in Bang Tao. I loved the place and whatever happens I will be coming back next year.

Earl Cook
New Zealand

Above all, a failure to communicate

I am writing this column 36 hours after the tsunami hit Phuket, and I'm angry as hell. Fire-breathing, blood-spitting angry.

Why? Because of the incredible lack of communication that has led to thousands of unnecessary deaths from Indonesia to Tanzania. The authorities here in Thailand knew about the earthquake, but didn't tell anyone; details of that decision are currently being investigated.

But even if the Thai authorities remained mute, hundreds – thousands – of individu-

als like you and me could've sounded the alarm for folks who were in harm's way.

I just heard an interview on CNN, live by telephone with a correspondent in Kata. The correspondent's repeated complaint: No information. What areas have been hit? Who's alive?

Who's missing? Is the airport operating? What are the chances of a second major quake? Another tsunami?

Turns out that some of that

information is available – but it's in dribs and drabs, in various places on the Internet.

I guess that's academic, though. Who in Phuket could get on the Internet? My TTT/Hi-Net

ADSL service went dead a few hours before the tsunami hit, and it's still dead 36 hours later. I'm

using a dial-up connection that's limping along, barely able to stand the burden of sending and receiving email.

It took 10 full minutes for

KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER



The Thai government set up a website to co-ordinate disaster relief. It's a noble effort – but if you can't get onto the Internet, what's the point?

the government's disaster website, www.disaster.go.th, to load, and I couldn't drill down to individual pages because the connection kept timing out. I couldn't even log on after 6 pm – all the lines were busy.

Representatives from Thailand and several neighboring countries will be meeting soon in Bangkok to discuss some sort of mutual disaster warning system. That step's long overdue, as the Sars debacle amply demonstrated.

But what about Internet access in Phuket? Where's the government's plan to finally give us fast, reliable, always-on Internet service? I'm not talking about the tin-can-and-string approach we're suffering from now. I'm talking about fast, free wireless Internet everywhere on the island.

In terms of disaster preparedness, that has to be at the top of the list. Everyone in Phuket should be able to get on the Internet to get the latest official news, to locate missing friends and relatives, to send and receive email, to get weather reports, and to find information that will quell rumors and save lives.

Accurate information delivered widely and quickly would give people what they need to make good decisions.

Permit me to offer an example. The day after the tsunami hit, I was in Central Festival, trying to buy a mobile phone. About 6 pm, people started leaving in droves, literally running for the exits. Most of the shops shut down. A panic had taken hold.

Why? There was a rumor that another tsunami would hit within an hour, due to a 6.1-magnitude earthquake off Langkawi.

Absolutely preposterous crap. First of all, there was no earthquake off Langkawi, as a quick search on Google or the Earthquake Information Center (neic.usgs.gov) would verify.

Second, an earthquake that measures 6.1 on the Richter scale would shake a few buildings, but it wouldn't cause a tidal wave – a fact that could also be verified at the EIC website (The Richter scale is a log scale; a level 6 earthquake is only one-thousandth as powerful as a level 9 earthquake).

Third, it would take much less than an hour for the shock wave to hit here, as a glance at any map would confirm. And so on.

I'm certain that the people who locked down their shops and fled Central in droves wouldn't be swayed by the facts. Rumors take on a life of their own, and fear rarely succumbs to reason.

But if the facts were readily available, perhaps people would think twice before falling for such incredibly stupid rumors.

San Francisco. Philadelphia. Taipei. Dozens – more likely hundreds – of cities are rolling out plans for free, universal, fast wireless Internet. The politicians in such areas cite emergency preparedness as a big factor in delivering reliable broadband Internet to everyone.

Why isn't Phuket on the list?

– Woody Leonhard
woody@khunwoody.com



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Stockbrokers expect speedy recovery

By Gategeo Phetsawang

PHUKET: Despite the initial shock of the December 26 tsunami on the Thai stock exchange, locally-based stockbrokers are confident that local investment levels will recover within the next quarter.

Arpa Kiewkacha, who chairs Adkinson Securities' Executive Board, said that the Adkinson branch in Patong, which on average manages investment totaling about 300 million baht, had suffered a 5% fall in its total investment level, and said she believed the fall could increase to 10% over the next few months.

However, she said, "Stock market investment will be better after the first three months of 2005. More customers will be investing with us. That's why we set up our second branch [in Phuket]."

K. Arpa said she is confident that the Patong branch will also attract new clients in the coming months.

"We expect to attract new customers in business in Patong, such as hotels and restaurants. Our existing customers at Patong are foreign residents and people who invest through us over the Internet."

"[Currently] only a few of our clients [at the Patong office] own tourism-related businesses, such as entertainment venues and hotels. So we have not been affected that much."



'I am not worried about [Phuket's economy]': Arpa Kiewkacha of Adkinson Securities.

"The tsunami will only delay investment, and we will still have investment from foreign residents and business owners who have not been affected by the tsunami," she added.

"I am not worried about Phuket as the

government is now hurrying to revive the [local economy] to what it was before the tsunami. Phuket is an economically important province, so it should [be helped to] recovery within a few months."

Trinn Pattaranukrom, manager of both the Patong and the Phuket City Adkinson branches, shares a similar outlook, even though he said that after the tsunami hit that the total amount of investment in the stock market from Phuket plummeted by 30%.

"Investment from clients at the Patong branch has slowed down and could possibly stay low until the low season, but tourism should be back at its peak by next high season," he said.

Thitima Dilokpat, Phuket Branch Senior Manager of brokerage National Finance plc (NF), also believes the situation will improve as 2005 unfolds, with more investors placing investment.

In particular, she said she expected NF to improve its market share. "This will depend on our marketing as well," she said. "We are trying to expand our market share and gain new customers, such as [owners of recently established businesses]."

K. Thitima said the major factor determining the level of investment was the performance of national economy. "It has been forecast that this year the gross domestic product (GDP) value will fall. However, stockmarket investment will remain attractive as it will continue to earn more interest than savings in banks," she said.

Thaveechai Harijuntanawong, Phuket Branch Manager of Kim Eng Securities (Thailand) plc, was more cautious with his outlook for the short term. "Just after the tsunami, stock trading in Phuket on the day was stopped and the total trading value of Thai stocks has since gradually decreased," he said.

"The economic situation in 2005 is difficult to predict because the tsunami happened in economically important provinces of Thailand."

"This will effect GDP. It depends on the central government and how soon it moves to effect a recovery."

However, K. Thaveechai remained optimistic long-term. "Although we can't predict the economic situation for 2005, we will keep our 25% of market share in Phuket."

"And if the economy gets back to normal, we may even increase the amount of investment placed with us to 700 million baht or even a billion baht," he said.

The initial reaction of everybody to the recent tsunami was shock. The second reaction was, for most, what can I do to help?

It is extreme situations that often bring out the best in people, and the residents of Phuket, of all nationalities, were no exception.

It has been a terrible tragedy, on a scale that previously was unimaginable.

For the business community, it has quickly become apparent that an assessment of the situation is necessary. This applies not only to business owners but also to employees.

Phuket's economy, as we all know, is based principally on tourism and the effect of what has happened is going to be substantial. How substantial is anybody's guess. Tourism is based on an image. The image has not been destroyed, but it has been damaged.

Television reporting certainly has allowed the world to know what has happened but at times it has descended into sensationalism and unfortunately some outright lies.

For example, statements have been made by staff of television stations that "Phuket is in tatters", "has been totally destroyed", and the like.

One journalist interviewed on CNBC for a related financial newspaper even said that he had written an article on how the pools of water from the tsunami would lead to outbreaks of malaria. This journalist has obviously made a scientific and medical discovery: mosquitoes apparently now breed in saltwater!

This is a subject that has been stressed frequently by all television channels, the threat of

Repairing the image of Phuket

the outbreak of disease. Unfortunately, these statements are made on such a sweeping basis that to viewers it appears that the whole area is about to suffer from life-threatening diseases.

Phuket has had a lot to contend with over the past decade, starting with the 1997 Asian financial crises, the 9/11 tragedy, the Bali bombing, Sars, chicken 'flu and the war in Iraq. The effects of each event faded away and tourist numbers have increased.

This event is somewhat different; tourists will not come in the numbers that Phuket needs to maintain its relative affluence if tourists believe that it is a disaster zone.

What is required is to inform people that Phuket is still a very attractive destination. All the infrastructure is intact. The last earthquake and tsunami of this size occurred in 1833 and there is no health risk except perhaps from overindulgence while on vacation.

How can the population of Phuket contribute to the changing of overseas attitudes in the short term? There is one very simple way. I noted the amount of telephone calls my wife and I received from overseas in addition to email and SMS messages.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

These were from relatives, friends and clients in the UK, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Portugal, India, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

I suspect that most foreigners received at least as many as we did.

Letting people in other countries know that the situation in Phuket is virtually normal is

one effective way of returning the local economy to its former successful state.

The economy and tourism will return to normal in any event, but the more we can speed up the process the better.

I was very pleasantly surprised not only with the degree of assistance given to tourists in distress by the Thai people and the expat community but also with the excellent organization that so rapidly responded in so many areas.

One English tourist who was on Phi Phi Don when the wave hit said she doubted the UK would have been so well organized in a similar situation. Cer-

tainly, the positive experiences of so many tourists after this event will be related to others and the kindness of the Thai people will not be forgotten.

As for me, I would like to state (with my tongue firmly in my cheek) my willingness to support the beachfront real estate market by buying a few rai. All I ask is that the government will let me register the property in my own name.

Well, I can dream, can't I?

Richard Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381997, Mobile: 01-081-4611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

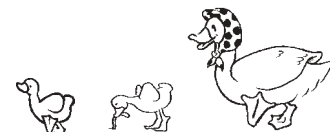
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One really good reason for a round of golf in Phuket

It was 8 am Sunday. A broken bedside lamp on the floor. Nothing special. Figured I must have been swinging golf clubs in my sleep. "Let's go for *khao tom* on the beach." A sleepy suggestion from my side. Rolled over. It's a normal Sunday morning.

8 am became 9 am. Woke again; remembered only the idea of breakfast on the beach. It's a great day. Let's go. It looked like a full house as we drove past Loch Palm. Just a normal Sunday morning.

"Accident Patong" repeated the traffic cop, waving us and everyone else on. New breakfast plan needed. That was my only other clue. The road to Patong Beach was closed.

A bomb? A super-VIP? Perhaps PM Thaksin in town? What a shame. It was such a lovely, peaceful and normal Sunday morning.

Such was the routine on the morning of Sunday, December 26, 2004, or at least it was for those separated from the Andaman Sea by the hills east and north of Patong.

For those unfortunate enough to be caught on or near the beach just a kilometer or two away, and for thousands of miles all the way around the Andaman Sea and Indian Ocean Rim, the scene could not have been more different.

By now, we have all seen the horrific images. Words can't add anything. Those brave souls helping the relief effort will have many more stories to tell; they may never see life the same way again.



We in Phuket have by now had dozens of emails and text messages from family and friends justifiably worried for our lives. The fact is that, had there not been TV and radio, I would not have been any the wiser. Nor would virtually anyone else involved in the island's golf industry, which is mainly inland.

In the face of such tragedy the game of golf seems insignificant. How can we talk about golf at a time like this? Yet, golfers were playing in ignorance, making pars and bogeys; caddies were caddying; and workers were cutting the grass and raking the bunkers. People generally went about their daily Sunday business.

In the next few days the routine continued. Was it cold hearted? Of course not. Tourists were here and knew little of the unfolding horrors.

What else were they going to do? Too many volunteers running round and mostly speaking the wrong languages would have hindered rather than helped the relief effort. As the days went on, many did what they could; mostly they gave blood at local hospitals.

The world's reaction to the tragedy was an overwhelming desire to help. Yet on the island,

life went on. There were fewer golfers. It was more difficult to get a taxi. Blue Canyon's caddies, many of whom live at the low-lying areas of Nai Yang and Mai Khao Beaches, understandably left golfers holding their own bags. The golfers picked up the bags and carried on. By the 28th the caddies were back at work.

Loch Palm and Phuket Country Club are completely unaffected. From what I hear, Laguna Golf Club (formerly known as Banyan Tree Golf Club), though near the beach, is also completely undamaged. On the more sheltered east side of the island, Mission Hills GC reports zero damage.

The "economic aftershock" has yet to be felt. "Once this group of tourists goes home, it's likely to signal a very quiet period because masses of tourists are canceling their trips and going elsewhere," said Roger Foo, Blue Canyon's Director of Golf, who worries that January onward will be "very quiet".

Strange, then, that while a huge relief effort deservedly targets the badly hit, the local people on low incomes will be the next most affected group as "tsunami paranoia" sets in and keeps tourists away.

Some foreign governments have issued blanket "stay away" travel advisories. This cover-my-ass-at-all-costs-without-asking-any-questions attitude is not at all helpful.

Phuket has been largely spared the kind of carnage that hit Khao Lak. Here, the bodies have been cleared away. Health hazards are no more apparent than they were on December 25. Indeed, unless one is standing within pitching distance of the beach, one would be none the wiser.

But, of course, images of normality don't get aired on CNN.

Only on the mainland did the tsunami have much of an effect

on the golf industry. Thai Muang Beach Golf Club was closed for a few days, but by December 31 was open as normal.

K. Piak, GM at Thai Muang Beach, stressed that the beautiful Andaman seaside golf course is now completely playable. "We had to clear a lot of debris on the holes nearest the beach, and we had some damage around bridges and lake edges," he said, "But otherwise, we're right back to normal."

Tab Lamu, the Royal Thai Navy's course, in a gorgeous beachside setting, is, however, devastated, with holes 17 and 18 now virtually on the beach. There has been a price to pay for that level of intimacy with the sea.

Some foreign governments have issued blanket "stay away" travel advisories. This cover-my-ass-at-all-costs-without-asking-any-questions-attitude is not at all helpful.

The toll rises daily. Neither rhyme nor reason can explain why so many innocents have been taken. Nature acts in a random and all-powerful way. In this case the tragedy is beyond understanding.

Are our various gods sending us a message? Are they dissatisfied with what we are doing to our world and fellow human beings?

If anything positive comes out of this tragedy, we must hope that a climate of peace and understanding will replace the climate of fear propagated by twisted religious and nationalist messages.

The people of the UK and US, Australia and Japan, Thailand and many other countries around the world are reaching deep into their pockets to help. Even desperately poor East Timor gave cash. Their help is from the heart. Politicians, take note.

The best way for foreigners to help the ordinary people of Phuket is to keep coming here. Don't cancel your trip because of misguided warnings from bureaucrats in offices tens of thousands of miles away.

The odds are that all the reasons you had for wanting to holiday in Phuket haven't changed. Why go somewhere else?

Searching for a loved one who is missing can be a very difficult, tiring and heart-wrenching process. The International Victim Coordination Center has been set up at Phuket Provincial Hall to give as much information as possible to aid in this process.

What should I do first? Visit the center, at the Phuket Provincial Hall on Narisorn Rd, Phuket City. At the center are lists of patients admitted to all of the hospitals in affected areas. You can also review lists of victims who did not suffer serious injuries and were relocated to hotels or resorts in unaffected areas.

If the person you are looking for is not listed, you should fill out a "Missing Persons Information" sheet. These sheets give you the opportunity to list valuable information for relief workers.

What if I can still find no information? Visit your embassy representatives on the second floor of the main information center. Then visit a DNA collection center (contact details below) and give samples from either the missing relative/friend, or from yourself if you are a blood relative.

If you have some personal items from the missing person (see below), it is important that you keep them carefully as they may provide material for more DNA testing in your home country.

If your relative or friend is missing you may feel the need to search for his or her body. Please understand, however, that the temples where bodies are currently being held are closed to the public due to health risks.

The conditions there and at other collection points are very dangerous, and there is potential for the spread of diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

International forensic teams have said that bodies will not be released to families or relatives without appropriate DNA testing to Interpol or FDI standard, as well as dental record checks. Dental records should be submitted through the proper government channels in your home country.

Given the above, it is highly recommended that those with missing relatives or friends return to their countries to help continue the identification process.

Once back home, what should I do next? First, make contact with the appropriate government office. They should be in a position to advise you of the next steps and where information such as DNA samples is being collected.

To help with identification, you are likely to be asked to provide the following belongings from the missing person:

- Items such as toothbrush, underwear, hair or shaver;
- Dental and medical records, particularly if they have had an operation;

Itinerary Visa Run Trip (Hadyai)

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ONE DAY ONLY

1105AM. Departure by 9R522 to Hadyai

1205AM. Arrival Hadyai International Airport

Transfer to Border (Thai-Malay)

Sadao-Changloon (SIC)*

1310PM. Immigration Process by Tourist

1410PM. Transfer back Hadyai International Airport

1510PM. Hadyai International Airport, Check in, Leisure at Airport and wait for the flight

1650PM. Departure by 9R525 to Phuket

End of Program

PRICE	PAX
ADULT	2950
CHILD(2-12YRS)	1550
INFANT	

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- *Transfer From Hadyai Airport to Border, roundtrip, (SIC) (*Seat in Coach)

Exclude:

- *Visa fee

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SEARCHING FOR A MISSING PERSON



The Crisis Center at Phuket Provincial Hall is the place to start your search for a missing person, but eventually the most effective way may be to return to your home country.

- Doctor's or dentist's contact information;
- Photographs or information about jewelry that you know they were wearing.

Collect these items as soon as possible and put each into a sealed plastic bag.

You should also complete a Disaster Victim Identification form, which can be downloaded from www.interpol.int/Public/DisasterVictim/Forms/Default.asp

Forensic teams are taking photos of all victims; the focus will be on identifiable marks and items such as operation scars, tattoos and jewelry to help identification.

They are also taking DNA samples and dental records.

All records will be held in a central agency, the Official Thai Tsunami Information Center OTTIC, which has a website to speed up the identification process

at www.csiphuket.com

If you are a relative or close friend of a missing person, it is recommended that you seek counseling support.

You can also help other relatives by suggesting that they, too, seek help.

Useful telephone numbers and websites:

DNA COLLECTION CENTERS:

Wachira Phuket Hospital: 04-7446070

Patong Hospital: 06-691-9793

Phuket Provincial Hall: 06-5083857

Krabi Meritime Hotel: 075-62002846

National Forensic Science Division Office, Bangkok: 02-2051744; 02-252 7930

Website information:

The following websites have been put together to provide

information and/or help relatives and friends with their search:

SEARCH OR POST INFORMATION RELATING TO MISSING PEOPLE:

www.phuketgazette.net
www.csiphuket.com
www.phuketitcity.com
www.phuket-inter-hospital.co.th
www.vachiraphuket.go.th
www.thaitsunami.com
www.thailandtsunami.com
www.hospital.moph.go.th/phangnga/
www.hospital.moph.go.th/takuapah/
www.disaster.go.th
www.phukethospital.go.th
www.phuketcity.com
www.missingpersons.or.th
www.ems.narenthorn.or.th (to

check hospitals in Bangkok)
www.ems.narenthorn.thaigov.net
www.peoplematch.rc.tv
www.missing.antalys.net

PHUKET HOSPITALS

Wachira Phuket Hospital: 076-217293-8; 076-211114;
 Website: www.vachiraphuket.go.th

Bangkok Phuket Hospital: 076-254425; Website: www.phukethospital.com

Phuket International Hospital: 076-210935; Website: www.phuket-inter-hospital.co.th

Mission Hospital: 076-237220; Website: www.phuketdir.com/missionhospital

Patong Hospital: 076-340444; Website: www.phuketdir.com/patonghospital

Thalang Hospital: 076-311033; Website: www.thalanghospital.go.th

Phuket Ruampaet Hospital: 076-212950

KRABI HOSPITALS:

Krabi Hospital: 075-611226; 075-611210; Website: www.hospital.moph.go.th/krabi

Khao Panom Hospital: 075-612388

Klong Tom Hospital: 075-612-353

Plai Praya Hospital: 075-612975
 Ao Leuk Hospital: 075-612288

TRANG HOSPITALS:

Trang Hospital: 075-218831
 Kanthang Hospital: 075-241256

Palien Hospital: 075-289010

Yanthakhao Hospital: 075-281-448

Trang Ruampaet Hospital: 075-218988; 075-219985-7,

Ratchadomnern Hospital: 075-223500-9; 075-211203

Wattana Paet Hospital: 075-218585; 075-219663; 075 214069-73

RANONG HOSPITALS:

Kraburi Hospital: 077-823031

Kapoe Hospital: 077-812370; 077-897016

Ranong Hospital: 077-811474

Suksamran Hospital: 077-844-143

PHANG NGA HOSPITALS:

Takua Pa Hospital: 076-421770;

076-412032; Website: www.hospital.moph.go.th/takuapah/

Phang Nga Hospital: 076-411616; 076-411618; 076-412032; Website: www.hospital.moph.go.th/phangnga/

RESCUE CENTERS:

Patong Beach: 076-321182

Thalang Toursit Assistance Center: 076-311057

Krabi: 075-611312; 075-611302; 075-624161-3; 075-611-381; 075-611055

Phang Nga: 076-412526; 076-440446; 076-491376; 076-411525; 076-411179

Koh Yao: 076-391598

Ranong: 077-823257; 077-813401-3

Satun: 074-783485; 074-722121-2; 074-722296; 01-370-0404; 09-9791077

Trang: 075-210099; 075-214-382; 075-217513;

Royal Thai Navy: (specific inquiries about tourists stranded on islands): 076-391590;

076-391598

Royal Thai Navy (search and rescue operations): 02-475-4251

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS FOR DISASTER VICTIMS:

076-211195; 076-327230; 076-327194

SPEEDY IMMIGRATION SERVICES:

076-273213; 076-213079

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Peugeot starts playing a

When Porsche launched its legendary sports car in 1963, it decided to number the car 901. However, a minor – at the time – French automaker claimed to have the monopoly on designations with a zero in the middle and took Porsche to court. Peugeot won and Porsche changed its numbering to the more memorable 911.

Peugeot has never looked back – until now. The French marque has run out of numbers, already having a small car with the 106 designation, and since the new model was not a replacement, but a completely new design, it had to be distinct from the popular little 106 and its (probable) successor, which will be the 107. Clear so far?

So, with impeccable French logic, Peugeot marketing gurus came up with 1007, the designation for its new sliding-door, compact people carrier. But Peugeot was to run into trouble with the holders of the James Bond rights, who claimed a monopoly on anything with 007 in the title.

Peugeot won that little fracas, too. Launched at the Paris Salon in September 2004, the 1007 had already been tested by motoring journalists as far back as June of last year.

It is, says its makers, a "...single compartment car equipped with sliding doors, providing a unique offer to support



By Jeff Heselwood

the existing classic range'. Flowery stuff, but the 1007 is actually very good. It offers much more space than conventional people-carriers and looks rather smart too.

Designed by famed Italian coachbuilder Pininfarina, the 1007's sliding doors are its major feature. The doors can be opened either electronically or by the interior or exterior handles. While they provide ready access to the front and rear seats, they cannot be opened at speeds above 5kmh, nor when the fuel filler flap is open – simple but effective safety devices.

Another benefit of the sliding doors is that they are little wider than a door mirror, so they can be opened in confined spaces where it sometimes difficult to get in or out of a conventional vehicle. Also, passing traffic does not need to contend with a door suddenly opening in its path.

Other safety features in the 1007 include seven airbags, one of which is attached to the steering column, while there is an alarm to remind rear seat passen-



gers to fasten their seatbelts.

The rear seats fold in a variety of ways to increase luggage space, while the front passenger seatback can be folded flat to provide a mobile office with space for a laptop and paper files.

The 1007 is offered with one of three engines: a 1.4-gasoline motor mated to either a 5-speed manual gearbox or the System Porsche Tiptronic transmission.

The Tiptronic system is also available with a 1.6-liter gasoline engine. A third engine option is Peugeot's sophisticated

1.4-liter diesel lump producing 70bhp (50kW) and a substantial amount of torque, peaking at 160Nm at just 2,000 rpm.

Peugeot-Citroën is the world's largest producer of passenger car diesel engines, which consequently tend to be of advanced design.

No performance figures are available as yet but expect the little 1007 to be fairly nippy as well as blessed with good handling, thanks to its light overall weight and "wheel-at-each-corner" design.




A total of 560 million eu-

ros (about 30 billion baht) was invested in the design and development of the 1007, which will be built at Peugeot's Poissy plant in France.

Around 130,000 cars are expected to be produced each year, with the launch on the French market scheduled for early this year and the rest of Europe in the second quarter.

Asian drivers, as usual, will have to wait rather longer to get their hands on this nifty motor.


Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at jhc@netvigator.com

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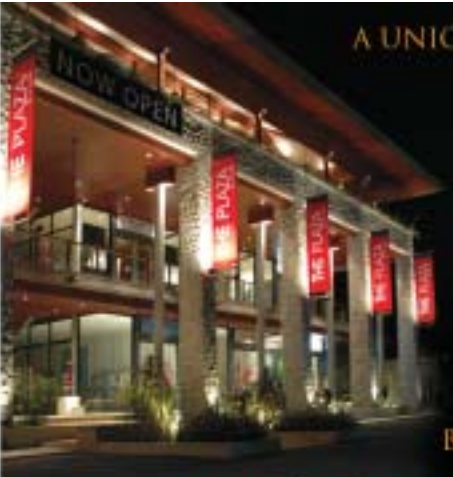
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numbers game

Left: Although performance test results are not yet available, the 1007 is expected to be zippy, and have good road handling due to the "wheel on each corner" design.

Right: For safety, the sliding doors cannot be opened at speeds above 5kmh, nor when the fuel filler flap is open.

Below: Designed by famed Italian Pininfarina, the 1007 will be available in a range of bright colors.



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Home of the Week

Chalong

This week's Home of the Week is a classy, modern, split-level, one-year-old home set on a sloping 1,600-square-meter plot, sharing a quiet cul de sac with only two other homes.

The hillside location is only a few minutes' drive from Chalong Circle, with its many shops, cafés, medical services and post office, and has direct access to the main roads servicing the large shopping complexes, hospitals and the international airport.

The main area on the lower floor comprises spacious living and dining areas, with doors opening onto a long, covered terrace with a delightful view of the garden. The home's Western-style kitchen is also on this level, as is a guest bathroom.

There is a lower ground-floor area, which has a roofed, open-air family room and a guest bedroom with en-suite bathroom.

On the upper level, with its delightful terrace also looking out to over the garden toward the surrounding hillsides, are two light and airy bedrooms with a shared bathroom, and a large master bedroom with en-suite bathroom featuring a Jacuzzi.

Utilities include air condi-

Split-level serenity



tioners, UBC cable TV, well water with a 75-cubic-meter storage tank, hot water, septic system and three-phase electricity. The property is accessed via a paved road.

The land title is *Nor Sor 3 Gor* and the property is for sale at 12 million baht.

For more information contact Siam Real Estate at Tel: 076-280-805, Email: info@siamrealestate.com or visit the website at: www.siamrealestate.com.





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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

Just five minutes' walk from Chalong Bay, Sun Palm Village will be a 180 million-baht, 27-rai development of family homes.

Construction, on Soi Baan Kok Tanod, off Chao Fa East Rd, is due to start in March, and is expected to be completed in early 2006.

The 81-home development will feature two design styles.

There will be 52 "Donoma" homes, single-story properties with around 157 square meters of living space, including three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a living room, and two car parking spaces. Prices start at 3.3 million baht.

"Kalinda" homes, of which there will be 29, will be two-story and offer around 198sqm of living space, with three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a living area and two car parking spaces. Prices start at 4.7 million baht.

Residents will be able to take advantage of a gardening service and 24-hour security, as well as a clubhouse and swimming pool.

Developer Sumran Tongdee said, "When you think of Phuket, you think of golf courses and palm trees.

"We've designed these to be budget family homes, in a setting of palm, coconut, frangipani and pagoda trees, to enable residents to feel the warmth of Phuket."

The houses are offered un-



Artist's impression of one of the Kalinda-design homes to be built at Sun Palm Village, off Chao Fa East Rd.

The sunny side to Phuket 'warmth'

decorated and unfurnished, but the developers will decorate and furnish them for an additional 800,000 baht for a single-story property and 1 million to 1.3 million baht for a two-story home, although these prices are subject to confirmation.

The exclusive agent for the project is PhuketOne Real Estate. Managing Director Larry Cunningham said, "The idea is to create a beachfront housing estate for families on a budget, with

houses within walking distance of the beach."

He added that he expects the estate's occupants to be around 65% foreigners, especially Europeans, and 35% Thais.

More information is available from PhuketOne Real Estate at 6/34 Nakatani Village, Kamala, Kathu, Phuket 83150, Tel: 076-345707, Fax: 076-345709 or email: info@phuketonerealestate.com

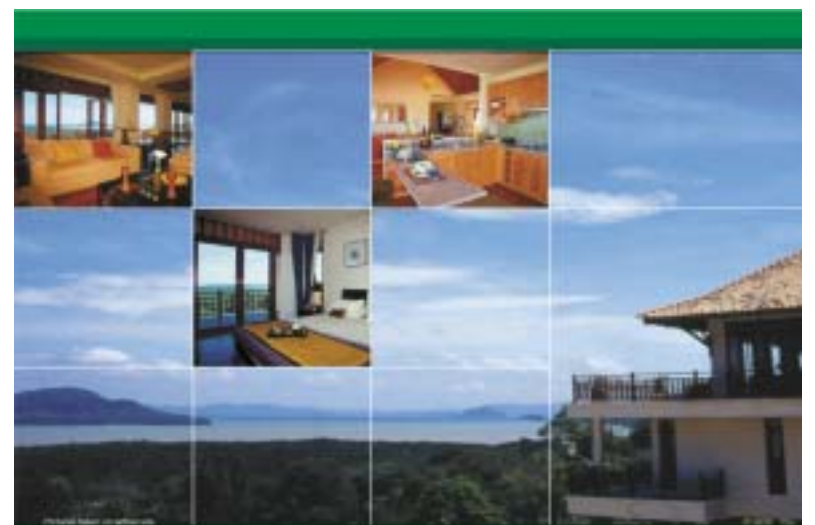
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Le Raffine Sukhumvit 31 Project developer and owner: Le Raffine 31 Company Limited. Registered capital: 10,000,000 Baht (fully paid up). Office location: 111 Sukhumvit 31 (Rooftop), Sukhumvit Road, Klongton Sub-District, Klongton District, Bangkok 10110. Managing Director: Pongprapornchai P.K.2. Registered condominium: 20 Baht with 10 units. On sale units: No. 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. Project incorporated and supported by Kriengsak Bank P.C. Building construction permit has been approved: 14/02/04. Construction begins: Jan. 2005. Completion expected: December 2006. The project will be registered in the condominium after completing the construction. Commence sales will be paid by buyers in accordance with registration of condominium joint project.

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GOD OF FIRE

In Thailand, different belief systems and their deities are so readily accepted that they are almost taken for granted.

And this probably goes some way towards explaining why a plant that's named after a deity is also taken so much for granted. Even though it's one of the more common plants in Phuket, it is perhaps largely ignored.

It is the ixora, or *khem* in Thai. In English it has several epithets: flame of the woods, jungle flame, jungle geranium. It is primarily named, though, af-

ter the Hindu god reputed to have appeared as a pillar of fire – somewhat apt, given the plant's intense appearance.

Tiny, four-petaled flowers, usually bright red, gather at the tips of its branches. Around 60 of these form clusters about the size of half a tennis ball. There are about 150 species of ixora, which are related to the gardenia and coffee plants. The most common is ixora coccinea.

Unlike much of the plant life here, the ixora is actually native to this part of the world. It never stops looking incredibly

healthy or blooming; it's a plant that doesn't have off-days. Its evergreen foliage and abundance of bright red to orange blooms make it perfect for hedges and high borders. It's all over Phuket.

It grows just about anywhere, from sand to peat, and can be trimmed into virtually any shape without disturbing its growth or slowing it down.

As a result of cross-breeding, importing and hybridizing, over the past few years, many new ixora hybrids have appeared on the market. Now it's available in white, pink, yellow, orange,



Ixora can now be found in a variety of colors, including white.

moss or rich coconut husk compost around the stripped area. This should always be moist (usually done by wrapping it in polyethylene film) and the roots of the plant kept fairly dry. New roots will soon sprout enthusiastically from the stripped area into the damp moss.

Then you cut off the new plant below the moss, pot it or plant it elsewhere, and leave it to its own devices. You now have a new plant for almost zero outlay, and you've made full use of a section of the old plant that you would probably have pruned off anyway. Serious gardening on the cheap.

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Property Gazette

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for sale. 250,000 baht total price, payable in instalments. 150,000 baht initial payment, the remaining 100,000 baht transferred at the Land Office after 1 year. Freehold title. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

8 VILLAS 4 SALE



Newly completed, small development on approx 2 rai of land. Close to Chalong, the development is comprised of 8 stylish villas with fully furnished rooms set in beautifully landscaped gardens. Includes a swimming pool and private parking. Price for the whole development is 25 million baht. Tel: 09-9222800. Email: meen443_40@hotmail.com

4 + 2 BEDROOM HOUSE IN KAMALA

Top-quality 4 + 2 bedroom house for sale in Kamala, near Phuket Fantasea and only 10 mins walk to the beach. 4 master bedrooms on 1st floor with en-suite bathroom. 2 bedrooms on ground floor - one can also be used as an office (2 phone lines), the other as a maid's room with attached bathroom. Large living/dining room with open European kitchen, as well as a Thai kitchen. Fully furnished – all rooms have aircon and ceiling fan. Priced at 18 million baht. For more details please contact Franz Brun in Kamala. Tel: 076-279075, 01-4761415. Email: fbrun@loxinfo.co.th

LARGE DETACHED BUNGALOW

Located in Chalong. Thai-style roof, 300sqm floor space, 42sqm covered terrace, 1 rai of land, wall-fenced and large, secluded garden in peaceful area. Please contact for information. Tel: 01-8912166. Email: gerhard-berger@gmx.at

LAND FOR SALE

in Phuket Country Club. Please call for more details. Tel: 09-8718333, 01-6913351.

SURIN BEACH



New Thai-style villa for sale at Suriyana Villas, 5-min walk from Surin Beach and Bang Tao Beach. 240sqm with a dining sala, car park sala, beautiful view over tropical swimming pool, 32 meters of exotic gardens. Architectural design with all interior and exterior finished to the highest Western standards. Form and function in perfect harmony. Price: 16.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-8753289. (day-time). Email: regents@phuket.ksc.co.th

PENINSULA MANSION

for sale. Situated on 2 rai, 3 ngan, 53.5 sq wah of landscaped gardens, with swimming pool and sala. Chanote Title. 5 bedrooms, with en-suite bathrooms. Living area approx 750 sq m. Staff quarters with en-suite bathroom. Laundry, office, separate shower/toilet. Fully furnished (optional). A beautiful one-of-a-kind home. Excellent location: The Mansion sits 50 m from the sea, with great views, on the East Coast Ya Moo Peninsula, Tambon Pa Khlok, Amphur Thalang. A 15-to-20 minute drive to all major places on Phuket, eg: Airport, golf courses, Phuket City, Dulwich International College, main hospitals, Royal Phuket Marina, Boat Lagoon, Tesco Lotus, Big C, Central, Index and Makro. Viewing by appointment only. All inquiries to John Young. Tel: 01-8927948. Email: jy@peninsulamansion.com

MISSION HILLS

Build your dream home on 1-rai serviced lots next to Phuket's newest golf course. Exclusive gated community. Please call or email for more information. Tel: 09-972-5226. Email: bgbphuket@yahoo.com

SEAVIEW LUXURY VILLA



for sale by owner/builder. New, luxury 3-bedroom, 5-bathroom, Thai-style detached home in Khao Khat with spectacular views over Chalong Bay and the southern islands. 1.5 rai (2,400sqm) of land. Property includes a swimming pool, landscaped garden and maid's quarters. Modern, maintenance-free construction, Thai Style, 3 separate buildings. Pls contact for more details. Tel: 07-2659977. Email: jimmys@loxinfo.co.th

LAND FOR SALE

4 rai, 1 ngan, 44.3 sq wah. Ripe for development. Chanote title. Superb piece of land which rises gently from front to rear. Some sea views, plus formed entrance driveway off the road. 100 meters from the sea. Adjacent to Peninsula Mansion. Excellent location: East coast, Cape Yamoo, Tambon Pa Khlok, Amphur Thalang. Take Highway 4027 east from Heroines' (4km), turn right onto 4003 to Yamoo. Viewing by appointment only. All inquiries to John Young. Tel: 01-8927948. Email: jy@peninsulamansion.com

LAND FOR SALE

Directly on the Banyan Tree Golf Course at Laguna Phuket. 1,050sqm/262.45 sq wah. Price: 7.872 million baht. Pls call or email for further information. Tel: 076-239864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

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HOUSE IN THALANG FOR SALE



10 minutes from the airport and 10 minutes from Dulwich International College. 8x4 swimming pool, 5 aircons, 2 bedrooms, 1 child's room, 2 bathrooms & 1 separate building useful as a store house or maid's room. 504sqm, Chanote title. 5.5 million baht, including furniture. Pls call for more info. Tel: 01-6078000.

7 ONLY

Townhouses, due for completion in July 2005. Deluxe living with lovely views. Only 7.5 million baht each. Tel: 076-345081, 01-9241447. Email: mail@villa.co.th

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NEW SINGLE HOUSE

for sale by owner. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished with a mountain view. 560sqm, 6.9 million baht. Tel: 07-2799500.

PATONG BEACH

3-story townhouse, newly renovated to a high standard. North end of the beach – panoramic views over the city and beach/bay. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, home office, marble floors, modern kitchen, about 250 sq meters. 6.9 million baht (fixed). Tel: 076-290225, 07-8869410. Email: john_w_cole@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at: www.patongbeachrealestate.com/townhouse

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Property Gazette

Accommodation Available

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2 SHOPHOUSES

in Kathu. 2 connecting, 3-story shophouses in Kathu at Anuphas Golf Ville, on the road to Patong. Very good location. Tel: 01-7872201. Email: phuket8@hotmail.com

2-BEDR HOUSE-KATA

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BUNGALOW & VILLAS for rent. Bungalow & villas available for rent at quiet area near Nai Harn and Rawai Beaches; swimming pool, sauna and massage, restaurant. Tel: 01-968-0309. Email: waeowta@myrealbox.com For further details, see our website at: www.deliver-it.nl/houses or www.houseinphuket.com

2- & 3-BEDROOM

houses. 3-bedroom house at Khao Khat with panoramic view over Chalong bay. satellite TV & ADSL Internet. 10 mins from Phuket City & Chalong. 2-bedroom house at Karon. Both in safe, quiet locations, unaffected by high tides. Tel: 076-244652, 09-729-9747. Fax: 01-6764849. Email: info@etwood.com

FURNISHED APT

Patong. Furnished, w/laundry, UBC & electric paid. Nanai Rd, quiet and close to everything. 14,000/month baht plus deposit. Tel: 01-0875828. Email: jicero51@hotmail.com

Accommodation Wanted

KAMALA HOUSE

wanted. I want to rent a 2-bedroom furnished house, aircon, satellite TV and full cooking facilities in Kamala area for 2 months, Feb-March 2005. Please get in touch with me. Tel: 902-163615444. Email: akiciman@tnn.net

SEARCHING FOR

a house. Looking for a 2-bedroom house to rent in Phuket (Patong area), not far from town or beach, with private swimming pool. Must be in an area with possibility of ADSL connection. One-year rental contract. Email: 8547eriksson@telia.com

NICE HOUSE WITH

garden. Please send me details of any unfurnished houses available for long-term rental only. I am a long term Phuket resident with references. No agents please - only owners. Email: marks@phuket.ksc.co.th

3-BEDROOM HOUSE

wanted. Looking for a 3-bedroom house in a quiet and Karaoke-free area. Must be in a location with possibility of ADSL connection and must have a covered parking space. Long term, no furniture needed. Max rent: 15,000 baht/month. Email: seismic_dude@hotmail.com

HOUSE WANTED

Looking for house with private tennis court or with enough land to build a court. Email: miss_catwalks@hotmail.com

NICE LOOKING

furnished place. I'll be in Phuket January 8-15 and I am looking for a safe place for 6,000-12,000 baht a month: Small kitchen w/oven for cooking. Nicely furnished, TV, aircon, kingsize bed, direct phone line for dial-up Internet, and possibility for DSL link. Safe box or security a plus. Tel: 01-6660478. Email: cold_ko@hotmail.com

2 BEDROOMS

wanted. Looking for a 2-bedroom apartment or house near Patong. Must have an ADSL link. Wish to pay around 10,000 baht per month. Will sign up for 6 months, but I live in Phuket permanently so if after 6 months I like the accommodation I can sign up for a much longer time. Please email with details. Email: thaorientalinn@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

for long term. Swiss businessman is searching in Phuket-Patong area for free-standing single family house in good condition. Must be completely furnished and have 2 or 3 bedrooms and spacious living room. Prefer nice garden with swimming pool. Minimum rental period: 2-3 years. Expected monthly rent: 15-25,000 baht. I will be in Phuket early February and would like to close a contract while there. Please send details, including photos and map, by email. Email: info@erfacgmbh.ch

WANT TO RENT

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MAID W/ HIGH

responsibility. Foreign couple is looking for a long-term maid with high responsibilities. Basic spoken and written English, plus nice, sincere personality required. The person should also be able to help with miscellaneous local issues. Working location for the first 9 months will be at Patong Beach; after that, in Kathu in nice environment. Good salary based on abilities and working experience. Please call or email for interview. Tel: 06-7428968. Email: fima168@yahoo.com

NANNY NEEDED

During the winter holidays (Dec 25 to Jan 9, 2005). Urgently needed to look after 3-year-old girl. English and/or Japanese speaking pls! Energetic lady w/own transportation who can play with my daughter from 8am-3pm. Pls call NOW! We offer good pay! Tel: 072-677924, 07-677924. Email: macoseru@hotmail.com

CLEANER NEEDED

Part-time hours by arrangement, 3-4 hours daily. Patong area. Please contact for more information or to arrange an interview. Tel: 076-342737, 09-9723861. Email: ba@kiwibrian.com

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This is a new position in a rapidly expanding company. Qualified candidates will be Thai, aged at least 28, and have:

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- ▶ Minimum 2 years' experience in accounting management
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II. IT TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER

Responsibilities: The Technical Support officer will focus, at least initially, on hardware and system maintenance, and networking issues (TCP/IP, LAN).

- ▶ Male or female, Thai nationality
- ▶ Diploma or degree in computers or a related field
- ▶ At least 2 years' experience in networking and hardware maintenance
- ▶ Good interpersonal skills
- ▶ Good command of spoken English would be an advantage

III. Reporter

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with initiative, an outgoing personality and plenty of curiosity about the world and how it works, and a keen interest in sports.

Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car drivers license.

IV. ASSISTANT DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

- ▶ Male or female, Thai nationality
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in any field
- ▶ Strong command of English would be an advantage
- ▶ Able to work as part of a team
- ▶ Creative and hard working

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Passara Kaewbumroong, Human Resources, by email, fax or post to:

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- Thai national, bachelor's degree, at least 25 yrs old, 3 yrs' experience
- Accurate typing, good telephone manners
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59/2 Ong Sim Phai Road, Taladyai, Phuket City, Phuket 83000
Applications are strictly confidential. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified. To know more about opportunities at Naga Concepts, please call Mr Andor Hampala, Director, at 076 219 892 or 02 633 8282.

HOTEL IN PATONG

The Hilltop Hotel, at No 24 on 50 Pi Rd in Patong, is looking for staff to work in all positions in the kitchen, restaurant and bar. For more information or to apply, call 076-296787 between 8 am and midnight.

INTERIOR DESIGNER WANTED

Qualified Thai interior architect with minimum 4 years' experience. 3-D Autocad and construction management ability required. Email: kathyadam@eggspace.com

Tai Pan

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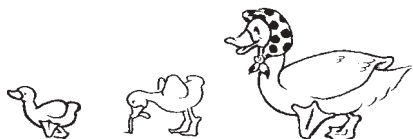
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LOOKING FOR

partner for existing hotel, good location, good business. Tel: 09-5902184.

Employment Wanted

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SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

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PlayStation 2 with two controls and approx 30 games. Tel: 04-0397600.

HOUSE CLEARANCE

3 double beds, 1 very modern, dark wood; 1 large, bamboo. Brand new bamboo furniture, Sony TV, DVD etc. Call Tel: 07-0659016 for more info.

Articles Wanted

POOL TABLE

wanted. Pool table wanted, good condition, pref 8'x4' with balls and cues. Tel: 06-146-5341. Email: sigsworth@btinternet.com

GAS-FIRED FRIDGE

I am looking for a gas-fired refrigerator. If you have one for sale or know where I can buy one, please call me at Tel: 07-8849964.

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wanted. Penn 30 or 50 with matching rods. May consider other trolling equipment. Please call Khun Dao at Tel: 01-8945012.

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29-foot fiberglass motor yacht with Thai registration. 2 x 280hp Mercruiser engines. Price: 3.5 million baht ono. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 076-239864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

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compressor. Bauer Junior 2, single-phase diving compressor. Nearly new condition, 100L/min fill rate, p21 filter system, whip and pressure gauge. Trade price: 178,000 baht. Will sell for 120,000 baht. Tel: 07-2697105. Email: pauladventure@hotmail.com

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for sale. Complete with 5.0 sail and rig. Very good condition. Starboard brand. Model Start-Go 2004. Can be viewed in Chalong. Tel: 01-8235410. Email: couture@loxinfo.co.th

27FT BAYLINER

for sale. Sunbridge Bayliner 2755, full-deck cabin cruiser. New Mercruiser V8 (250 HP). Very well-maintained. Can take up to 12 people, sleeps 5. Perfect to discover the region. Can be seen at Yacht Haven. Price: 1.5 million baht. Tel: 01-9799307. Email: michelburon@hotmail.com

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wanted. 35-42 ft production flybridge launch. Cash buyer. Please email specifications, condition and price. All replies will be answered. Tel: 64-9489872, 64-2199326. Fax: 64-981884. Email: hatchback@clear.net.nz

SAILBOAT FOUND

I've found a small sailboat. If you can prove ownership (photos, or show missing equipment), I will return with a prayer of gratitude that you are alive and well. Tel: 07-8934960. Email: leifthor@myfastmail.com

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BOAT WANTED

Looking for a boat like Adriatic 790 S - about 8m long, 3m wide, 4 beds, 1 toilet, and diesel engine. Tel: 076-333242, 09-6517818. Fax: 076-333243. Email: horstkaron@yahoo.com

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Daily, 20x5m. Up to 35 pax. Thai registration. Lying at DeeLock shipyard in Phuket City. Have details and pictures. Tel: 01-8927847. Email: colonapt@loxinfo.co.th

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COUNSELLOR

available. I'm sitting here at home feeling helpless watching the devastation & emotional and mental upheavals in people's lives. I am a trained counsellor and wish to offer my services to travelers returning to Australia who may need help in their grieving progress or for those who just wish to talk to someone who cares. Phuket is a regular holiday destination for me and I can understand and relate to the devastation and loss that everyone is going through. Tel: 08-9497 3403, 04-39904537. Fax: 08-9497340. Email: mkjb@iinet.net.au

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VOLUNTEER

available. My name is John. Sitting at home, I feel helpless, watching the devastation to people's lives that has occurred. I'm not skilled but I am fit and healthy. If you need someone to lift, fetch and carry, do not hesitate to contact me in England and I will fly out as soon as possible. All I need is somewhere to pitch a tent. Tel: (44) 11-32672880, (44) 077-33255399.

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