

# The Phuket Gazette

Volume 12 Issue 16

News Desk - Tel: 076-236555

April 16 - 22, 2005

Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net

20 Baht

The Gazette is published in association with

The Nation

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## Drive to break up transport 'mafia'

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: In an attempt to improve public transport on the island, Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura has announced his support for a new project aimed at putting hundreds of metered taxis on Phuket roads and launching an Airport Bus service.

On April 1, the Governor presided over the launch of the "Taxi Phuket Development Project" at Central Festival, during which he also announced the introduction of a new 52-baht minibus service between Phuket City and the airport.

The 30-seat minibus, to go into service in about three months, will stop at four locations: Surakul Stadium on Wichit Songkram Rd; Tesco-Lotus; the Heroines' Monument and Prangasang Temple, on Thepkra-sattri Rd in Thalang.

The new taxis are station wagons with seating for seven and more luggage room than the standard metered taxis. Built by Bangkok-based car manufacturer Thai Rung Union Car (TUC), the "Thai Rung Bangkok Limousine Express" vehicles have Isuzu 3,000cc engines and are available for purchase at 920,000 baht on a low-interest instalment plan through the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank (SME Bank).

Prospective buyers can set themselves up as taxi drivers for a down payment of 229,000 baht, paying off the balance over a five-year period at just 5% interest. No collateral is required, though buyers must have a personal guarantor.

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of the



Festooned with balloons, the new 7-seat metered taxi makes its debut at Central Festival.

Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), told the Gazette that the taxi fare will be 50 baht for the first two kilometers, then 7 baht per kilometer thereafter.

While this is more expensive than metered taxi fares in Bangkok, the 20km trip between Patong and Phuket City, for example, would cost 176 baht – about half what most tuk-tuks currently demand for the same journey.

K. Teerayuth added that the metered-taxi registration process takes one day and costs less than 2,000 baht.

At the launch, Gov Udomsak said he would like to see public transport in Phuket improve and provide more options for tourists.

"Currently we have only

about 20 metered taxis. I would like eventually to see all black-plate [illegal] taxis become registered. We also want to add more metered taxis," he said.

"Some metered taxis in Phuket are still barred from picking up passengers at certain hotels. We would like them to be able to collect fares from anywhere on the island. It's a necessary thing that we must do," he said, adding that he was willing to take on "influential figures" to make it so.

Gov Udomsak encouraged tuk-tuk drivers in Patong whose vehicles were damaged by the tsunami to switch over to metered taxis and also encouraged black-plate taxi drivers to take advantage of the SME loans and operate legally.

– Editorial: Page 14

## Burmese tsunami survivors in limbo

By Gazette Reporters

PHANG NGA: They came to Thailand in search of a better life, but now thousands of Burmese who survived the very worst of the tsunami are languishing in Phang Nga, unaided and in hiding, while the bodies of dead Burmese lie unidentified in the mortuaries.

The majority of the survivors claim they are in Thailand legally, but that they lost their papers in the tsunami. As a result, they are afraid to approach the Thai authorities for help, for fear of deportation.

The Burmese government says there are no Burmese in Thailand, and so refuses to intervene to help them.

The Ranong-based Suphamit Foundation set up a relief center in Khao Lak, but, according to manager Chuwong Sangkong, staff were forced to close the center on January 10, after being threatened by employers worried that they might lose their cheap labor.

The foundation had by that time enabled 712 migrants to return to Burma by giving them 500 baht each and helping them to reach the Burmese border at Ranong.

Said K. Chuwong, "The employers threatened to harm our staff if they continued to help the laborers, because they wanted to continue using them after the tsunami, and didn't want to lose them.

"The employers keep [the Burmese] hidden from the authorities who may be able to help them, while the laborers are afraid that if they attract atten-

Continued on page 2



## Queer News

### Boared to death

PHAYAO: An elderly hunter in Chun District was gored to death by a wild boar after shooting its mate and stealing their four babies, his neighbors said.

In late March, Wun Sisan, 68, shot a female boar and collected its piglets to sell to villagers to raise at a cost of 1,500 baht each.

About 10 days later, in the early evening of April 4, the little pigs were still penned up near his home when K. Wun heard the sound of a wild boar approaching, making sounds as if calling out for the babies.

Not believing his luck, K. Wan took out a rifle and followed in hot pursuit. He finally got in range along a creek in a sugar cane field and blasted away, hitting the animal.

Rather than roll over and die, however, the boar charged K. Wan, jumping atop him, gouging him with his long canines and trampling him under underhoof.

Villagers ran to help, but it was too late. The boar had pounced and gored the last living breaths out of his assailant.

The boar fared no better – it, too, died at the scene. By the time police came to investigate, the neighbors had already butchered the 120-kilogram animal and shared the meat among themselves. **Source: Thai Rath**

# US trade reps assess ways to help SMEs

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura met with US trade representatives and the head of the Office of Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion (OSMEP) on April 3 to discuss ways in which the US private sector might assist in Thailand's recovery following the December 26 tsunami.

The talks focused on ways to channel private-sector investment from the US to affected businesses, given the Thai government's decision not to accept direct economic aid from foreign governments.

A key issue in the discussions was the role the proposed Thai-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA) would play in facilitating loans to small businesses that have been unable to obtain credit from Thai lending institutions.

The eight-member US contingent in Phuket was led by Assistant US Trade Representative Barbara Weizel, who heads a 60-member negotiating team visiting Thailand for the third round of of the somewhat controversial FTA negotiations in Pattaya.

Ms Weizel said the talks

had been productive. "Today we were looking at tsunami-affected areas and spoke with local officials ... to get a better understanding of the situation here and how we can help.

"They gave us a good explanation of areas where they need assistance, as well as longer-term recovery plans, including for SMEs, tourism, fisheries and others," she added.

She said the talks had made her team realize the importance the Thai government places on

SMEs, adding that the FTA group was working on other areas that would lead to long-term economic growth and elimination of poverty in Thailand.

"What we are doing today is part of a bigger effort," she said.

Dulce A Aahniser, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Oversea Private Investment Corporation said that her agency had set aside credits totaling US\$150 million (about 6 billion baht) as part of its Tsunami Reconstruction Finance Initiative.



Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukbal (not in red), gets the Phuket Gay Festival underway on April 7. The first night's partying had a red theme, to symbolize blood, as a way of spreading the message about the dangers of HIV.

## Police coax would-be jumper to safety

PATONG: A drunken man horrified people in the Soi Kebsap area of Patong on the morning of April 7 by threatening to jump to his death from the 18<sup>th</sup> floor of the Patong Tower.

The drama started at about 8:30 am after the man, who police have identified only as

"Aek", put a over the balcony railing and flailed his arms.

Pol Lt Col Narong Laksanawimol of the Kathu Police Station led a team of 15 officers to the scene, where a 5x5-meter air cushion was deployed on the ground to break Aek's fall if he went through with his threat.

Col Narong was one of four negotiators who, after about two hours of persuasion, finally convinced the man to come down. The colonel later told the *Gazette* that Aek had become distraught after an argument with his girlfriend and was out of control from alcohol.

The negotiations were slow, he added, because the man was afraid of the police and initially refused to talk to them.

Col Narong said he explained to Aek that they would not press charges. They then asked him to think about his family and the effect it would have on them if he jumped.

After giving up his suicide bid, Aek was escorted to Patong Hospital for treatment.

## Burmese survivors still in limbo

From page 1

tion to themselves, the Thai authorities will catch them and send them back to Myanmar because they don't have ID papers."

The foundation has been unable to keep track of Burmese tsunami survivors since the center closed, but K. Chuwong estimates that there may be as many as 2,000 of them in difficulty.

Before the tsunami, there were around 33,000 Burmese registered with the Phang Nga Labor Office. Many were in Phang Nga doing unskilled jobs, as housekeepers or gardeners in hotels around Khao Lak, or on fishing boats based in villages such as Baan Nam Khem.

K. Chuwong believes that although 3,000 migrants fled back into Myanmar, and scores died in the tsunami, a "huge number" remain in Phang Nga.

He said he had asked the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok to help the survivors, but embassy staff refused, saying that they had been told by Yangon that there were no Burmese laborers in Thailand.

"So, no Burmese laborers died in Thailand and there are no laborers here who need the help of the Burmese government," said K. Chuwong, referring, with an edge in his voice, to the reply from the Burmese Embassy.

Adisorn Kerdmongkon, committee member of the Campaign for Democracy in Burma (CCDB), said most of the laborers seemed to be in hiding in three places: Baan Nam Khem, Khao Lak and Laem Pakarang.

CCDB officers believe they may be staying with friends who are working, although it is thought that around 90% of surviving Burmese migrants lost their jobs because of the tsunami.

K. Adisorn said the CCDB intends to track down the laborers and take them to the Phang Nga Provincial Labor Office, where they can re-register.

At some time in the future, the committee hopes to arrange some form of liaison between the laborers and the Thai Tsunami Victims Identification Center, to enable Burmese victims of the tsunami to be identified.

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## Grace Park to fill Pak's shoes in Tiger Skins



MAI KHAO: South Korean Si Re Pak has pulled out of the Tiger Skins 2005 golf tournament, taking place on April 16 and 17 at the Blue Canyon Country Club, citing a back injury. She will be replaced by compatriot Grace Park.

Park, 26, won two major Ladies' Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tournaments last year, including the Kraft Nabisco Championship. She was also awarded the 2004 Vare Trophy by the LPGA, making her the second South Korean to receive it, the other being Pak.

Other top players taking part include Colin Montgomerie, Retief Goosen – who won the 2002 and 2003 Tiger Skins – and Thomas Bjorn.

Highlights of the event will be broadcast on Channel 7 at 10:25 pm on April 18.

## Park fees waived till end of May

PHUKET: Entry to marine national parks and 15 other natural attractions along the Andaman coast provinces will be free of charge until May 31.

Sirinath National Park in Phuket was due to re-open on April 9. Head of the park, Thanapong Aphaiso, said, "Some areas in the park will not be open to visitors because we are rejuvenating them and they will be re-opened later."

"In addition, we are building a hostel with bathrooms, and a car park," he added.

# Missing millions probe 'making progress'

PHUKET CITY: Phuket City Police say they are making progress in the investigation into the alleged theft of 2.05 million baht in tsunami relief funds from Phuket Provincial Hall – but have yet to name any suspects in the case.

Phuket City Police Superintendent Pol Col Paween Pongsirin told the *Gazette* on April 3 that he expected his department to have "cleared up" the case before the Songkran holiday, but he declined to elaborate for fear, he said, of jeopardizing the case.

The money, part of funds intended for

distribution to tsunami victims though the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM), was reported missing from a box at Phuket Provincial Hall on February 15.

Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura assigned Vice-Governor Supachai Yuwaboon to lead an investigation team into the disappearance. On March 11 the V/Gov said his commission had concluded that the money had been "lost" through "poor accounting" by the ODPM officers charged with distributing it.

This finding was strangely at odds with

the police investigation, which found evidence that someone had sawn through one of the locks on the box and pried back its cover.

"We are conducting the investigation as rapidly and thoroughly as possible but have yet to name any suspects. Everything must be finished before Songkran or the middle of the month," said Col Paween.

Col Paween did not specify whether "finishing the case" referred to the collection of evidence, the naming of suspects, or the filing of criminal charges.

– Anongnat Sartpisut

## Sipa launches 3-hour service for IT experts

By Anongnat Sartpisut

BANGKOK: Foreign IT workers coming to Thailand will be the envy of employees in all other sectors following the April 7 launch of a new online system by the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa).

The system will allow the government to process foreign IT workers' applications for work permits and extensions of stay within just three hours.

Chalermcharn Yotviriyapanit, Head of the Sipa's Investment Promotion Section, told the *Gazette* that foreigners may now apply online for a "Knowledge Worker Certificate" ratifying that they are recognized by the Thai government as IT specialists.

The certificate entitles applicants to have work permits and extensions to stay processed within three hours through Sipa's One-Stop Service Center.

To be issued a certificate,

foreign IT workers who have been offered a job in Thailand can fill out the form at [www.sipa.or.th/knowledgeworker/apply.php](http://www.sipa.or.th/knowledgeworker/apply.php)

"Sipa will process the initial application within five days," explained K. Chalermcharn, adding that once the applicant has arrived in Thailand, he or she may then apply in person to Sipa's One-Stop Service Center for a work permit and an extension to stay equivalent to the duration of the contract of employment.

"If all documents are in order, the work permit and extension to stay will be issued within three hours," he said.

For further information call K. Chalermcharn at Tel: 02-554-0407 or Email: [chalermcharn\\_yo@sipa.or.th](mailto:chalermcharn_yo@sipa.or.th), or visit [www.sipa.or.th/knowledgeworker](http://www.sipa.or.th/knowledgeworker), or contact Naruemon Pechruttanumunee at Tel: 076-379111 or Email: [phuket@sipa.or.th](mailto:phuket@sipa.or.th)

## Phuket Air 747 grounded after safety check

LONDON: Passengers booked on Phuket Air flights were left in limbo after one aircraft was grounded because of "serious defects" and another was barred from carrying passengers.

Safety inspectors in London prevented the Boeing 747-200 from taking off after they discovered the collision avoidance system was broken. The aircraft had returned to Gatwick after one engine shut down.

The British Department for Transport ordered emergency inspections of all Phuket Air planes on British soil on April 4, after a flight from Bangkok to London had twice aborted take-off after refueling at Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Passengers forced the crew to stop the plane after seeing fuel gushing from a wing. The airline said later that this was due to over-filling, and posed no danger.

British Civil Aviation Authority officials who inspected the 25-year-old plane when it finally arrived at Gatwick – 36 hours late – found the evacuation safety lights – meant to indicate escape routes during an emergency – were not working.

The plane was deemed air-

worthy and allowed to return to Bangkok – but without passengers.

Then, on April 6, another Phuket Air 747 had to return to Gatwick three hours into a flight to Bangkok, because of a hydraulic fault. One engine was shut off while the plane was airborne.

The plane had already spent 11 hours on the ground at Sharjah during the flight to Gatwick, while repairs were carried out. It was thought the problem had been fixed, but it recurred during the return flight to Bangkok.

Attempts by the *Gazette* to obtain a comment from the airline were unsuccessful.

Before the start of the four days of problems, Phuket Air announced that it was axing the direct service between Bangkok and London because of the impending low season, and replacing the route with a new one between Bangkok and Amsterdam.

The airline's marketing and communications manager, Krona Visutrasai, told the *Gazette* the London flights would be "suspended temporarily", but that the company intended to restore the route later.

Sources: BBC, The Times.

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# If I Were A Bird

By Thipratri Saenkam

Last week I had a wonderful dream that I was a bird flying in the light-blue sky. I had a fine opportunity to see a lot of things on the ground and on the water, and to smell good things around me.

Everything I saw seemed real, but in fact it was just a dream. In my dream I felt very happy, as if I had gone to heaven. We know that no dream is true.

As I dreamed I could see nature, which was very beautiful, with rivers, canals and oceans. I could see wild animals and green forests all over Thailand as I flew in the light-blue sky.

The forests made me feel as fresh as if I were sitting in an air-conditioned room. Looking down at the ground was fascinating; I felt like a tourist looking down from an airplane.

I could see the way people lived their lives, full of kindness. They were all charming, they helped one another. They didn't fight. Giving was more important to them than taking.

The owners of houses, buildings and shops were able to



live in one neighborhood and share a lot of good modern technology. They had computers, televisions and telephones to help them in daily life.

I could see how Thai people take care of their culture and traditions. The festivals of Lao Kratong and Songkran, particularly, are widely celebrated in

Thailand. The first is a feast for lovers, the second has now become almost a big water fight.

Young people like to play with water on Songkran Day, but as I flew over in my dream I saw them all wake up early to clean their homes and go to the temple with their mother and father. The tradition changes a

It was a moment for Phuket to be proud of: the two winners of the Southern Thailand round of the Second Junior Impac Dublin Literary Awards also scooped all-comers for the over-all prizes for Thailand.

Thipratri Saenkam, 18, and Ella Micheler, 17, won 10,000 baht apiece for their entries in the Southern Thailand round, topping a field of 69 entrants from Phuket, Surat Thani and Pattani.

On April 4 they went to the finals in Bangkok, where they were hailed as winners out of 300 entries in the all-Thailand competition, Thipratri winning the section for Thais and Ella the section for non-Thais.

As part of their prize, the two girls will go, each with one parent, to Dublin this summer to attend the senior Impac Dublin Literary Awards in Ireland, the world's richest literary prize.

Thipratri, a student at the Kathu Wittaya School won the prize for best entry by a Thai with her essay, *If I Were A Bird*. Ella, a student at Dulwich International College, won the prize for non-Thais with her entry, entitled *Smile*.

Here, the *Gazette* publishes their winning entries.

little, but no one can change it completely.

In my dream, people dressed very politely in clothing that preserved Thai culture. If I could, I would not dress like Westerners do, but then society would probably not accept me any more, so I try to dress by following the styles of people who I believe to be good.

I flew on through the sky and arrived in the South. I could

see many small islands with beautiful beaches and many forests.

I went to the East and could see many people who were not rich yet who were very happy, always smiling – and very honest too. I flew to the North and it was very cold but I could see many trees, which made me happy, and allowed me to rest for a while. In the West I saw many flowers and many colors. Every part of Thai-

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land, I could see, had its own cultural traditions and costumes. I liked that very much.

In the morning, I awoke and went to school, just as I did every day. But the dream kept flitting around in my mind. I thought to myself that, if I were a bird, I would have a lot of food to eat all day, all year round. I could eat fruit such as oranges, mango, papaya, durian or bananas.

I would not have to worry about my safety as I do in my life as a human. As a bird I could eat food that was free of pollutants and chemicals. I wouldn't have to wash my hands before every meal, and I would not have to cook.

Mind you, I think I would miss all my favorite Thai food, such as *tom yam goong* or spicy glass noodle salad. And if I wanted to eat fish, I would have to eat it raw, like the Japanese do, though that wouldn't bother me – I like sushi!

As I walked home I passed some trees and I could smell the scent of nature from the forest, and I could see the land and sunlight just as I had in my dream. The scent spread around me, touching me deep in my heart.

I walked a little way into the forest and to sit down and close my eyes. I could hear the sounds of a waterfall, the water flowing in a stream and the sound of lovely birds in the forest – a different song for each kind of bird.

I heard, too, human voices communicating, informing one another, talking in order to understand different things.

I stood up and walked home, thinking that I'd like to be a real bird, but couldn't be. I would like to be a bird because birds are free and I love freedom. I could go anywhere in the world; I could hear and see and smell all the thing I saw over the horizon and past the seas.

But most of all I would be able to see Thailand, every small part of it. And that is also the place that I would always return to because I like Thailand very much.

Thailand is already my dream country, and I would not want to change it!

By Ella Micheler

One needs only seventeen muscles to smile; yet one should never underestimate the power of a smile. A smile can reconcile two enemies, brighten the life of a stranger, cheer up a room with an atmosphere of goodwill and happiness, or give a glowing first impression.

From this, one can logically surmise that since Thailand is the renowned Land of Smiles, it is one of the most powerful countries in the world. No, Thailand does not have enough nuclear weapons to obliterate our world n times. Neither does it have a ridiculously large army, hundreds of angry battleships, flocks of military planes, or hidden Weapons of Mass Destruction – but 60.6 million grinning people should be a force to be reckoned with.

Events of the past few years, however, have seriously shaken my belief in the power of a smile – or indeed, in the power of any single person's benevolence and hope.

Thailand's "war on drugs" during February and March 2003 ended in the deaths of over 2,000 people, including children under the age of 16 months. SARS descended on Southeast Asia, and after menacingly circling Thailand, it finally struck in March 2003. We became consumed in panic, seemingly unable to protect ourselves with anything but flimsy white mouth masks.

Avian flu came a few months after that, referred to merely as "the dark side of globalization" by the Thai PM Thaksin Shinawatra, and we watched in awe how quickly it spread. As it brought us the stench of burned chicken corpses, hanging in the air with our own palpable fear, we despaired that things would ever return to normal.

In that same year, Muslim separatist activity in the South of Thailand reached its boiling point, and from my sheltered home in Thailand's favourite tourist island Phuket, I learned of the terrorist attacks in Pattani and

# SMILE



other states of the South, where students my age still live in fear for their lives.

On December 26th, 2004, a tsunami hit our shores and we could not smile for a long time.

Like most teenagers, I went through a period of fierce idealism. Fueled by John Grisham's *The Street Lawyer*, I was determined to become a lawyer and help all manner of people (although I wasn't exactly sure of how, but my thirteen-year-old self smoothed over those details).

I held all manner of Utopian dreams: peace, equality and education for all, the complete eradication of social injustice, governments that were not corrupt, and so on. They were typical run-of-the-mill hopes, and the realization gradually sank in that I had little chance of actually achieving them.

Feeling jaded and cheated by the fact that nothing in the world changed, no matter how hard I tried, I buried myself in my studies.

It was not a miraculous epiphany that pulled me out of this mindset, but an innocuous comment by my physics teacher, on a wholly ordinary Wednesday

morning. "Newton's Third Law stipulates that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," he said.

Seeing our half-asleep faces, he grinned and went on, "That means that if I push the Earth, the Earth should push me back. Anyone care to test that theory?"

My friend and I glanced at each other. Glad to get away from mind-numbing physics formulas, we both got up and looked at him expectantly. He gestured to us encouragingly and said, "Jump." We did so half-heartedly.

Turning back to the rest of the class, secret amusement showing through his face at the sight of our own bemusement, he said proudly, "Congratulations. You have just moved the world."

It was then that I realised that it is the little things that make our lives infinitely more wonderful, as my grandmother insists (and which I had always dismissed as a touch of senility).

Perhaps the smallest thing of all is a smile; so often unacknowledged and so often forced for the flash of the camera, smiles dominate all my earliest memories of Thailand.

I remember being three years old, in the arms of my father as he strolled through the muggy heat of Bangkok's streets, people smiling at me from all sides, flashes of white teeth against brown skin.

Back in Germany, I experimentally smiled at people in shopping centers or on crowded streets, only to have them glance back at me with faint confusion, as if wondering if they knew me, and then dismissing me as soon as they remembered something more important.

It seems that Thailand is one of the few nations left where Newton's Third Law holds true in the context of smiles: if you smile at someone, they will smile back.

After the tsunami, many of us were afraid to smile, for fear that it would be insensitive to those who were grieving – but when one feels so utterly powerless in the wake of a natural disaster, the one thing one can do with absolutely certainty is smile.

And smile we did. Amid the shock and grief, Thais were still strong enough to smile and to show compassion to the thousands of foreigners who had suffered. A sense of solidarity swept over us, and people as far away as Bangkok stormed hospitals to donate blood, clothing, food and other necessities.

Smiling is universal and simple. It does not matter whether you have white teeth contrasting with dark skin or pale skin, or if your teeth are crooked, or yellowed with age. It does not matter if your wrinkles show, or if sunlight reflects off your shiny new braces.

What matters is that we are all capable of it, regardless of gender, nationality, religion or political belief. A smile may not go very far in stopping a bullet, or bringing money into a desperately poor country – but it is a start. We can all do our part, no matter how infinitesimally insignificant it may seem compared to other events.

As the Land of Smiles, we have an obligation to set an example to the rest of the world. If smiles really are infections, then we should start an epidemic.

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When my son-in-law shot me through the head last week I honestly didn't feel a thing. There was no blood, no spattered brains against the wall, only a mischievous giggle and a sort of *kerblunmph* sound from the 4.5-kilogram gun.

The scene of the crime was "Jungle Squad" in Kathu, where you can stalk and eventually shoot down friends, enemies and that annoying person from the office who you've wanted to get back at for years.

But is crawling through 10 rai of former rubber plantation, sweating copiously, heart hammering away, actually fun? You bet it is.

Firing an invisible laser beam for a distance of up to 150 meters at adversaries who really, actually and honestly want to "kill" you brings out the Grunt in people of any age or gender.

The harmless (luckily for me) beam is aimed at a sensor, attached by Velcro to each combatant's hat. When the beam finds its target, the sensor notifies the gun which "fired" it, and yet one more life is tragically lost in the steamy jungles of South-east Asia.

That is not the end of the story, though, as combatants may have several "lives", depending on the rules of the game they are playing.

Jungle Squad arrived on the island last November. It is the

# JUNGLE RUMBLE

first outdoor laser combat game company in Thailand.

Managing Director Nigel Burt recalled that the process of importing 30 life-size guns into Thailand wasn't exactly easy.

Each replica requires a separate real-life firearms license, as local authorities are understandably jittery about people running around the island shooting each other up, even with lasers. Let's face it, there's enough of that around election time.

Like local political maneuvering, the one-hour game fires up passions that can sometimes lead to embarrassing moments.

At an opening promotion party last year, two expats – who shall not be named – overstepped the game's physical boundaries by leaving the rubber plantation, and promptly got themselves arrested at a local police booth for illegal possession of firearms.

One could hardly blame the arresting officers, as the 80,000-baht Marita and M-16 replicas do look uncannily real. Happily, the misunderstanding was soon cleared up with smiles all around.

The game is more enjoyable with a large number of participants, but if a couple of friends want to drop by for a rum-



"Ladies possess the one talent that is required to survive and do well at this game: patience," says Jungle Squad's Nigel Burt.

ble in the jungle, staff members will make up the numbers, either as opponents or as team members.

Mr Burt has 14 years' experience organizing war games on the Isle of Wight in England, and he is convinced of his laser guns' superiority in this field of recreation.

"This is real jungle combat minus the pain and the mess," he said. "It's a lot cheaper than similar concepts, plus it's environmentally benign and it's safe."

Well, safe if you're not like the over-enthusiastic American sailor on R&R who recently tripped in the undergrowth, went flying stern over bowsprit, and ended up in the dentist's chair.

It's easy to imagine Jungle Squad being a haven for testosterone-laden blokes, but ladies acquire the skills of hunting and surviving just as well as, if not better than, the boys, Mr Burt said.

"Ladies possess the one talent that is required to survive and

do well at this game: patience," he explained.

The heavy gun is awkward for smaller children to handle, but anyone between the ages of 10 and 84 can have had a go at being GI Joe, and more and more want to try.

Mr Burt said Jungle Squad is a perfect team-building activity, one that his squad can set up quickly on hotel or even office grounds – whatever the terrain.

In a word, the concept has limitless possibilities: in the open, in the jungle, building-to-building, beachside, anywhere – just so long as you don't scare the buffaloes.

Jungle Squad provides combatants with camouflage boiler suits and hats; Mr Burt recommends trainers as footwear. But apart from that, combatants set their own rules.

There is, though, just one proviso: Mr Burt is the ultimate judge, and cheating is nigh-on impossible. There's no room for Cowboys-and-Indians-style "You're dead," "No, I'm not," "Oh yes you are," squabbles here: the gun and head sensors register everything.

Sorry about that; it's the Law of the Jungle, you see.

– **Lis Kinswoman**

*Jungle Squad is at 46/2 Phra Barami Rd, Kathu (on the left coming down Patong Hill). Tel. 09-0710169, Email nigelree@myway.com*



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## This week

**LADIES TOGETHER:** (right) Vipaphun Kusuwan (front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left), the President of the Business and Professional Women's Association – Phuket and other members make merit at Samnuksong Para and Wat Kanan in Thalang recently.

**BIRTHDAY GIRL:** (below) Arsira "Nong" Matthap (center) takes a break at her birthday bash held recently at The Islander bar in Rawai, with her better more-than-half Wayne "Red" Graham (right), Neil Rickards of The Islander (left), and friends.

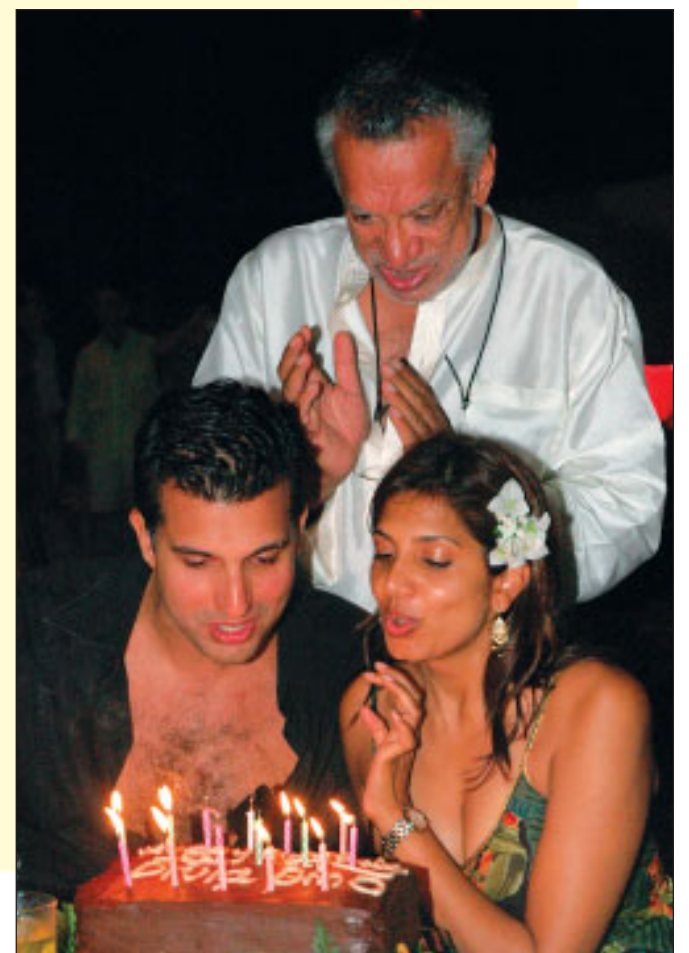


**FLOWER POWER:** (below, from left) Laurent Aublin, the Ambassador of France in Thailand, and his wife, Pascale, celebrate the completion of the first L'Orchidée Residences villa with Jean Claude Guillet of the project's developer, AC Highland.



**INSCRUTABLY CHARMING:** (above) At the opening of the Oriental Origin shop on Dibuk Rd in Phuket City are, from left, Orasa Tosawang, the shop's owner; her aunt, Suadjeng Tantavej; and Phuket native Viset Choopiban, the Minister for Energy.

**BIRTHDAY BOY AND GIRL:** (right) Gulu Lalvani (standing) plays host at a birthday party for his children, Divia (right) and Dino. The party, with a jungle theme, pretty much took over the whole of Amanpuri.



**HIGH SUMMER:** (left) Among others at the Central Summer Fashion Show 2005, held recently at the shopping center, are Alexandre Glauser (in blue shirt), GM of Central Karon Village Phuket & Waterfront Suites, and, to his left, Naratipe Ruttapradid, the mall's GM.



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## BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

At the Detroit show in January, before snow blocked off large parts of North America, a number of top manufacturers unveiled some interesting concept vehicles. Among these was one from Ford's Premier Automotive Group (PAG) Jaguar division: the Advanced Lightweight Coupé.

Designed by Ian Callum, the man responsible for the Aston Martin DB7, as well as Jaguar's own aluminum-bodied XJ8, the new coupé is also produced in this lightweight metal.

In recent years, Jaguar has been hemorrhaging cash. Indeed, of the four PAG companies – the others are Aston Martin, Land Rover and Volvo – only Volvo is contributing to Ford's coffers.

Jaguar has sold its Formula 1 team to Red Bull and will close its famous Brown's Lane factory in Coventry, all in an effort to bring the company back into profit. The Detroit concept car may be the answer.

Jaguar Chairman and CEO Joe Greenwell said: "The Advanced Lightweight Coupé represents the very essence of Jaguar, its heart and soul. If you want to know what lies ahead for us, what direction we will take – this is Jaguar's answer."

The car rides on 21-inch alloy wheels, fitted with ultra-low profile Pirelli tires, giving it the typically aggressive pouncing profile of all Jags while, toward the rear, the cabin flows back into a clean tail with twin exhausts.

Powered by Jaguar's normally-aspirated V8 motor, the ALC will get to 100kmh from rest in a little over five seconds and – if not electronically governed – has a top speed in excess of 290kmh.



"The Advanced Lightweight Coupé represents the very essence of Jaguar, its heart and soul," said Joe Greenwell, Chairman and CEO of Jaguar.

Should the ALC move from concept to reality, then its top speed will probably be limited to 250 km/h. Many, but not all, European manufacturers are party to a gentleman's agreement restricting the speed of their supercars to the golden 250.

"The ALC is the sort of Jaguar we want to build," said Mr Greenwell. "But that means we must do much more than just come up with a beautiful design.

We must have the tools in place to turn that creative spark into something more tangible."

The engineering excellence of Jaguar is reflected in the ALC's specifications. An aluminum chassis similar to the XJ saloon is used, which is 40% lighter yet 60% stiffer than a comparable steel body. Lighter weight gives more responsive handling and improved steering feel, as well as better torque reaction.

The interior is classic Jaguar: understated and refined. There is plenty of headroom and an adjustable pedal box, so even tall drivers will feel at home.

"We all agreed that our interiors should be clean, simple and straightforward," said designer Ian Callum. "There's an

honesty about the car's interior that I really like."

Laid out in the classic 2+2

sports-car format, there are front sports and rear bucket seats and tan leather upholstery throughout.

Matt-finished aluminum inserts are spread through the car to accentuate the contemporary feel of the cabin, and in the center of the dash there is a touch-screen Alpine console. The instrument binnacle has been designed to replicate the shape of the steering wheel, while behind the wheel there are paddle-shift levers for the six-speed automatic transmission.

The levers are attached to the steering wheel itself – rather than the steering column – to ensure they are always where a driver expects to find them.

So will the ALC make it into production and, more important, does it herald a strong future for Jaguar?

Jaguar boss Joe Greenwell: "This car is as clear a statement on the strength and confidence of the company as we could possibly make. Its design is assertive and pure and is a perfect symbol of our 21st century cars. Beneath that beautiful body lies the heart and soul of a true Jaguar sports car."

You may draw your own conclusions, but I believe Jaguar could well begin to contribute to PAG's fortunes before very much longer.

Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at: [jhc@natvigator.com](mailto:jhc@natvigator.com)



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# Faith, hope and charity

On the second floor of Central Festival Phuket is a shop that is well worth a visit. So worthwhile is it that a life or – just perhaps – the quality of a life could depend on it.

It is the Life Home Project (LHP) shop, which sells a range of clothes and accessories. Proceeds from sales are plowed back into the LHP's sterling work for mothers and children who are HIV-positive.

Of special interest is a range of necklaces from Kenya. The manager of the shop, Wasana Jittanom, explained that staff from the LHP met their opposite numbers from the African country at a World AIDS Day function in Bangkok last year.

"We exchanged products," said K. Wasana. "Items made by the LHP are sold in Kenya, and vice-versa." The necklaces, she says, are proving very popular.

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FROM KENYA WITH LOVE. Necklaces shown are available from the Life Home Project shop on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Central Festival Phuket. Stone necklaces cost from 180 to 990 baht. Metal necklaces range in price from 240 to 300 baht.





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Critics often describe a poor performance by an actor as “wooden”, but while every performance by Surin Yangkheiosod is “wooden” this is a good thing rather than bad.

K. Surin, 37, is the artistic Director of Natayasala Thai Puppet Theater (formerly the Joe Louis Theatre), which is soon to open a theater in Phuket where, every night, puppeteers will coax emotions from fear to joy from wooden marionettes.

The secret to achieving this, as discovered by K. Surin's father, Sakorn – who, in 1996, was honoured by HM Bhumibol Adulyadej as a National Artist in performing arts for his contribution to preserving traditional Thai puppetry – lies in the total co-operation of the three – yes, three – people who manipulate each marionette.

“My father suggested that the puppeteers should move as their puppet moves, rather than just stand still, with only their hands moving as they control the puppets,” said K. Surin.

“We tried it and found that the puppets moved much more smoothly than before.

“But for three people to manipulate a puppet harmoniously, they must, as the saying goes, eat rice from the same

# Knowing how to pull all

When he was 17, **Surin Yangkheiosod** was into motorbike racing and playing drums in a friend's band, and even fighting other teenagers. But by the time he reached 20, he loved puppetry so much that he woke up at 5 am every day, just to practice it in front of a mirror.

Today K. Surin is the Artistic Director of Natayasala Thai Puppet Theater – better known by its former name, the Joe Louis Theatre – which will soon open a theater in Phuket.

The seventh of nine children, and the third generation in his family to master the ancient art, K. Surin here explains to **Gategeo Phetsawang** how came to love puppetry.

cooking pot. That means there is no difference between them and everyone is equal, wherever they come from. It's a good basis for puppetry.”

He added, smiling, “If ever there is a quarrel between the performers, I arrange for them to perform together. Then they have no choice but to resolve the argument, because they can't work together if they are angry.”

Also important in puppetry is matching the character of a puppet to the character of a puppeteer.

K. Surin believes that some puppeteers are naturally suited to manipulating certain characters. Some may be best at “playing” the role of Hanuman, the leader of the monkey army in the *Ramakien*, while others are better at playing, say, soldiers in an army.

Others in K. Surin's family – he is the seventh of nine children – have their own interest in *Khone*, or Thai classical masked play. His oldest sister specializes in costumes and accessories; one brother is expert in Thai traditional music, and another in singing Thai traditional songs.

He said, “My brothers and sisters all learned Thai classical

masked play from our father; I started to learn it when I was seven years old.

“I had seen my dad performing *Khone* and Thai musical folk drama. I started acting at a very early age, when my father had me perform as a joker in a play, so I feel familiar with it.”

That said, at one stage, it looked like K. Surin would not follow in the family tradition.

He explained, “When I was around 17 years old, I wasn't very interested in *Khone*. I didn't go home, but stayed out with my friends. I was into motorbike racing and playing drums in my friend's band, and even fighting other teenagers. My parents couldn't cope with me.

“But after three years, I decided I couldn't live my life like that anymore, and when a French puppeteer, a friend of my brother, asked me to join his show in France, I went. I spent three months there, demonstrating puppetry in schools.

“I learned about Burmese and Indian puppets. I loved puppetry so much I would wake up at 5 am every day, just to practice it in front of a mirror. That's why it took me about one month



‘I loved puppetry so much I would wake up at 5 am every day, just to practice it in front of a mirror’ – Surin Yangkheiosod, the Artistic Director of Natayasala Thai Puppet Theater (formerly the Joe Louis Theatre).

to learn what takes most other people a year.”

He continued, “When I returned home, the first thing that struck me was that my father was working, while my brothers were busy with their own businesses.

“I asked myself why my father still had to work when he was 60 years old. Nobody in my family thought I was responsible enough to look after the family.

“I told them that I wanted

to work for my father's puppet troupe, and I started to design the shows. Then we were booked to play in Japan, and it was during this time that my family started to believe in me, and forgot what I had been like in the past.

“I swore to myself that I would buy my dad a new house, and, after spending three months in a monastery, I collected some money from the show and went to Saraburi to work on molding

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# the right strings



K. Surin believes that some puppeteers are naturally suited to manipulating certain characters, so it is important to match the character of a puppet to the character of a puppeteer.

the 15-meter-high Buddha image there."

By the time he was 24, K. Surin had earned enough to buy that new house for his father and new instruments for the troupe's musicians.

Now, his career is devoted to preserving and developing Thai puppetry, with his family. He said, "Everyone in the family helps to preserve the theater. I just want to work for the theater. Right now, I teach puppetry, make puppets, am a puppeteer, a driver. In fact, I'll do anything."

The theater has 40 puppets worth at least 40,000 baht apiece, said K. Surin, adding that he spent two years making two special puppets gilded with gold and silver for HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

According to K. Surin, small Thai puppets, *Hun Lakorn Lek*, were invented by Kru Klay

in 1901. As they were 80% mechanical, they could move better than existing puppets. K. Surin's grandparents were puppeteers in Kru Klay's troupe.

Their son, K. Surin's father, Sakorn, became a puppeteer. After a bout of illness, a monk advised K. Sakorn to adopt the nickname Liew - "lucky Chinese tree".

The name became corrupted to Louis, and after legendary boxer Joe Louis visited Thailand, the troupe became known as the Joe Louis Theatre.

Disaster struck in 1999, when a fire destroyed all but two of the company's 50 puppets, along with musical instruments and almost all the family's possessions.

But the family was determined to rebuild and continue to preserve Thailand's puppeting heritage.

Said K. Surin, "I dedicate all the new puppets we create to the Thai people. They belong to everyone; we're just people who preserve them and publicize this aspect of Thai culture for Thais and foreigners alike."

Anyone who wants to learn Thai puppetry, said K. Surin, should know basic Thai classical masked play, traditional dance and/or drama, and have a real desire to learn and love the art.

"We are open for everyone who wants to learn puppetry," he said. "There are now 30 people in our troupe and we're looking for 40 people in Bangkok and 60 people to train so they can work in our theater in Phuket."

He added, "The future of Thai puppetry, which is a national treasure, depends on Thai people. If Thais don't preserve it for future generations, who will?"

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## In The Stars

by Isla Star

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): The heat is on for you if you have an important deadline to meet this week. If your birthday falls during the coming days, postponing celebrations looks likely. Not everyone will be on your side, but you should put your sandal down when it comes to demanding a quiet work space. Cancer has an important question to ask on Tuesday; be cagey when answering.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): Others will try their hardest to have the last word at the beginning of the week. In business discussions, the stars are not on your side and you are advised to wait until the end of the month before arranging meetings; progress will be smoother then. Romance is quietly brewing in the background – Aries is thinking about you. Wear jade to encourage spiritual support.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): This week will not be the most exciting one of the year. If you are starting to tire of the temperature, be prepared to listen to your body and slow down your lifestyle. The best way to spend the coming days is by doing as little as possible in a cool place. Welcome news is on its way.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): Dreaming and scheming are two of your favorite pastimes, and you are about to see one of your plans bear fruit. This week, you will be one of the busiest bees around. The only problem is that others won't be ready to pull their weight; offer a bonus to encourage them. The number 7 should be lucky on Saturday.

**LEO** (July 24-August 22): You are probably at sixes and sevens over a domestic matter. Agree-

ments with your partner will be best reached toward the end of next week, so let matters simmer until then. A work-related brainstorming session will yield profitable results this weekend. You will be considering ways of fine-tuning your career until the end of this month.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): You will be in touch with your creative side this week; exploring new hobby possibilities is likely to give your income a boost later this year. Money matters have been getting you down lately, but the end of the rainbow is closer than you think. Meanwhile, try to refrain from making new investments. Do not ignore a lack of warmth in your relationship.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): Life is a hotbed of activity for you from now until the end of the month. Your altruistic deeds of late are quietly making merit. On Monday, your fear of offending people will need to be overcome. Someone appears determined to push you into a corner; a few choice words should set the matter straight. Wishing upon a star midweek may prove worthwhile.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): The hidden depths of your personality are making someone curious. Expect to find romance as soon. A disciplined approach toward money is recommended until the end of April. Next month will see finances improving – a career opportunity is waiting in the wings. Another Scorpio has pearls of wisdom to offer about a conflict in a personal relationship.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 21): The seeds of an

innovative idea require careful nurturing. Sagittarians who are not sure which way this scheme should move should wait before seeking advice. A windfall on Saturday allows you to consider escaping from Phuket – renewed energy will definitely result. Romance is best started toward the end of the week, when your partner will be most receptive.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Your popularity receives a boost this weekend, but this could be a result of someone discovering that you have something they need. Don't believe everything you hear, and do some research before committing to any agreement. If you have been harboring romantic feelings toward Pisces, then you will be happy to discover that the coast is finally clear of competition. Wear shades of stone to mellow your mood.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): Put your imagination to good use and find ways to brighten up work. There's a cloud hovering over this area of your life, but it can be dispersed with a little effort. Business progress is being affected by this negative climate. If you are in a managerial position, try giving your staff a treat. The answer to a personal dilemma will be revealed by putting distance between you and the problem.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): Slow changes will bring the most benefits. If you give in to the temptation, you will regret it later. As the week progresses, love takes a turn for the better, though this is not an auspicious time to cement a new relationship. A relative abroad is considering coming to visit – before throwing open the door, establish just how long the stay will last.

# Top jobs for Patong tigers

For two weeks, we had a glimpse of why Patong Beach became so popular. To be honest, it perplexed me for years. Don't get me wrong, I love the place, but it had become a painted lady, layers of make-up masking her creeping decrepitude.

But for two weeks in January, we saw the young woman again and boy, she was a stunner.

So the Governor has felt the need to appoint "The Five Tigers" to ensure that Patong redevelops in line with the government's excellent strategy for the old place. This is necessary.

It was surprising to some that Patong's Mayor, Pian Keesin, was included in the streak of tigers, but this was perhaps due in part to the Governor's unprecedented public urging of K. Pian to get moving with the plan.

Through all of this, we have learned that our current Governor is a smart cookie. He has emerged from December's disaster with a reputation as a fair, straight and capable leader – with the interests of Phuket in his heart – totally enhanced.

It is a mark of the man's savvy that K. Pian has been included in this plan. Patong has been a stinking cesspit when it comes to administration, both to its end users and to the good people who are trying to improve it.

A thousand petty interests – all of which have been bought or gleaned by patronage or direct cash over decades – infect the blood of the Patong administration like malaria.



By Konrad Stalin

The mosquitoes have feasted for more than a generation, sucking the blood out of the once-beautiful resort and leaving behind their toxins.

Countless good men have tried to improve its lot but have failed – or become infected themselves.

The notable exception is Phuket City Police Chief, Superintendent Pol Col Paween Pongsiri. However, he was moved to the city after all too brief a tenure in the Patong.

It takes someone with a deep local knowledge over the generation or so that the town has become a mess to sort it out, and K. Pian fits the bill.

The Governor has given K. Pian the opportunity to become a legend, a hero, "the Savior of Patong", and I hope that he accepts the challenge. We are all rooting for you, and we believe that the tigers have the right mix of talent and power to get it right. Please don't let us down.

But what do we feel Patong needs? These are not a difficult questions to answer. In fact, the answers are all too glaringly obvious.

But before I deliver my wishlist, email your ideas of what Patong needs to [konradstalin@hotmail.com](mailto:konradstalin@hotmail.com) and I'll include them in the next Toon Town.

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KIDS

THE FUN PAGE



FOR ALL

THE FAMILY

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?



Brain Buster!!

Teacher Mr White found this coded note taped to his car windshield: “Yg ctg jcxkpi c uwtrtkug rectva hqt Ou. Dtqyp.” At first, he couldn’t figure it out. Then someone whispered to him, “M stands for K.” Can you crack the code?

A. “We are having a surprise party for Ms. Brown.” (M stands for K tells you that the alphabet has been shifted by two letters.)


ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK’S MONSTER QUIZ

1. The Quakers; 2. John Glenn; 3. Alaska, from Russia; 4. Professional wrestler; 5. He reputedly spent 30 years atop a pillar; 6. Brittany; 7. British PM Harold Wilson; 8. Orthorexia; 9. Wear. It is a hair clip; 10. The Killers; 11. Brandon Flowers; 12. A reincarnated lama; 13. Charles Proteus Steinmetz; 14. One of Superman’s enemies; 15. Hunger; 16. Mexican; 17. Taxonomy; 18. The Valley; 19. Queueing; 20. Myanmar.

Solution to last week’s crossword

RESIDENCE  
ENGLISHMAN  
ANDES KHAKI  
VIRGIN  
ESCAPED LONDON  
SOCIETIES  
DIM DICKENS  
RPAO  
OPERA YACHT  
PRECEDENT  
DEFENDANT

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. What was the name of the Egyptian god with the head of a jackal?

2. What sound does an explosion make in space?

3. Dick and Burt Rutan are involved in which sphere of technology?

4. What was their most recent success?

5. Which R&B singer made her feature movie debut in the 2005 movie *Coach Carter*?

6. In which city would one find the Jin Mao Tower?

7. Where was the last Super Bowl played?

8. In the *anime* series *Dragon Ball Z*, on which planet does the *Frieza Saga* take place?

9. What and where is the tallest free-standing, man-made structure?

10. How tall is it?

11. The Anio river in Italy was previously known by what name?

12. Which chemical element has the atomic number 79?

13. In which country is the town of Buftea?

14. Dr Hidetsugu Yagi

15. What is a Witches’ Butter or *het hoo noo*?

16. Which World War II aircraft was known as “the Wooden Wonder”?

17. Sébastien Mazure plays for which French soccer team?

18. What is the name of the team’s stadium?

19. Who, on April 16, 1963, was the first woman in space?

20. What is the regional capital of Sardinia?

Answers next week

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Said what the future held.

6. Movie star’s award.

7. Very angry.

10. Ms Grier, actress.

11. Items in a ledger, maybe.

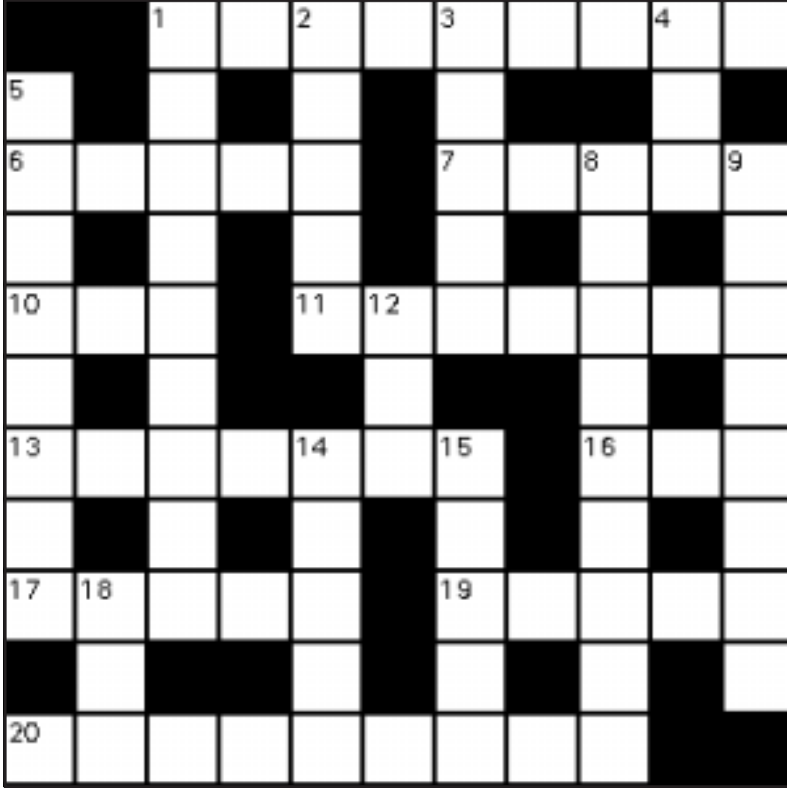
13. Not at all famous.

16. Cry of discovery, perhaps.

17. Ms Day, actress and singer.

19. Martini garnish.

20. Bad time, economically speaking.



Down

14. Sahara watering hole.

15. Ms Campbell, super-model.

18. Poem of praise.

1. Aid for a dicky ticker.

2. Weirdly disturbing.

3. Stupid person.

4. Consume.


5. Chemical mixture.

8. Cartoon movie.

9. Sold into bondage.

12. Just manufactured.

Solution next week



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## Taking on the transport mafia

The *Gazette* has long argued for government action to break up the illegal transport monopolies that have done so much to harm the island's tourism industry.

Complaints about the tuk-tuk "mafia", particularly in Patong, have long been the leading gripe among tourists – but they aren't the only ones who have suffered.

The lack of efficient, reasonably-priced public transport – of the kind available in just about every other province of Thailand – has forced many island residents to choose between shouldering the expense of buying a car or risking life and limb on a motorcycle.

Now, with the introduction of 100 new metered taxis and an Airport Bus service scheduled to begin in three months' see News], there appears to be some light at the end of the tunnel.

The announcement couldn't have been better timed. Investment bank Goldman Sachs warned recently that the global oil trade may be entering a demand-driven "superspike" period which could see crude oil prices more than double, to US\$105 barrel.

This possibility, coupled with increasing traffic congestion on our roads, makes the need for a greater range of public transport options more glaringly obvious than ever.

The Airport Bus service to Phuket City is a good start; it should be followed swiftly by a similar service to Patong and Kata-Karon and a free shuttle service around Patong to help ease traffic congestion now that the provincial government is considering regular closure of Soi Bangla to traffic at nights.

The Governor of Phuket has said he is willing to take on "influential figures" to protect the rights of metered taxis to operate as they should be allowed to under the law.

The current downturn in tourism will have cut deep into their expected profits for the first time in years; they will be unlikely to accept any incursion into their domain, and will probably react with their normal tactics: intimidation, violence and vandalism.

Currently, metered taxis in Patong are only "allowed" to pick up fares in front of the Tourist Police office. For the new metered taxis to operate safely will require a very firm commitment on the part of the Kathu Police who, under the command of Superintendent Pol Col Teeraphol Thipjaroen, already have one post-tsunami success under their belt: the successful expulsion of rental bike and jeep operators from their occupation of the beach road.

The Governor and the police deserve full public support for any effort they make to break the stranglehold thuggish elements hold over the island's public transport sector.

– The Editor

**The Phuket Gazette**

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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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.

### Time for volunteers to get recognition

Isn't it about time that the Thai government officially recognized the efforts made by volunteers who have saved lives and helped in the tsunami relief efforts, by offering a medal for their humanitarian work?

There will no doubt be a few awards going to the desk-bound bureaucrats, so it is only right and proper that those working selflessly on the front line should at least have some gesture of gratitude made towards them.

Gridley Bryant  
Surin

### Why do I need a driving license?

My wife and I spent three weeks on vacation in Patong between February 21 and March 15. One of our reasons for visiting Patong was to help the people suffering from the after-effects of the tsunami.

I have read the coverage in the *Gazette*, in the newspaper and online, but there are still some things I cannot understand:

Everyone is talking about how business and tourism should be encouraged, but this message does not seem to have reached the police in Patong.

Since 1993, I have hired a motorbike on my holidays, just one of the small bikes of the type everyone has, but I had never been asked for my driving license.

But since the tsunami, apparently, the motorbike rental businesses in Patong have been having a really rough time, with the police stopping tourists and

locals, issuing big fines and doing things such as locking up the bikes.

Is this really necessary? Friends of mine were in Hua Hin at the same time as we were in Patong, but they had no trouble with the police regarding driving licenses.

Is it true what Thai people tell me, that policemen get 60% of the fines they collect? If it is, then everything makes sense!

Tourists may choose other places for their next holiday.

As tourists, we would also like to suggest that the authorities stop the traffic menace on Soi Bangla.

In the evenings, one can hardly walk along the sidewalks because they are much too narrow.

Why not ban all traffic from this road at night? Most tourists wouldn't mind walking an extra few meters to get a tuk-tuk.

Apart from these points, we enjoyed our holiday. People are doing a great job rebuilding this lovely place.

Josef Hofmann  
Germany

### The disabled need better access to sea

I live in Kata and I have noticed an increasing number of Thais and tourists traveling around the village on wheelchairs.

These people are often seen looking longingly at the sea, but they have no way of getting to the warm, therapeutic waters because there is no way a wheelchair could cross the soft sand of the beach. This is the case not only at Kata, but also at other beaches.

Unfortunately, my husband

will soon be joining this group as he has a progressive congenital muscular dystrophy that affects the strength in his legs, and we have wondered how he could manage to keep on swimming.

We thought he could drive a 4WD vehicle down the slipway and onto the beach, but we have been told that this is illegal. Then we thought he might drive onto the beach on a Quad Bike (a four wheel all-terrain motorcycle) but have been told that it is illegal to drive these on a public road.

Of course, the best solution would be to have a special path to the high-tide level, for use only by the aged and disabled.

We wonder what the legal situation is as regards having a vehicle on the beach to help a disabled person gain access to the sea? We also wonder what steps the Tourism Authority of Thailand is taking to encourage physically impaired and elderly people to visit Phuket and enjoy the sea and the sun like anyone else.

Montanette  
Kata

### Dead Brit's driver was not at fault

In your online article (*Gazette* Online, March 30) about the British police officer killed when a cross-country bus hit the rear of the minibus he was traveling in, a Thai police officer is quoted as saying, "I believe both drivers were negligent."

It is a basic rule of law that, in any such crash, the driver of the vehicle behind is at fault. The driver of the minibus – another British police officer – therefore could not have been at fault.

Jim Beck  
Phuket

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published online as *Issues & Answers*.



# Under African skies

**L**ike Africa itself, this memoir of a girl growing up on farms in Rhodesia, Malawi and Zambia is beautiful, savage and hilarious. Alexandra Fuller's *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight* (Random House, New York, 2001, 301pp) is the story of the white African Fuller family comprising Mum (Agatha), Dad (Tim), and daughters Vanessa (Van) and Alexandra (Bobo).

The title might seem a bit odd. It's from a humorous poem by British MP and author AP Herbert titled, *Don't let's go to the dogs tonight, for mother will be there.*

The phrase has, however, resonance with this book both literally – packs of dogs sleep on the beds and living room furniture of the family's rustic homes – and figuratively; in the aftermath of the bitter civil war in Zimbabwe, when an Australian hitchhiker asks Tim Fuller where he's heading in his Land Rover, he replies, "To the dogs."

On many late nights in clubs around the three countries, Mum and Dad happily go to the dogs too, Mum singing *Ole! I'm a bandit!* and falling off the bar while

Van and Bobo wait in the car consoling themselves with Cokes and potato chips.

But despite the heavy drinking and Mum's occasional manic-depressive spells, they are a tight family. The parents are rugged white-Kenyan settlers who moved to Rhodesia in 1966 shortly after then-Prime Minister Ian Smith had declared unilateral independence from Britain on November 11, 1965.

Near the Mozambique border – in the most dangerous part of Rhodesia where insurgents, or "terrs", were constantly moving through the bush to lay landmines and ambush white convoys – the Fullers settled down to grow tobacco and raise cattle on a hardscrabble farm in the remote Burma Valley. Bobo is three, Van six. The house has no electricity and the climate is beastly.

"It's eyeball burning hot. I lie on my belly and let my legs wag lazily back and forth, my head in the crook of my arms where my forehead is pressing a sweaty band into the skin. Mum is reading to herself. It is so hot that the flamboyant tree outside cracks to itself, as it is already anticipating how it will feel to be on fire.

The dogs are splayed on the floor wherever they can find bare cement, panting and creating wet pools with their dripping tongues. Our throats are papered with the heat."

Dad, like every other white farmer, joins the Rhodesian Army for regular 10-day patrols in the bush, hunting down terrs.

With an Uzi slung over her shoulder, Mum runs the farm, plants gardens, patrols the estate on horseback. The two girls grow up to be expert horsewomen and rifle shots, unafraid of snakes, scorpions, jackals and hyenas, while giving wide berth to leopards and baboons. Their only company is each other.

There are many running jokes in this highly eccentric family – Mum's drunkenness, Dad's temper – but the funniest is Bobo's clinging dependence on Van, the goddess three years her senior who brushes her off with regal disdain. To be a Fuller is to be self-reliant.

Along with the sly humor is an unforced lyricism. Here is the family driving a South African visitor to a lake:

"We pass, without comment or surprise, small rain-ready herds of impala.

The ewes are swollen with impending babies, but the babies will come only with the first rain. Dad stops to let a pair of warthogs charge fatly in front of us, round-bottomed and heads held high. A kudu bull stares us down – the perfect white 'V' on his nose a hunter's target. He is sniffing the air and then, with a magnificent leap, his horns laid across his back like medieval weapons, he is gone, plunging grayly into the crosshatched bush."

The book is also a family album with 60 photos that track the progress of Bobo and Van from schoolgirls in knee socks to stunningly beautiful brides. In the end, when Mum and Dad are running a prosperous farm in independent Zambia, there's also a subtle change in attitude.

Once frankly racist, they invite many Zambian neighbors to the weddings of their daughters, both presided over by Bishop Clement H. Shaba.

This is the best memoir of Africa I've ever read, better than those famous colonial authors Isak Dinesen and Beryl Markham. It's closer to the bone.



## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



# Rights – and wrongs – of software

**Q** I uninstalled a legal copy of Office XP from a computer I no longer use. At the time of the original installation I "activated" it online with Microsoft, and as far as I know there is no way to "de-activate" it online.

Now I want to install this legitimate copy of Office on another computer. Would I be breaking any rules or laws by doing so? Will Microsoft "know" that it has been installed on a second computer? If so, how?

PPI, Chalong.

**A** I am not a lawyer (and I hope never to be one), so this isn't legal advice, but I think what you want to do conforms to Microsoft's expectations, particularly given the rampant copying in Thailand.

The 'Softies know that you

activated that particular copy of Office XP with that specific computer, and there is no such thing as "de-activating". Fortunately, Office XP does not require activation – although Office 2003 does – and because of that you should feel quite comfortable installing Office XP on a new machine, and not activating it.

However, keep the disks handy in case the Microsoft gendarmes ever come knocking on your door.

**Q** On my Fujitsu laptop I run Windows XP that came with the machine, all legal and with a sticker on the bottom of the laptop. I also have Office XP installed on this laptop, but there is no sticker or any documentation to support that it is genuine.

When I launch Microsoft

Word, a serial number appears along with the message "registered to Jeroen", and so on. How can I be sure this software is legal and not the result of the computer vendor doing me a "favor"? I tried asking the vendor but have received no reply.

LTD, Rawai.

**A** Again, I'm not a lawyer, but if you bought a computer with Office XP pre-installed and the vendor has not responded to your request for confirmation that you have a valid copy, I think you have just two options.

First, you can report the vendor to Microsoft by sending an email to piracy@microsoft.com or by calling Microsoft in Bangkok (see [www.microsoft.com/piracy/Reporting\\_out.msp](http://www.microsoft.com/piracy/Reporting_out.msp)).

Second, you can let things slide. Keep copies and notes about the inquiries you've made to the vendor, and copies of any

receipts you may have for software. That way, if the gendarmes ever knock on your door, you can readily pass the buck.

**Q** I have spent hours trying to find guidance on "read only file" in one of your Dummies books. I burned a file to CD and then wanted to revise it, but couldn't. How did I make it a "read only" file, and how can I delete or modify or revise it?

RT, Phuket City.

**A** When you burn a file to CD, Windows automatically marks it as read only, which means you can read files on the CD, but can't change them unless you re-write the entire CD.

When you copy the file from the CD onto a hard drive, it's still marked read only, because the original file – the one on the CD – was marked read only. Doesn't make sense, but that's how it works.

If you've copied the file from the CD to a hard drive, and you want to change the file, first find the file using, say, Start | My Documents or whatever you like. Right-click on the file and choose Properties. Down at the bottom you'll see a box under "Attributes" that says "Read only". Uncheck that box, click OK, and you'll be able to edit to your heart's content.

– Woody Leonhard  
[woody@khunwoody.com](mailto:woody@khunwoody.com)

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# The legacy of the deep

**G**ili Black, the Operations Manager of the Koh Tao Dive Operators Club (KT-DOC), is vibrant with energy. The only paid employee of KT-DOC, 27-year-old Gili is an exotic mix of ancestry and influence.

Raised in the Republic of South Africa by Jewish parents, Gili migrated to Israel with her family when she was 11, then lived in England for five years before moving to Thailand two years ago.

"The KT-DOC was organized in 2003 by the majority of the owners and managers of dive businesses who wanted to stop the wheeling and dealing going on around the island," she explained.

"One of the main influences

in the formation of the KT-DOC was a Japanese lady by the name of Sharlyn Sawasa, a diving instructor who lived on the island for 12 years.

"Unfortunately, she recently passed away, but it is her vision that guides the organization today. She pushed hard for the preservation of the environment and the sustainable development of Koh Tao from the first day she stepped on the island.

"She's one of the reasons why I'm doing this job. Somebody has to continue the work that she started. I think Sharlyn realized early on how necessary and important it was to preserve Koh Tao. When she saw that the diving industry was growing as more people came, she realized that the

## Beneath the SURFACE

By Chris Cruz



**FANCY A SMOKE?** When not sinking tuk-tuks and vintage aircraft, or organizing the breaking of records, such as off Koh Tao recently (below), Gili Black (above) likes to take stock of her situation.

impact on the environment could be adverse."

The first project of the KT-DOC was the Koh Tao Underwater World Day, on February 7 last year.

The club's President, Vijite Srisung, explained that the plan is to make it an annual event to mark the opening of the official diving season on Koh Tao. On February 12 this year KT-DOC put Koh Tao on the diving map by breaking the world record for the largest number of divers diving simultaneously.

Gili explained, "We decided to come up with a gimmick that would attract tourists not only to come to Thailand, but also to have some activities that they could actually take part in, instead of just standing on the side observing.

"I am from Durban in South Africa, and I knew about the previous record set there three years ago so we decided that we were going to break it. Officially, we had 722 people in the water, though we actually had 750 divers because not everybody signed registration forms."

The record-breaking dive attracted some criticism from environmental organizations but, in its defense, Gili explained, "First of all, we invited the World Wildlife Federation to monitor the event. We had actually invited them before we came up with the record-breaking idea.

"Second, Guinness had strict environmental guidelines that we had to comply with, so the attempt was planned and coordinated so that the dive was performed, not on a coral reef but on a sandy bottom eight to 10 meters deep."

The safety of the divers was another major concern. "We had oxygen boats, evacuation boats, spotters and marker buoys. So both the safety and the environmental issues were at the top of the priority list in planning an event of this magnitude."

Gili believes the event was a success. "I think most of the



participants enjoyed themselves, after all, it is not everyone who can claim, 'Hey, I am a record breaker'," she said.

But the record-breaking dive was not the only activity. "We had a beauty pageant to select Miss Koh Tao and Mr Koh Tao, which turned out to be hilarious.

"Surat Thani Governor Juthamas Siriwan came to the event, which started with monks blessing the island.

"Everyone enjoyed the festivities. There was something for everybody," Gili said.

In addition to the fun stuff, the KT-DOC has some more serious projects lined up for this year, including:

- The sinking of an old landing craft and a B-29 bomber to provide underwater attractions;
- Revamping all moorings and access areas on dive sites;
- Installing caged propellers on all dive boats operating from Koh Tao;
- Setting up a turtle breeding and release program;
- Educating every dive shop employee and the community to help preserve the beauty

of underwater sites in the area;

- Creation of an artificial reef ;

- Teaching schoolchildren to swim, snorkel and dive, and educating them about marine life;

- Launching a battery disposal and collection project;

- Conducting marine research, including species counts, research on water changes, building fishing grounds to help the fisherman population while saving the reefs.

- Launching a giant clam release project;

- Breaking another record by staging the longest and biggest reef check, in coordination with CPAD, a Thai-American environmental group that will set up an office on Koh Tao.

"Oh, we have already sunk the first tuk-tuk here in Koh Tao as part of the festival we have just concluded," Gili added.

"It's a 'pay for' training dive site, and the money collected will go toward teaching children to dive. If you teach children how to dive, you also teach them to appreciate and preserve the environment.

"This is the legacy of Sharlyn Sawasa. Her vision is being



(bold listings are Thai-flagged boats)

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36 Ft 1994	Island Gypsy Europa Perkins, 2 x 225 Hp	US\$	169,000
29 Ft NEW	Prowler Motor Cat Honda 4 stroke, 2 x 50 Hp	THB	POA
21 Ft 1997	Searay Laguna 21 Mariner 200 Hp (50 hrs)	THB	1,200,000
Sail			
63 Ft 1993	Wooden Penisi Ketch Isuzu, 115 Hp	Reduced to Euro	100,000
60 Ft 1982	Penisi Ketch Hino 175 Hp	US\$	51,500
47 Ft 1989	Vagabond 47 VolvoTMD 31A	US\$	175,000
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# Architecture expo draws crowds

PHUKET CITY: The recent Architect Taksin '05 exhibition, from April 1 to 3, attracted good crowds to check out the products and services on offer at the booths of some 40 companies that set up exhibitions in the Royal Phuket City Hotel.

The organizers, the Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage (ASA) and TTF International Co, said that they were already discussing holding another such exhibition next year.

Products displayed ranged from sanitaryware to wooden furniture, and from construction material to housing developments.

The President of the ASA, Manu Trakulwattanakij, said, "We were planning, before the tsunami, to hold an exhibition in Phuket, and had already contacted many potential exhibitors."

"But then the tsunami came and we put our plans on hold. However, we soon realized that, with many buildings damaged by the waves, it would be good to help revive and renovate the region, so we resurrected the show."

He added, "We have had good feedback from the visitors."

Many of them are in the construction business or are engineers, though there are also members of the general public who are interested in decorative and construction materials."

One visitor, Prasit Pong-Udom, said, "I am interested in sanitary fittings, ceramic tiles and so on. My favorite booth is the Kohler (Thailand) one – the products are very attractively designed."

"Other booths I like are Green Furniture and Green Living Home Co. If they hold another exhibition like this, I'll go to it."

Chanida Sae-Tan from Phang Nga said, "It's my first time at an exhibition like this. The construction booths are not so interesting, but I like the Green Furniture and Green Living Home booths because their products are attractive. They are mostly made of wood, emphasizing Thai style."

Home and construction shows appear to be the thing right now. Almost immediately after the Architect Taksin show finished, the Andaman Rebuild Expo was held from April 7-10, and also attracted big crowds.



The wares of some 40 companies attracted the interest of not only professionals in the trade but also members of the general public.





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**T**his five-bedroom home, which sits in 1,177 square meters of landscaped gardens, boasts a well-thought-out design and an impressive range of accessories.

Not least among these is the roof-mounted solar hot-water system and a lightning conductor. The garden features an outdoor whirlpool bath.

Much use is made of granite flooring and the airy kitchen, which leads into a large lounge-diner, is well equipped with a range of Pratika units and Ariston appliances including a washing machine, dryer, dishwasher, a dual oven and stove.

The ground floor also has a "Thai" kitchen, one bedroom with en-suite facilities, an office-cum-bedroom and two store-rooms.

The *maka*-wood staircase leads to the four main bedrooms – all of which are en suite – with the same wood used for flooring. The 500sqm house also has an attic, which has scope for use as a hobby room.

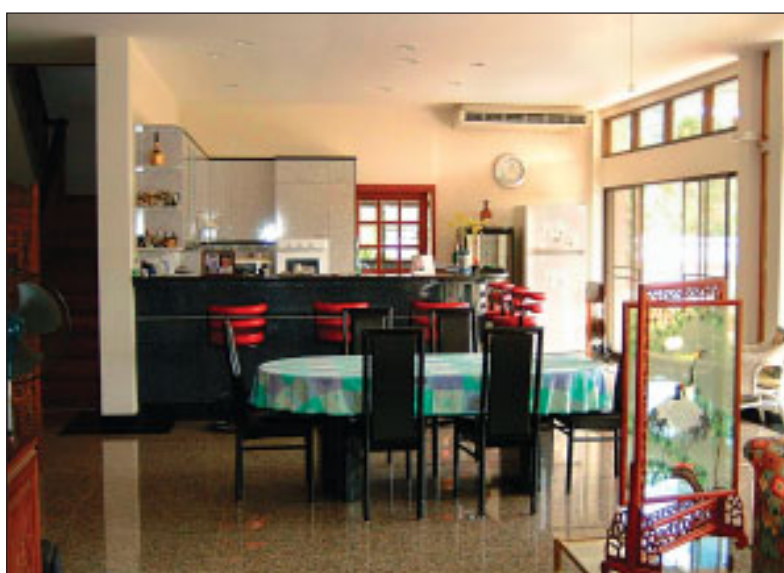
Facilities include a well, two standard filtration systems and a reverse-osmosis system to produce potable water. Fans, air-conditioners, down lights and halogen track lights are used throughout.

The asking price is 18 million baht, and the land title is Chanote.



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Above, the rear of the house with its spacious garden. Right, the airy kitchen and dining area. The home also has a Thai kitchen.



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## Construction Update

## Airport

**T**he first phase of a two-part extension to Phuket International Airport – a new two-story international terminal – is due to be completed in May, five months later than originally planned.

Airport Director Maj Pornchai Eua-aree told the *Gazette* the project had been delayed because local suppliers had refused to supply the contractor with building materials on credit, and this had caused "a lack of liquidity".

However, said Maj Pornchai, work had continued and the project is now more than two-thirds complete.

He explained, "Construction started in the middle of last year, and we expected it to be finished by the end of the year."

"However, the contractor did not have any contacts in Phuket, and suppliers demanded that he pay cash, and this caused a lack of liquidity."

"But now, construction is 70% complete, and we expect this phase to be finished in May."

In addition to increasing interior space by 1,500 square meters, the extension will add a bridge, an escalator, and check-in counters and other facilities.

The project cost will be 150 million baht, and it is being paid for by the Airports Authority of Thailand (AAT).

The two-stage expansion was planned because of the growth in international arrivals, but Maj Pornchai said phase two has been put on hold.

He noted that in the last quarter of 2004, the number of international passengers increased by 30.8% compared with the same quarter of 2003, but in the first quarter of 2005, following the tsunami, the number had slumped by 25.4% when compared with the first quarter of 2004.

He said AAT wanted to wait and see whether passenger

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by Anongnat Sartpisut

# extension up in the air



Phase 1 of the airport terminal extension is 70% complete, and should be finished in May, but Phase 2 has been put on the waiting list.

traffic would rebound and increase as earlier projected before committing to the estimated 400-million-baht investment the new extension would require.

"We were due to start work

on the second phase in 2006, but that has now been postponed. It looks as though it will be 2007 before we look at restarting the construction program."

He continued, "The figures

show that the international terminal here dealt with 2.1 million passengers last year. If both these projects were completed, we would have the capacity for three million passengers a year."



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## Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

There are too many experts, too many people who think they know what they're talking about but actually haven't the faintest idea.

Most members of this particularly annoying species of human tend to hang around in bars, waxing lyrical on subjects in which they're complete amateurs, though they would like their fellow drinkers to think otherwise.

They'll try to give you advice on which car you should buy without having driven anything but an Isuzu pickup for the last five years. That kind of thing.

Then there are the 'professional' experts. These are the founts of wisdom who are drafted into situations such as criminal courts, to give their considered opinion on the subject at hand.

It strikes me as a little odd that both the defense and prosecution attorneys can produce experts who say the complete opposite from each other. I rest my case.

Expert gardeners also tend to be a complete pain in the proverbial. Many of them haven't a clue, and much of the advice they offer reflects this. You often want to tell them exactly what they should do with their trowels.

I'm happy to admit that I simply haven't a clue most of the time. People often ask me to identify plants. If you don't know, you don't know – there's just no way

around that. But I have learned a bit of a cheat over the years, which can sometimes make you sound as if you know what you're talking about.

If someone comes up to you and describes a plant with no flowers, and lots of regular-shaped leaves that appear from a single stem, then the simple answer is that it is – probably – a ti plant, or cordyline. *Maak-phu-maak-mia* is one of the variants in Thai.

The ti is a bit of an oddity. What does it look like? It would be so easy to give a quick simple description of the ti plant – if there was one. It has leaves, which are usually glossy. Sometimes they're green, but usually not; the colors can be spectacularly vivid, from green to bright pink, and just about everything in-between.

Sometimes these leaves are long and slender, but often not. Occasionally it has flowers, but usually it doesn't bother.

Just about the only rule is that the stem seems to extend from the growth of new leaves, a bit like some palm trees. Even placement isn't that easy – some varieties like full sun, while others prefer the shade.



**DEFYING DESCRIPTION:** Some green, some red; whether with long and slender leaves or not, the ti plant can be difficult to describe.

The first wild ti plants, with their original green leaves, came from the islands of Polynesia. There, the locals made their traditional skirts from the leaves, because they don't shrivel when they dry up. At some stage, somebody thought it would be a good idea to start experimenting with the ti, and soon variants were exported all over the world.

It now features in just about

every garden in Phuket, in one form or another, though you might not know it. It's often seen as an ornamental plant, as it grows very predictably – that is, straight up. At least, it tries to.

Often, it gets so tall that it bends sideways under its own weight. Once this happens, the new growth at the end of the stalk then makes a dramatic turn skywards.

You can produce some bizarre-looking versions of the ti plant by letting it do this, or even encouraging it by pulling it over, then propping it up vertically again. The direction change will happen every time and the result will look particularly abnormal.

You'll no doubt have a plant with somewhat severe psycho-

logical problems, but at least it will look cool.

Propagation is best achieved by the good old "cut it and stick it" method. Simply cut the stem at any point you wish, remove a few of the lower leaves and push the stem a few inches into some potting compost.

The offcut will mope for a while, and drop a few more of the lower leaves. After a week or two, and with liberal doses of water, it will start to liven up and become a plant in its own right, quietly sprouting roots with very little help.

The ti plant actually seems to enjoy having its stems hacked off. Within a few days of being attacked, it will eagerly sprout two or three more stems to replace any it lost. After a few months this process can be repeated, so that from one solitary stem you can potentially produce many more.

Even better, the bits that were removed are now climbing skyward in their own right, starting the process all over again.

The ti plant will always look impressive. Just don't try to ask for one at the local garden center, or give advice about it, however "expert" you may be: it is too difficult to pigeonhole.

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# Property Gazette

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E-mail: phuket@cbre.com  
www.cbre.co.th

## NEW HOUSE

in Nai Harn for sale. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, large garden: 4.5 million baht. Tel: 01-7520275.

## LAND FOR SALE

4 rai, 1 ngan 44 talang wah, Chanote title. Seaviews, entrance off new, concrete, government road, 100m from 3-phase power supply, level site, easy drainage. Location: Yamu, east coast. Price: 3.5 million baht per rai. Inquiries and to view. Tel: 01-8927948. Email: jypenman@phuket.ksc.co.th

## HOUSE FOR SALE

in Phuket. A lovely detached bungalow is available for sale by owner in the Irawadee private estate in Kathu, Phuket, near the golf course of the Phuket Country Club. Price: 2.75 million baht ono. Pls call Tel: 09-8729149. Email: klaus\_harbauer@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at: www.phuket-house-for-sale.com

## PANWA LAND

Elevated, tiered land. 260-degree sea views, 40m above sea level, each plot. Approx 1 rai. Price: 8 million baht per plot. Tel: 01-6412201.

## PATONG CONDO

Studio, 28sqm, freehold, 490,000 baht. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip\_5@hotmail.com

## NAI HARN HOUSE

for sale. Thai-style, 3 bedrooms, 1 rai, 6.9 million baht. For more information, please see our website at: www.homesinphuket.com

## KRABI SEA VIEW

Land with water and road. Located in Ao Thaleng. 3 rai. Tel: 01-7973808. Email: pipornpi@hotmail.com

## URGENT SALE

Single home. 1 story, 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, in Land & House. Only 1.95 million baht. Tel: 09-7242881.

## CHERG TALAY

Land for sale/rent, with old house. Directly on the main road. 2,010 sqm. 4.8 million baht. Tel: 076-278008. Email: phuketdream@yahoo.de

## HOUSE FOR SALE

Live in a quiet area. 105sqm house: 2.5 million baht. Pls email for pic or contact for more info. Tel: 09-5913996. Email: manyhouseforyou@hotmail.com

## Properties For Rent

### BEACHFRONT CONDO

Kalim, Patong, fully furnished, high standard. 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, pool, many facilities. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-8920038.

### PATONG APARTMENTS

For rent: clean, comfortable condos. All-new interior decor, aircon, big fridge, TV, big beds, pool, parking. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-0825707. Please see our website at: www.phuket-accommodation.info

### LONG-TERM LEASE

New, fully-furnished house in Palai Green, with 2 aircon bedrooms, hot shower, kitchen, living room, garage and beautiful garden. Located in a quiet area near Chalong Bay. Tel: 01-8924311.

### KAMALA

Shophouse for rent. Aircon, cable TV, 2 bedrooms. Price: 8,000 baht. Tel: 06-2746511. Email: baancoconut@hotmail.com

### KATA LUXURY

1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments. Western standards, Kata sea view, huge terrace, great location, quiet, parking. Under construction, available May 1. Prefer long-term lease, 1-90 years. Contact Khun Elle at Tel: 09-5926890 or Khun Gordy at Email: gordy240@hotmail.com

### KAMALA

Guesthouse with restaurant for rent. 4 rooms, one apartment. 20,000 baht a month. Tel: 06-2746511. Email: baancoconut@hotmail.com

### ROOMS TO LET

Lake-view apartments in Kathu. Fully-furnished, with aircon, fridge, cable TV, hot water, car park. 183 baht a day. Contact for details. Tel: 076-202585, 09-1968449. Email: ketmaneeclayton61@hotmail.com

### ELEPHANTS ????

at the bottom of your garden surrounded by palm trees! Secluded European-designed house only 2km from the beach. Dutch, Austrian & English neighbors. European kitchen, huge terrace, even bigger lounge. 2 bedrooms with en-suite bathroom. Tel, UBC installed. Unfurnished, long-term only. 28,000 baht a month. Tel: 01-2711082. Email: happyjo@procom.in.th

### BUNGALOW

for rent. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, in quiet soi in Rawai. 15,000 baht a month lease. Furnished, TV, UBC, aircon. Tel: 076-388051, 01-8081804.

### KATA HOUSE

28,000 baht a month. Close to Kata Beach on a quiet hillside. Fully-furnished, 3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, 3 bathrooms, hot shower, living room, Western kitchen, parking space, 2 huge terraces and phone line. 28,000 baht/month. Tel: 076-216036, 01-6062827. Email: nij017@hotmail.com

### MOUNTAIN TOP

seaview rental. Patong. 5-bedroom Thai/Bali home now available for rent at long-term discount. Open sea views from all rooms. Maid service, swimming pool, car park. Email: pococonnor@hotmail.com

### KATA, 1 BEDROOM

Attractive 1-bedroom apartment on a hill overlooking Kata Beach, with aircon, fan, phone, cable TV, DVD, microwave, good furniture, hot shower, etc. Available to rent immediately. Long-term only: 12,000 baht per month, or 120,000 baht per year. Please contact for more info. Tel: 07-2675376. Email: w.gabrielle@gmail.com

### DULWICH (VILLAS WITH POOLS)

1) 3-bedroom, 220sqm furnished villa available beginning of May, with 8m by 25m swimming pool. Perfect location. 70,000 baht per month.  
2) New 500sqm, four-bedroom villa with pool available in June. 100,000 baht per month. Must see!  
3) 1,200sqm, five-bedroom villa with pool. 200,000 baht per month.

All villas for long-term rent only, or for sale. Tel: 076-239838, 01-8779292. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com For more information or photos, see our website at: www.clickseedesign.com/clients/gracegarden/www/default.asp

### HOUSE FOR RENT

in Land & House Park, in Chalong. Fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, private swimming pool, fitness. Accommodation available from May 1. Price: 28,000 baht/month. Tel: 01-9560204.

### KATA BEACH CONDO

Large, 1-bedroom, luxury, ocean view, furnished, pools, spa, gym, garden, quiet area. UBC TV, phone, DSL Internet. 30,000 baht/month. Please contact for more info. Tel: 09-9726017. Email: asiasail@yahoo.com

### NICE HOUSE

for rent. Beautiful area with view of southeastern perimeter of Mission Hills Golf Course. House centered on 11 rai, UBC, garden, cook indoors or out, 2 bedrooms, aircon. Perfect for retired couple. 6 months: 50,000 baht; 1 year: 100,000 baht. Call Steve at Tel: 06-076-0141.

### FURNISHED HOME

for rent in Land & House. 2 bedrooms with aircons, 2 bathrooms, hot water, cable, tel, kitchen, big fridge & car park. Price: 16,500 baht/month. Tel: 09-7376192.

### BUILDING

for long-term rent. 2 stories, 19 rooms, all 35sqm, all with furniture, refrigerator, aircon, cable TV, tel line DSL, plus one big room, suitable for use as restaurant, shop, etc. Pls contact Tel: 01-8920609, 01-3261195, 076-342898-9. Email: tattawon@thaimail.com

### RAWAI STUDIO FOR RENT

All you need is your suitcase. Long-term rent. Price: 10,000 baht. Tel: 07-2705706, 01-9703615.

## Property Wanted

### SELL YOUR

property. We have buyers looking for land and properties. Tel: 09-7230251.

### LOOKING FOR HOUSE

in Patong. Swiss living in Phuket many years is looking for a 2-3 bedroom unfurnished house in Patong with small garden and car parking. Tel: 09-8749570. Email: mlch65@yahoo.com

### SMALL HOUSE

wanted to rent. Unfurnished but must have large garden area, fenced or unfenced, for my dogs. I need a long-term lease. Willing to renovate property if required. Must have telephone line or ability to get one. Tel: 04-7457024.

## Agents for Classified Advertising

### PHUKET

#### K.L. Mart

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

## Classified Advertisements

Please use this form to write your classified advertisement.  
Then hand it to any of our agents.

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(heading)

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 80 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Property Mart page: Friday 3 pm.

Deadline for all other pages: Saturday 12 noon.



# Property Gazette

## Accommodation Available

**PATONG LUXURY**  
apartments. Central Patong, 1- & 2-bedroom apartments. Please email for info & photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

**PATONG CONDOS**  
Nicely decorated condos for rent or sale. Located in central Patong, behind Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd. The rooms have everything: fan and aircon, kitchenette, fridge, cable TV, access to swimming pool. The rental price is negotiable. Tel: 01-8948446, 09-8726895. Email: sfrkata@hotmail.com

**ROOMS FROM B300**  
Your own hot shower, aircon or fan only, pool table, UBC TV, 24hr security. Call for info. Tel: 076-342280, 01-9781956. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

**SUVIMOL**  
apartments. Newly finished, on Rang Hill. Aircon, water heater, refrigerator, cable TV. All are furnished. Tel: 01-6072489.

**PATONG PAD**  
Nicely furnished, cable TV, pool. Tel: 04-1069724. Email: tj\_biggie@hotmail.com

**CONDO ROOM**  
for rent. 5 min walk to Patong Beach, cheap price, fully furnished, sea view, aircon, hot water, cable TV. Tel: 09-6455134. Email: js\_0704@hotmail.com

**HOUSE FOR RENT**  
A 2-story house in Land & House, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, phone line, aircon, cable TV, kitchen with washing machine. Price: 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-283029, 04-1840259.

## Accommodation Wanted

**RENTAL**  
accommodation wanted. Looking to rent either one or two houses/villas for four people for a month or two from July onwards. Pls contact for more information. Email: lee\_pompey@hotmail.com

**FURNISHED HOUSE**  
Will pay up to 20,000 baht per month for long-term contract. DSL computer access desirable, plus garden and washing machine. Must be furnished and near beach. Please leave message if phoning USA. Tel: 503-2275265. Email: ma333499@ucf.edu

**PLEASE HELP**  
Can anyone help me to find an apartment or house for 2 weeks in November? I need 2 bedrooms, 3 beds. It must be in Patong. Thank you. Email: info@sandelin.biz

**3-MONTH RENTAL**  
2- or 3-bedroom house with pool wanted now for 1-3 months, or possibly long term if perfect. Please contact by email at: petemolyneux@hotmail.com

## Building Services

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Fax: 076-263204

Email:

p\_con@thaimail.com



## SPAS R US

Steam room sauna and accessories, and portable hot tubs from USA. Quality equipment, designed and installed for your needs. Business and residential. California Spa Design. Tel: 076-263269, 09-1950610.

## Household Items

### RATTAN COUCH:

3,000 baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-383052, 06-9529517.

### SANYO TV

21-inch, new. 4,500 baht. Please contact for more info. Tel: 07-8024688. Email: brennanie@hotmail.com

### HOUSEHOLD STUFF

wanted. I need a fridge with cooler, and a big screen TV. So if you are leaving and have these items for sale, please contact me with details. Tel: 01-2734000. Email: bbonello@web.de

## Household Services

### LOCKUP STORAGE

Individual storage units from 4 cubic meters, well ventilated, 24hr security, sensor flood-lights. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-0825707.

## NEW RELOCATABLES

Fully insulated, aircon. For sale: 160,000 baht. Tel: 076-281-283. See our website at: www.SafewayPhuket.com

## ONE-STOP SERVICE

Handymen and home improvement contractor available for repairs and more. Floor/wall tiling, painting, ceiling, lighting system, kitchen, bathroom, wood and furniture. Tel: 09-5913996, 01-8953185. Email: hservice@phuket.ksc.co.th

## Household Services Needed

### LIVE-IN MAID/

companion. 35-50 year old nice Thai lady with no family commitments. Own room, required to cook Thai food, clean and take care of 79 year old very nice Australian man who is in good health. Part time position, so can work elsewhere if wished, but must live in. Small salary, all meals, etc. Would suit lady who needs a home. Tel: 01-8117613. Email: sue@baanrimpa.com

## Property Services

### HARDWOOD FLOORS

Change to new, real hardwood floor in 1 day. It's pre-varnished - no dust, no smell. Teak, oak, etc. Tel: 01-424-1354.

## Bangkok

### Get your Phuket Gazette from these outlets in the capital:

#### Don Muang Airport

Tel. 02-5731120

#### Se-Ed, Mahboonkrong Building, zone B, Phayathai Rd, Pathumwan

Tel. 02-6117165

#### Se-Ed, Silom Complex, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Silom Rd, Bangrak

Tel. 02-2313244

#### Se-Ed, Silom Center, Rama 1 Rd, Pathumwan

Tel. 02-6581153

#### Se-Ed, Panthip Plaza, M-floor, Petchaburi Rd, Rajathewee

Tel. 02-6566070

#### Se-Ed, Fortune Town Building, Ratchadapisek Rd, Huaykwang

Tel. 02-2485668

#### Se-Ed, Central Rama 3, Satupradit Rd, Yannawa

Tel. 02-6736342

#### Q Mart, Grand Hotel, Sukhumvit Rd, Soi 11, Klongtoey

Tel. 02-6511200 ext. 3452

#### C Mart, Centre Point, Petchaburi Rd, Soi 15, Rajathewee

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#### Duangkamol, Sukhumvit Rd, Klongtoey

Tel. 02-2526261

Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre? Let us share it with you - every week!

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To ensure clarity,  
please airmail.  
Do not Fax!



# Island Job Mart



## Tilleke & Gibbins INTERNATIONAL LTD.

**T**illeke & Gibbins International, established in Thailand since 1893, is coming to Phuket. We are establishing a full service legal office and we require another competent and professional **Thai Lawyer** to work with our local and international professional counselors. Our requirements include:

Licensed to practice law in Thailand

Fluent in written and spoken English, with good communication skills

Experience as a commercial transactional lawyer in either property law, corporate law or immigration law, or litigation experience

Of good character, with strong commercial awareness

We offer a competitive salary and terms of employment, as well as excellent career development prospects and the chance to work with a recognized leading provider of professional legal services.

Please email your resumé to:

**Trw@tillekeandgibbins.com**

Applications should be received by 25 April; they will be kept strictly confidential.



## Dive Supply Co., Ltd.

is looking to recruit for the following positions at our new head office in Chalong:

- 2 x Sales representative for diving equipment sales
- 1 x Secretary/Receptionist
- 1 x Accounting Assistant

- All positions for Thai nationals 25 years and up
- Salary range from 12,000 to 20,000 baht a month depending on experience, knowledge and competency
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Excellent telephone skills

- 1 x Warehouse Assistant (male)
- 1 x Driver with truck license (male)

If you think this is you,  
please contact:

**Khun Pen at Tel: 076-383414 or  
Email: info@divesupply.com**

## EXEC PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Small boutique resort located on the hill in Patong area is looking for an Executive Personal Assistant to work with our team.

- Male or female, more than 25 years old; Thai Native preferable

- Minimum of 3 years' experience in hospitality industry

- Must be highly organized and confident, with strong leadership abilities

- Administrative and computer skills

- Good command of English, spoken and written

- Must be a team player with an outgoing personality and positive attitude

This is a challenging job with good benefits and opportunities in friendly working environment. Send your resumé by email or fax. Tel: 076-345345. Fax: 076-345099. Email: agm@clubbamboo.com

## IT CONSULTANT

A Phuket media and marketing company is looking for a bright, energetic, young staff member to join the company as an IT Consultant. Requirements: bachelor's degree in computer science or related field; knowledge of computer languages (Perl, PHP and MySQL, Macromedia Dreamweaver, HTML, JavaScript, Photoshop or Graphic Design etc); capable of maintaining Linux server, Microsoft Windows Client, Outlook; experience in network systems is an advantage; good interpersonal and communication skills; English literate. Contact Khun Mink for an interview. Tel: 09-474-5726. Email: piyapak\_s@yahoo.com

## SALES

Co-ordinator (2 positions). A local media company is looking for bright, energetic sales people to handle media sales for a number of Asian-based publications. Previous sales experience would be preferred. Must have a high level of English and be able to prepare and present sales proposals. Applicants with cars are also preferred. Drivers license is essential. Applications should be made to Khun Mink. Tel: 09-4745726. Email: info@leadingedge-media.com for an interview.

## NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS!

Many excellent jobs available soon.

Must be TEFL trained.

**Apply now!**

**paul@langserv.com  
Tel: 06-9520088**

## SECRETARY WANTED

Position now open for Thai secretary in established canvas company at the Phuket Boat Lagoon. English speaking, computer friendly, with Word/Excel. Own transport. Pls contact K. Muzza for more info. Tel: 076-238946, 01-3701600. Fax: 076-238946. Email: canvas@loxinfo.co.th

## NANNY NEEDED

to take care of a two-month-old baby in Surin. Must speak English and have adequate experience. Tel: 01-7875723.

## LAW FIRM

seeks accountant. Full-time or part-time. Tel: 076-261377. Fax: 076-261378. Email: scphuket@yahoo.com

## THAI ADMIN

and teacher required with good English skills. Must be a hardworking person. Email: info@kajonkiet.com

## MAID WANTED

full-time live-in maid. Must speak English. Nice room with private bath, private kitchen, private entrance. Motorbike provided. Nai Harn area. References. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-388483, 07-9840907.

## MARKETING ASSISTANT

Property development company looking for:

- Male or female, age 28-35 years old

- Good English communication skills and computer literate

- Pleasant personality & attitude

- At least 2-3 years' experience in marketing

For more information, please contact Promotion Manager Mr Stephan. Tel: 076-290-404. Fax: 076-341612. Email: promo@lorchidee-residences.com

## CAREGIVER WANTED

part-time for elderly farang man. Must speak English. Flexible hours in beautiful location. Live-in private quarters. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 06-9465799. Email: odd\_muse@yahoo.ca

## EXPERIENCED STAFF

wanted for property development company in Phuket. For more information check: [www.immobilienplus.com/jobs](http://www.immobilienplus.com/jobs)

## CRUISE COORDINATOR

Thai/English-speaking Cruise Coordinator is needed. Tel: 076-239111. Fax: 076-238974. Email: suporn@thaimarine.com

## ACCOUNTANT

needed for real estate company. Very good command of written, spoken English; computer knowledge. Pls call for info. Tel: 076-273427.

## URGENTLY NEEDED

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

## ASIAN TRAVEL CLUB

recruit. Asian Travel Club, located in Kata Beach, is looking for Thai/English and Cantonese/English-speaking sales representatives. You should be easygoing 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

## SALES DEVELOPMENT

manager. Your core tasks are to improve conversion rates of sales and repeat customers. Salary + strong commission incentives. Come work for a smart, reputable company. Tel: 076-236616, 01-8952206. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

## ENGLISH NATIVE

speakers. English teachers required. Full time: 30,000 baht per month. Part time: 350 baht per hour. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-377095, 09-2929946. Email: britishschoolphuket@yahoo.co.uk

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# Island Job Mart

**URGENTLY REQUIRE**

The Safari Beach Hotel, just 50 meters from the beach at Patong, is ideal for a private vacation or family holiday. Our hotel was established in 1980. We are now seeking the following staff to share in our rapid expansion:

- Chief Engineer 1 position
- Engineering Clerk 1 position
- Accountant 2 positions
- Room Maid/Room Boy 2 positions
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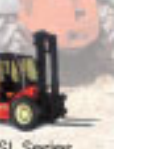


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