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# Goodbye to ghosts

By Anongnat Sartpisut

**PATONG:** A ceremony has been held at Patong Beach to exorcize "sea ghosts" of people killed in the tsunami, in the hope that Korean tourists will be persuaded to return to Phuket.

The ceremony was organized by the Seoul, South Korea, office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

The Patong Beach ceremony was conducted by Korean medium Lee Hyo Nam. It lasted about four hours and included dancing and the offering of fruit, intended to reassure Koreans of all beliefs.

Before the March 22 ceremony, he told the *Gazette* that the aim of the rite was to invite the souls of all the dead, of whatever nationality, to depart to the heavens.

"The ghost that scares Koreans most is the sea ghost," he explained. "We believe that people who drown cannot go to Heaven. They remain in the sea, beneath the people swimming there. They try to lure the swimmers to the same death as they suffered, so more people will drown."

"We believe that there are about 1,000 ghosts around Patong Beach, but the aim of the ceremony is to call upon the gods of the land, sea and sky to take the spirits in the sea to the shore and from there to the heavens."

Noonsongyi Han, Informa-



Medium Lee Hyo Nam spins repeatedly as part of the exorcism.

tion Officer of the Seoul TAT office, told the *Gazette* it was felt that Koreans would be reluctant to return to the island as long as they believed it was still haunted by the ghosts of the tsunami dead.

The TAT spent 700,000 baht on the ceremony, providing flights from South Korea on Orient Thai Airlines for journalists, to ensure that the event received coverage in the South Korean media.

Ms Han said, "If you compare numbers for January to March last year with the same period this year, the number of Korean visitors is down about 40% this year. We think this is

because Korean people believe in ghosts

"We hope that, after this ceremony, more Koreans will come to Phuket, although I can't predict how many."

Three days earlier, 160 sportsmen took part in an overnight soccer tournament at Kalim Beach, intended to reassure people that the area was not haunted.

Altogether, 32 teams of five players competed in the event, between 6 pm on March 19 and 6 am on March 20.

Organizer Amnuay Kuabum told the *Gazette*, "We were there all night and we didn't see anything out of the ordinary, such as ghosts."

## Tax breaks urged for foreign filmmakers

**NAI YANG:** Reducing taxation and slashing red tape could help revitalize the post-tsunami film industry in Phuket and surrounding provinces, a seminar heard on March 21.

Delegates to the meeting, organized by the Office of Tourism Development and the Thai Film Office, were told that scenes for 441 foreign films were shot in Thailand in 2004, generating revenue of around 1.13 billion baht for the country.

Phuket was the fourth most popular location for foreign film producers, after Bangkok, Chon Buri and Chiang Mai, and in past years Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi together usually attracted about 100 film crews each year.

But this year, Thailand is likely to make only 10% of what it made last year from location shooting of foreign-made films.

Thanitta Maneechote, Deputy Director-General of the Office of Tourism Development, said that, this year, seven producers in January and six in February had asked for permission to film in the Andaman region, but most of these projects were documentaries or advertisements. No one had asked for permission to film a big-budget feature film in Thailand.

K. Thanitta told the meeting at the Pearl Village Hotel that making it easier and cheaper for foreign producers to work in Thailand might persuade them to return.

She said, "Last year, we were approached by Hollywood movie companies wanting to shoot two films - *Anaconda 2* and *Ghost Rider* - in Thailand, but the crews ended up going to Fiji and Australia respectively because those countries had re-

Continued on page 2

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## Tax breaks urged to attract foreign movie-makers

From page 1

duced taxes on film making, and took only one or two days to decide whether or not the crews could shoot scenes in conservation areas and the like."

She added that the movie *The Beach* had brought "a vast amount of money" to Krabi, where it was shot, not only directly in terms of what the film crew had spent on accommodation, food and other services, but also indirectly, because of tourists who visited Krabi after seeing the film.

Making its own effort to increase the use of Thailand, and specifically Phuket, as a location for movies is SF Cinema City, operator of the SF Cinema Coliseum at Central Festival Phuket and six other multiplexes around Thailand.

Scott Rosenberg of AMW International told the *Gazette* on March 22 that the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) plans to hold a symposium in Phuket from May 29 to June 6 this year. A film festival will be staged to coincide with the event.

Mr Rosenberg said that the symposium and festival should instill confidence in filmmakers about making films in and around Phuket.

"Getting the film industry back on track in Phuket will help to give the survivors of the tsunami what they need: work, not handouts."

The festival is still in the planning stages, but Mr Rosenberg said that while the main focus would be on Asian movies, the program will also appeal to non-Asians and would comprise a mix of commercial and art-house films.

— Anongnat Sartpisut

## Duo go through to award finals

PHUKET: Thipratri Saenkam, 18, from Kathu Wittaya School, and Ella Micheler, 17, from Dulwich International College, won the southern region's top prizes in the Second Junior Impac Dublin Literary Awards for Thailand, topping a field of 69 entrants from Phuket, Surat Thani and Pattani and winning 10,000 baht apiece.

In an awards ceremony co-hosted by *The Nation*, *The Nation Junior* and the *Phuket Gazette* on March 19, they received their prizes from Dr James Irwin, Chairman of US-based productivity improvement consultancy Impac, which — along with Enterprise Ireland, a business promotion agency of the government of Ireland — is sponsoring the competition.

Thipratri, winner of the award for Thai students, and Ella, who won the award for non-Thais, will now go forward to the national final of the competition, the results of which will be an-



nounced on April 4 in Bangkok. The Thai and non-Thai winners of the national final, in addition to receiving cash prizes, will be flown with their parents to Dublin, Ireland, this summer to attend the senior Impac Dublin Literary Awards, the world's richest literary prize.

• At the prize presentation ceremony in Phuket are, front row, from left, Andrew Smith, Dulwich International College,

non-Thai runner-up; Ella; and Nittaya Rakkannan of Kathu Wittaya School, representing Thipratri. Also pictured are Dr James Irwin, Chairman of Impac (left); Wallapa Bunnag, *Gazette* Events Manager (2nd from left); Alasdair Forbes, Managing Editor of the *Gazette* (4th from left); Pana Janviroj, Editor of *The Nation* (6th from left); and John Magee, publisher of the *Gazette* (7th from left).

## Patong to be testbed for national warning system

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Patong has been chosen as the pilot site for the government's high-tech Early Warning System for disasters and will have three siren poles operational by the end of April, an official from the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology said on March 21.

The announcement was made at the Phuket Governor's Office by Manus Somsang, deputy chairman of the sub-committee appointed by Prime Minister to establish an emergency broadcast network to warn of

tsunamis and other impending disasters.

The project is unrelated to a donated 560,000-baht warning system, which failed to impress in testing conducted earlier this month.

In the new system, each siren pole will receive data via satellite from the National Warning Center to be set up in Nonthaburi. The sirens will be capable of issuing five different types of alert, including both sirens and computer-generated voice messages in various languages. Each pole will consist of eight loudspeakers producing a volume of sound that will be audible as far away as 1.5 kilometers, the manufacturers say.

The three 15-meter poles, to be spaced out to allow coverage to extend the entire length of

Patong Beach, will be erected atop the Tourist Police Station in central Patong, at the Sunset Beach Resort to the north in Kalim, and at the Seaview Hotel near Klong Pakbang to the south.

They will use digital sound technology designed by German Kockum Sonics, which is donating the equipment for the pilot project.

Each pole will have a control cabinet to receive signals from the National Warning Center, which will also transmit alerts via Thailand's 211 AM radio stations, 312 FM stations, 10 Thai TV channels and via SMS messages to mobile phone owners.

The Early Warning System, which will eventually cover the entire nation, will initially focus of the six provinces affected by the tsunami, K. Manus added.

## IN BRIEF

### Prince Andrew to visit Phuket

PHUKET: HRH Prince Andrew, fourth in line to the British throne and Britain's Special Representative for International Trade and Investment, is due to visit Phuket on April 25 and 26 after attending Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan.

The announcement was made by Phuket Vice-Governor Niran Kalayanamit following a meeting with representatives of the British Embassy and Buckingham Palace staff in Phuket today.

The Prince will use his visit to thank those involved in the tsunami recovery and rebuilding operations, and to inspect some of the areas affected.

### Gay Festival dates set

PATONG: The 6th annual Phuket Gay Festival will take place from April 7 to 10.

More than 2,000 people are expected to join the event, including the gala parade that has become the festival's signature attraction.

The parade will take place on April 10, starting at 4 pm at the Royal Paradise Hotel.

For more details email Khun Tangmo, the festival's Chairperson, at: tangmoclub@yahoo.com or visit the website: www.gaypatong.com

### Architect expo in April

PHUKET CITY: The Architect Taksin '05 expo, to be held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from April 1 to 3, will showcase a variety of construction and decoration technologies, equipment, products, materials, and related services available from manufacturers and suppliers worldwide.

The exhibition is being organized by the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA) and TTF International Co Ltd.

For more information contact TTF at Tel: 02-7172477 extension 123 or visit the exhibition website at <http://www.architectexpo.com>

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Miss Thailand Universe contestant Malinart "May" Singthongboon, 23, from Saraburi, grins as she holds up the target she has just riddled with pistol shots.

# Tourists 'will come back in October'

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Panu Maswongsa, Vice-President of Marketing of the Phuket Tourism Association, has said that he expects the number of tourists visiting Phuket to return to normal by October, when European tourists start to come back in larger numbers.

"The number of tourists [to Phuket] will not increase in the immediate future because we are now entering the low season, but we expect tourists to come back to Phuket at the end of October as we enter the next high season," he said.

K. Panu made his prediction after returning from the re-

cent International Tourism Bourse (ITB) exhibition in Berlin, considered one of the most important marketing platforms for Phuket's tourism industry.

"In light of the positive feedback I received at the ITB, I believe that European tourists will return to Phuket next high season," he said.

"We explained and helped tourists and tour agents to understand what the current state of Phuket truly is. We told them the truth so that they would have a different perception from that given by the media."

K. Panu said that tourists were primarily concerned about Phuket having a tsunami warning system installed and about the

emergency services available on the island, but noted that German airline LTU had promised to increase its service to Phuket from three flights a week to five a week in September.

"After the tsunami, the occupancy rate of Phuket's hotels fell to 5-10% in January and February. Now, in March, the rate has risen to 40-45%.

"We will soon be in the low season, when our major markets are Singapore, China, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Australia. Not only should we encourage European tourists to come, but also we should ensure the Asian markets send tourists this low season, too."

## Beauties and bullets

PHUKET: Demonstrating that there's more to a beauty queen than good looks, the 44 competitors in the Miss Thailand Universe 2005 competition indulged in a little pistol shooting, raced all-terrain vehicles and rode on elephants during their recent visit to Phuket to promote the island's wobbly tourist market.

The activities, filmed by Channel 7 TV for broadcast on March 26, the final day of the contest, took place at the Phuket Shooting Range. On March 20 the contestants had a quieter day, visiting the Sea Gypsy village on Koh Sireh, where they watched a display of Sea Gypsy dancing, before joining in.

The contestants arrived in Phuket on March 17. One

of the competitors, Araya "Ann" Prasompol, 19, from Rayong, told the *Gazette*, "I am excited because this is my first time [in Phuket]. I had heard that the island was badly affected by the tsunami but we will show the world that the beaches are still there and still beautiful."

Thanjira "Vi" Prapaharn, 20, from Phitsanulok, said that she was very moved by the warmth of the welcome given to the competitors by the people of Phuket.

"I think that it is important for us to show the world that it is safe to travel to Phuket," she commented.

The Fab 44 were due to leave the island on March 23, to prepare for the finals in Bangkok.

## Immigration goes mobile

PHUKET: The Immigration Department is launching a mobile service as part of its contribution toward boosting Phuket's tourist industry.

Throughout April and May, immigration officers will staff desks at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket on Tuesdays, and at the Kata Beach Resort on Thursdays – except on the April 12 and 14 Songkran public holidays.

Phuket Immigration Super-

intendent Pol Col Witawat Buranaspom told the *Gazette* it is hoped that the service, which will offer advice as well as extensions to tourist visas, will persuade tourists to add 10 to 15 days to their stays.

Col Witawat said Immigration had been considering setting up mobile facilities since the end of last year, but the project was postponed because of the tsunami.

If it proves successful, he said, similar services may be offered during the high season.

Col Witawat added that the mobile service would handle only extensions for tourist visas; more complicated matters, such as renewing permits to stay for people with non-immigrant visas, will continue to be dealt with at the head office in Phuket City.

## Body ruled a suicide

CHALONG: Police have identified the body found hanging from a tree on March 18 as that of Wachara Rodklongtan, 21. Pol Maj Anek Mongkol of Chalong Police Station, said K. Wachara is believed to have killed himself.

## Reposessed properties up for auction

PHUKET CITY: Some 49 reposessed shophouses, apartments, houses and land, with a total value of 38 million baht, will be put up for auction at the Phuket office of the Government Housing Bank (GHB) on March 26.

The cheapest opening bid for a plot of land is 88,000 baht, while the lowest opening bid for a house or apartment is 200,000 baht.

The highest opening price for a property is 3.9 million baht for a three-story shophouse in Chalong.

For more information, contact the GHB at Tel: 076-214532, 076-223601-3 or 076-218191-3.

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## Queer News

## Not-so-lucky charm

PHAYAO: A Phayao man is behind bars after allegedly stealing the preserved corpse of a stillborn baby boy from Phayao Hospital to use as a lucky charm.

Jakree Tiemkaew, a 35-year-old builder from Tambon Ban Dam in Muang District, was taken into custody on February 22 after he took the tiny corpse to a local glass cabinetmaker and asked to have a special enclosure made for it.

The cabinetmaker, who normally makes cabinets for Buddha amulets and other religious icons, found the request unusual and tipped off Phayao's Muang District Police, who took Jakree in for questioning at 10 am.

During questioning Jakree told police that he hadn't stolen the corpse, but had simply walked into the hospital one day last January and asked for it. His request, he said, was granted by a hospital official, whom he described to police.

The hospital has now launched an investigation into the matter, the results of which will determine whether Jakree is charged with stealing property from a public institution or the lesser charge of receiving stolen goods.

It is also taking steps to modify the section of the morgue from which the child's body was stolen, such as by putting a door on it.

Jakree explained that he made a special point of offering the *kuman thong* (Golden Child) brightly-colored sweets and soft drinks at every mealtime and carried it about with him in a shoulder bag whenever he left home.

He also claims the stillborn child twice protected him from impending dangers.

"Once, about a week after I started taking care of the Golden Child, I was walking to work when it whispered to me to watch out for a nail. Immediately I noticed a five-inch spike sticking out of a plank that was lying on the ground.

"Then in February, I was driving home when it whispered to me that my car tire was damaged. Sure enough, I had a blowout one minute later," he said.

As nobody has stepped forward to post bail for Jakree, he now sits in a court prison cell where he reportedly gets along well with the other inmates, who call him *Ajarn* (a highly learned man or professor).

Jakree told a reporter that he fully intends to continue his black magic after his release, although this time he would practice using icons composed of materials other than human tissue, which brings too many complications, he said.

A neighbor later told a reporter it was well-known that Jakree was a few satang short of a baht. He started practicing black magic about 10 years ago after his father died, but nobody in his village in Tambon Ban Dam paid him much notice because he generally kept to himself and caused no harm to the community.

Witthaya Dumwongkhead, Associate Professor at Maejo University and an expert in Thai witchcraft and black magic, said belief in the *kuman thong* legend dates back to ancient times, but is no longer very popular in Thailand, except in rural areas near the border with Cambodia.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

## KAFKA WOULD

As Phuket's yachting industry continues to grow, more and more foreigners are arriving in Thailand and leaving again aboard boats. Navigating Immigration rules in any country can be an odious task, and nearly every foreigner in the Kingdom has a tale to tell – with the message that Thailand is no exception.

To fast-track the process of clearing through Immigration, Customs and the Marine Office, the Phuket Port Control Center (PPCC) was set up at Chalong Pier as a one-stop center for people arriving at or leaving Phuket by sea. Currently, officers at the PPCC expect to process each arrival or departure within 45 minutes.

Although the PPCC has done away with the requirement for sailors to run around Phuket City presenting themselves to all three departments before the prescribed 24-hour deadline, some immigration requirements still come under consistent criticism.

One *Gazette* reader wrote, "I want to make it clear that none of [my] complaints apply to the officers at the PPCC," and "the [PPCC] staff are invariably courteous and helpful".

But, he added, the Immigration Office in Phuket City is another matter entirely. "I have been sailing in the waters of foreign countries since 1988, and have cleared through immigration offices in more than 50 countries. Without exaggeration, Thai Immigration is the most difficult, time-consuming and hostile I have encountered."

He took particular exception to the requirement that foreign skippers and crew members must each post a 20,000-baht bond as a guarantee that they will leave the country – a particular bugbear of many sailors arriving in Thailand and wanting to stay longer than the 30 days Immigration allows them when they arrive.

There is something Kafka-

The rule requiring yacht skippers and crews to deposit a bond of 20,000 baht with Immigration before leaving the country by road or air has long been a source of frustration for yachties. Here, the *Gazette's* Sangkhae Leelanapaporn tries to fathom what's behind the law. The answers are probably best described as 'murky'.

'The Immigration Act ... requires foreign captains and crew to post a bond because, if they enter [Thailand] by boat, then they should also leave the country by boat. In fact, most of them actually leave by road or by air. Why don't they leave the same way as they came?'

– Pol Col Witawat Buranasompop, Superintendent of Phuket Provincial Immigration Office



esque about this law which states, in essence, that any crew member of a boat who sincerely wishes to leave Thailand (by any route other than by sea), must post a bond to guarantee that he will leave.

So, for example, a boat skipper who wants, at the end of his 30 days, to do a "visa run" by leaving Thailand and going into Burma, then re-entering Thailand, must by law post a bond to ensure that he does, indeed, leave Thailand.

Once he is back in Thailand, the skipper can then reclaim the 20,000 baht – which he posted specifically in order to guarantee that he left the country.

However, Pol Col Witawat

Buranasompop, Superintendent of Phuket Provincial Immigration Office, stoutly defends the requirement. He believes it guarantees that foreign captains and crew will leave Thailand when their 30-day permits to stay expire.

"Since 1979, Section 28 of the Immigration Act has required foreign captains and crew to post a bond because, if they enter [Thailand] by boat, then they should also leave the country by boat.

"In fact, most of them actually leave by road or by air. Why don't they leave the same way as they came?" Col Witawat complained.

"Most crew let other people

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# HAVE LOVED THIS ONE



Left: Living the dream, with a yacht at anchor off Naiharn Beach. Above, the Phuket Port Control Center has taken much of the agony out of the old bureaucratic nightmare, but the 20,000-baht bond for crew leaving Phuket by road or air continues to raise hackles.

indeed left the country. We always give a receipt [to the person paying] to prove that we are holding the bond.

"If they don't leave Thailand as they claim on their departure form, the 20,000 baht will be forfeited and kept by the government, but [this is rare] – last year there was only one case when we retained the 20,000 baht. If people follow the Immigration rules, they can get their money back," he said.

Col Witawat hinted that the 26-year-old law was probably drafted without yachting foreigners in mind. He explained that the bond, which must be lodged at the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office in Phuket City, does not apply to passengers or tourists.

Through the example of a married couple and their two

children arriving in Phuket on a yacht, Col Witawat explained that the father could register as the captain, but all the others could be registered as "passengers".

However, the question remains why a bond would be required from a private yacht owner who has registered himself as the captain, but either wants or needs to leave Thailand by means other than aboard a boat.

Many people would argue that the boat itself should be surety enough that he would return, though of course this is exactly the opposite of what the law seems to have been designed to achieve.

On this, Col Witawat remained staunch in his defense of the requirement. "There is no rea-

son to change the law. Immigration must work as a service for checking aliens and for maintaining the security of the country. It's enforced not only in Phuket. All ports in Thailand require crew to pay [the bond]," he said.

"If they don't have 20,000 baht they should not stay in Thailand, because they could be troublemakers. Can captains guarantee that their crew will not break the law? And how could they live in Thailand without 20,000 baht? You have to pay for accommodation, food and other things," Col Witawat added.

"The 20,000 baht is not much money. If people don't have this amount of money, perhaps they should not stay in Phuket anyway, because Phuket has a high cost of living," he concluded.

pay the bond so that the person paying the bond can collect the money after the crew member has left Thailand," Col Witawat explained.

"Some people pay the bond for other crew members because they can get the money back within two days of Immigration confirming that the crewman has

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# FLOATING AN ANCIENT IDEA

By Anongnat Sartpisut

Even one day away from the sea is one day too many when your entire income derives from what you harvest from the water.

As a result, local fishermen want the replacements to be reliable and as near to maintenance-free as possible. Fishermen's incomes are generally low, so if the boats are cheap to maintain, so much the better.

Water, especially saltwater, causes metal to rust – including the nails that hold the boat together. Replace metal nails with wooden pegs and, so the theory goes, you have a boat that could last 100 years.

That, at least, is the expectation of Dr Artorn Chandavimol, the Vice-President of the Niyom Thai Fund Foundation (NTFF), which has been helping repair or replace fishing boats wrecked by the tsunami.

Starting just two days after the tsunami struck, the NTFF has been running two boat-building programs, with the intention of getting fishermen back on the water as soon as possible and, at the same time, providing them with work while their boats are being built.

Around 20 professional boatbuilders have been busy at the foundation's base at Tung La-Ong, Phang Nga, building boats for tsunami-battered communities in Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi, and at the same time training 40 boatless fishermen in boat building. The "trainees" are paid

200 baht a day for their help.

Speed was of the essence in the first program, which consisted of making damaged "conventional" boats (held together by nails) seaworthy, so the fishermen could put to sea again.

So far, the foundation has repaired 40 of these boats at a cost of 5,000 to 30,000 baht apiece.

Under the second program, boatbuilders are making boats using an ancient technique that employs wooden pegs instead of

metal nails. Dr Artorn hopes that, eventually, he will persuade modern fishermen to use boats built with this technique of their ancestors.

Explaining the benefits to the *Gazette*, Dr Artorn said, "We discovered a boat at Tai Muang, in Phang Nga Province, that was more than 100 years old. Although it had been destroyed by the tsunami, it was still clear that its structure was very strong."

"It was held together by wooden pegs. In fact, it was made

entirely of wood, which lasted longer than it would have done if it was made using metal nails.

"It is a technology that worked for the Vikings about 1,500 years ago, and the Chinese 7,500 or so years ago."

Dr Artorn says that there are three reasons why the boats fell out of favor: they used more hardwood than boats with metal nails and therefore cost more; they took longer to build, and they required more highly skilled craftsmen.

But he hopes they will become a common sight on local seas again, because they are much more durable than modern boats.

Somchai Wijit, assistant Phu Yai Baan (Chief) of Baan Chai Lay, Tai Muang, who has a century-old boat, said the wooden pegs, *lok pa sak*, are made from the wood of the mai nak mud, a hardwood that grows mainly in the mountains.

Kajornsak Pan-sak has been making all-wood boats for the foundation. He said he learned the techniques from his father, who had 30 years' experience making such boats.

He said, "It takes me between 10 days to two weeks to build one boat. I'd say a 9.5-meter boat costs around 200,000 baht."

"The most difficult part is making the pegs the right size for the hole. Each must fit precisely, so you have to measure it exactly, and it all has to be done by hand, because if we used a machine the peg might break. One boat needs a minimum of 1,000 pegs, so there is a lot of work involved."

Dr Artorn estimates the foundation needs around 9 million baht to complete its work at Tai Muang and to build around 60 more boats. Anyone wishing to make a donation can contact him at Tel: 06-6775555 or 05-8926774, or by email to: artornc@yahoo.com.




Above: Dr Artorn helps to scrape a boat.

Left: Boatbuilders tap pegs into the hull of a boat.

Using this technique, a practised professional can construct a 12-meter boat in approximately two weeks, but it takes a novice about a month.

There are around 10 wood-nail boats in Tai Muang, and they are used mainly for fishing for *goong kheuy* (local shrimp) and small fish such as *chingchang* (white-bait).



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# Masseuses wrestle with the law

The would-be operator of a 257-million-baht Bangkok massage parlor has launched legal action to try to force the police to decide on the parlor's application for a licence within the 90-day deadline.

PPTS Co said it had applied for a licence for the multi-million-baht venture, on Ratchadapisek Rd, in September, but had not had a decision so far.

In a petition filed at the Administrative Court, the company claimed the police had blocked the review without justification, naming Pol Maj Gen Pramote Pathumwong of Metropolitan Police Region 5 as the officer in charge of such reviews.

Article 9 of the Entertainment Venues Act states that police should rule on a licence application within 90 days.

**A little extra help:** After witnessing their predecessors go through nine reshuffles during PM Thaksin's first term, some newly-appointed Cabinet ministers are perhaps hoping that a little *feng shui* will help them hang on to their jobs.

Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak has had the furniture in his new office rearranged according to *feng shui* practices and has added a Buddha image.

Deputy Prime Minister Surakiart Sathirathai has ordered a new desk and other furniture, and a carpet to match, along with a new telephone system.

Agriculture Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan has refuted claims that she had four date palms which used to stand on a staircase opposite her office removed because they were against *feng shui* concepts.

However, two aquaria, complete with goldfish, have been installed in K. Sudarat's office. "Goldfish make you live and work in harmony and in peace," explained Agriculture Ministry Permanent Secretary Banpot Hongthong.



**FREE AS A BIRD:** A truck laden with dove cages to the market in Yala during preparations for the annual Asean Cooing Dove contest. Rearing and keeping cooing doves is a popular pastime in the deep south.

**Lean times:** The drought has so far caused 13.68 billion bahts' worth of damage to Thailand's crops and caused severe disruption to exports, particularly of rice and fruit.

It has been projected that rice harvested this year will be one million tonnes less than last year, and the National Economic and Social Development Board has warned that Thailand's gross domestic product could suffer if the drought lasts beyond May.

Rice production for 2005 is projected at 17.5 million tonnes. Sugar cane production, too, is ex-

pected to fall from 60 million tonnes to 40 million tonnes, cassava from 20.6 million tonnes to 17 million, and durian production halved, from 200,000 tonnes to 100,000 tonnes.

HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who holds a patent on a rain-seeding technique, has established a rain-making center at Hua Hin, aimed at bringing relief to farmers in some of the 63 provinces hit by the drought

**Family Feud:** A 10-year-old girl intervened to stop her drunken father shooting her mother in the head.

Anurak Nuchboonchay had already shot Sriprapha Jitmoong in her left leg and he was about to pull the trigger, with the gun pointed at her head, when the couple's daughter, Nonticha Jitmoong, distracted him.

"I rushed to help my mum out of the house and we went deep into a nearby forest," the 10-year-old told police in Chumphon.

The two stayed in the forest for about an hour before contacting Anurak's sister, who lived nearby.

K. Sriprapha was then rushed to hospital, as the police launched a hunt for her husband, who had fled the scene.

K. Sriprapha said her husband regularly beat her when he was drunk. "I bore all the pain hoping to keep the family together and have the financial means for my daughter's education," she said.

"But it is enough. From now on, there will be only my daughter and me."

**Pachy-drama:** A cow elephant spent almost five hours jammed in a four-meter-deep drain after falling through the cover of a sewer in Samut Prakan.

A veterinarian gave Phang Lamyai, who is 51 years old and weighs three tonnes, injections of painkillers and minerals before a rescue team set about hoisting her out of the hole, using a crane, a backhoe and several trucks.

A police spokesman said mahout Banyat Salangam, 22, had brought Phang Lamyai to the city from Buri Ram three days earlier, to make money by selling fruit to people to feed to the elephant.

Banyat was apparently drunk when the elephant stepped on the sewer cover.

The elephant sustained wounds to her hind legs, belly, the joints of her front legs and her tail.

Police charged Banyat with taking an elephant on to a road and blocking traffic, an offence punishable by a 500 baht fine.

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

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# Facing the longest low season



## ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

**T**he tourists are trickling back to the area. Some have come because they are curious about the tsunami. They visit the most-damaged sites to take photos. Others come to revisit and help support the economy and the business owners they know from past visits.

Many visitors arrive expecting to see destroyed buildings and other remnants from the tsunami, and seem surprised at how normal everything looks. Some seem disappointed not to find destruction and despair upon their arrival.

Other visitors said they felt guilty about "having a good time" in a place where there has been so much grief.

All customers are welcome at this point in time, but it is especially heartening to have old friends return, friends who truly care about the welfare of the area and its inhabitants.

We in Krabi all insist that this is exactly what we need, the perfect antidote: smiling, happy customers spending their money supporting the local businesses and keeping the local Thai staff employed.

But one thing is for sure – everyone agrees it is quiet. It is common knowledge that Koh Samui and Pattaya have benefited from the events of December 26, as misinformation about the condition of the Andaman Coast provinces scared away many tourists.

The problem facing many local businesses is that the recent increase in business is too little,



Above left: There's no mistaking the new nursery school for Phi Phi kids in Krabi Town. Right: Apichat Lanlongsa is all ready for his 'customers'. Below left, volunteers check everything is perfect while, below right, kids enjoy the giant slide on opening day.



too late. The hotels are running at 20%-40% occupancy, but pricing remains soft and customers are looking for "tsunami specials."

Now we are entering the last phase of what would usually be the high season. After Songkran, in mid-April, the season will effectively be over. For most businesses it will be the longest low season on record, for others a struggle for survival.

**Realty bites:** There are a few bright points on the horizon. It seems investors in real estate have been interested in finding properties that might sell at a discount, while other potential investors are inquiring about opening new businesses for the next high season.

At this point, it doesn't look like there are any "distress sales" of properties, although with luck the upward-spiraling rents and property prices will slow enough to attract new businesses.

So if businesses can just survive this drawn-out low season, the hopes are high for next year.

**Beach bash:** On March 24, the Holy Land Resort in Ao Namao will be the host for the first Full Moon Psy/Goa beach party. Starting at 10 pm, six DJs will keep revelers dancing until 10 the next morning.

The Holy Land is a beautiful seaside spot just five minutes' boat ride from Railey Beach, and free rides are being provided by YaYa's Bungalows.

If you have a car, it's just seven kilometers from Ao Nang Beach, or you can hitch a free ride from Wanna's Place on the Ao Nang beach road.

The entry fee is 150 baht and includes one drink. For more information contact Stephan at Tel: 01-8940208 or by email at: [stephan@wannasplace.com](mailto:stephan@wannasplace.com).

**Foundations at work:** Through the creative talents of many Thais and expats, a nursery school has been built to aid homeless families from the Phi Phi Islands.

After the tsunami, many of the surviving families were moved to temporary housing near the Klong Hin mosque in Krabi Town. This isn't the perfect long-term solution as many large groups are living in accommoda-

tion meant for much smaller numbers.

In addition, many of the parents are finding it difficult to look for work as they must look after their young children in their new environment. The nursery school should help alleviate some of these pressures and help the community rebuild itself.

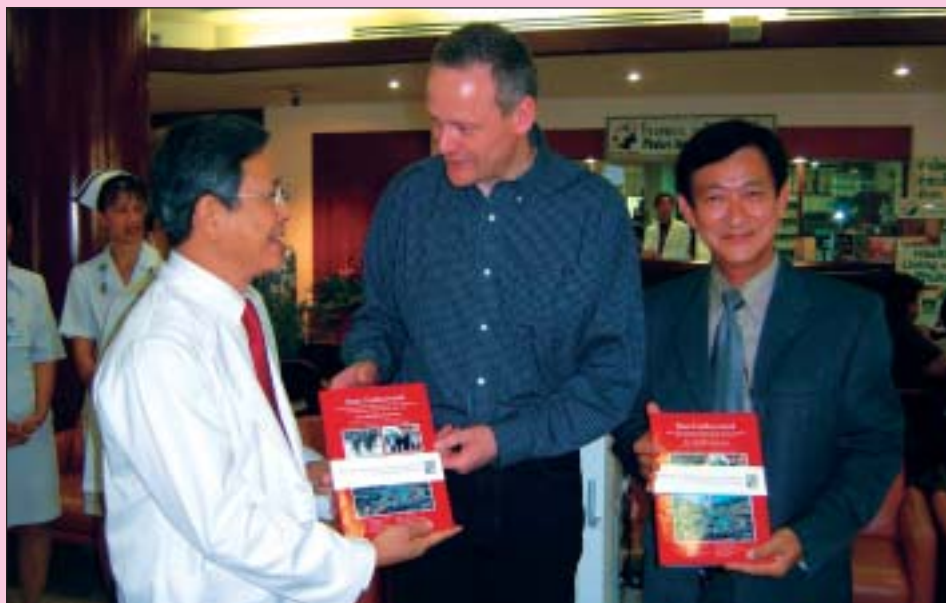
The building was funded by private donations and Help International Phi Phi, with many volunteers involved in the construction and outfitting of the school. On March 8 it was officially opened, with much fanfare and fun provided by clowns, games and a huge inflatable slide. Representatives from various foundations – including the UN – were on hand to help support the local community.

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## This week



**NATION TO NATION:** Cyril Svoboda (center), the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, exchanges gifts with Dr Anuroj Tharasiroj (left) and Anurak Tharasiroj, respectively Hospital Director and Managing Director of Phuket International Hospital. The informal presentation followed a ceremony to hand over a ventilator from the European nation to the hospital in recognition of its sterling work during the tsunami crisis.



**BACK AGAIN:** (from left) William Warren, Princess Sakina, ML Tridhosiuth Devakul – the owner of The Boathouse – Khunying Phumthong Devakul and Gen Chaovarit Yodmanee throw a switch to open the renovated restaurant.



**HELLO MR CHIPS:** Asimo the robot visits Central Festival Phuket to cheer up children following the tsunami.



**DISCUSSION TIME:** DDr Harald Wiesner, Austrian Ambassador and Special Representative for the Tsunami Disaster Region, and Dr Esterer Erwin, Deputy Special Representative (center left and right), meet with the *Phuket Gazette's* Managing Editor, Alasdair Forbes (right), and Desk Editor Andy Johnstone.



**AND TO U2:** Ploypraphat Semnara (center), Branch Manager of Internet Thailand Public Co, offers sincerest wishes of success to Suwannee Sunhangid (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), the Manager of the second U2 computer store, at the new branch's recent opening.



**SUKKO TO ME:** (from left) Pichet Klunchun, Spa Conceptualist, Sunai Wachirawarakarn, General Manager of Sukko Cultural Spa & Wellness Center, and Somyot Yasavudhi, Director of Sales & Marketing of Sukko, at a recent press conference announcing a Sukko spa in Phuket.



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The message on the banner accompanying the Thai delegation to the 2005 International Tourism Bourse (ITB) in Berlin earlier this month said, "Paradise on Earth."

ITB is the world's largest travel mart; virtually every country that can claim a hotel or resort is represented, and it was chosen by Phuket's hotel managers and political leaders as the premier forum for persuading the international travel industry that Phuket is a safe and glorious destination for holiday fun.

The massive scale of this expo overwhelms anyone brave enough to try to view all that is offered in a sprawling set of 26 convention centers all joined by corridors lined with food and drink.

Thousands of tour company buyers from all over the world converge on ITB to negotiate room rates and tour packages which can mean life or death for a region's tourism industry.

I spent two days exploring as much of ITB as possible, taking in such remote pavilions as Mongolian eco-tours, Iranian cultural

# Bourse intentions

adventures and Tanzanian wildlife reserves.

In the Southeast Asia convention center, attention focused on Phuket. Managers of small, Thai-managed resorts, GMs of large international resorts and local political leaders – often reported to be in conflict over the development of Phuket's future – stood side-by-side to promote the island.

The Phuket delegation, which was professional and convincing, showed videos of gorgeous beaches and happy tourists enjoying what this island has to offer – *after* the tsunami.

A central sala, where Thai massage was offered, was a popular feature. Tired delegates could have weary muscles relaxed before heading off to their next meeting.

Massage and the healing arts have become a major draw for our region, which is promoting "Health Tourism". The Phuket Spa As-



Dorinda Roseberry (left) and partner, Nikorn Banjerdlert go over the finishing touches at Evolve Spa, at Treetops Arasia, Surin Beach.

sociation presented its beautiful guide to 25 of the island's certified spa operations.

In the end, however, time alone will tell how the international holiday buyers will respond to the efforts of the Phuket delegation.

**Evolution:** One of the members of this Circle of 8 is Dorinda

Roseberry, who is back in spa operations after taking some years off to have three babies and to develop her own line of spa products.

Dorinda can be credited with creating some of the best concepts and therapies for the Phuket spa industry. She was recruited more than 10 years ago by the Banyan Tree Spa to develop their therapy programs and then became a spa consultant for resorts around the world.

She and partner, Nikorn Banjerdlert, developed Roseberry massage products, which are used by spas that want oils that heal as well as relax.

Now Dorinda and Nikorn have been appointed managers of Evolve Spa at Treetops Arasia, at Surin Beach, and this has given Dorinda the opportunity to create an environment that is beautiful as well as healing.

"We are using therapeutic colors and crystals and a menu of spa therapies that I have developed from years of practice," she tells me.

Bilaal Rajan began raising funds for charity when he was just four years old, when he raised money to help the victims of the January 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India.

That was also the first year Bilaal took part in the Aga Khan Foundation Canada's World Partnership Walk – which supports development projects in Africa and Asia. He has completed the walk every year since then, raising CND\$1,000 (around 32,000 baht) each year.

Bilaal became involved with Unicef in October 2004, after seeing an advertisement asking for donations to help victims of last September's Hurricane Jeanne in Haiti and elsewhere in the Caribbean.

He decided that donating CND\$10 a month, as his father and mother, Aman and Shamin, suggested, was not enough, so he started to sell boxes of biscuits donated by his father's company. He raised \$6,400, then set up his own website, [www.handsforhelp.org](http://www.handsforhelp.org)

Unicef Thailand Assistant Communications Officer Pichada de Jesus said that since last year, "Bilaal has advocated passionately for Unicef's work on behalf of children around the world."

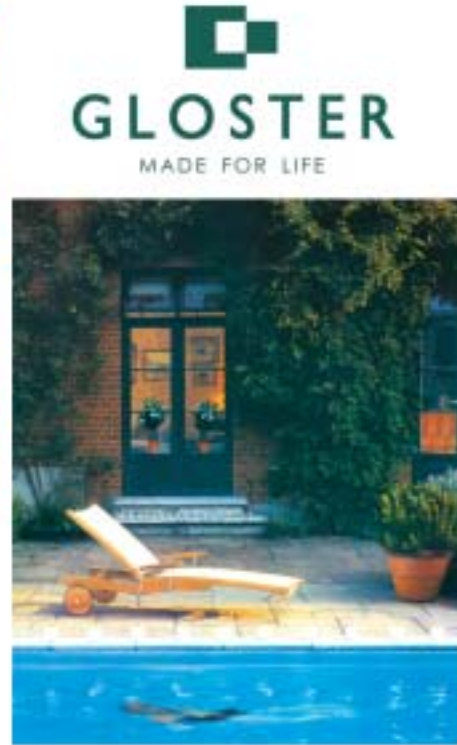
Bilaal has supported Unicef's Trick-or-Treat fund-raising campaign and has raised money for kids affected by HIV/Aids.



## Off the WALL

With Bruce Stanley

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# LITTLE BIG HEART

When he saw the pictures of the devastation caused by the December 26 tsunami, Canadian Bilaal Rajan knew he had to do something to help the people in the areas affected. So he put on his coat and went around his neighborhood in Toronto, knocking on doors and asking for donations.

What makes Bilaal extraordinary is that he is just eight years old, and his door-stepping on behalf of tsunami survivors was just the latest in a string of fund-raising activities he has carried out since he was four years old.

This month, Bilaal has been touring tsunami-hit areas in Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives as an ambassador for the United Nations International Children's Fund (Unicef) Canada. His first stop was Baan Kalim School in Kamala, where *Gazette* reporter Anongnat Sartpisut caught up with him.

Then after the December 26 tsunami, Bilaal launched Unicef's "Canada Kids Earthquake Challenge" in which Canadian children were challenged to raise CND\$100 each towards tsunami relief. The effort has raised around CND\$2.5 million.

Bilaal, who set himself a target of CND\$10,000, decorated plates and sold them. He presented one – decorated with the Canadian flag – to Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin on January 7 this year, when the PM

wanted to officially recognize Bilaal's outstanding efforts.

Bilaal is now a child ambassador for Unicef, and came to Phuket and Phang Nga this month, during a four-country tour to highlight Unicef projects for tsunami survivors. At Baan Kalim School, his first stop, Bilaal played games and practiced English with around 20 pupils.

The youthful fund-raiser's message to the children of Baan Kalim? That children can do many things, and that they should



Bilaal Rajan (center, in khaki shirt and trousers) plays with children at Baan Kalim School, spreading the message that 'Children can do anything ... Just believe in yourselves.'

not think that they cannot do something just because they are young.

"Children can do anything," he said, suggesting that if children say what they really believe, adults will take notice of them.

"Don't think that because we are small we cannot do anything," he said. "Just believe in yourselves."

Bilaal told the *Gazette* he began raising money for charity because, "I just feel it is not fair for people in the rest of the world when a tragedy like the tsunami happens to them."

It's a long way from a cozy street in Toronto to a tsunami-swept part of Phuket, and Bilaal seems to be aware of this. "When I joined with Unicef last year, and when I started selling my boxes of cookies, I didn't know it would become such a big thing."

"Now I am here in Phuket, helping other children."

In the future, Bilaal, who attends the private St Giles French school in Toronto, would like to be an astronaut, because he finds space "interesting".

His mother confessed that she was concerned at first that Bilaal's schoolwork would suffer because of his charity work but, she said, "He has got only As and A+s. He is doing very well."

Mrs Rajan added that she expects Bilaal to continue fund-

raising long into the future. She said, "He has a goal in life to make a difference, if he can, and that is what he really wants to do."

Unicef Thailand can be contacted at: UNICEF P.O. Box 2-154, Bangkok 10200; or at 19 Phra Atit Rd, Chanasongkram, Phra Nakorn, Bangkok 10200. Tel: 02-3569499, 02-2805931. Email: thailandao@unicef.org

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# ART AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Intricate Fabergé eggs in the Kremlin in Moscow, imposing marble statues of Roman emperors from Pompeii in Italy, the enigmatic faces on the Bayon at Angkor, Cambodia – I've seen some memorable examples of human creativity over the years. But I was still totally unprepared for what I witnessed – literally at my fingertips – in Central Festival Phuket.

It may seem like an enormous leap from the workshop of one of the world's greatest goldsmiths to Envy beauty salon at Central, but Carl Fabergé would no doubt have identified with the intense concentration and attention to detail shown by Envy's K. Cha Cha and K. Janny as they turned my bitten-to-the-quick fingernails into miniature works of art.

It took them at least 25 painstaking minutes to sculpt an acrylic extension onto one nail and add handmade decorations of 3D flowers and tiny jewels.

Each would dip the moistened tip of a very fine paintbrush into first one pot of colored acrylic powder then another, then turn the resulting tiny blob into just one petal of what became a two-tone flower no bigger than five millimeters wide.

The owner of Envy, Carmen Finch, arranged for her staff to have five months of training from

## NAIL ART

by Alison Winward



Left: There's something for everyone at Envy – and if you don't see a design you like, the artists will create one for you. Right: Owner Carmen Finch says customers want to look 'different'.

a nail artist from Bangkok before the salon opened.

They learned all kinds of nail art, from straightforward painting in nail varnish to 3D decorations of the kind they gave me. K. Carmen showed me examples of designs created by her staff, ranging from tiny paintings of marine life to one of a Japanese woman in a kimono which ran over all five nails on one hand.

"The staff get ideas from

magazines, but they also have their own ideas, and some customers come with their own thoughts on what they want, too," said K. Carmen.

"Russian customers seem to like sparkly nails, long and quite sharp; flowers and cartoons are popular with Thai customers.

"Most of our [nail art] customers are foreign, though, and I'd say most are aged between 15 and 30, and they seem to want to look 'different'."

It is possible to create nail art on natural nails, but more complicated designs really do need the length and strength of extensions.

K. Carmen says the nails and their art will last for up to three months, but as the nails grow, the resulting gap between the extension and the nail itself should be filled every three weeks.

Prices for all services at envy are subject to a 40% post-tsunami discount, which will last indefinitely.

With the discount, painted nails cost between 300 and 500 baht per hand (this takes about 45 minutes). Nails with a 3D design cost 1,500 baht for both hands, and those with an additional layer of acrylic over a 3D design are 2,100 baht per set; 3D nails take three hours to create.

Envy is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Central Festival Phuket. For more information call Tel: 076-249-900.



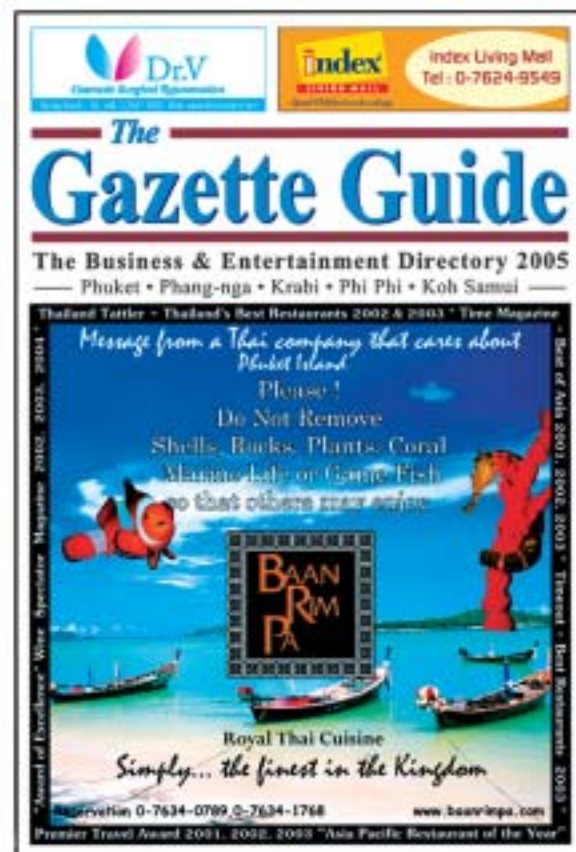
## ANNOUNCEMENT

The *Gazette Guide* 2005 has arrived and is on sale at 140 baht.

Bulk copies of the island's most comprehensive business directory are available @ the following rates:

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 10-20 copies:   | 80 baht/copy |
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| 101-400 copies: | 60 baht/copy |

All 3,000 businesses listed in the *Guide* are entitled to one copy of the book @ only **70 baht**, a 50% discount off the cover price. Pick up your copy at the *Gazette* offices today!



For bulk orders, please contact [guide@phuketgazette.net](mailto:guide@phuketgazette.net) or call Mem (Thai) or Ann (English) on 076-236555.



# Chic and cheerful

To be blunt: chief among Tahiti's many attributes is the fact that it commands definite cred. The island may have put the cash in cachet, but it's worth it.

Remember, too, that it's French. Perhaps that has something to do with the snob value. Palm trees waft over sun-kissed beaches and do everything else the travel agent promises, but around Faaa (a superlative name for an airport) and its environs there's a distinctly Gallic air.

Tahiti has suffered the indignity of being invaded by gangs of yodeling honeymooners ("Gee, isn't that sunset like a outta-body experience, sorta?"), and trampled beneath crocodiles of tourists.

Some gurgles towards the all-in, drink-all-you-can, sun'n'wotsit resorts, but thankfully, Tahiti is beyond the bounds of the Euro-lout.

And while other idyllic locales have succumbed, Tahiti has merely risen above the common herd with true French *hauteur*.

Take the beach. It's become a traveler's aphorism that the guests you see on the hotel beach are the very last people on earth who should be allowed to take off their clothes in public.

Swaying bellies and other protuberances which would be better swathed in several score meters of thick canvas are waggled about like trophies. It's the antithesis of one's expectations.

But cut to *la plage publique* on Moorea.

No loungers (chairs that is), umbrellas or irksome, hovering waitpersons, just a strip of sand, a cluster of mangroves and a stray coconut shell or two.

A little way offshore, unrefined merriment, uninhibited G-strings and up-ended bottles of Hinano beer, as a young islander and two girlfriends stand swigging and giggling waist-deep in a sea that is as clear and fresh as their faces.

At intervals one of them sloshes ashore and scurries off for a refill. It's a ridiculously care-free scene.

Yup, Tahiti's still sexy.



That is also so very French, too.

Take the restaurant, which could be one of many on the island. Unimposing, located miles from anywhere, a husband-and-wife affair. Front of house is Monsieur.

Bibulous, obese, ebullient, a grin creased round his wine

glass and a welcome word for everyone.

The winelist? Of course. A table? Possibly, perhaps, he emphasizes, in 20 minutes or so. A drink beforehand? Assuredly. A waiter comes – and goes. *Monsieur* returns. Profuse apologies. Some more minutes go by. *Et enfin...*

Preventing the whole operation from sinking into the Pacific is Madame. Forty-odd, supremely elegant, exquisitely coiffeured and garbed, endlessly efficient.

Now briskly sautéing in the kitchen, she is then calculating a bill, her pencil flying down the figures before she finally succeeds in prising the Cognac bottle from Monsieur's grasp.

Perhaps she is also preventing Monsieur from sinking into the Pacific. This is a true husband-and-wife operation. The stereo hums and lizards flicker over the matting walls.

It is, in all senses, a delicious meal.

SO WHEN DO WE LEAVE? Tahiti was good enough for artist Paul Gauguin and author Robert Louis Stevenson. It's easy to see why.

The welcome of the *Femmes de Tahiti* may have been romanticized somewhat, but the island's beauty is never Faaa away.



Elsewhere the *tricolore* trickles, policemen in *kepiss* dawdle over a mid-shift coffee and a Gauloise in the hotel foyer, and the argot is, well, argot. Could the Cote d'Azur have slipped a continent or two?

Tahiti. There is little to compare with it this – or any – side of Guadeloupe.

Inconveniently situated – getting there involves a dogleg via Auckland or Tokyo, the breed of dog you choose dictating your transport thither.

Either route invariably involves so sudden a crossing of the International Date Line that one can even be forgiven asking the legendary dumb-tourist's question: "What day is it, anyway?"



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Helping tsunami victims - HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn graciously granted an audience to Mr. Sunthorn Arunanonchai, chairman, Mr. Jeff Adams, CEO, and executives of Ek-Chai Distribution Systems Co., Ltd. (Tesco Lotus), to donate 10 million baht to the Princess Sirindhorn Fund (for the South). This money was donated by Tesco Lotus staff and customers, and the Tesco for Thais Foundation.

# Tesco Lotus

## contributes to tsunami relief



Jeff Adams, CEO: "...It is only in moments of great adversity, that the true strength of our values emerges. Our customers and staff have responded with many selfless acts of generosity and support. For this, and your ongoing support for those in need, I sincerely thank you all."



### Focus on practical aid for victims

The tragic aftermath of the December 26 tsunami prompted an unprecedented aid response from both the local and international communities. With its stores in Phuket and Trang, Tesco Lotus also

played its part, utilising its supply chain to deliver urgent supplies rapidly to where they were most needed.

"Our focus has been to send aid that is practical, and able to be used immediately," says Tesco Lotus Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jeff Adams. "We consulted with local relief agencies and provincial authorities to ensure our assistance got through to the people most in need."

Two 40-foot containers of water, food and essential goods were immediately rushed to Phuket and presented by Phuket branch manager Piyaporn Charoenrungruang to the Phuket Red Cross and Phuket PAO. The following day, Tesco Lotus supplied stranded foreign tourists in temporary accommodation at Thammasat University Rangsit campus with toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap and other essentials. These were presented by Senate president Suchon Chalikhreua. A further container of drinking water and noodles was sent to Krabi as part of a Ministry of Commerce "Aid Caravan".



At the Phuket store itself the emphasis was on meeting essential needs in the community. 500 flashlights and batteries helped people without power. Oil, sugar and sauce were supplied to the local Red Cross. Toiletries and materials were supplied to the US Special Forces Association whose volunteers were supporting people in need in Tap La Moo. Refrigerators and gas stoves supplied by vendors were delivered to needy communities by our trucks. School backpacks and stationery were given to 750 children in Tap La Moo, Ban Nam Kem and Bang Sak schools in Phang-nga to help them resume their studies. In these and many other ways our staff and management have sought to alleviate the suffering of those affected.

### Customer and company donations top 12 million baht

Through our store network, our customers also responded to the tragedy contributing nearly 8 million baht throughout January in special collection boxes for the Sirindhorn Fund (for the South) and the Ra-ja Pracha Nu-Gror Foundation under Royal Patronage. The company contributed a further 3 million baht bringing the total donations from customers and staff to 11 million baht. This was in addition to more than 1 million baht of emergency supplies donated by the company.

### Tesco's international support for tsunami victims over 100 million baht

Tesco worldwide has also mobilized support; Tesco UK donated 7.5 million baht to the International Red Cross for tsunami-affected countries and followed this with a further pledge of another 10.95 million baht to support international donations in Malaysia, Sri Lanka and India.

Customers internationally have also responded with Tesco Hungary collecting 2.8 million baht for the Hungarian Red Cross, and Tesco UK collecting 80.6 million baht for the International Red Cross.

Jeff Adams sums up the mood within the company..."The response of the global family of Tesco staff and customers has been exceptional. Many people in desperate need throughout Asia will benefit from these heartfelt contributions."





KIDS

THE FUN PAGE  
FOR ALL  
THE FAMILY

# Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 25 Greek or Roman gods. The names may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. See if you can find more than your family or friends. Score: 15 or more, good; 20 or more, very good; 25 or more, excellent.

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| V | V | H | B | A | E | K | M | B | E | L | Z | U | K | Y |
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# Brain Buster!!

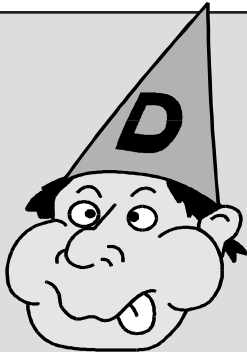
Anongnat, Boonchuay, Chairat and Damrong decide to pool their money to buy some ice cream. Chairat has twice as many baht as Boonchuay. Anongnat has four baht more than Damrong but three baht less than Chairat. Damrong has 15 baht. How many baht does Boonchuay have?

Answer: 11 baht (Anongnat has B19 and Chairat has B22.)

## ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Pluto; 2. Utah; 3. Sydney Harbour Bridge; 4. On one's face. It is the cheekbone; 5. The Tropic of Cancer; 6. Bruce Willis; 7. H. Rider Haggard; 8. *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*; 9. American Barry Nelson as Jimmy "Card Sense" Bond on US TV in 1954; 10. Bob Holness on South African radio in 1956; 11. Norway; 12. Ethnic groups in China; 13. Smetana; 14. The New Zealand cricket team; 15. Baek Ji Young; 16. The Geto Boys; 17. The Foundation; 18. Deserts; 19. Hypothetical elementary particles; 20. *The New York Times*.

# Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. What was boxing legend Muhammad Ali's original name?

2. What were the names given to his famous fights in Zaire and the Philippines?

3. Älvkarleby is the home town of which Swedish author?

4. The town is located by which stretch of water?

5. Indie-rock supergroup Broken Social Scene come from which country?

6. What was their 2001 debut album called?

7. What is the Internet country code for Equatorial Guinea?
8. *Gentlemen's Quarterly* – or *GQ* – magazine is published by which company?

9. Who is the drummer for heavy metal band Slipknot?

10. What political position does Wolfgang Schäuble hold?

11. Katy Trail State Park is in which US state?

12. Singer Asuka Fukuda found fame in which J-pop band?

13. Name the battle fought on February 12, 1429 in Rouvray, France.

14. What is the term for an
- opening in a wall, ship's side or armored vehicle through which a gun can be fired?

15. Name the three stars that make up Orion's Belt.

16. Where would you find the Milwaukee Depth?

17. Miss Havisham is a character from which novel by Charles Dickens?

18. *Ballad of a Dead Soulja* is a track by which late rapper?

19. Who or what is Metagross?

20. Ravi Shankar is a virtuoso of which instrument?
- Answers next week

# Never a Cross Word!

## Across

1. Put under a spell.

5. Six before Aug.

7. Cowboy's transport.

9. Between violin and cello.

10. Male deer.

12. Connected to the Internet.

14. Haitian black magic.

15. Cloche and bowler, for example.

18. They're at your fingertips.

19. Las \*\*\*\*\*, gamblers' paradise.

22. Pig.

23. Not a well person.

## Down

1. "\*\*\*\*, humbug," from Ebenezer Scrooge.

2. The most violent confrontation.

3. On the same score.

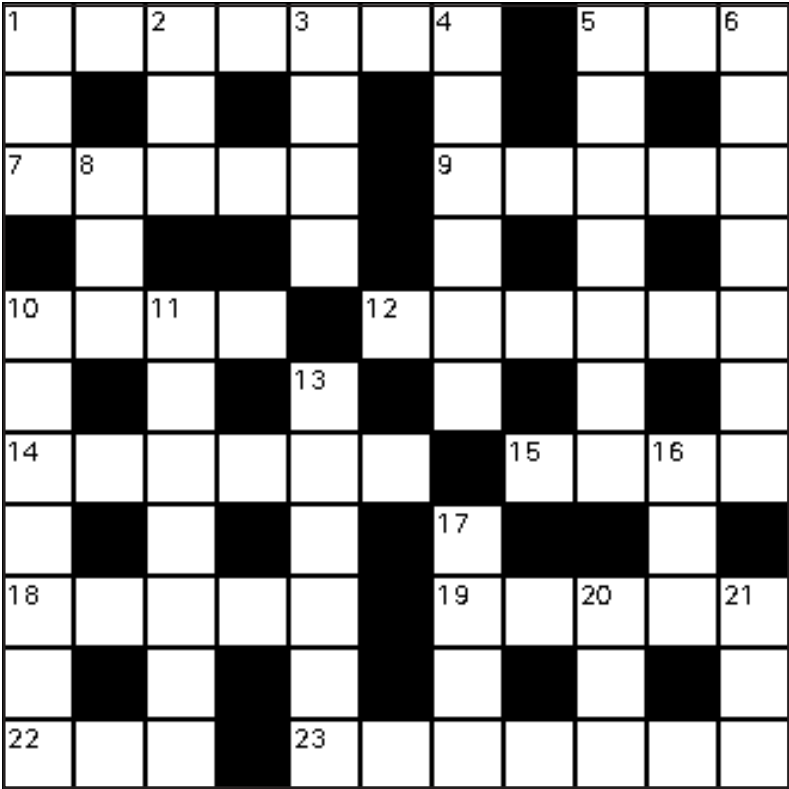
4. Cuban capital.

5. Disney World state.

6. Lodge-building rodents.

8. Not in.

10. \*\*\*\*\* Day



- Adventist.

11. Worshipping.

13. Japanese miniature tree.

16. Essential for a cuppa.

17. Tel \*\*\*\*.

20. Hair goop.

21. Down in the dumps.

Solution next week

## SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| M | A | T | E | R |   | H | I | N | D | U |
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| M | Y | T | H |   | W | I | N | E | S |   |
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| O |   | I |   | I | I | I | L |   | E |   |
| N | A | D | I | R |   | C | I | D | E | R |





# Know your law when starting a business

Mr A, an American who had lived in Phuket for many years, had a business with a Thai partner.

When he set up the business many years ago, Mr A chose to have it established as a limited partnership, rather than a limited company; the former was cheaper to set up, although it did mean that Mr A's Thai partner was named Director of the partnership.

All went well for a long time, give or take the usual ups and downs experienced by a growing business.

As in marriage, though, the hard times are when business partners find out whether their partnership really works well, or if it is time to separate.

The latter turned out to be the case for Mr A, and this was when he found out that having a partnership with a Thai director who was also the majority Thai partner was not to his advantage.

Mr A's partner did not want anything to do with the business and refused to sign papers needed to make payments from the bank or for work permit extensions or any other documents.

This caused no end of problems, so Mr A decided to see if he could buy out his Thai partner and run the business himself.

The separation was as long and complicated as a divorce and took many months to resolve, but finally Mr A was able, us-



**LAYING  
DOWN  
THE LAW**  
With Friedrich  
'Sam' Fauma

ing borrowed money, to buy his partner out.

Eventually, Mr A learned that, as an American citizen, he could have been the majority shareholder in the limited partnership all along, because a treaty between Thailand and the US puts American citizens on the same footing as Thais. Indeed, he could even have been the sole director.

Of course, if he had known this from the very beginning, Mr A could have saved himself an awful lot of trouble; he could have controlled the partnership as the director, and his position in the dispute would have been totally different.

In addition, while a limited partnership is cheaper to set up than a limited company, the majority shareholders of such partnerships have unlimited liability, while shareholders in limited companies have only limited liability.

Mr A's experiences show just how important it is to get the right advice, outlining all the options, before starting a business – and also to bear in mind that the cheapest way is not always the best.

Letter to the Editor

## The wrongs of copyright

**W**e would like to point out some inaccuracies in the 'Laying down the Law' column of December 4, 2004, titled "Copyright – and copywrong", so that your readers are not misinformed.

Copyrighted works in Thailand are governed by the Copyright Act of BE 2537 (1994). Section 9 of the Act states:

*Copyright in the work created by the author in the course of employment vests upon the author unless it has been otherwise agreed in writing provided that the employer is entitled to communicate such work to public in accordance with the purpose of the employment.*

Basically what that means is that the work of an employee, which is copyrightable, in the course of his employment, in the absence of any express contract to the contrary, belongs to him.

So, in the story related in the column, the employer claimed a false copyright and made a fraudulent criminal complaint. The copyright to the "book", as matter of law, would belong to the employee, not the employer.

Section 10 of the Act states:

*Copyright in the work created in the course of a commission vests upon the employer unless the author and the employer have agreed otherwise.*

This means that the hirer would have had to have specifically commissioned the copyrighted work from the employee. However, this section generally covers works of art or music commissioned in a commercial sense. An example would be a soft drink firm hiring an advertising agency to produce a jingle for its latest marketing campaign. Another would be a specifically tailored software program for use in a specific industry.

Copyright in Thailand, as in most jurisdictions in the world, is not "registered" – there is no central registry for copyrighted works. Works are copyrighted by publication or distribution.

In the case of a book, a copyright is violated (with certain exceptions that do not apply in this case) by the copying for distribution or republication. The use of a method or information contained in a book does not, in and of itself, constitute a copyright infringement.

Last, even if there were an

express contract between the employer and employee in the case cited, and the employee violated that contract and republished or copied for distribution the work in question, or if the employer had commissioned the work, such an offense would be very unlikely to be a crime resulting in deportation.

For that the defendant would have to have been sentenced to a jail term greater than six months. The sentence for a copyright violation such as the one described would range from 6 months for a first-time offender to four years or more for a repeat offender, depending on the severity of the violation.

The employee in the case cited confessed, which would automatically have halved his first-time sentence to three months and therefore not made him subject to deportation.

We suggest that anyone faced with a situation like this or seeking further information on copyright, trademarks or patents seek advice from a qualified intellectual property attorney.

Matthew McEvily,  
McEvily & Collins,  
Phuket and Bangkok

## Tsunami is a second chance

**I**t has been only three months since the tsunami and the terrible crisis that so many people have had to endure, but it seems that life is already returning to normal.

It is important that the world, and the lives of those caught up in the catastrophe, should return to as normal an existence as possible, so that they can earn a living independently, rebuilding and rehabilitating their lives in the process.

But are things now getting back to being a little too close to the way they were before?

About a week after the tsunami, there was delight among many locals and tourists alike that most of Patong Beach had been cleared of debris and now looked like the paradise it had been decades ago.

Gone were the hundreds of sunloungers and umbrellas that lined the shore and made the beach an eyesore.

Gone were the jet-skis and banana boats, and gone were the vendors who would plod up and down the beach under the burning sun, attempting to sell trinkets to tourists.

If one stood on the beach, all one saw was white, soft sand and sapphire-blue waves, just as it had been before. For a while there, it was as if this was the way it was and should always be.

But now the jet-skis have returned. So have the sunloungers and umbrellas and vendors.

It reminds me of the story of Noah's Ark. Noah was instructed to collect a pair – one female, one male – of all the animals in the world and build a large ark in which to house them.

Once Noah had completed the ark and filled it with animals, it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, flooding the entire world. Finally, a single white dove plucked a branch from a tree, signifying to Noah that God's purpose had been fulfilled and that the deluge was over.

Many interpret the story as



**Youth 'n  
ASIA**

By Lauren Moorhouse

an Act of God to rid the world of evil.

But there is another way of looking at it, which parallels the tale of the tsunami. We did not receive a warning about the impending disaster, and what happened was devastating to many countries and to countless lives.

Shouldn't we see this as a wake-up call that we need to be better people and learn from our mistakes?

The world can be a wonderful place full of joy and laughter and at the same time full of chaos and despair. All these elements come together to define the place where we live and we have to see both the positive and the negative sides of it.

We should take this occasion – and other setbacks – as opportunities to start over. This is, after all, what a lot of us want: a second chance.

If you believe in yourself, you can make any dream come true. But you must have faith, whether you're a 17-year-old student, or a 57-year-old beach-restaurant owner.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, said "We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open". Now it is our chance to do so.

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# What's in a Thai name?

Dear Momma Duck,

Are Thai nicknames gender-specific, especially the ones that are English words? Are "Bomb" and "Tiger" only for boys, for example, and "Gem" and "Dollar" only for girls? Also, I heard that Thai parents take a lot of trouble choosing names – formal and nicknames – not because they want them to sound nice but because they hope they will make their children lucky. Is this right?

Curious,  
Phuket City



**Momma DUCK**

By Wanida Hongyok  
[momma@phuketgazette.net](mailto:momma@phuketgazette.net)

Dear Curious,

Thai children always possess short nicknames, almost always of one syllable. The use of a nickname not only makes life easier for all of us, but it is also tied up with the idea of avoiding the attention of spirits. Using a baby's real name during the first 30 days of its life might cause the spirits to focus their attention on the child, perhaps with unfortunate results.

Most Thais continue to use their nicknames throughout life and many do not know, or have forgotten, the real names of their colleagues and friends.

Of course, specific nicknames sometimes change according to fashion. Within my parents' generation, nicknames were quite simple – for example, Kaew (green), Dam (black), Mah (dog), Daeng (red), Mu (pig), Nui (little), Nit (tiny) and Ouan (fat). In Phuket, people of my generation have nicknames derived from the Chinese version of our names, such as "Jiew", "Seng", "Kiew", "Siew", "Lou" and "Hong".

Today, many Thai kids have farang-sounding nicknames, such as "Dew", "Ann", "Apple", "A", and "B" for girls. Some male versions are "Tiger", "Ball", "Big", "Golf", "Top", "Bert" and even "God", although I do not know how this poor last child might handle his nickname when he is in an Islamic or Western country.

Some parents choose nicknames according to their own passions, such as "Tong" for someone who loves to play cards, or perhaps after a famous singer or actor. As we all know, Thais love to shorten things.

Also, some of the parents of the current generation were educated in Penang, and that shows in the nicknames they give their children – "Mary", "Shane" or "Dolly", for example.

Anyone thinking of giving a

child a nickname needs to be careful to choose a name that sounds okay in Thai. Western names such as "Yvonne" [which sound similar to the word for "bitch" in Thai], or "Rudi" could cause your child some embarrassment in the future.

Also, Thai people find some foreign names hard to pronounce, such as "Andrew" – which becomes "Endoo", which means "cute" in Thai.

Some nicknames seem very strange when a person becomes an adult, such as a skinny girl called "Ouan" (fatty – because she was a fat little baby), or a tiny baby boy named "Big", whose parents clearly expect him to grow to match the name. "Pui" (plump) is the nickname of Pornthip Nakhirankanok, the second Miss Universe from Thailand!

When it comes to formal names, parents go to great lengths, usually consulting a revered monk as well as the standard book of names, to find an apt name for the child because it is believed that the name will influence his or her future.

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## In The Stars

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): Opportunities for personal improvement are looming. You should be quick off the mark this week if you don't want to miss the first golden chance. You may believe that an impromptu meeting on Wednesday is just a surface exchange but there's more going on than meets the eye. Expect March to go out with a bang where romance is concerned. Birthday celebrations are certain to be fun.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): The future is looking more secure. A money matter that has been troubling you for some weeks now will be laid to rest. You are advised to focus on relaxation for the rest of this month. In April, passion will reach boiling point and you will need lots of energy to enjoy the new relationship that is waiting in the shadows. The color lime green will sharpen your focus.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): Adventure beckons this week. If you've started to wonder where all the challenges in life have gone to, fasten your seatbelt for an exciting ride. A secret wish has much more chance of coming true if it is not divulged. Tuesday is the most auspicious day for initiating business discussions; the stars are ready to support your demands, but keep them realistic.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): If, recently, you've been putting someone else first, the balance is about to tilt in your favor. Those who require a shoulder to lean on this week won't be disappointed by their partner's support. There will be some obstacles to navigate at work, and switching off won't be easy. On a brighter note, you can look forward to smoother business progress in April. Sagittarius has an interesting tip to offer on Thursday.

**LEO** (July 24-August 22): Much as you would like to take a break, this is not the right time to do so. Those who are running out of steam are advised to keep their energy levels topped up during the coming days. If you're single, a platonic friend starts to shine in a romantic light. Don't be shy about sharing your feelings – romance

## What the coming week holds in store

is particularly well-starred during the coming weeks.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): Plans are subject to last-minute hitches this week, so you are advised to cultivate a more flexible attitude than normal. Friends are generous with advice about a personal problem that you are experiencing at the moment. It's worth listening to what Aquarius has to say on this matter. On Wednesday, something finally arrives in the mail that takes you by surprise. The scent of lavender will soothe frazzled nerves.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): The wind of change blows a welcome burst of creativity in your direction. This week will see you working hard on a personal project that needs the artistic touch. If you have been considering handing in your notice and embarking on an independent career, this is an auspicious week to do so. However, you should discuss these plans with your partner sooner rather than later. Make a spur-of-the-moment purchase on Monday.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): You are advised to keep an eagle eye on finances this week. Monday and Tuesday could reveal a mistake being made that's not in your favor; if you don't pounce on this quickly,

it could prove difficult to rectify. On the home front, your loved one is feeling unloved – show you care by presenting them with a surprise gift.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 21): Romance refuses to come to the boil for until the end of this month. April will bring a steamier climate for a relationship to flourish in. On Wednesday, take gossip with a grain of salt – if you succumb to the temptation to pass on what you hear, there will be dire consequences. Be frugal with money, particularly on Tuesday. The number 8 looks promising on Monday.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Capricorns will be aware of a change in the atmosphere at work this week. Just when you thought that business was far from booming, expect to attract serious interest from someone out of the blue. Where relationships are concerned, the truth needs to be told; a cloud of dishonesty will not blow away of its own accord. The best day for clearing the air is Sunday. Wear ice blue to keep your cool.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): You will realize just who your friends really are this weekend. If you need help to get out of a sticky situation, you will not be impressed by everyone's reaction though Cancer can be counted on. The final days of March are an excellent time for getting into a new exercise routine and stocking up on healthy food. April promises to be a challenging month.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): If you are less than satisfied with the monotony of work, you must be prepared to take a risk in order to move into more exciting waters. You should ask yourself if you are really open to change or whether you are just experiencing pipe dreams. Try asking a friend for an introduction to someone you've been admiring from afar; the outcome will be favorable.

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**The Phuket Gazette**  
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## Bitter irony: no water after the deluge

There was an unintentional irony in the *Gazette*'s editorial cartoon in the issue of March 5. It showed an elderly gentleman waiting for a drop of fluid to come from a tiny tap fixed to the end of an enormous pipe labeled "Aid".

The irony is that the cartoon, intended to be metaphorical, also reflects a very real situation on the ground, where there are serious water shortages.

People living in the large plywood-and-tin camp around the Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) building in Baan Bang Muang, in Phang Nga, told the *Gazette* that the water supply there is turned on for only a few hours during the night. Most were provided with no storage tanks, forcing them to lug water from a tap elsewhere in the camp in whatever containers they could scrounge up.

They were told by the *OrBorTor* that they were welcome to install a tank to keep water – but that there was "no budget" for this. Good-hearted private citizens stepped in to provide the funds.

The situation was the same for the tin-sheet toilet blocks and cheaply-built bathing facilities. There was money to build them and to install piping to bring water to flush the toilets. Again, all the funds were provided by NGOs or private citizens. Still the problem is the pathetic dribble of water that trickles through these donated pipes.

There is water. Camp residents say that whenever a VIP visits, the water flows all day. But no one is allowed through the ranks of security men and bowing-and-scraping bureaucrats to tell the big-wigs the truth about the situation.

Most of the people in this camp are from Baan Nam Khem. In the devastated village itself, the people who were lucky enough not to have their homes destroyed, and who opted not to move into the camp, are getting water for one or two hours a week.

This is not a problem that can be addressed by NGOs or individuals. It requires funding and willingness from the local authorities, backed by the central government. All that the authorities have offered so far is install pipes and meters so that these desperate people can pay for government water. Since very few of them have any kind of income this is clearly not an option.

Water is the most basic of human needs. The people in these camps and in Baan Nam Khem lost so much – homes, loved ones and livelihoods.

They deserve far better than the scandalously shabby treatment they are currently receiving.

– The Editor

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## 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.

### Brickbats over Governor's bouquets

The March 19 edition of the *Gazette* featured on the Happenings page a sycophantic photo and caption about gifts and plaudits being presented to Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura in recognition of his work during and after the tsunami.

Is this the same Governor Udomsak who appears – through his subordinates – to have so woefully mismanaged the distribution of aid funding as detailed on pages 4, 5 and 6 of the same edition of your newspaper?

How can the *Gazette* allow itself to be used in such a way?

An Unquiet American  
Chalong

### Made a profit? Then give some back!

It is a shame that, in the aftermath of the tsunami, the Thai government sees fit to cast a negative cloud over volunteers who have come to help their friends in Khao Lak and elsewhere.

We have spent many vacations in this region and it has become more than a holiday; it is almost like visiting family.

Many Westerners share this feeling and have returned to the areas affected, not because they want to take a vacation, but because they care and want to help, often out of their own pockets.

The Thai authorities should be grateful that these people show such affection for Thailand and its people.

The Phuket region should not be publicizing a message of "don't go to Khao Lak". It should be encouraging Western tourists,

at the very least, to take a day trip, put a smile on the local people's faces and let them know that tourism will return.

The Bang Niang camp, where we have been helping out, still needs lots of help and support. It seems to have been overlooked by many of the aid agencies and basic needs are often not being met quickly enough.

Why don't some of the companies that do so well out of tourism – such as beverage companies, airlines, car rental agencies and resorts organize a "Family Day" in Khao Lak and the surrounding areas?

This has been organized in Phuket where, yes, there was damage and sadness, but nothing compared to what the Khao Lak people have been through.

Do not forget Khao Lak.

Stuart  
Darwin, Australia

### Beach confusion

I have just returned to the UK having been in Patong since December 12, 2004, and I would like to give the *Gazette* a big pat on the back for your coverage of the events since December 26.

The letters you have printed from all over the world show the good hearts of the people who care about what happens to the Thai people who have had to pick up the pieces and start again.

All the government talk about what to do next with the beach has me confused. It gave permission for beach traders to have 2,000 sunbeds on the beach, and they had to be bought by the vendors.

Now I read in a recent *Gazette* that, on the orders of the government, they may have to

buy them again so they all look the same.

We all know about the "Take Care" ways of the Thai people; it's time the powers-that-be took care of the Thai people.

I have been coming to Patong for five years. I have never rented a beach bed or been on a speed boat or jet ski, but I can see that other tourists want them.

With good planning, a three-kilometer beach can accommodate all of the 2,000 beds, plus umbrellas.

If anybody wants to go to a beach with none of these, then may I recommend Australia: no sunbeds, no umbrellas ... and the highest rate of skin cancer in the world.

Keep up the good work; I can't wait to get back.

John Easton  
UK

### Going off UBC

I have been a UBC subscriber for more than two years but am now investigating other options for receiving international TV services.

UBC seems to be managed by people who cannot even organize the subscribers' program listings magazine to be sent out in advance each month. Sometimes it arrives as much as 10 days late; sometimes not at all.

UBC is – considering the average Thai person's salary – extremely expensive. Lowering prices might be one way to increase the number of subscribers.

Good luck for the future, UBC – if you have one.

Square Eyes  
Chalong

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.



# Don't blame me alone

## FIRST PERSON

I don't understand why, when road accidents happen every single day, nobody blames the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), yet when one boat sinks, everyone points the finger at us.

We have only eight officers here and our duties aren't really that different from those of the PPTO in that we register, licence and inspect boats, both locally-registered ones and those from abroad.

But because the office has just eight staff to take care of the whole of Phuket, it means we can carry out only around 10 random inspections each month. We cannot count the number of passengers boarding every single boat for every single trip.

The best we can do is check the capacity of each boat and check that it is carrying the correct number of life jackets for its capacity.

And if we catch people who are breaking the law, I would have no qualms about fining them the maximum I can. I'm not afraid to fight anyone to uphold safety.

The Marine Department [in Bangkok] has already asked for more staff so we can have officers on standby at the ports, make more inspections and be more thorough in those inspections.

However, after the Cabinet meeting, it was resolved that Governors and local administrative bodies should also take responsibility for such issues.

I intend to ask Governor [Udomsak Usawarangkura] to arrange for the Provincial Ad-

After the ferry *Rungroj* sank in high seas near Koh Yao, the Phuket Marine Office was castigated for not doing more to prevent vessels sailing when as grossly overloaded as the *Rungroj* was.

Central government has been demanding answers: Why had the Marine Office not cracked down on overloading earlier, before the *Rungroj*, licensed to carry 22 passengers, set sail with 70 people on board, plus two motorbikes and other cargo?

Trang native Surin Theerakulpisut, who became Chief of the Phuket Marine Office three months before the *Rungroj* sank, says his officers should not shoulder the entire blame, and that responsibility for preventing similar tragedies in the future should be shared with other government bodies.



ministration Organization (*Or-BorJor*) and the police to provide additional coverage at ports and jetties.

The *Or-BorJor* could help by doing more than just checking that businesses are paying their taxes and fees.

They could also make sure that companies comply with the law in other respects.

It is easy to say that the accident was caused by the negligence of the captain, but we should remember that this was the last boat of the day. If he hadn't allowed everyone waiting for the boat to get on, they would have had to stay in Phuket, where

they would have had to pay for accommodation, while their families on Koh Yao waited for them to come home.

I know the captain was under tremendous pressure, and perhaps that is why he let so many people board the boat. Maybe he thought that, as he had skippered a boat for 10 years, he would not get involved in an accident.

That doesn't mean to say that I will do nothing about this accident.

I have already done my best, and the press should be fair with me as a result.

For example, I have already

checked about the *Rungroj*'s capacity and found that under normal circumstances, she would have had a capacity of 50 passengers.

But she was, in fact, licensed to carry less than half that number to accommodate all the cargo that people normally carry with them.

We have to remember that it is not unusual for these ferries to carry motorbikes – people can't afford to have one motorbike on Koh Yao and another in Phuket, so they have to transport their one bike between the two places.

I remember clearly the last

time I did an inspection at Koh Yao. One local told me he wasn't worried about the state of the boats.

If it wasn't his time to die, he said, then whatever happened, he would not die.

And this while my officers were working very hard to protect him!

If you were to ask me whether [the *Rungroj*] would have sunk that day if she had been carrying only 20 passengers, I really could not tell you, especially as the wave that hit her was about four meters high.

Yes, she was overloaded, and we aren't going to forget all about the accident because only local people lost their lives.

When I went out searching for bodies – this was the day after the sinking – there was a ferry leaving from Koh Yao, and it was overloaded. The owner of the boat is a former *kamnan* – a government officer! – from Koh Yao.

And on the day of the sinking itself, when all community leaders should have been working together, I was upset to be told that a community leader of Koh Yao Noi was a passenger on the ferry; I knew that if he died, it would be big news.

But later I saw him – alive – and I told him he should have been more responsible. He should have prevented the ferry leaving the port. He just laughed and made a face.

I will continue to work on this problem and will arrange a meeting about training for boat owners and skippers very soon.

## A dreadfully slow line

I read that the TOT (Telephone Organization of Thailand) is connecting more ADSL customers. It would appear, however, that they are doing nothing to increase the system capacity to match this increase in customers.

When I was first connected the speed was excellent, but there has been a steady decline in speed; I'm now operating at 32 kb/sec – way below my expectations.

In addition, the connection is frequently disrupted and it is necessary for me to reconnect two or three times every single hour.

I would like to know what the TOT are doing to maintain an acceptable level of service as they rush to sell more connections.

Mike Rawai

I'm using a TOT ADSL internet connection from my office at Rat-U-Thit Rd (close to Sainamyen School) with a 512 Kb download contract.

When they installed the line

I asked what the outgoing mail-server name is so I could send mail via this connection with my own mail program and mail provider, but nobody could answer this question.

Also, I have lost the connection many times while at other times it is very slow. Can anybody tell me what the mailserver name is and also why I have so many problems with my connection?

Gerar Teuben Patong

**Archin Chirathamsoonthorn, operations officer, Data Communications Center, TOT Phuket Office, replies:**

In response to the first query, our ADSL connection system can now support 5,000 customers, but we currently have only around 1,200 customers, so I cannot see why you are having this problem.

You should check your equipment for viruses, but you can also contact our 24-hour call center for help.

The helpline numbers are

076-212199 or 076-212399, or email: pkt\_com@yahoo.com

When you contact them, please make sure that you have the details of your ADSL connection, your telephone number and your location ready to give to the operator.

In answer to the second correspondent, the outgoing mailserver name for TOT customers who had ADSL installed between 2001 and 2003 is 203.150.218.198. The outgoing mailserver name for lines installed in the years 2004 and 2005 is smtb.pacific.net.th

The connection may be slow at the times when we are upgrading our system to expand bandwidth to accommodate traffic. You should check the ADSL indicator (the green light) on your ADSL modem, which will tell you if your connection is working well.

It is also possible that your modem or PC isn't working properly, in which case you could try to reboot.

You can also contact our call center for more assistance.

## Issues & ANSWERS

**Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket's authorities or institutions? Then this is the forum for you.**

**Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond to them.**

**Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at**

## Lost affidavit worry

I plan to get married soon and got an affidavit (*bai sod*) from my embassy confirming that I have never been married, along with a notarized translation thereof. Then I lost my passport. The *bai sod* I have is based on my old passport. Do I need a new *bai sod* based on the new passport, once it has been issued?

Paper chaser Samkong

**An official at the Phuket Muang District Office replies:** You don't need to get another *bai sod*.

When you come to register the marriage at our office, you must bring: the *bai sod* you have; the police report; a copy of your old passport; and your new passport. You should also bring in signed copies of each for us to file in our records.



# Surprising fun with a dysfunctional family

For years I've been avoiding reading Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 2001, 568pp) despite its hysterically favorable reviews. The novel, I gathered from the cover and the dust jacket, was about a family Christmas reunion in the Midwest. Yawn.

Well, I'm glad I finally got around to it, because *The Corrections*, despite being over-long and plodding in parts, is an excellent novel. The author has fastened his teeth into five fully-fleshed, funny, obsessive, irritating but ultimately lovable characters who keep surprising the reader.

They are Al Lambert, a 75-year-old retired railway executive who is afflicted with Parkinson's disease and is losing his mind, his not terribly bright fussy-budget wife Enid, and their three grown children.

The elderly couple live in a falling-down house in a fictional Midwest city called St Jude. Son

Gary is a successful investment banker and daughter Denise a famous chef. Both live in Philadelphia. The middle son, Chip, is a former academic and failed screenwriter in New York. The three siblings face the perennial question: what to do about mom and dad?

We're first introduced to the aging couple at home. The focus of the novel then shifts to Chip, who is awaiting their visit in his New York apartment on their way to a passenger ship for a cruise up to Canada.

Chip is ex-post-structuralist academic, formerly married to a feminist, and you think: the Midwest and academia? No thanks. But then the plot takes a delightful and hilarious turn to post-Soviet Lithuania and an improbable Internet scam.

Gary, the dutiful son, husband and father, is suffering from massive doses of depression, alleviated only by alcohol. The bickering between husband and wife, the power plays among the three sons, the stratagems between parents and children – all are beautifully detailed. You can often judge a writer by how he is with children, and Franzen is very good indeed.

And then we come to Denise, the most complex, likable and detestable character in the book. She marries the older man who taught her how to become a chef, then embarks upon a les-

bian love affair with a co-worker she doesn't particularly like, divorces her husband and soon afterward breaks up with the woman.

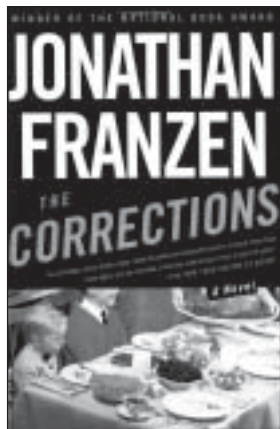
Then she is offered a restaurant of her own by a handsome, newly rich software millionaire who is married and the father to two daughters. He sends her on a culinary tour of Europe and meets up with her in Paris.

"She endured ten days of his affability. Toward the end she couldn't stand to see herself in mirrors, her face seemed to her so ravaged, her tits so droopy, her hair such a frizzball, her clothes so traveled-out. She was, basically, shocked that this unhappy husband was resisting her. Even though he had good reason to resist her! He being the father of two lovely girls! And she being, after all, his paid employee! She respected his resistance, she believed that this was how adults should behave, and she was extremely unhappy about it."

Denise returns to Philadelphia and proceeds to seduce her boss's wife, dumps her and seduces him. And yet you can't stop rooting for her.

There are any number of bravura passages in this book. I'll leave you with this one, Al Lambert meditating on his morning medications:

"In the morning every process quickened, speeding his meds to their destinations: the canary-yellow spanule for incontinence, the small pink Tums-like thing for the shakes, the white oblong to discourage nausea, the wan blue tablet to squelch hallucinations from the small pink Tums-like thing. In the morning the blood was crowded with commuters, the glucose peons, lactic and ureic sanitation workers, hemoglobinous deliverymen carrying loads of freshly brewed oxygen in their dented vans, the stern foremen like insulin, the enzymic middle managers and executive epinephrine, leukocyte cops and EMS workers, expensive consultants arriving in their pink and white and canary yellow limos, everyone riding the aortal elevator and dispersing through the arteries. Before noon the rate of worker accidents was tiny. The world was newborn."



## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



## WTO calls for easier access to soft loans for SMEs

PHUKET CITY: World Tourism Organization (WTO) consultant JK Robert England has called for more flexibility in providing soft loans to tourism-related small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the post-tsunami environment.

Speaking after meeting with Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura, he said, "The government has been amazingly successful so far in response to an unprecedented problem. However, more things can be done, more programs can be initiated."

"If you are a small business, one of the things you most want is relatively easy access to soft loans. You don't want to have to

provide too much documentation because that may be very difficult to provide.

"It may be very easy for you to service your loans but difficult to get the loan in the first place. Maybe a little bit more flexibility is required for that."

Mr England was in Phuket to conduct research into the support being provided to tsunami-affected SMEs in the tourism industry, including reviewing the government's initiatives and the provision of soft loans.

He said that his recommendations would be reported to WTO headquarters, which will pass them on to the Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

## ON THE MOVE



The new chief of Phuket Provincial Prison is **Paisai Suwanraksa**, 48, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat. K. Paisai has worked in the Department of Corrections for 26 years, his most recent appointment before Phuket being as Director of Nakhon Sri Thammarat Correctional Institution for Young Offenders. He holds a master's degree in liberal studies from Bangkok's Krek University.



**Adisak "Dan" Pitukrojant**, 41, from Ratchaburi, has been promoted to General Manager of Mom Tri's Villa Royale at Kata Beach. The holder of a bachelor's degree in the service industry, he has worked at Mom Tri's for 15 years.



**Vallapa "Pam" Bunnak**, from Bangkok, is the new Events – Client Services Manager of the *Phuket Gazette*. The holder of a diploma in conveyancing from the Central TAFE Western Australia, her previous work includes six years with Ross Realty and five years with Financial Wisdom Ltd, both in Australia.

Been promoted or got a new job? Know someone else who has? Let us know by email to [onthemove@phuketgazette.net](mailto:onthemove@phuketgazette.net)

## Pitfalls

Last week I suggested that readers take a look at New Zealand for investment possibilities. This week I want to take a closer look at the economy of these far-away islands, and at some of the pitfalls to be avoided.

The central bank of New Zealand, the Reserve Bank, is in a difficult position. Inflationary pressures are growing and the standard practice to counter this threat is to raise interest rates.

Central banks in this situation have to make decisions without knowing what the effect is going to be; too many increases can lead to a recession. Too few, and inflation may run riot.

New Zealand's central bank raised interest rates six times in 2004 and again on March 10 this year, taking the rate to 6.75%.

Even though just the idea of this strategy can produce unwelcome side effects, the effects of the increases have still to be felt in the "real" economy.

The New Zealand dollar (NZ\$) is at a record high against its US counterpart and is being forced higher simply because higher New Zealand interest rates make the currency more attractive for foreigners to hold.

The Reserve Bank is already concerned that the currency is too strong, and would welcome a drop of 15% in its value. The NZ\$ is, however, likely to strengthen.

New Zealand is, in many areas, suffering from capacity constraints, which is similar to the Australian situation, only worse.

The single biggest problem is the shortage of both skilled and unskilled labor. The latter problem is being felt mainly in the agricultural sector where there are not enough people available to pick fruit.

One short-term "bandage" solution for the agricultural sector is to bring in Russian agricultural students during their sum-

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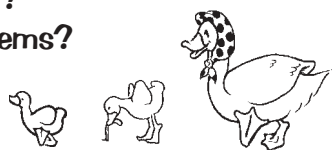
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Questions about Thai culture?  
Having communications problems?  
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# Seafood prices recovering well

By Rungthong Naknueb  
& Benjamat Srisuwan

PHUKET: Despite fears that Phuket's tsunami-battered fishermen would suffer a further blow as consumers rejected seafood in the wake rumors that crabs and the like had been feeding on corpses, prices for fish and seafood have held steady since the tsunami – and, in some cases, have actually risen.

Demand slumped immediately after the tsunami, but, said Tada Pitchayaporn, the Director of the Phuket Commercial Affairs Office (PCAO), so too did the supply – roughly half of Phuket's fishing fleet was damaged or destroyed by the tsunami.

"In the month following the tsunami, people did not eat seafood because they believed that fish were feeding on bodies in the sea. This was an unfounded fear.

"But the most important effect of the tsunami was the damage done to fishing boats. Fishermen couldn't work, and although demand for seafood fell, so too did the supply," K. Tada explained.

To make up for the shortfall in supply, fish and seafood were trucked into Phuket from the Gulf of Thailand, but even so, many prices still rose after the tsunami.

Take the average wholesale price of swimming crab at Phuket Fishing Port. It was 104.33 baht a kilo in November 2004 and 99.66 baht a kilo in December. But in January, the price climbed to 129.6 baht, before falling to 119.6 in February.

Indian squid, which had been fetching 45.66 baht and 34.33 baht a kilo on the wholesale market at the fishing port in November and December last year, commanded 51.66 baht a kilo in January and 59 baht in February.

Similarly, according to the PCAO,

blue crab, which had an average retail price of 215.25 and 225 baht per kilo in January and February 2004, was on sale for 265 baht in January and February.

K. Tada added that, as more boats return to the water, Andaman seafood is regaining its share of the market from produce from the Gulf of Thailand, because locally-harvested seafood, especially shrimp, is cheaper.

Kunchit Tunpanuwat, of Chokphan-nuchit Fishing Raft, is optimistic. "We're not finding it too difficult; we can catch a lot of fish and sell it in the food market," he said.

Panya Assawangkoon, Chief of Phuket Provincial Fisheries Office, told the *Gazette*, "Although the fishing boats were damaged, the fishermen have been catching more fish than the past because many kinds of fish were brought here by the tsunami, and the fish are big, too.

"One fisherman told me he had caught many fish but he struggled to sell them during the month after the tsunami. But now fish is selling better than it was."

This opinion was shared by Charat Sae-Tan, the Secretary of the Phuket Good Taste Food Festival, due to be held later this month at Saphan Hin.

"After the tsunami, people – especially locals – didn't eat seafood," said K. Charat. "But now they are eating more seafood than they were two months ago, and seafood restaurants seem to be getting more business."

Perhaps not all restaurateurs would agree. Chunpen Santikul, of the Laem Hin Seafood Restaurant said that the price of seafood is not her prime concern.

"Most of our customers are locals, and business has been down since December 26. It's improved over the last month, but it's still not back to what it was."

# to investment in New Zealand



## MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

mer holidays. This, of course, is a sector of the immigrant labor market that New Zealand does not wish to have permanently. Another suggestion is to bring people in – again temporarily – from East Timor.

The government is trying to entice some of the estimated 600,000 New Zealanders employed overseas to return to their country to enjoy the economic boom. It is also trying to increase the number of skilled people migrating to the country.

Meanwhile, the boom in residential property has reached such levels that Finance Minister Michael Cullen has pleaded with New Zealanders to invest in the stock market instead.

The stock market itself is at record levels, pushed up mainly by domestic institutions, pension funds, sophisticated private investors and foreigners.

It is something of a surprise to hear a politician from the left-of-center ruling Labor Party encouraging people to invest in the stock market. But the average "Kiwi", mindful of the global downturn in stock markets in 2000 and 2001, is much more interested in property. This is the biggest boom in the history of the New Zealand property market and nobody, it seems, wants to miss out.

The government is also to blame for the current situation. Taxation in New Zealand is high but gains made on property are tax-free.

In contrast, managed funds, which are unit trusts/mutual funds that invest in a mixture of shares, bonds and cash, are taxed at the company rate of 30% on their gains, which hardly consti-

tutes a level playing field.

So it is not surprising that local investors are selling managed funds and putting the money in property.

For those interested in the New Zealand stock market, no tax is levied on pure stock-market investment and there is a wide choice available, including index trackers, some of which are exchange-traded funds.

Foreigners who are attracted by the New Zealand property market must, as always, not forget the precept of *caveat emptor* – let the buyer beware.

The first trap is apartments for sale in Auckland that are being marketed by slick advertising campaigns.

The apartments are usually in upmarket blocks and sales blurbs are often accompanied by statements that independent valuations support these sale prices. The independent valuations are in fact correct, but what is not mentioned is that various companies are selling apartments at vastly inflated prices, which in turn leads to vastly inflated valuations.

The true market price – sometimes 50% of the *marketed* price, note the distinction – often becomes apparent only when private owners – as opposed to the developers – sell to buyers in the same block. Not surprisingly, foreigners – in fact anyone outside Auckland – are most likely to be the victims.

Another area of property investment that has proven to be costly to investors is buying "off the plan", with the developer typically offering apartments or townhouses in a desirable location.

The attraction to the buyer is that it fixes construction costs, which is obviously sensible in a rising market. However, most developers have inserted *force*

*majeure* clauses in the small print of their contracts.

*Force majeure* – also called acts of God – generally relate to major events such as earthquakes or wars. The occurrence of a dire situation such as this would enable the developer to exit the contract.

But these days *force majeure*, in some contracts in New Zealand, includes changes in economic conditions, allowing de-

velopers to demand more money from buyers if, for example, property values or construction costs increase.

Should the buyer refuse or be unable to pay the extra, the developer can void the contract and resell the property at a higher price leaving the buyer with nothing.

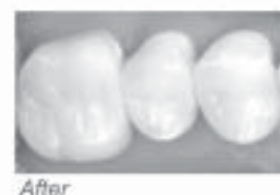
Under New Zealand law, the buyer would probably win a legal suit, but this would be an

expensive and time-consuming remedy, especially for those based outside New Zealand.

Local lawyers recommend that people do not buy off-plan because it is simply too risky.

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](mailto:imm@loxinfo.co.th).

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The beach clean-up and reef-check project, which began a few weeks after the tsunami, continues around the west coast of Thailand from the Similan Islands to the Phi Phi Islands.

A group of divers – most of whom are professionals – go out to the these dive sites, selflessly giving their time and energy in an effort to heal the coral reefs and remove tons of debris.

Much work has been done, but, according to 61-year-old Saran Kittiwanakul, a PADI Course Director who spearheads the program, much work still remains to be done.

K. Saran's diverse resumé includes serving in the Royal Thai Navy for 18 months, working as a professional musician to pay his way through university, and 24 years of lecturing at a variety of Thai universities.

He developed an interest in diving relatively late in life, when he was 51. Age notwithstanding, in 2001 he became the second Thai to qualify as a PADI Course Director.

His natural gifts of leadership and management have been put to good use in a praiseworthy effort to revive the local tourist industry.

A much respected teacher to many, it is only fitting that the

# Clean-up continues off the

concerned Thai and *farang* diving professionals whom he had taught in the past have rallied to help him in a time when economic recovery is the main objective.

K. Saran said that the Ministry of Transport has provided pulleys and cranes for the project and that the Ministry of Environment is also supporting the effort by sending marine biologists to lend their expertise.

He continued, "The FOR-SEA Foundation – a Thai environmental movement – has been our main source of funding.

Artists and musicians have been performing to raise cash and we have also received 2 million baht from Singha Beer. The Royal Thai Army has also provided us with a great deal of help."

He also singled out Bubble Blue Scuba from Khao Lak and White and Blue Diving from Chalong – together with the Andaman Princess – for providing much-appreciated assistance, offering the use of their boats for the effort.

"It appears that there are

Saran Kittiwanakul, a 61-year-old PADI Course Director, is leading the charge on clearing up dive sites off the west coast of Thailand.



again to promote faster healing and regrowth.

"If we couldn't revert them, we were advised to simply leave them exactly as we found them as table corals can still survive – and even thrive – when upside down, albeit growing at a slower rate.

K. Saran explained that uprooted fan corals had to be tied to metal struts driven deep into the seabed and positioned facing into a current to let them catch their food.

"However," began K. Saran, "the marine biologists soon realized that we had far too many divers – sometimes 100 or so – in too small an area at any one time. We were probably contributing to the damage rather than alleviating it."

He said that it became necessary to limit the number of divers in any one area during a reef check. "Some of the corals that had to be helped were in deep water, and our criteria for choosing volunteers were high. We preferred diving professionals," he pointed out.

"The problem was different off the Phi Phi Islands. That area does not have a lot of coral growth in front of the beach but it was mayhem down there.

two types of problems that the volunteers must help to alleviate. The first is that, around the Similan Islands, there has been destruction of some of the coral reefs," he explained.

"But the damage is less than was at first feared," he was quick to point out.

"The Phi Phi Islands are problem number 2. So much of

the tourist infrastructure – hotels, dive shops, restaurants, boutiques, jewelry shops and others – has been obliterated.

"The marine biologists diving with us in the Similans did a survey and advised us on how to help heal the reefs.

"Table corals that had been uprooted and turned upside down had to be turned the right way up

## Beneath the SURFACE

By Chris Cruz

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# coast

"We found about 10 corpses, as well as uprooted trees, bungalows, beds, motorcycles, hi-fi speakers, computers, kitchen stuff, water tanks and boats as well as personal effects such as bags, jewelry and money.

"It was necessary to remove these items by different methods, using reef bags for the small stuff and inflatable plastic bags for many of the larger items. Our support team collected these on the surface."

K. Saran said that the very large items – trees and the like – were secured with rope before being rigged to air-filled 30-liter plastic drums and raised to the surface with a winch.

"We had to use as many as 12 drums to lift the most massive pieces of debris," he said.

K. Saran said that they will return to the Similans at the end of March to check the progress of the coral after their earlier efforts.

"But there is still a lot to do in the Phi Phi Islands. My estimate is that it will take 30 to 40 divers making two or three descents a day for two months to clean it up."

But he has hope that Thailand's west-coast tourism industry will recover "in time".

"I have been diving in many other countries but I am Thai and we have always been a proud nation.

"We are living in a strange time in Thai history, but I am proud that the various sectors of our society have joined hands to move towards a common goal of healing and recovery," he noted.

Speaking of the attempt to set the world record for the most number of divers in a single dive conducted off Koh Tao recently, he said, "The public relations sector and the environmental organizations have set their goal to invite the tourists back to Thailand.

"Yet we have to be vigilant in adhering to safety standards and protecting the environment at all times."

"We must take care of the environment for the future generations so that they too can enjoy what we can see now," he concluded.

## Khao Khat Viewpoint challenge for cyclists

**KHAO KHAT:** A challenge has been issued to cyclists to compete for laurels in a race around one of Phuket's newest attractions, the Khao Khat Viewpoint tower.

The Borrae-Khao Khat Mountain Bike Ride, on March 27, will take competitors along a 12-kilometer route around the tower, with proceeds going into a scholarship fund for local Muslim students.

There will be six classes in the competition for men: under-16; Open; 30-39 years, 40-49 years, and over-50.

The women's competition, however, has one class – Open.

Competitors should register at Klong Mudong, the entrance to the Khao Khat Viewpoint, between 8 am and noon on the day.

For more information call Tel: 01-7877507.

# Smiles and tsunami relief at the Sujika golf tourney

**PHUKET:** The organizers of the second Sujika Gardens Annual Golf Tournament reported an enjoyable two days' of play at two courses – Blue Canyon Country Club and Phuket Country Club – as well as a day's pre-match practice at Laguna Phuket Golf Club for the 36 competitors.

But the efforts and enjoyment of the golfers went beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> hole as the tournament raised in excess of 67,000 baht for the tsunami relief effort.

The funds will go toward the cost of a complete set of text books for a junior school in Khao Lak.

Best Overall Player was Bob Good with a combined score of 75, while Martin Carpenter was declared the tournament's Most Outstanding Player.

The much-sought after Naga award – for the player deemed to have enjoyed the contest most – went to Digby Collis.



Sujika Gardens Estate Director Roy Robertson smiles as Digby Collis (right) from Singapore inspects his Naga Trophy, awarded to him by Sujika Chamchan.

## Anchor Bar go four points clear

**PATONG:** In Week 18 play of the Patong Pool League, Anchor Bar came back after trailing 3-5 in the singles to win their match against Pickles 7-5.

Going on to win the extra point from the beer leg, Anchor moved four points ahead of Dog's Bollocks and six ahead of Off-Shore Bar at the top of the table.

Amigos took all three points against Queen Mary as did Champs against Valhalla.

Happy Days will be replaced by Le Gallion for the rest

of the season, but points will not count.

**Top players:** 1. Dum (Anchor) 37 points; 2. Rich Smith (Off-Shore) 35; 3. Chris Chambers (Pickles) 35; 4. Andy Hay (Champs) 32; 5. Chris Ford (Amigos) 32.

**March 31 (Week 20) fixtures (home teams first):** Queen Mary v Champs; Amigos v Shakers; Happy Days v Tatum Mansions; Valhalla v Anchor Bar; Pickles v OffShore; Nag's Head, Dog's Bollocks – bye week.

## SONGKRAN GRAND PRIX

**KATHU:** Phuket Kart Speed Way will hold its Songkran Grand Prix on April 13.

There will be a 125cc Owner-Driver race, a 125cc Hire-Driver race, as well as races for women and children.

For more information call Khun Nuch at Tel: 01-5353119.

## Gov's team to take on soccer celebrities

**PHUKET:** Players from Tak Bai United, actors and singers from the Singha U-Star celebrity squad and a team of provincial notables headed by Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura will compete in a "VIP" soccer match in aid of tsunami relief, on April 2.

Joining the Governor on his team will be officers from Phuket Provincial Court, Phuket Chamber of Commerce and Phuket Sports Association.

The mini-tournament will take place at Surakul Stadium, starting at 4 pm.

The event is intended to be another contribution toward reviving the post-tsunami tourism industry, and proceeds will be donated to the Phuket branch of the Thai Red Cross Society, to be used to help tsunami survivors.

There will also be a Phuket OTOP shop, blood-donation sessions and other activities.

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I am a Francophile. A nation that has given the world Béatrice Dalle, the Citröen DS and Jean-Paul Gaultier just has to be good.

Also, a nation that can so incense George Dubya Bush as to suffer the shock-and-awe wrath of Fox News has to be worthy of high praise.

I am vaguely apprehensive as I approach La Mousson because the restaurant is currently in the home of managers and owners René and Daeng Leduc, their Patong restaurant having succumbed to the waters on December 26.

But a mere second after stepping into the garden of this beautiful home and any apprehension disappears.

René greets us – amid the animated buzz of the other diners and the songs of Edith Piaf faintly audible in the background – with Old World charm.

René and Daeng have adapted their home splendidly to its new role. Six tables grace the patio, while the living room has another 10 or so.

We are seated at our table overlooking the swimming pool, and the waiter, K. Pong, brings our aperitifs, and the chilled white wine cools us down as we soak up the ambience.

It is so incredibly relaxing here. There is no rush to order and both René and K. Daeng flit from table to table chatting with everyone, more like the hosts of a dinner party than restaurateurs.

René's culinary career began when he was 15. He served his apprenticeship – which included cooking for HM Queen Elizabeth II and *le general* de Gaulle – under a master chef for whom the epithet "hard but fair" is appropriate.

René says, "He encouraged

# Old World Charm

me to apply myself 100% to the task, whatever the task was, not just cooking.

"In the kitchen, in business, in life, 'apply yourself fully' is what I learned and what I practice."

K. Daeng's introduction to cooking was much more recent. "Ten years ago I didn't know how to cook, but Rene began to show me and I just picked it up by instinct from then on," she explains.

It strikes me that they are not just a couple but also a team,

which causes K. Daeng to smile. They have that gentle familiarity that allows one to finish the other's sentence, although when I ask who does most of the

cooking, K. Daeng explains that they share the work.

"But René," she whispers, "he..." She forms her hands like a pair of binoculars. More laughter.

We choose our hors d'oeuvres: French onion soup for me and *escargots* for my companion.

René asks for our choices for the main course so as to advise on a bottle of wine. My companion plumps for turbot with a béarnaise sauce and I choose steak tartare. "One fish, one meat," mulls René over the wine. "I know which wine," he smiles.

He recommends a bottle of 1994 Chateau Tour du Mirail Cru Bourgeois. It is rich with the aroma of cherries and cassis, and the glasses – which are both voluminous and sonorous; a quick *santé* and it's as if church bells



René and Daeng Leduc and their trademark *nougat glacé et soufflé mandarin* (right).

have been rung – are at our lips as the appetizers arrive.

They are red hot and delicious. The garlic scents rather than overpowers the gastropod and the butter-and-olive-oil amalgam is divine, just right to dip bread into. We do.

"Thai snails?" I ask René. "French," he replies, "the Thai ones are too small and too chewy, so we have them imported."

The soup is delightfully sweet from the mass of caramelized onions and the topping of Gruyère, itself caramelized under the grill.

My companion's turbot is

simply a picture.

"It's not actually turbot,"

confides René, "You cannot find that here, but the fish we use tastes almost the same."

He is right, and the fillet is presented in a heart shape, with delicate spheres of carrot and swede, and a dish of vibrantly-colored vegetables. The *sauce béarnaise* is slightly piquant and the tarragon adds layers of depth.

My steak tartare is magnificent. For anyone not familiar with the dish, it is a mix of raw fillet steak, raw egg yolk, capers, onions and garlic, and seasoning.

Some restaurants, particu-

larly those in countries known for their litigious inhabitants, no longer serve this dish or – culinary crime of crimes – they *cook* it! Others actually put a health warning or disclaimer on the menu.

It is served with *pommes frites* – not French Fries and most certainly not "Freedom Fries". I am in raptures. The steak tartare does not melt so much as gently dissolve in my mouth, with first the taste of capers, then garlic and so on spinning me round.

All evening I have heard the other diners' cries of *superbe!* and *formidable!* And in my faltering French, I do likewise. René nods a genial acknowledgment.

"Some dessert?" he asks. I feel that he has something else to impress us with.

Our host suggests his own creation, a dish found here and nowhere else: *nougat glacé et soufflé mandarin*.

It also has a sauce, naturally, but I forgot to write down the name.

René has trumped himself with this dessert; it is simply exquisite.

The (homemade) ice cream and the soufflé are as light as feather. Myriad tastes – Grand Marnier? Feathery egg yolks? Fruits? – and then aftertastes echo through my senses.

This man, actually, this charming couple, infuse their food with the most important ingredient: love. And one can never add too much of that.

*La Mousson. 32/8 Soi Palai 2 (behind Phuket Zoo), Chalong. Tel: 076-282170 or 01-476-1271.*



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Home of the Week

Chalong

# A tidy earner

**S**et in one rai of landscaped gardens near Phuket Riding School in Chalong is a delightful single-story villa that offers much to the prospective buyer.

The grounds feature a large terrace, a car-parking area and even a lily pond and bridge.

The main villa comprises approximately 340 square meters of living space – the ground floor is open plan and has high ceilings, while the European-style kitchen contains all the appliances a modern family needs.

The master bedroom features built-in wardrobes, an en-suite bathroom and a tasteful mirrored ceiling.

The second double bedroom is also large and features built-in

furniture and en-suite facilities, while the third double bedroom has a separate toilet.

The property – which is 250 meters from a main road – also features a terrace of five bungalows, all of which are let out on long-term bases, providing the owner with a very good income.

The gardens have sufficient space to build more bungalows or a swimming pool, as the owner fancies.

The property is on the market for 14.9 million baht and has a Chanote title.

Contact Rudi of House and Villa Sales Phuket at Tel: 01-9241447 or 076-345081, or email: mail@villa.co.th



**ABOVE:** Set in one rai, the main villa of the property retains plenty of private space, even with the terrace of five bungalows (below), which, let long term, provide a steady income for the owner.  
**BELOW LEFT:** the European-style kitchen has all the facilities for a modern family.



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**Construction Update**

by Anongnat Sartpisut

**D**eveloper Tactical Capital Co Ltd will break ground on its Estate Beachfront development on March 29, marking the beginning of the 2½ years it is expected to take to complete the 19-rai project.

"The completion date depends a little bit on sales, but we expect to finish construction within 2½ years," Tactical Capital Chairman Matthew Rayner said.

"We will start building the Villa B designs first, and we expect to complete them within 18 months," he added.

A total of 19 villas will be built, all in Balinese design, with uninterrupted 180° sea views overlooking Ao Por, with the karsts of Phang Nga Bay standing proud in the distance. Each house will be built around a U-shaped infinity-edge pool.

The project concept is to provide affordable sea-view villas in a safe living environment, along with good returns from the property rental market, Mr Rayner explained.

Seven units will be built in the two-story Villa A design, providing 445 square meters of liv-

# Bay view project set to break ground



Artist's impression of the sprawling 595-sqm Villa B design at The Estate Beachfront.

ing space, including three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a maid's room with bathroom, dining and living room, kitchen, study and parking space for two cars.

The single-story Villa B de-

sign will be used for four units, which will be within meters of the beach, offering 595sqm of usable space, including three bedrooms each with an en-suite bathroom in the main pavilion, three separate bedrooms each in its own separate pavilion, as well as a maid's room, living and dining room, kitchen, study, store-room and parking space for two cars.

Eight units will be built in the largest, three-story Villa C design, which will have 658sqm of space, comprising four bedrooms, five bathrooms, maid's room, living and dining room, kitchen, study, laundry and parking space for two cars.

"Villa C units will have views to the north and south, looking over the headland past Ao Por Pier and across Phang Nga Bay," said Mr Rayner.

Prices for the homes will range from 20 million to 40 million baht.

"Buyers can personalize the design of the house. For example, having the kitchen separate from the dining room is great for Asian

people because they want to keep the smell in each area separate, but some foreign clients have said that they would like to have an additional outdoor kitchen."

The utilities, which will all be underground, will include communal water and electricity supply, phone lines and high-speed Internet. Communal services for the development will include 24-hour security and common areas maintained by Kawarau Consulting Co Ltd.

Mr Rayner said, "Our target customers are people who are looking for a home in Phuket, but also want quite strong rental yield. Half of our customers are people who would like to buy to live here, the other half want to buy properties so that they can rent them out."

"Feedback has been very positive," he added. "We have not sold any [units] yet, but five of the 19 have already been reserved."

For more information, contact Mr Rayner at 23/112, Boat Lagoon, Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Phuket 83000. Tel: 076-273427. Mobile: 01-787-3193. Fax: 076-273428. Website: [www.theestatebeachfront.com](http://www.theestatebeachfront.com). Email: [mrayner@tacticalcapital.com](mailto:mrayner@tacticalcapital.com).

## LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

**L**ast week the ITB expo was held in Berlin. Normally the most important travel forum in the international exhibition calendar for Thailand, it was doubly important this year for Phuket and Krabi, considering the battering they took on December 26, followed by media attention to the troubles in the southern provinces.

It was understood that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) had a big budget to promote recovery.

At least, that's what the travel industry media said. Maybe the TAT did have lots of money, but many participants returning from the exhibition have expressed disappointment at the presentation by the Thailand contingent.

One experienced travel executive described the Thai stand as looking like a café in a department store.

"There was no atmosphere, no excitement, no sense of urgency, just the same old thing," he said.

"Other destinations that had been affected by the tsunami were attracting great attention. The Maldives, Malaysia and others had attractive girls in national costumes, dancers and activities, whereas you'd think we had nothing interesting to offer."

"You would have thought that Thailand would have gone all out to show what we had to offer, but no, there was nothing special," he added.

Thailand is still one of the most exotic and culturally exciting countries in the world. The Andaman is still fabulous, the troubles in the Deep South are far, far away.

But our travel industry frontline troops seem to believe that long faces and a few brochures will get everything back to normal.

Maybe that's the problem. Normal had been the same for too long. Maybe its time for a change – new faces, new ideas, new energy and new smiles.

For many the memories of December 26 are still powerful and haunting. For many, they always will be.



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# A lackluster showing at Berlin mega-expo



Are Thailand's front-line troops doing enough in the battle to get the customers back into small beachfront restaurants like this one?

"Now, I feel the same again. Look at the sea and the beach and the little boats. It looks so beautiful, but I feel like nobody wants it, or us, anymore."

K. Lek can't bring them back by herself, and the return of the tourists won't happen all by itself. It will take a huge effort from everybody, and mostly from those in charge of the marketing of the industry.

It's wake-up time, or somebody else will take away what we had. It takes more than my bowl of rice and a few beers to keep K. Lek going.

But everybody has to feel that the people out there representing Phuket are doing the job professionally. They need to trust them.

My friend K. Lek has a little business on the beach. She cooks great food, and loves to chat to the visitors. Even though everything seems to be back to

normal for K. Lek, there's not a big gap between the smile and the tears.

"I feel the same way that I did when my boyfriend left," she told me. "I made our house look nice, it was clean with nice curtains and furniture and it was our home. But he didn't want it, or me. He still went away."

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## Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

## PONDEROUS PONDERINGS

A garden can be a great haven for contemplation and meditation, just the place, in fact, for me to ponder the contents of the Bloomin' Bert postbag.

Each of these letters was sent by a real reader (really!) to bloominbert@hotmail.com.

I don't pretend to know what I'm talking about in the answers below, so please feel free to take each response with the very large pinch of salt that it most definitely deserves.

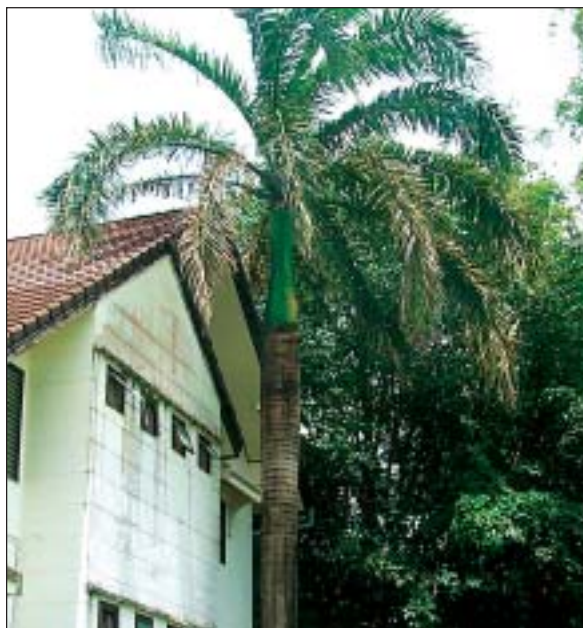
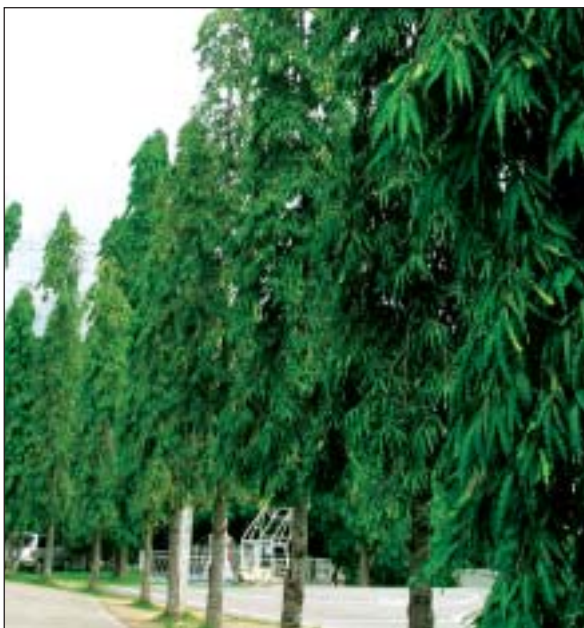
The first is from a gentleman in Chalong: *We have just bought a new house in Chalong. The garden has the standard 1.7m-high wall and there are more houses under construction at the back of our property.*

*I would like to have some privacy and so would like to plant some sort of screening to give us at least another one meter of height above our wall, more if possible. Could you please advise us what we could plant, either tree or shrub, to provide us with our privacy.*

There's only one logical choice in this part of the world really, and that is the ashoka, or *asok India* in Thai, which would do the job perfectly. They're used everywhere that needs something tall, bushy and green to act as a divider in a garden, or hide a particularly ugly wall.

As a postscript, our Chalong homeowner needed no encouragement to go out to his nearest garden center and buy a couple of these giants, although they were less than gargantuan when they were first delivered. Half a dozen Thai gardeners descended on his back garden and dug a neat hole for each, setting them, as they should, about a meter apart.

Next, something from a lady in Phuket City: *I read with interest your article on the desert rose. Could you tell me if you can get seeds in Phuket for these. Could you also give me information on the following and if I can get seeds? Adenium, Red Ever-*



Answers to prayers (clockwise from above left): Ashoka for privacy; the royal palm for lofty aspirations; allamanda for just about anywhere; and a beer for the thirsty gardening columnist.



*bloomer, Grumbley White, Arabicum, Swazium and Black Ruby.*

The simple answer to this is that the best selection of seeds I've seen in Phuket has been at, of all places, Tesco Lotus. There is little point in planting seeds that you haven't bought locally, as they simply won't be adapted to life here; the climate may well be too much for them. If they're from Europe, they probably won't stand a chance. Even plants that thrive in Chiang Mai, further north in Thailand, may struggle here in Phuket.

On a more practical note, the idle side of me is tempted to ask why anyone should bother with the hassle of seeds at all. Somebody at a local garden center has probably already done all the hard work, and would be willing to part with the fruits of his labors for less than a hundred baht. Just a thought.

From a soon-to-be resident: *I read your article in the Gazette on palm trees. I am having a villa built in Phuket and would appreciate it if you could tell me the height of the tallest palm tree that can be bought for replanting, and the approximate cost, even if the tree has to be bought here from*

*Myanmar or northern Thailand.*

The most obvious is the royal palm, or *maak nuak* in Thai. It's obvious because, next to coconut palms, these are probably the most common palm in Phuket. These are the ones you see growing in the middle of the road and in most gardens, planted purely because they look good. A six-meter version that's already been growing in somebody else's garden for around eight years can be bought here in Phuket for around 1,500 baht.

If you have an area that needs something a bit bushier and a palm seems like a good idea, then you need a golden palm. In

Thai, it's known as *maak luang* and, again, it's a very common sight in Phuket gardens. These are the tufted-style palms with several shoots growing from a central point. A three-meter version will set you back the princely sum of 800 baht, and a four-meter one will cost you 1,500 baht. They take a fair time to grow, which accounts for the difference in price.

Finally, a couple of quick ones. The first is about the allamanda, which is that yellow-flowered bush that you see at the sides of the roads and in gardens all over the island.

*Thank you for your article on the allamanda. I was wondering how near to the beach one could plant one.*

As long as it's not actually in sand, the allamanda will grow just about anywhere. It's actually very difficult to kill, no matter how you abuse it. It's tolerant of most things, including salty air.

*I have a question about my coconut trees. Can you please let me know what can be done to fight the little beetles that eat the leaves before they open? We have only one coconut tree left that has not yet been affected and we have been told that the problems is down to a white worm of about five centimeters that is eating the heart of the palm. Any clues how to deal with that?*

The best advice I can give is to call Rentokil, which has a branch here on the island. They have all the right equipment and chemicals to deal with this kind of thing. You need something fairly strong, but something that won't damage the tree. They'll know what to do.

Now you know how I spend my weekends. I sometimes spend more time in front of the computer than pottering in the garden. Oh well, time for another beer...

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# Property Gazette

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### QUIET LOCATION



Patong. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. Large house on large lot with room for expansion. Aircon, just completely remodeled. Price 4 million baht. Must see. Call for appointment. Tel: 07-8821963. Email: benlee53@hotmail.com

### NEW HOUSE 4 SALE



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### QUALITY STUDIO APARTMENTS

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### LAND FOR SALE

Near Dulwich. Please call for details. Tel: 01-9888180.

### BEACHFRONT CONDO

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### CONDO PATONG

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### BUILDING IN PATONG

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for sale. 350,000 baht total price, payable in instalments. 250,000 baht initial payment, and the remaining 100,000 baht transferred at the Land Office after 1 year. Freehold title. Please contact for more info. Tel: 09-474-0227. Email: chotip\_5@hotmail.com

### GUESTHOUSE FOR SALE

Near Sheraton Krabi Resort, every room has sea view; no problems from tsunami. Tel: 01-3703109.

### NAI HARN LAND

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### HOUSE FOR SALE

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For other issues, deadlines for Classified ads remain as before.



# Property Gazette

## OVERLOOKING PATONG



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2-bedroom house wanted for the period November 2005 until February 2006 - furnished or not. Email: borje.kristensson@vbsbowl.com

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## Agents for Classified Advertising

### PHUKET

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Patak Rd, Chalong

Tel: 076-280400/3

#### NAVA Language School

Phang Nga Rd, Phuket Town

Tel: 076-232398/9

#### Sin & Lee

Thalang Rd, Phuket Town

Tel: 076-211230

#### Taurus Travel

Aroonsom Plaza Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong

Tel: 076 344521-2



# Island Job Mart



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- \* Personnel Manager
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- \* Boat Captains and Boatmen
- \* Guest Activity Supervisors
- \* Housekeeping Supervisors
- \* Room Maids

Please send your CV to [gm@bandararesort.com](mailto:gm@bandararesort.com) or simply fax it to 077-427340. Walk-in interviews will also be accepted by calling 077-245795 for an appointment.

## CAREGIVER WANTED

Part time for elderly farang man. Must speak English. Flexible hours in beautiful location. Live-in private quarters. Tel: 06-9465799. Email: [odd\\_muse@yahoo.ca](mailto:odd_muse@yahoo.ca)

## KINDERGARTEN

teacher. Native speakers required with a TOEFL certificate and/or degree. Fax: 076-248976. Email: [info@kajonkiet.com](mailto:info@kajonkiet.com)

## SECRETARY/

bookkeeper. Urgently needed: Thai national with good command of written/spoken English, computer literate (Windows, Office), with bookkeeping and tax knowledge, for full-time employment. Must be available NOW for training. Please send your resumé by email with picture. Tel: 076-279530, 01-8917499. Fax: 076-279530. Email: [info@kalim-seaview.com](mailto:info@kalim-seaview.com) For more info please see our website at: [www.kalim-seaview.com](http://www.kalim-seaview.com)

## TOP GARDENER

Required for ocean-front house. Must speak English, could be foreign/Thai. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8173776. Email: [bic1@phuket.ksc.co.th](mailto:bic1@phuket.ksc.co.th)



Asian Wind Spa and Leisure Consultants are currently recruiting for the following positions:

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### Spa Supervisor

**1 position**

- Based in Bangkok
- Certificates or experience in the spa industry would be an advantage
- Good command of the English language
- Management skills
- Start immediately

### Spa Receptionist and Therapist

**10 positions**

- Good command of the English language
- Good personality and people skills
- Fair computer skills
- Based in Bangkok/Phuket

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to the Personnel Department:

Asian Wind Co Ltd, 3rd Floor, Royal Phuket City Hotel, 154 Phang Nga Rd, Taladyai, Muang, Phuket, 83000.

Tel: 076 233348, 076 354027 Fax: 076 212091

Email [info@asianwind.biz](mailto:info@asianwind.biz)

## MANAGERESS

Entertainment night club seeks stylish, motivated, experienced, English-speaking person for 5-star venue in Patong. Contact Peter. Tel: 07-0170135. For more info please see our website at: [www.homebarphuket.com](http://www.homebarphuket.com)

## F&B MANAGER/

Director. Looking for a creative, energetic person with good experience. For more info, send email with full resumé. Tel: 076-330530, 06-6894883. Fax: 076-330128. Email: [frank@katagroup.com](mailto:frank@katagroup.com)

## LANGUAGE

teachers. Phonics and pronunciation to be emphasized. Good pay. Tel: 076-282232, 01-9794140 for more info.

## LAW FIRM PHUKET

Looking for accountant and secretary. Part- or full-time. Pls contact by email at: [scphuket@yahoo.com](mailto:scphuket@yahoo.com)

## SENIOR OFFICE

Secretary required for a unique, growing, new type of business located in Patong (Helicam Aerial Photography)

- Thai national.
- Excellent English, spoken & written.

- Excellent telephone sales skills.

- Minimum 3 years' experience in office secretarial work.
- Must use Word, Excel and be capable of learning a new database.

- Have a friendly, positive attitude towards organizing bookings and scheduling appointments within a busy environment.

Please email or fax your resumé to the following address: Helicam, 241/22 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong, Kathu, Phuket 83150, Thailand. Tel: 076-292772. Fax: 076-292773. Email: [info@helicam-asia.com](mailto:info@helicam-asia.com) Learn more about Helicam at: [www.helicam-asia.com](http://www.helicam-asia.com)

## SALES ASSISTANT

Asia Debit, provider of international internet merchant accounts and online secured credit card payment solutions, seeks:

SALES ASSISTANT:

- Male/female, age not over 35

- Excellent spoken and written English

- Basic computer skills

- Good organizational skills

- Ability to learn quickly

- Ability to work independently

JOB SCOPE:

- Process incoming e-commerce applications

- Filing/organizing

Please submit resumé stating qualifications and experience, expected salary, and a recent photo via email. Please contact. Tel: 076-264445. Fax: 076-264447. Email: [oil@asiadebit.com](mailto:oil@asiadebit.com)

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# Island Job Mart

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Thai with at least 3 years' experience in computer graphic & magazine design with knowledge of Microsoft Office programs, Photoshop, Illustrator or CorelDraw, and PageMaker.

Please apply in person with CV and portfolio, or by mail, to:

**Artasia Press Co., Ltd.**  
Ban Prangthong 32/11 Moo 3,  
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Phuket 83000.  
Tel: 0 7626 4433.  
Office Hours: 9:00-18:00 Mon-Fri.

*HOMES Phuket Phuket Guide*

## DUTY MANAGER

(Thai only). Kata Beach Resort is urgently looking for a Duty Manager (Thai nationality only). Profile: Mature, guest oriented, flexible and good command of English. Salary: 10,000+ baht, based on experience. Please send full resum  or apply in person. Tel: 076-330530. Fax: 076-330128. Email: fokatabr@katagroup.com

## SALES/MARKETING

newspaper. We are looking for a salesperson to sell ads and subscriptions in all our international newspapers. Great salary for the right person. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-346218, 09-8093566. Fax: 076-346232. Please send full resum  or apply in person. Email: Info@newspaperdirect-phuket.com

## ASIAN TRAVEL

club, located at Kata Beach, is looking for Thai-English- and Cantonese-English-speaking sales representatives. You should be easy-going and have a positive attitude and professional appearance. Good salary, commissions and benefits offered. Full training provided. Tel: 076-333461. Fax: 076-333460. Email: paulivarlarsson@hotmail.com

## URGENTLY NEEDED

Maid, Pa Khlok area. Good salary. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-273427, 01-8295388.

## POOL CLEANER

Full-time position, own transport required. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8934661. Email: valiant@loxinfo.co.th

## Employment Wanted

### EXPERIENCED

English tutors. Experienced native English tutors available immediately for all levels of English, from beginning to advanced. Test preparation and business English as well as academic English. Available to come to your home or business. Summer crash courses available. Contact Tom or Robin. Tel: 05-8891229. Email: xinrui95@yahoo.com

### SPANISH TEACHER

or guide. I am Javi, a Spanish native looking for a full-time job as a Spanish teacher or tour guide. Please contact with job details. Tel: 037-351-958. Email: jcampolier@hotmail.com

## CAPTAIN

Experienced foreign-going navigator with long experience is seeking to work as a captain on a motor yacht that goes on day trips with a company or private owner, for a permanent contract. Holding 1st Mate competency certificate for 500 gross tonnage vessels and over, and all mandatory certificates. Well aware of ISM and G.M.D.S.S, safety equipment and all navigational equipment. High salary required; accommodation and yearly air ticket to be provided. Can also teach navigation in local sailing school(s) without extra salary. Tel: 01-9700859, 00120101817789. Email: marklover2@hotmail.com

# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Articles for Sale

### FOR SALE

Home Jacuzzi tub. Barely used, beige color, new 90,000 baht. 30,000 baht. Large, two-sided "Room for rent" light sign on wheels, 1,000 baht. Tel: 07-246-6546.

### PLANTS FOR SALE

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## MOUNTAIN BIKES

Specialized Demo Nine, race ready, downhill race bike. Brand new, 8" front suspension, 9" rear suspension. US\$5,000 new. Call with best offer. Giant AC Team, single or double crown suspension, XTR and XT components. 1 year old. Call with best offer. Contact Ari. Tel: 05-8891229. Email: xinrui95@yahoo.com

## PLAY STATION 2

Urgent sale: Play Station Version 2, including 30 games. Brand new; only used a few times. New one: 13,500 baht. I will sell for 7,500 baht. Please call for inspection and testing. Tel: 07-9820422. Email: moodiving@yahoo.com

## ELECTRO ACOUSTIC

guitar. Motion. Electro-Acoustic guitar. Semi cutaway. Volume, bass, mid-range, treble EQ. Nice tone through amp. Low Action. 5,000 baht, including carry bag. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 01-537-9196. Email: robinsbum@hotmail.com

## MOUNTAIN BIKE

US-made, lightweight but heavy-duty mountain bike with "rock shocks" and extended handlebars. New tires. 6,000 baht. Automatic gear shifting on handlebars... what a deal! Email: maxskii@thailand.com

## DIVE EQUIPMENT

mint cond. XL Beuchat BCD. US Divers regset. Used half a season, mint condition. Will sell to best offer for all. Tel: 07-9376961. Email: maxskii@thailand.com

## SALE NOTEBOOK

A good notebook, little used, still under warranty, good price. Please email for more info. Tel: 09-5593161. Email: jurgen.hugli@gmail.com

## ELECTRIC WATER

air cooler for sale at 2,000 baht. Good condition. Tel: 05-0388178. Email: golfucky@hotmail.com

## YAMAHA DRUM KIT

Yamaha DTXpressII electric drum kit plus bass pedal, stool, and 70-watt amp. Excellent for practice, teaching and professional playing. Price: 45,000 baht. Tel: 01-895-7727.

## 21" TV

- Haier stereo AV: 8 months old, 3,000 baht.  
- Two speakers: 400W, 500 baht.  
Tel: 09-2913641. Email: sayan40@hotmail.com

## BEDDING FOR SALE

Purchased at Winner 2 weeks ago, pocket spring, wide style; paid 17,000 baht, will sell for 8,000 baht or trade for any size television with AV connection. Call Steve. Tel: 06-0760141.

## Boats & Marine

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Raffles Marina  
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Fax: (65) 6863 2917  
singapore@simpsonmarine.com

**PHUKET OFFICE**  
Phuket Boat Lagoon  
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Fax: +66 976 239927  
phuket@simpsonmarine.com

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Ocean Marina  
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Fax: +66 3 823 7307  
bangkok@simpsonmarine.com

**PORT DICKSON OFFICE**  
Admiral Marina Club  
Tel: (606) 6476868  
Fax: (606) 6476817  
westmalaysia@simpsonmarine.com

**LANGKAWI OFFICE**  
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## DINGHY

4-meters long, 100,000 baht. Please contact to arrange inspection. Tel: 04-0580815. Fax: 076-243089. Email: sharkymike@yahoo.com

## 54FT CATAMARAN

Built 2004 in plywood/glass fiber/epoxy. Six big (9 sqm) double-berth cabins. Galley, saloon, 20 sqm cockpit. Price: US\$55,000. Tel: 006-019-5434313. Email: catnoina@yahoo.de

## SPEEDBOAT 4 SALE

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# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

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**Gulf Craft**

**The Touring 36**  
 The utility series from Gulf Craft including the Walkaround 31 pictured. Models from 31 - 36 ft in open-plan, cabin cruiser and patrol configurations, with various engine options available. Stock Walkaround 31 arriving soon with single diesel inboard.

**The Walkaround 31**  
 Attention all tour companies and resorts. The versatile and exciting Touring series from Gulf Craft is available in 36, 40 and 56 ft with choices of engine configuration. Providing tour and ferry passengers transit in comfort and safety. Stock 40 arriving soon with diesels and waterjets.

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 Tel: 076 239986 Fax: 076 239987  
 Email: goboating\_th@yahoo.com  
 www.gulfcraftboats.com www.gulfcraftinc.com

## Bulletins

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

is holding meetings in English at the following places:

**Phuket City Mission Hospital**  
on Wed and Sun at 7 pm

**Bangkok Phuket Hospital**  
on Fri at 7 pm

**Patong Patong Hospital**  
on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm

For more info, please call 01 895 4763 and 01 891 2895.

**PHUKET CHESS CLUB**

will be established soon in the Southern Fried Rice restaurant/guesthouse in Kata Night Bazaar. You will be able to play chess every day in a permanent chess room or in the restaurant. Please contact for details and to register interest. Tel: 01-8948446. Email: sfrkata@hotmail.com

**Looking for love?**  
[www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)

## Business Opportunities

### BAR/RESTAURANT

for sale. In good location opposite Jungceylon & Burasari hotel. Fully equipped, seating for about 60, 3-year lease, 35,000 baht/month rent, price 700,000 baht. Three-month deposit required. Tel: 076-342194, 09-8716176.

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for sale - urgent. Restaurant, Internet cafe, beauty salon. All for 2.6 million baht. Tel: 06-2815587. Email: teojuan52@hotmail.com For more information, please see our website at: [www.thegclub.com/phuketbusinesses](http://www.thegclub.com/phuketbusinesses)

### PROFITABLE

business. Newspaper Direct distributes daily newspapers from 50 countries, 240 different titles, to hotels, bars, restaurants, bookstores, beach sales etc. Phuket franchise is for sale. Company, fully operational office, computers, motorbikes etc. call for more info. Tel: 076-346218, 09-8093566. Fax: 076-346232. Email: info@newspaperdirect-phuket.com For more information, please see our website at: [www.newspaperdirect.com](http://www.newspaperdirect.com)

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a year. Are you looking for a risk-free investment? Are you able to invest 600, 1,500 or 3,000 dollars? Tel: 45-4970-4705, 45-26791011. Fax: 45-49704705. Contact by email at: midaz66@yahoo.dk and I will send you information and the link.

### RESTAURANT/

rooms. Looking for active partner in Kamala, minimum investment 300,000 baht. Tel: 01-9848288. Email: bbq@loxinfo.co.th

### SHOP FOR LEASE

Patak Rd (main road), Karon Beach. 70sqm with phone, ADSL, nicely done with tiled floor, ceiling, painted walls. Tel: 09-1968429. Email: amorn9999@yahoo.com

### HOTEL FOR LEASE

Consistent income all year from solid guest base. Easy to manage. Tel: 01-8922824. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at: [www.kohjoy.com/building](http://www.kohjoy.com/building)

### INTERNATIONAL

Pre-School. British school. Prime location in sought-after residential area of Phuket, with great reputation and goodwill. Accommodation and pleasant surrounding gardens available for owner's use. This rare opportunity only due to present owner's relocation. Easy business transfer. Tel: 01-9794140. Email: tsun7@hotmail.com

### TSUNAMI RESORT

opportunity. Active investor/partner sought for redevelopment of eco-resort on Phra Thong Island, Phang Nga. Site is a world-class setting, with two beautiful beaches, abundant wildlife, years of successful operation based on a love of nature. Please contact by email at: [simi@losthorizonsasia.com](mailto:simi@losthorizonsasia.com)

### BAR FOR SALE

Large, successful, established bar in soi off Soi Bangla for sale. Pool table, sound system plus all fittings. Please call for more information. Tel: 06-2832285.

### BAR/RESTAURANT

Refurbished after tsunami. Good location in Patong. 50 seats (aircon). Includes accommodation: 4 rooms + 1 for staff 1.25 million baht for 5 years, rent 35,000 baht/month. Please call for more information. Tel: 04-8448381.

### SALE OR LEASE

Guesthouse/minimart in Patong, central location. Fully refurbished to Western standards. Pls contact for more information. Tel: 07-8887676. Email: [homeawaypatong@hotmail.com](mailto:homeawaypatong@hotmail.com)

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### COMPUTER

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## Personals

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Would you like a free weekly or daily email that will give you encouragement or inspiration? Send a blank email to us to subscribe, or visit our website for more information. Email: [subscribe@thoughtforweek.net](mailto:subscribe@thoughtforweek.net) For more info, see my website at: [ThoughtForWeek.net](http://ThoughtForWeek.net)

### BACKGAMMON

Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Please call if interested. Tel: 076-386113, 01-5778443.

### PHUKET GENTLEMAN

33 years old, fun, educated, physically fit, Western gentleman living on Phuket. Looking for an educated, attractive and sincere Thai woman 20 to 30 years old for potential relationship. Please email your information to: [birdrock@iname.com](mailto:birdrock@iname.com)

### GOOD FAMILY LADY

Attractive guy, university degree, healthy lifestyle & finances, would like to meet a sweet Phuket beauty who is a warm and interesting lady. I prefer to start as friends but hope to find a nice girl to share good life with. Email: [daniel29200@yahoo.com](mailto:daniel29200@yahoo.com)

### SEEKING MR RIGHT

I am female, 32 years old, living and working in Phuket. I am now looking for romance with the right guy with a good attitude. I am fun to be with and hope to find someone cute, fun and mature. Email: [lonely\\_phuket@yahoo.com](mailto:lonely_phuket@yahoo.com)

### WANT LONG-TERM

companion. American retired senior living permanently in Patong looking for an attractive lady to be his companion and share his accommodations and lifestyle. Email: [donaileman@hotmail.com](mailto:donaileman@hotmail.com)

**Do Not Drink Tap Water!**



## Do Not Drink Tap Water!



