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# Official arrested for B2m aid theft

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Police on the evening of April 22 arrested the Chief of the Finance Division of the Phuket Provincial Financial Office, Apichart Nooprod, for the theft of more than 2 million baht of tsunami aid money, which was reported missing on February 15.

Apichart, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, has denied the charge, and underwent questioning at Phuket City Police Station.

He told members of the press after his arrest, "I have done nothing wrong. I am not scared because I did not do it."

Phuket Police Station Superintendent Col Paween Pongsirin said the police had been working hard on the case since the theft. He declined to give details of the investigation, saying, "We need to be careful be-



Apichart Nooprod arrives at Phuket City Police Station after his arrest for the theft of the aid money. He denied the charge.

cause at the moment we have only one person under arrest."

He said that the next step

would depend on what was learned during the interrogation of Apichart.

But he added, "From witness statements and other evidence, we are sure we have done the right thing."

The money, 2.05 million baht, went missing from a metal trunk in a locked room at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Police theorized that, after getting into the room, the thief sawed through one of the two lock hasps on the box then used a bar to lever the lid up far enough to take most of the money it contained.

The arrest comes after more than two months of investigations, including one by an official commission that concluded, oddly, that the money had not been stolen, but had been lost due to "poor accounting" procedures by staff of the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, who were responsible for looking after it.

## Britain's Prince Andrew thanks Thailand

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: HRH Prince Andrew of Britain arrived in Phuket on April 25 to thank Thai people and the local British community for their assistance to UK citizens in the aftermath of the December 26 tsunami.

The following day he made three public appearances. The first was at the Bangkok Phuket Hospital, where he met staff who assisted tsunami victims.

In the afternoon he went to Nai Yang Beach to inspect boats donated by the Royal Thames Yacht Club and then to the Thai Tsunami Victim Identification (TTVI) center in Mai Khao, where he met Disaster Victim Identification teams for a briefing on their work and laid a wreath at the Wall of Remembrance.



Prince Andrew receives a garland on arrival at the Bangkok Phuket Hospital...



... and lays a wreath at the Wall of Remembrance at the TTVI in Mai Khao.



## Queer News

### Inside job

BANGKOK: A furniture vendor returned to his home in the capital's Prawes District to find that the family safe had been stolen by his 20-year old son and the son's 15-year-old gay lover.

Ironically, the theft was reported on the second day of the Songkran festival, traditionally a time for young Thais to pay their respects to their parents and elders. But when 50-year-old Meng Hai Sae-tan returned home after midnight, there was no lustral water or respectful *wai* waiting for him.

Instead he found his safe was long gone – as were his son Jirawat, 20, and the boy's lover, identified only as "Ball". The safe had contained over one million baht in cash, plus jewelry valued at 300,000 baht, he said.

K. Meng Hai told police that his son had been angry with him after he refused to give him money to study hairdressing. Also spoiling relations was Ball, who had moved into the family home two months earlier, against K. Meng Hai's wishes.

Despite being ordered out of the house, "Ball" stayed put – until the pair finally disappeared with the family jewels, that is.

Source: *Kom Chad Leuk*

# Patong evacuation routes marked and tested

PATONG: A tsunami evacuation drill was due to be carried out at Patong on April 29, to test the effectiveness of the new evacuation route direction signs and maps devised in the wake of December's tsunami.

As the Andaman coast's most heavily developed tourist district, Patong was chosen for the pilot project for the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) warning system, which Center officials say will eventually cover the entire Andaman coast.

The drill was intended to discover how

effectively Patong could be evacuated if an earthquake scoring 9.0 on the Richter scale occurred 400 kilometers from Phuket, off the Indian Nicobar Islands, and triggered a tsunami.

The resulting wave could reach Patong within 30 minutes. With 10 minutes needed for the warning message to be sent and the sirens sounded, the evacuation would need to be complete within 20 minutes.

The plans for the dry run were unveiled at a seminar at the Metropole Hotel. Phang

Nga Governor Anuwat Metheeviboonwut told the seminar that the first evacuation plan in his province, for Takuapa District, would be completed on May 10 and would cover Nang Thong, Bang Niang, Khao Lak and Bang Sak beaches.

In some parts of Phang Nga, evacuation routes needed to extend as far as two kilometers inland, whereas at beaches backed by hills, such as in parts of Khao Lak, the evacuation routes could be as short as 15 meters, he said. – *Anongnat Sartpisit*

## Satree school launches book about tsunamis

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET CITY: The Satree Phuket school has unveiled a book about the tsunami produced by staff.

The book, titled *Tsunami Monton Phuket Mahantapai Leu-ad Yen* (Tsunami: Cold-blooded Killer of Phuket) contains information about tsunamis, how and why they happen, and advice on what to do should another one hit Phuket.

Launching the book, school Principal Kiattisak Pillawart said he believed so many people lost their lives because they did not know what to do when the tsunami struck.

"That's why the school de-



Satree Phuket Principal Kiattisak Pillawart with the tsunami book.

cided to write this book, to inform people, here and outside the school, about tsunamis," said K. Kiattisak.

Rawat Chindapol, whose family has donated 500,000 baht towards the cost of publication, said, "This book will help preserve the memories of this tsunami for future generations, plus it is suitable for teachers to use in class."

A total of 100,000 copies of the Thai-language book have been printed and are available from retailers throughout Phuket, as well as the Phuket International Airport, Tesco Lotus, 7-Eleven stores and schools and government offices in the province.

The cost is 150 baht per copy; proceeds will go towards paying for the education of students affected by the tsunami.

## Police still bamboozled by bomb

THALANG: Police remain bamboozled in their investigation into the mysterious time bomb that was discovered in a quiet residential area of Pa Khlok on March 10.

Police said the device, which was eventually destroyed in a controlled explosion, consisted of two sticks of C4 plastic wrapped tightly in black insulating tape and connected by wires to a cheap alarm clock.

It was believed to have lain wrapped in newspapers for three days next to the wall of a cold storage facility before it was discovered by the father of the facility's owner.

Thalang District Police Superintendent Pol Col Chinnarat Ritthakananont on April 20 told the *Gazette* that there has been no progress in the investigation, but added that he now suspects the bomb may have been intended to intimidate rather than destroy.

He also said the bomb may have been discarded by its owners out of fear that it would be discovered at a police checkpoint.

"I don't think the bomb was ever really intended to go off, otherwise its makers wouldn't have timed it to wait three days before going off. They would have timed it to go off on the first day," he said.

After its discovery, police said the bomb was set to go off at 5:30 pm on March 10, but that the clock had apparently stopped at 3:10 pm.

Col Chinnarat said investigators were continuing to look for new leads in the case.

## Fire prevention advice issued

PHUKET: Phuket City Municipality has issued fire prevention advice and has ordered its Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM) to be on standby to deal with fires as the dry season drags on.

The Municipality is advising residents to be especially careful when lighting offerings at shrines, or when cooking. Residents should also check that electrical equipment and installations are in order, to reduce the chances of an electrical fault causing a fire; to keep matches away from children; and to make sure that cigarette butts are fully extinguished when thrown away.

Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana said the Municipality had issued the warnings because the current dry conditions have increased the risk of fire. She said, "A fire would could cause great social and financial loss."

Anyone who sees a fire should call the ODPM at Tel: 199, 076-211111 or 076-212457.

## Art mart at Central Festival

PHUKET: Central Festival Phuket is to be the venue for an art market lasting the whole of May.

The market is being arranged by the Ministry of Culture's Office of Contemporary Art and Culture as another attraction to lure tourists back to Phuket.

The market will feature 300 paintings by a total of 50 artists from the six Andaman provinces hit by the tsunami.

There will also be demonstrations of batik painting, leather

carving, photography, sketching and painting, cartoon drawing and postcard making. The market will be open every day between 11 am and 9 pm.

## Endangered turtles get microchipped

PHUKET: Marine biologists are microchipping sea turtles in an attempt to reverse an 80% slump in the animals' population over the past 20 years.

Phuket Marine Biological Centre (PMBC) director Wannakiat Thubthimsang said that the situation had become "a crisis", brought on by humans disturbing the turtles' nesting areas.

## APOLOGY

Mr Thongchai Wongavatchanakarn has prosecuted me (Mr Georg Dietlmeier) at Phuket Provincial Court on a charge of trespass and mischief. I hereby admit that I am guilty. I wish to apologize to Mr Thongchai Wongavatchanakarn and to express my gratitude to Mr Thongchai Wongavatchanakarn for forgiving me and withdrawing the case against me.

Mr. Georg Dietlmeier  
Announcer

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# Patong alarm system test a howling success

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PATONG: The last of the alarms in Patong's newly-installed emergency warning system was tested on April 9. It emitted a 121-decibel alert that could be heard 1,500 meters away.

The alarm at Phuket Cabana Hotel, connected to 24 loudspeakers, was tested for 10 minutes at 2pm.

Installation of the system, which will eventually be linked to the Nonthaburi-based National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC), began on April 4.

Two other alarms, at the Seaview Patong Hotel and the Sunset Hotel, were tested on April 6, and April 8 and 9 respectively.

The Patong system has been installed by Bangkok-based Ele Sat Engineering, using communications equipment from Swedish company Kockum Sonics and an Inmarsat satellite system.



What's that noise? The new alarm system got the attention of tourists on the beach.

Deputy Mayor of Patong Chairat Sukbal was present when the alarm was tested.

He said he thought the system was working efficiently but he added that it would be re-tested when it was receiving data from the NDWC.

"Today we have triggered the alarm from the control tower here, but when the link to NDWC is complete, we will have to test it again," said K. Chairat.

He added that he had met

with government-appointed tsunami tsar Smith Thammasaroj to discuss the details of the new system, such as what languages would be used for warnings what kind of information would be given.

K. Chairat said, "The world-class alarm installed in the tourist provinces will give tourists confidence that they are safe when they are visiting us."

"We will follow up the installation by inviting Patong hoteliers and business-people to a briefing on procedures for evacuating each part of the town."

Pat Neeley, Executive Director of Ele Sat Engineering Co Ltd, said he had been confident about the trial after the success of the earlier test at the Seaview Hotel.

He continued, "This system is easy to maintain and it can be monitored day and night – even via a laptop computer."

## Phuket's 'rapid recovery' impresses Lankan visitors

PHUKET CITY: Government officers from Sri Lanka, on a three-day fact-finding visit to Phuket and Phang Nga, declared themselves impressed by the speed with which the region is recovering from the tsunami.

The 17 officers from tsunami-affected areas of Sri Lanka are here to see if the experiences of Phuket and Phang Nga could be used to help their own regions rebuild after the tsunami.

At the Royal Phuket City Hotel, the group's leader, Voravong Chonlasi, a specialist from the Asian Institute of Technology, said the group had learned that Phuket was recovering so quickly because of the government policy of attracting businesses back to tsunami-hit areas. Another factor had been good cooperation between local authorities and communities, he noted.

He continued, "We know the priority is to boost tourism and to be fast and proactive in doing this."

"Preparation is key here, as well as solving problems point by point as they arise."

"The team members are especially impressed by the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM) and the way officers have worked so closely with local people."

K. Voravong added that the Sri Lankans felt that, despite the amount of help offered to their country, it was still making slow progress in recovering from the tsunami. This was because of a lack of cooperation and the slowness with which money was being released.

## Violet diesel relief

PHUKET CITY: The government is to subsidize "violet" oil, which is used as fuel for small fishing boats, by two baht a liter for at least the next three months.

The subsidy will bring the price of violet oil down from 18.60 baht per liter to 16.60 baht.



Matt Butcher says he won't be feeding any more eels.

## Diver's digit is eel's meal

By Andy Johnstone

PHUKET: A 32-year-old Briton was admitted to hospital after his left thumb was bitten off and eaten by a giant moray eel while he was diving off the well-known East of Eden dive site in the Similan Islands.

Matt Butcher, told the *Gazette* he had fed the 2.2-meter eel regularly over the past year and a half, and that she was well-known in the diving community for her friendliness.

"Many people dive there to see her," he said from his bed at Bangkok Phuket Hospital. "She will swim in between your legs or curl herself around your arms. Divers often feed her scraps of food taken from their liveaboard boats. She likes sausages and will even eat fruit."

Mr Butcher told the *Gazette* how, on April 18, he and his buddy, 21-year-old Becks Herbert, also from England, had descended to around 14 meters with some food for the eel.

He said, "I've been feeding the eel for 18 months and nothing seemed different on this occasion. She seemed quite playful, while I took the food – a sausage wrapped in a plastic bag – from my pocket and threw it to her."

Mr Butcher said the eel (scientific name *Strophodon sathete*) circled round behind him and latched onto the thumb of his left hand, which was still holding the bag.

"I couldn't get my thumb out of her mouth once she had started biting. The teeth of a moray are angled backward so she got a better grip [on my thumb] every time she bit down," he said.

"I tried pushing the fingers of my right hand into her mouth to try and force her mouth open but she did not let go; she could taste blood by then..."

"She was shaking her head from side to side, biting harder all the time. Five seconds later, my thumb just came off."

"She ate it and swam away. I didn't even have time to reach for my knife."

Mr Butcher, who is right-handed, has been told that surgeons may be able to transplant one of his big toes to replace his thumb.

He said that he will continue diving – although he will no longer feed eels.

He added, "I was wearing shorts during this dive, and I'm just glad that the thing didn't swim up one of the legs and bite something else."

## Hotel worker knifed to death after refusing to clink glasses

PHUKET: A kitchen hand working at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa was stabbed to death after refusing to clink glasses with a drunk in a karaoke bar.

Pol Capt Saichol Petsuwan of Thalang Police Station told the *Gazette* 29-year-old Samrid "M" Sirithisak had been having supper and singing with two friends at the Kuenrang Karaoke Restaurant in Baan Kian, Thalang, on April 20, when the trio were approached by the drunk.

The man, who had been sitting at a nearby table, asked K. M to clink glasses, but K. M refused. After an altercation, the drunk stabbed K. M twice in the chest then fled on a motorbike.

The victim's friends rushed him to Thalang Hospital, but he died from blood loss 30 minutes after arrival.

Capt Saichol said officers arrested the alleged murderer, Jaruk "Jar" Musikum, at his home in Kamala two hours after the killing.

Jaruk, a water supply engineer, has been charged with murder and being in possession of a weapon in a public place.

Capt Saichol said Jaruk and K. M had not known each other before the killing, and the murder seems to have happened purely because Jaruk was drunk.



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In his criticism of financial institutions taking too long to approve soft loans for tsunami-affected businesses, Phang Nga Governor Anuwat Metheeviboonwut on April 21 pointed out that some 60% of income in Phang Nga province derived from tourism in Khao Lak.

He added that there were now only 1,000 accommodation rooms open to guests in the Khao Lak and Kuk Kak areas – which, without the tsunami, would have had close to 10,000 in the now fading “high season”.

“Currently we have only 10% of the number of tourists that would normally be in Phang Nga because we have no accommodation and they are still afraid [after] what happened last year,” he said.

Gov Anuwat blamed the delay in rebuilding Khao Lak businesses on financial institutions taking a long time approving loans. “The problem we have today is that 80% of the business owners are still waiting for loans from financial institutions to be approved,” he said.

He said that no more than 20% of businesses in the Khao Lak area had begun rebuilding. “The financial institutions should approve loans as soon as possible because the rains will come in May and impede reconstruction,” he said.

Gov Anuwat’s criticism of the banks echoed similar remarks by World Tourism Organization

Anyone who has visited Khao Lak over the past month would agree that the area remains a scene of desolation, much of it an open expanse where resorts, restaurants and other tourism-based businesses once stood, now waiting for large-scale rebuilding to begin.

Yet local many local businesspeople are still waiting for approval of the essential soft loans promised by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, so they can start the rebuilding.

The delay in the arrival of funds prompted Phang Nga Governor Anuwat Metheeviboonwut on April 21 to openly criticize banks and other financial institutions for taking too long to process soft loan applications. His comments have found support from Khao Lak business operators and denial from the banks.

The Gazette’s Sangkhae Leelanapaporn and Anongnat Sartpisut report on how the delay in the much-needed funding is affecting the rebuilding of Khao Lak businesses, and what the banks have to say in their defense.

(WTO) consultant Robert England on March 18, and came three weeks after a Senate fact-finding team also criticized banks for the delay.

Governor Anuwat said on April 21, “On February 19, when PM Thaksin visited Phang Nga and talked with local business owners, everyone was inspired to rebuild their businesses, but now that the financial institutions still have not approved the loans they are starting to feel discouraged again.

“Twenty days ago [Deputy Prime Minister] Dr Somkid Jatusripitak came to explain to

local business people how they can apply for the soft loans, but little has happened since.

“But because people continued to ask me for help [in getting the loans], I applied to Dr Somkid to help again. We didn’t know why the banks had a problem and couldn’t give the loans,” he added.

Gov Anuwat said that he had since learned that financial institutions were taking a long time approving the loans because business owners could not provide all the paperwork necessary to satisfy the institutions’ requirements.

# WHERE

He added that local business people had told him that the financial institutions appeared to have little confidence that businesses in Khao Lak would be able to repay the loans. This seems odd, since the banks are not the source of the soft loans. The Bank of Thailand (BoT), the country’s central bank, is.

Yuthaphol Singhampai, Director of the Communications Office of the BoT, in Bangkok, told the *Gazette* that the BoT has already allocated 45.197 billion baht for tsunami soft loans.

Some 22.49 billion baht has already been transferred to commercial banks for the soft loans, while a further 22 billion baht is in the process of being approved, K. Yuthaphol said.

The money is loaned to the commercial banks at 0.01% annual interest, and the private banks are allowed to charge no more than 2% interest per annum.

“I think it depends on each private bank whether it will loan the money because it is their risk. The BOT cannot tell the private bank which people to approve loans to because they have to analyze the financial circumstances of each customer,” K. Yuthaphol explained.



He added that he believes the some of the complaints are nothing more than sour grapes.

“I think some people have already been approved for soft loans but will not tell anyone that they have. But we have details



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# ARE THE LOANS?



A trickle of tourists – but with soft loans currently very slow in being approved, there is no way large numbers could be accommodated.

from each bank that has received funds for soft loans and used them,” he said.

He added, “I think some people did not qualify for a loan according to the conditions required by the bank, such as not owning a business affected by the tsunami, and have complained to the press. The BOT always receives complaints and is blamed when banks will not lend money to customers.”

However, a source at a commercial bank, who spoke to the *Gazette* on condition of anonymity, said that the BoT had yet to make the funds available for his bank to provide soft loans.

The source explained that the bank was not prepared to tell applicants that this was the case. Instead, the source said, the bank simply told applicants that the

documents provided were not complete; the bank has no other excuse to give customers for not approving the loans.

“If we said the BoT had not yet transferred the money to us, I believe that the central government would blame us 100%. Each bank has had to find a way to stall for time until the BoT transfers the money to us,” the source explained.

In response to this predicament, the bank is offering existing clients loans slashed from 10% interest down to 2%, the source explained.

“This is so we can provide immediate help and people do not need to wait for the BoT.

“But we can’t provide loans to new customers to rebuild their businesses because we do not have the budget,” the source said.

“We have not seized any

properties of customers affected by the tsunami because it is not their fault they missed payments – it was a natural disaster. We have to give them time until everything gets better,” the source explained.

In Khao Lak, however, Gov Anuwat’s criticism seems to ring true. Yanyong Khorpetch, Managing Director of the Khaolak Laguna Resort, told the *Gazette* that he has been waiting for approval of a loan from the government’s Tsunami Recovery Fund since late February.

However, he has since taken a loan from the Thai Military Bank to rebuild the resort. “Although the [government] interest rate is better than those offered by commercial banks, I applied to the Thai Military Bank for 300 million baht. The earliest we expect the government loan to be approved is sometime [in May].”

K. Yanyong explained that the government-supported loans were slow in being approved because the people responsible for approving them were based in Bangkok.

“The process is slow because the staff are not based in the area. When [financial institutions] need information about a business’s previous performance, it is difficult to find it. For example, some hotels lost the [required] documentation when the hotel was destroyed,” K. Yanyong said.

He added, “Most Khao Lak business people are small entrepreneurs. They are not professional accountants, so they probably do not have the [required] documentation prepared.”

He suggested, “It would be better if the government made the loans available direct to local businesses instead of through the commercial banks. Banks look at the risk as a priority, as well as many other issues, so they work very slowly.

“Some banks have dedi-

cated very little in the way of resources in helping local businesspeople. They should make giving loans to local businesspeople a priority.

“If there are no resorts, there will be no guests; and when there are no guests, there will be no money for local entrepreneurs, and no work.

“I am not in a rush. The hotel was destroyed, so I am drawing up the plans and waiting for the money. However, some businesspeople need it urgently because they need to open before the next high season.

“If the loans from the banks are approved too slowly, it will affect local businesspeople. They will need to rely on donations, and will not be able to rebuild their businesses.

Phang Nga will become a ‘beggar’ province,” said K. Yanyong.

Chittiporn Suthipibul, Managing Director of the Khaolak Resort, pointed out another shortcoming of the soft loans.

“The problem is that the time frame in which to replay the soft loans is too short – only two years. Our business cannot fully recover in this time. It would be possible to repay the loans if the banks or the government extended the period to five years,” she said.

K. Chittiporn explained that PM Thaksin had said during his visit to the area in February that if businesses affected by the tsunami had a problem repaying the loans within two years, he would discuss this with the banks again.

“However, already half a year has passed and local businesses have been slow in starting re-construction and there are few tourists. Many businesspeople here have found that banks are not providing genuine help.

“Our hearts are ready to fight to bring Khao Lak back. However, the troops – the banks – are hesitating, and we don’t know how to fight without their help,” K. Chittiporn said.

“Now, the banks are not the only problem,” she added. “When we applied for loans before February 28, we thought we had applied for enough to recover. But other factors, such as the rise in oil prices, and the subsequent rise in the cost of construction, mean that the loan we asked for probably will not be enough.”

She explained that re-opening as soon as possible is a priority. “The sooner we start reconstruction, the better it will be for us; not in terms of making money but for putting us in a better position vis à vis our competitors.

“I am quite confident that Khao Lak will be restored to what it was before, if the government helps through a policy of developing a quiet and truly relaxing area.”

Anupong Sa-Ngunnam, President of the Phang Nga Tourist Association, told the *Gazette*, “Commercial banks worry too much about profit and loss, so the approval process is too slow.

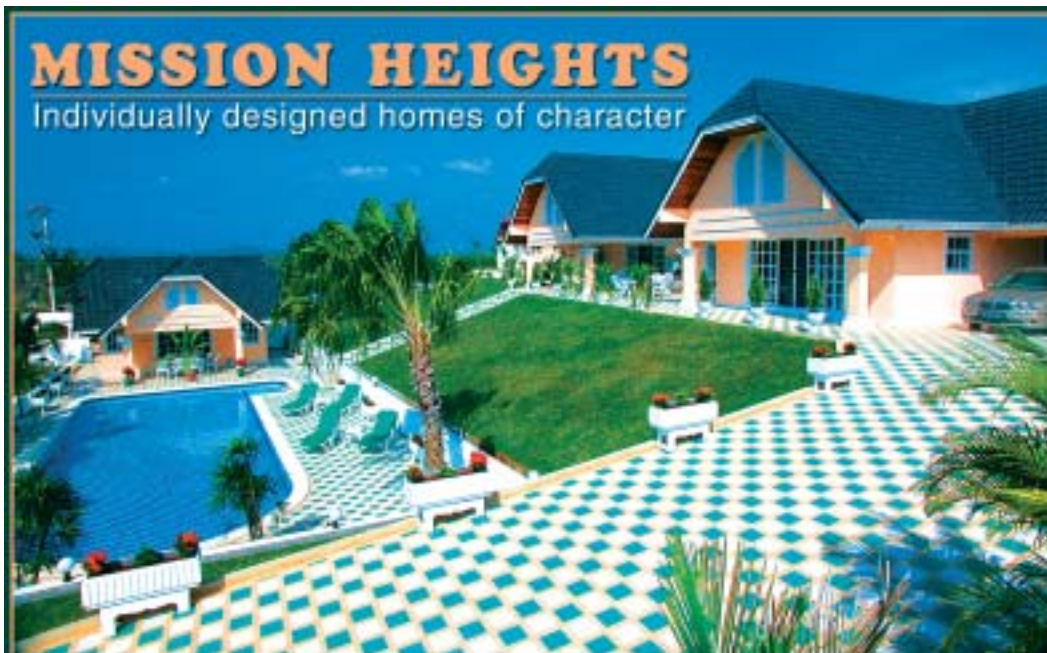
“Businesses that need help should have the money by the end of May so they can start work and re-open their businesses for this coming high season.

“Travel agents cannot sell when there is no product. For sure, banks should be more honest than they are now,” he said.



‘Everyone was inspired to rebuild their businesses, but now that the financial institutions still have not approved the loans they are starting to feel discouraged.’

– Phang Nga Governor Anuwat Metheeviboonwut



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# Heart gallery

By Anongnat Sartpisut

**C**ould pencils and paint and 200 meters of canvas help children recover from the trauma of December's tsunami?

German arts group Propheten hopes so, which is why the organization brought art materials and around 200 meters of canvas and brought some 1,000 children from Phuket and Phang Nga to Patong on April 14.

The idea was to create a massive children's art project, thought to be the biggest of its kind in the world.

Propheten artist Mike Kuhlmann said, "Propheten representatives first came to Phuket at the beginning of January. Patong looked like a war zone and we knew we had to do something."

Mr Kuhlmann explained that, through their painting, the children would be reaching out to the whole world. They could express thanks to the people who had helped them, and, at the same time, they could invite people to return to Phuket as tourists.

The art project was organized with the support of the management of The Chedi Phuket and entrepreneur Peter Fischer, President of German soccer club Eintracht Frankfurt.

A number of activities were arranged for the day of the painting, including beach soccer, sandcastle building and games.

But the centerpiece was the



**No longer looking like a war zone, Patong Beach briefly became the island's art center with a 200-meter-long painting, which artist Mike Kuhlmann hopes to exhibit in Berlin, Paris and London.**

200-meter-plus length of canvas, on which children were told to paint what they liked and write any message they liked.

Each child who took part was given a set of wax crayons, colored pencils and paints.

Sawettachoke Pankum, 10, of Sainamyen School, who escaped the tsunami, said, "I am happy that everyone in my family was safe from the tsunami."

"I painted my friends and my family, with me at the center. I used a beautiful blue color. I had a great time; I've never painted on a beach before."

Saowalak Srisukkaew, aged 10, was one of 35 pupils of Kuraburi School, on Koh Phra Thong, Phang Nga, where the

village of Ban Pak Chok was washed away by the tsunami.

He said, "I am happy to be here to draw a beautiful picture of me and my friends."

Mr Kuhlmann said that Propheten intends to exhibit the picture in Frankfurt, Berlin, London, New York and Paris, to remind people around the world about the tsunami.

"In December and January, people were talking about the tsunami all the time, but even now, people continue to need help here. We want to remind people in wealthier countries that, without their help, people here may not have a future."

He continued, "One of my friends nearly died in Phuket. He

survived, but we decided to help by raising money and by telling the world what happened here."

"I also want to show the world that the people of [Thailand] deserve respect, because of the incredible way they have picked themselves up after the tsunami."

Propheten now plans to work with the Thai Education Ministry to set up "learning centers" in each of the six Andaman provinces struck by the tsunami.

The GM of The Chedi Phuket, Daniel Meury, said, "Some schools in the provinces affected by the tsunami don't have good access to computers or other technology, but good communication gives people a

chance to know about the world and to expand their minds."

Mr Kuhlmann, picking up the thread, added, "Propheten knows the importance of communication in giving people a good education."

"Thailand is a developing country and we hope to close the digital gap between the poor and the rich."

"We also hope to give children an enjoyable experience, and also, by enabling them to communicate with other children so closely, we hope too that they will establish better relationships with each other, as friends and companions."

The Propheten website is at: [www.propheten.com](http://www.propheten.com)



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# IDs required for SIM cards in May

All buyers of SIM cards for prepaid mobile phones will have to show proof of identity from May 10. State agencies and mobile phone operators held a meeting and all agreed to implement the new rule, said Kanawat Wasinsungworn, Deputy Minister of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Ministry.

No decision was reached on whether the existing 22 million prepaid phone users should be required to identify themselves to their mobile phone operators, he said. Earlier, the ICT Ministry proposed that the measure apply to both new and existing prepaid phone users.

All cellular service providers are expected to sign a memorandum of understanding on May 9. The move is in response to the government's effort to thwart future attempts by separatists in the Deep South to use mobile phones with prepaid cards to detonate explosives.

Opponents of the scheme have argued that the presence of thousands of smuggled SIM cards in the Deep South, and the fact that Malaysian mobile phone networks reach into eight southern districts, including Haad Yai, will render the scheme useless.

**Another poor survey:** Education Minister Adisai Bodharamik ordered the Basic Education Commission to carry out a survey to identify students from families whose yearly earnings are less than 100,000 baht.

"The survey will be used to devise assistance schemes for underprivileged students and improve the way in which government subsidies are paid to schools," he said.

K. Adisai said the current system, whereby the government pays a lump sum to each school, was unfair. He said he would restructure the system to better meet students' needs after viewing the survey results.

The restructuring would be based on a more efficient allocation of the existing budget and would not require additional funding, he said.

**Training accident:** A Royal



These traffic lights at an intersection in downtown Krabi attract the attention of passers-by, locals and tourist alike.

Thai Air Force F-5B combat training jet crashed in Surat Thani's Phunphin district on the morning of April 21, killing the pilot and co-pilot. Engine failure was the suspected cause.

The plane was flying 300 meters over the treetops when it caught on fire. One of the pilots ejected from the craft but died. The two-seat aerobatic jet belonged to Wing 7 of Air Division 4.

The two victims were identified as Wing Commander Somchai Patpai, 38, the commandant of Fleet 701, and his co-pilot, Flying Officer Arun Lalaeng, 28.

**Paint it black:** A group of frustrated house buyers in Bangkok painted their homes black in protest at what they said was the

government's failure to protect their rights.

At the center of the protest was Rattana Sajjathap, whose townhouse in Chuensuk village in Bangkok's Bueng Kum district is earmarked for demolition to make way for a U-turn flyover.

A member of a group calling itself the Network of Disappointed House Buyers, K. Rattana said she was duped into buying the property, as she was unaware that it was slated for destruction. Other members taking part in the protest had found their homes to be substandard, she said.

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**Standing ovation:** Local medical researcher Dr Korraphat Muyurasakhon has disputed the widespread belief that frequent consumption of eggs is bad for you, saying it might even help reduce cholesterol levels in the blood.

Dr Korraphat said high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) in eggs had reduced the level of so-called "unfriendly cholesterol" in the blood vessels of 60 working-aged people who took part in a study.

The level of the "unfriendly" low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) had not increased after eating eggs every day for four weeks, he said, noting that eggs do not contain saturated fatty acids, as butter and animal fats do.

**Land encroachment claim:** The Charoen Pokphand (CP) Group dismissed allegations of land encroachment leveled by the Senate Environment Committee, saying the company had lawfully acquired the land plot in question more than 10 years ago.

The committee lodged a complaint with police, alleging that subsidiary CP Food Plc encroached on public land in Rayong's Klaeng District and destroyed one of the last mangrove forests in the area.

The Department of Special Investigation has promised to investigate the allegation.

Paisal Thanapermpoon, head of the Mangrove Forest Conservation Office, said CP

Foods would have to pay 108,300 baht a rai in compensation if found guilty of destroying mangrove forest on public land.

**High rollers:** From May 1, pickup trucks will be banned from Bangkok expressways if carrying passengers in their beds without "appropriate" safety features.

The ban is meant to save passengers' lives, traffic officials said.

"Many road accidents involving pickup trucks have resulted in high death tolls because passengers in the beds have no protection," said Somchai Jarukasemratana, Deputy Governor of the Expressway and Transit Authority of Thailand. Those caught flouting the rules face a fine of up to 1,000 baht.

**SMS extravaganza:** Culture Minister Uraiwan Thienthong called on television stations to rein in programs that seek to boost revenue by luring young viewers to send in mobile-phone messages in the hope of winning prizes.

K. Uraiwan said the short message service (SMS) culture, promoted by certain producers of youth-oriented programs and soap operas, was instilling the habit of extravagance in Thai youngsters.

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

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# Samui gets ready for regatta

The fourth Koh Samui Regatta will take place from May 22 to 28, with yachts again arriving from all corners of Southeast Asia and beyond.

The largest contingent of premier racing class boats is expected to arrive from Hong Kong. It includes Frank Pong's 23-meter *Jelik*, which in its previous life as *Pyewacket* set the record in the Transpacific race from California to Hawaii, a record that still stands.

Also from Hong Kong, and expected to give reigning Samui champion *Free Fire* a run for her money, are the hot-rods *Mandrake* and *Drum Stick*.

The Cruiser Racing division will see the likes of *Moon Blue 2* again pushing Marcel Liedt's *Hocux Pocux 2* all the way, while Racing Class 2 will see the local favorites from the Royal Thai Naval Academy face some serious opposition from *Down-Under* and her crack crew headed by Australian skipper George Snow, who took line honors in the 1997 Sydney-Hobart with his maxi-yacht *Brindabella*.

Overall, around 30 yachts are expected to appear, and the racing will again be a mixture,

with two days of round-the-cans racing in Chaweng Bay on Tuesday and Saturday, and the other three days consisting of coastal passage races taking in courses to the south of Lamai, around Koh Rap, and along the north shore across to Koh Pha-ngan and returning to Chaweng Bay.

Contact the Regatta office for more details, at Tel: 07-7430404, or check the website at [www.samuiregatta.com](http://www.samuiregatta.com)

## FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander Sammy Swan

**Koh Pha-ngan crackdown:** Police recently confiscated 1,200 ecstasy pills during an undercover operation on Koh Pha-ngan. A special police drug force went to Sunrise Bungalow on Haad Rin Beach, the owner of which – “Big Mama” – is allegedly a well-known drug dealer who has been selling ecstasy pills to tourists for many years.

Undercover officers who went to buy pills from her alleged that she was selling the tablets for 650 baht a pill and was shifting around 1,000 pills on every Full Moon Party night.

They later confiscated 1,290 pills, one gun and 20,000 baht. The raid was part of a wider initiative involving police and other public agencies, which is aimed at cleaning up the image of Koh Pha-ngan in preparation for its transformation into one of the region's premier nature destinations.

At a meeting held in February, Thawatchai Theurdpa-thai, assistant to the Governor of Surat Thani Province, said he wanted to make the island drug-free, and since then a number of projects and proposals have been initiated.



Troy Yaw has entered his Sydney 46 *Ulmulu* in the Racing 1 class of this year's Samui Regatta. *Ulmulu* came second overall in the class in last year's Samui Regatta

Foreigners are the main customers for drugs on Koh Pha-ngan, and the Full Moon Party is especially known for its chemically-fueled atmosphere. The idea is to change the island's reputation from one based on parties and drugs to a place for nature and beauty.

Waste is also a problem, as mentioned in previous columns, and 20 million baht was granted

to the Koh Pha-ngan authorities this year to build an incinerator that will help to deal with the 30 tonnes of waste generated on the island every day during the high season.

Water is now also becoming an issue as more and more visitors arrive, and lessons will have to be learned from Samui in order to try to deal with shortages early on.

**Tourism drop:** An expected downturn in domestic tourism will soon begin to take effect, according to Panuk Woramit from the Tourism Authority of Thailand on Koh Samui.

He predicts that after Songkran, which brought tourists from all over Thailand, numbers will drop significantly, and the province may suffer as a result.

Terrorism and the tsunami, combined with higher fuel prices, have reduced the number of Thais who travel.

However, these factors should not affect the number of foreigners visiting the island, although the usual seasonal slump in May and June will obviously mean a reduction in overall revenue.

Cdr Sammy Swan is a writer for Samui's community magazine.

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## This week



**THAILAND TRIUMPHS:** Two celebrants of Phuket Bike Week 2005, held recently in Patong, enjoy some light refreshment. Behind them are some splendid old bikes, including venerable Triumphs.



**THE GRANDE ESCAPE:** Among others releasing turtles at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket are (from right) Wannakiat Thubthimsang, Director of the Phuket Marine Biological Center; Phuket Vice-Governor Supachai Yuwaboon; Chananporn Rosjan, Miss Thailand Universe 2005; and (left) Rear-Admiral Theerawat Srithaporn, Deputy Commander of the Royal Thai Navy Third Naval Area Command.



**DISPATCHES:** Claude Sauter (right), the Resident Manager of the Cape Panwa Hotel, greets veteran British broadcaster and war correspondent Michael Nicholson, who was in Phuket to film a feature on post-tsunami recovery for British ITV news program *Tonight With Trevor McDonald*.

**GENEROSITY:** (right) Samuel Katz (3<sup>rd</sup> from left), CEO of Cedant Travel Distribution Services, representing Cedant Cares, a fundraising effort of the NRT Foundation, presents a check for US\$500,000 (around 20 million baht) raised by employees for the rebuilding of Bang Sak School in Phang Nga to Vice-Governor Teerathep Sriyapan (center) and Prasit Sataporn-chaturawit (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), the school's principal.



**EGGSTRAVAGANZA:** (below) Young guests at Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club enjoy a feast of fun painting eggs during the resort's Easter Day celebrations.



**CUB REPORTERS:** (left) The management team of Thailand's Channel 7 (from left) Pissanu Nilklad, Surang Prempri and Dr Jutha Tingsaphat meet the island's wildlife during a recent visit to Phuket FantaSea.





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**Gazette:** What was your childhood like?

**Tammy:** Maybe a little different from other people because every morning I had to wake up at 5 am and practice from 6 am to 7 am, then after school I had to go back and practice again. That was kind of my routine everyday. But it was fun. It really helped me for my career now.

I am lucky that I was born in Los Angeles. At that time my parents owned a Thai restaurant in LA and all of my brothers and sisters were playing tennis. So I already started in Los Angeles. But I moved back to Thailand when I was four. So I got all of the practice and tennis courses in Thailand. I grew up in Thailand and I am 100% Thai, and very proud of it.

**Gazette:** Do you miss the US?

**Tammy:** Actually, not. [Laughs.] I have to go there for tournaments, like the US Open. When I go there I also visit my sister and brother, nieces and nephews, so it's like a second home. But I would choose to be based somewhere in Thailand, though maybe not in Bangkok [laughs].

**Gazette:** How many times have you been in Phuket?

**Tammy:** I think this is my fourth time here. The last time was last November, during the Paradorn Super Tour. The people here in Phuket are very nice and give us a very warm welcome. I always love to come to Phuket. It kind of feels like home. If I have a chance to come back again, I would love to.

**Gazette:** How much do you train on court and off?

**Tammy:** Actually it de-

# KNOCKING AROUND

**T**hai women's No 1 tennis player Tamarine "Tammy" Tanasugarn was recently in Phuket to play in the Fed Cup match against Croatia (see Sports pages). The *Gazette's* Anongnat Sartpisut caught up with her before the tournament to learn a bit more about her life on the WTA circuit – and more.

pend. I usually train on court for about five hours and then more off-court doing fitness. If it's close to competition [I exercise] less because you have to give your body time to recover.

**Gazette:** What the hardest part about training?

**Tammy:** Well, I am kind of lazy [giggles]. You have to keep alert all the time and try to have fun for yourself. You have to find some sort of tactic, such as being surrounded by friends, so you don't get bored and tired all the time. You need motivation, so you have to set goals for yourself.

**Gazette:** Can you tell the readers about your diet?

**Tammy:** [Laughs.] Before, I didn't really know how to manage my eating habits. But I got a trainer who explained to me that my metabolism wasn't that fast, so she advised me to eat fewer carbohydrates.

So now I eat more vegetables and proteins, and it works. But I don't really have to "diet" by skipping meals, just [eating] less carbohydrates.

**Gazette:** Do you eat somtam?

**Tammy:** [Laughs.] Oh! I

really like *somtam poo plara* (spicy papaya salad with fermented crab and anchovies; a very spicy, strong-smelling Isarn dish). I like it very much, but sometimes I don't eat it before competitions because maybe it's not too good for my stomach.

**Gazette:** You were Thailand's first tennis star. After Paradorn became so popular, do you feel noi jai (slighted), or were you glad to have some of the pressure off you as Thailand's top player?

**Tammy:** Actually, neither. I have known him since I was very young. He deserves [success]. He works very hard to be in the top 10 in the world. Everyone should be very proud of him because he is the only Asian player ever to break into the top 10.

So I think he deserves to be No 1 among the Thais and he represents Thailand very well. Everybody in the world now knows about the Thai *wai*, and it's be-

cause of him. So I think he has done a really good job promoting Thailand.

**Gazette:** What's your relationship with him like? Do you think the media is too hard on him?

**Tammy:** I thought this interview was about the Fed Cup [an all women's tournament]! [Laughs.] Actually, he is a very friendly person and a lot of fun to be with. I think it's normal for everybody to want to know about the personal life of superstars, but, well, it's tough.

Sometimes I feel sorry for him too, because the media is always trying to find out about his personal life – especially because he's the No 1 [sports] superstar from Thailand. It's normal, so he has to handle it.

**Gazette:** What do you do when you aren't playing tennis? What are your hobbies?

**Tammy:** It depends on my mood. I like reading and other things like normal Thais – going to movies, shopping.

**Gazette:** Your current world ranking is 68 and you've been on the tour for 10 years. Have you ever thought about retiring? Have you given any thought about what you would like to do after you retire?

**Tammy:** This question has

been coming to me a lot the last couple of years. Sometimes, when your results aren't that good it's easy to get bored and tired.

But I still have my goals and I enjoy working. Sometimes, you get down, but it's a normal part of [any] life.

For tennis players, you can't be No 1 forever because everybody else is working hard, too. The most important thing is to enjoy your job and keep trying hard to improve yourself. That's my thing.

But if I retired, well, I have many plans [laughs]. I'd like to study or maybe teach tennis and introduce tennis to youngsters. I am experienced, so I'd like to share that experience with them.

But if I got bored with that maybe I'd like to further my studies and become a businessgirl [laughs]. I don't know, it depends. But for sure, if I study it will be for an MBA, in Thailand.

**Gazette:** Would you mind telling us something about your personal life? Are you secretly married or do you have a partner?

**Tammy:** I am very, very single, *ka* [laughs]. I don't know why. Maybe my job makes it very difficult to have a partner, or a boyfriend, because I travel a lot. It's hard. It's tough, but you know, I think every girl is dreaming about [relationship]. But I'll wait and see.

**Gazette:** What about your dream man?

**Tammy:** I don't have any particular specs. For me, he

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# WITH TAMMY



**Tammy Tanasugarn** was born in the States, but says Thailand would always be her first choice as a place to live.

*thing strictly business?*

**Tammy:** Um, well I think of all of the other girls as my friends because we always wave and say "hi" to one another.

Most of my best friends are Asians, like Angelique Widjaja and Wynne Prakusya from Indonesia, because we seem to come from similar cultures and seem to speak the same way.

**Gazette:** What did you think when you heard about the tsunami? Where were you and what were you doing?

**Tammy:** I was very shocked. I was in Bangkok at the time. I saw the news and was crying and felt very sad about it. But you can't stop anything [that comes] from Mother Earth, you know, so you have to learn and adjust.

I hope this will be a good lesson and that we can adjust. I hope this [tennis] event will help lift Phuket people up, make them happier, and promote tourism.

**Gazette:** Do you think Phuket has any chance to become a place for tennis players to train, such as they do in Florida? Do you think it's too hot here?

**Tammy:** I've been to Florida and it's the same climate. So I think it's a good place for players, especially at the start of the year, before the Australian Open.

A lot of players, like Conchita Martinez and Monica Seles, come to Thailand to have a holiday or practice here. They love Thailand so much. So it would be nice if we could have

the facilities for them to train here.

I think the hotels and the food are No 1 in the world anyhow. I think if we start having more events here, like the Fed Cup and Paradorn Tour, it will raise interest in the game for Phuket people and attract more players.

**Gazette:** A lot of Thai women are obsessed with keeping a pale complexion. Your work means you are out in the sun a lot. Do you worry about getting dark?

**Tammy:** Good question [laughs]! Yes, I do. I usually

don't worry about making myself up too much when I go on court, but whenever it's sunny I have to put on sunblock all over. After that I have to put on "after-sun" cream.

But I still get dark and get wrinkles. If you're in the sun a lot you have to do your best to protect your skin.

**Gazette:** Where will you go when you leave Phuket? Where is your next tournament?

**Tammy:** After Phuket I'll go to Morocco and then on to the French Open and Wimbledon.

doesn't have to be tall or handsome, or anything like that. It's more about his character and whether we could get along together well.

But he has to be a "doga-

holic" [he has to love dogs], because I have four of them [laughs].

**Gazette:** Do you have any close friends on the tour or is the whole



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# LISSOME LEGS FOR A SKIMPY SKIRT

## FASHION

**M**any women feel vaguely uncomfortable at the prospect of strutting their stuff in a miniskirt, especially the really short skirts of around 15 inches in length.

Most women tend to leave these mini- or even microskirts – which tend to resemble a wide belt more than a skirt – to the professionals gracing the catwalks of Milan, London or Paris.

On screen, Ally McBeal or even the slightly better-fed Bridget Jones are keen to show that they have legs and, in the words of rockers ZZ Top, know how to use them.

The miniskirt – too good to be seen only after dark – is making its sexy little way out of the closet and into the office, but one must choose the right length; around 18in or longer is advised.

If Bridget Jones can do it, so can any woman from 16 to ... well, mid-40s, perhaps, as long as the Ministry of Culture does not get its hands on the skirts first.

The *Gazette* asked Wayne Lunt of Club Asia Fitness for advice on how to get your legs in shape for a miniskirt – before you spend your hard-earned baht on one.

### Exercise 1: Lunges (right)

**Step 1:** Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart.

**Step 2:** Take a 65-85cm step forward, landing your heel first and then lowering your body by bending your knee. Do not bend your body forward, and make sure your knee does not extend beyond your toes.

**Step 3:** Keep your upper body vertical directly over your hips, lower your body straight down until the back knee almost touches the ground. Hold the weight of your body on the front leg, then push up from the floor – keeping your body straight – and return to the starting position.

Repeat the same movement with the opposite leg, completing 10 repetitions with each leg before resting for one to two minutes and repeating the exercise.

As you become more proficient and the exercise becomes easier, you can do more repetitions. Given time, you should be able to complete 30 lunges on each leg before resting and then repeating the exercise as many as three times.



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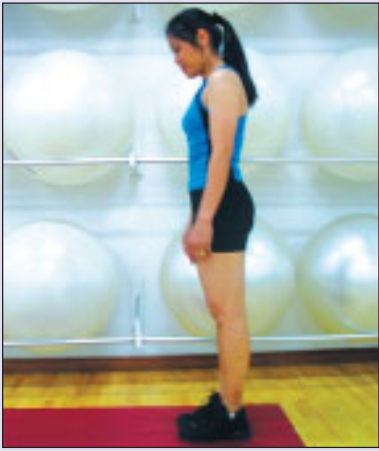
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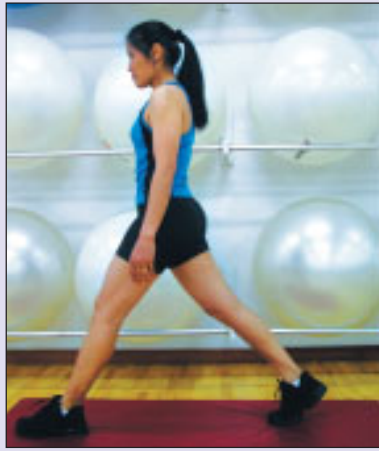


Done regularly, lunges are a great overall leg workout that will firm your upper legs and buttocks.

**Exercise 2: Squats (below)**

**Step 1:** Get in a comfortable upright stance with your feet shoulder-width apart. Your toes should be either pointed straight ahead or slightly outward.

**Step 2:** Keeping your heels planted firmly on the floor, inhale and move your buttocks back and downward. As you move downward, slowly extend your arms out in front of you.



Continue downward, by bending the knees, but be careful not to allow your knees to extend beyond your toes. This will save your knees from too much stress.

**Step 3:** Checking that your back is straight and your knees have not gone beyond your toes, keep going down until your thighs are parallel to the floor.

Exhale as you rise into your starting position. There



should be no sideways movement, especially in the knee or hip area, during this exercise.

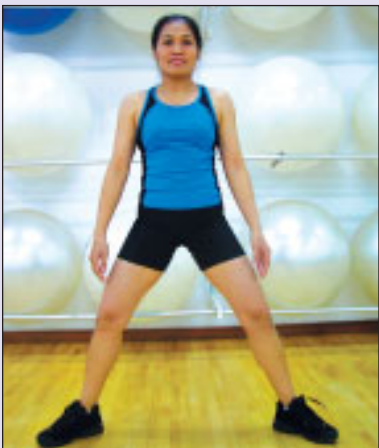
Repeat 10 times before resting for one or two minutes and repeating the exercise again. As with the lunges, given time and practice, you should be able to perform three sets of 30 squats.

This is an excellent workout not only for the legs but also your lower back and torso.

*Photographer: Jaratsri Surat. Model: Renu Arnesen, Senior Gym/Aerobics Instructor at Club Asia Fitness.*

*Thanks to: Wayne Lunt, Club Manager of Club Asia Fitness*

*Location: Club Asia Fitness, 3rd Floor, Royal Phuket City Hotel Tel: 076-233333.*



A miniskirt can look great – if you have the legs for it. The good news is that a bit of exercise can give you great gams.

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# SIMPLY DELHI-CIOUS!

Indian food fans in the Chalong area will be delighted to discover that they can now enjoy authentic cuisine close to the bay.

Having lost their restaurant and tailor shop at Bang Tao Beach in the tsunami last December, Yashpal "Jazz" Singh, Sandeep Singh and chef Raj Kumar decided to open another restaurant in the south of the island.

Raj Kumar, who comes from the Punjab area of India, had eight years of cooking experience in restaurants in Delhi before coming to Thailand and will use only traditional ingredients, which are available from specialist suppliers on Phuket.

The new restaurant, "Mr India", offers generous portions of mouth-watering Indian specialties. As soon as you walk into the restaurant, the tempting aromas will whet your appetite.

While guests are deciding what to order, vegetable pakoras are served free with any 49-baht beer. Lassi drinks are available, either plain or fruit-blended.

The menu includes various Indian breads and a range of vegetarian dishes, with set menus planned for the future.

Desserts are typically Indian: rice pudding, *gulab jamun* and *gujar ka halwa*, among others.

All the dishes at Mr India are freshly prepared, but the delicious results make the wait worthwhile.

Mr India welcomes takeaway orders.

## Chicken Pakoras For 4 people

### Ingredients for pakoras:

350g boneless chicken breast;

## Guest chef

By Jenna Wise



50g roasted *chana* [chickpea] powder;  
10g *degi mirch* [paprika] powder;  
1 pinch baking powder;  
8g *garam masala*;  
salt to taste;  
10ml water;  
Enough *ghee* (clarified butter) for deep frying [you can use cooking oil, but this won't give an authentic taste];  
Salad for garnish.

### Ingredients for mint sauce:

20g plain yogurt;  
25g fresh mint leaves;  
2 small green chilies;  
1.25-cm-square piece of ginger root;  
1 clove garlic, crushed;  
1 small onion, chopped finely.

HELLO DAHLING: (right) A yellow *chana* (chickpea) *dahl* makes a perfect vegetarian dish.



PUKKA TUCKER: What could be better than homemade chicken *pakoras* (left)? Try them with a sweet, tamarind-based or mint-and-yogurt sauce.

Put all the mint sauce ingredients into a blender and mix until you have a smooth sauce.

### Ingredients for sweet sauce:

20g sugar;  
50ml water;  
25g fresh tamarind;  
1 teaspoon *elaichi* [cardamom] powder.

Soak the tamarind in water for about four hours. Squeeze well and boil the fruits together with other sweet sauce ingredients for 15 minutes. Allow to cool before serving.

### Method for the pakoras:

Cut the chicken into strips about

7 cm long and 1.5 cm wide. Mix the other ingredients well together to make a paste. Roll the chicken strips in this and deep fry in *ghee* on a low heat for about four minutes. Remove and drain, then allow to cool slightly and fry for a further two minutes. Serve with the sauces and a salad.

## Yellow Dahl For 2 people

### Ingredients:

50g yellow *dahl*;  
100ml water;  
1 teaspoon *haldi* [turmeric] powder;  
1 teaspoon mixed crushed garlic, ginger root and salt;  
1½ teaspoons salt;

1 small diced onion;  
1 small tomato, diced;  
1 teaspoon fresh chopped coriander;  
1 small finely chopped green chili;  
*ghee* for frying;

### Method:

Boil the *dahl* in the water for five minutes. Fry all the other ingredients in *ghee* for about a minute so they are slightly browned. Drain the *dahl* well and stir in the fried mixture.

Mr India Restaurant, 43/73 Moo 5, Chalong Plaza, Chalong Bay, Phuket 83100. Tel: 09-7810180, 04-0160005. Open 10:30am – 10:30 pm, seven days a week.

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### 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!!

Imagine you have seven mangoes and two paper bags. How can you put an odd number of mangoes into each bag?

Answer: Put three mangoes in each bag. The seventh mango? Don't put it in either bag!

### SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



## Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



- Lateens, spankers and topgallants are types of what?
- Pretty in Black* is the new album by which Danish rock band?
- Skylon is an aircraft design from which British rocket scientist?
- In which city would you find the Shifeng Bridge?
- What name is given to the lower corner of a square sail?
- What language is made of dits and dots?
- Who wrote the novel *Das Boot*?
- What was the name of the submarine in the novel?
- Harry Mason is the main protagonist of which computer game?
- Who reportedly burned his ships after arriving in the New World?
- Castilian, Catalan, Galician and Basque are the official languages of which country?
- In heraldry, if a man has a shield, what does a woman have?
- Which city in Kent, England, has an iguanodon on its coat of arms?
- Sailors who have crossed the International Date Line are awarded what?
- Which group of islands was the focus of the Guano War of 1864 to 1866?
- The verb "clew" means to do what?
- Name the northern terminus of the St Petersburg Chertvertaya Linya metro line.
- What is the term for a sentence that uses every letter of the alphabet?
- The Arab dish *gameh* principally consists of what?
- Which cartoon character made his debut in *Porky's Hare Hunt* on April 30, 1938?

Answers next week.

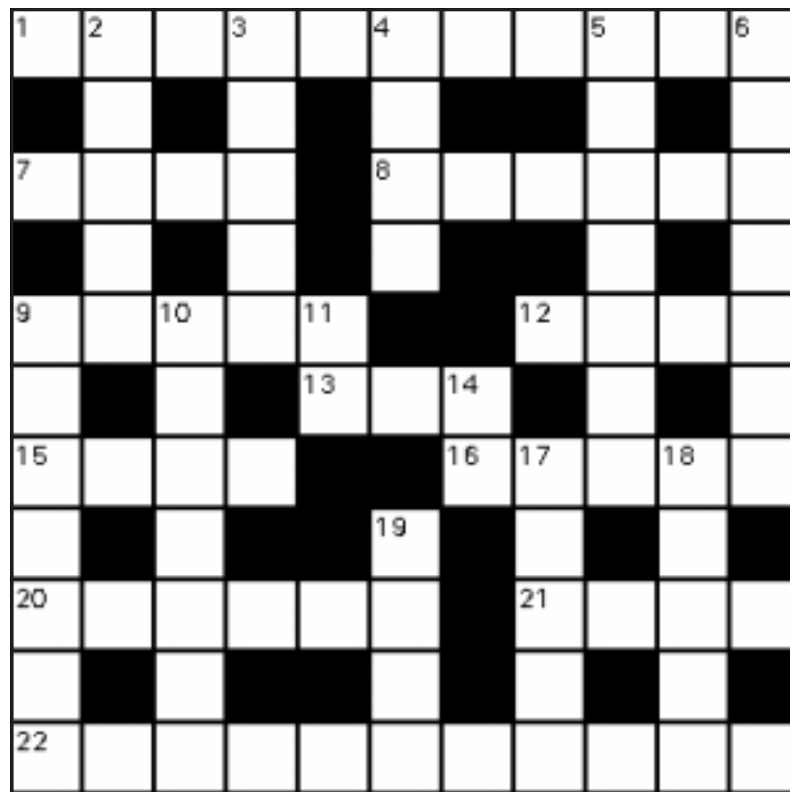
### Never a Cross Word!

#### ACROSS

- Government by an intellectual elite.
- Definitely not good.
- Scottish clan identifier.
- If you're a fibber, you won't like this.
- One time only.
- First prime number.
- Caligula's water.
- Three Musketeers* author.
- Not working properly.
- Pressing implement.
- San Franciscan, for example.

#### DOWN

- Little eel.
- Little island.
- Serious promise.
- Word that means the opposite of another.
- Soldiers of 17dn.
- One big problem with Bangkok.
- Not common.
- Vietnam's Uncle \*\*.



- Mister \*\**, 1960s sitcom.
- North in American Civil War.
- Delicious smell.
- Keyboard mistake.

Solution next week.

### ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

- The Vikings; 2. Brian Boru; 3. Ciao; 4. 75; 5. *Pesach* or *Passover*; 6. Cornwall, England; 7. *Bibendum*; 8. *Opus Dei*; 9. *Marseilles*; 10. 543 BC; 11. *Thespis* at the Theater *Dionysius*, Greece; 12. *Moby*; 13. *Eminem*; 14. *Beatrix Potter*; 15. *Proxima Centauri*; 16. 4.22 light years (that's 39,896,955,912,159.36 kilometers); 17. *Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero*; 18. *Diphtheria*; 19. 91; 20. *Technetium*, 1937.



# All the news that's fit to print, and none that isn't

The city fathers have been trying for many years to change the tawdry and sullied reputation of Pattaya, and they are soon to be aided in this fight by a new English-language daily newspaper that will prove beyond any doubt that the days of bad news are behind us forever.

There will be no hint of crime or criminal activity or pictures of ne'er-do-wells between the covers of this soon-to-be-esteemed publication.

Unfortunate accidents involving motor vehicles, motorbikes, elephants and the occasional water buffalo will be reported, but in as mild a manner as possible.

As an example of the kind of stories the newspaper – to be called the *Pattaya Trite* – will be printing, I'd like to offer the following gems:

"A seminar on handicrafts and ironing etiquette was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Really Expensive Resort last Tuesday and Wednesday.

"The seminar was conducted by MR Khunying Faceachecream na Buriram and attended by every woman who's ever had anything remotely to do with the Pattaya International Ladies' Club and Dykes on Bikes."

"A Danish man of middling years offered to interview a couple of girls of easy means at his hotel for the purposes of gaining a sociological profile of Thai working women.

"He politely asked the young ladies if they would consent to having photographic and videographic evidence of their ample charms being made by the man, purely for his own prurient enjoyment and that of his many friends back in Denmark.

"Unfortunately, when the young ladies declined his request on the grounds of being believers in an arcane religion known as Modesty, he became discombobulated and cast the women out without remuneration.

"The ladies were displeased and one of them produced an implement normally used by butchers to reduce a pig's carcass to saleable-sized pieces, while the other brought forth a utensil associated with tenderizing steaks.

"The pair then threatened the man with the removal, without anesthetic, of a vital organ.

"Members of the local constabulary attended the scene and were able to calm the situation with their winning smiles and diplomatic skills.

"The Dane handed over the contents of his wallet and the young ladies departed with broad smiles on their faces."

"A Thai man who appeared tired and emotional after an afternoon and evening of sipping fermented apple juice decided to ride his motorbike home, even though his eyesight appeared to be impaired by the amount of liquid he had consumed.

"Turning onto Sukhumvit Highway the man may well have lapsed into a meditative state, as he failed to notice an oncoming 18-wheeled vehicle.

"The funeral is scheduled for Monday."

"An Englishman who had dined rather lavishly at an establishment serving beverages of an alcoholic nature and then visited a number of the many local temples on Walking Street, had a negative experience with a concrete pylon while in control of a two-wheeled people-moving device on Soi Buakhaw.

"The man was not wearing his protective headgear and parts

of his cranial matter were found embedded in both the pylon and the asphalt with which he had cause to come into contact after involuntarily dismounting from his two-wheeled device at greater than walking pace."

"At the Temple of Many Healing Hands in Soi 6, a birthday party was held to celebrate the eighth day of the heart-warming marriage of 89-year-old Tommy Stinkfinger, originally of Batten-down-Hatch, Surrey, and his 18-year-old wife Lek Morenextofkinthanyoucan-pokeastickat.

"Lek proudly told her many well-wishers Tommy had consented to hiring a young Thai man of her acquaintance to live-in with the happy couple to help with those chores and tasks she couldn't handle by herself.

"She claimed the young man was only too happy to grease Tommy's walking frame each day so the former chartered accountant would always look his immaculate best.

"Lek said the sleeping pills she was administering to Tommy each afternoon were helping him to get a good night's sleep."

These are just a few examples of the many touching stories to come from the *Pattaya Trite* each and every day.

The newspaper's motto is: *Sniffit et weed net shovellum crappus*, which translates as "Let's smell the flowers, not dig the dirt."



The young ladies declined his request on the grounds of being believers in an arcane religion known as Modesty.

# M-iles



The US-built Mercedes-Benz M-Class was probably the first European-styled luxury SUV, but subsequent models from Volvo and BMW – the XC90 and X5, respectively – have undermined the credibility of the Mercedes version.

Some critics have even gone so far as to label it "primitive" and "crude". Harsh words, but compared with Mercedes' rivals' newer models, not far from the truth.

Despite the criticisms, however, more than 620,000 M-Class

models have been delivered since the model's launch in 1997.

At the recent North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) in Detroit, parent company DaimlerChrysler rectified the situation with a new, fully upgraded M-Class, a model that is so big an improvement on the old one that it is bound to claw back part of the market lost to Volvo and BMW.

The new SUV now features a choice of four engines: two common-rail turbo diesels and two gasoline versions. Top of the range is a gas-powered five-



By Jeff Heselwood

## In The Stars

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): Taureans who are hot and bothered are advised to cool down their social activities. Burning the candle at both ends is bound to take its toll. You will soon get the go-ahead for romance and, if you're celebrating a birthday this week, an intimate dinner for two will be ample celebration. The number 6 is likely to bring you luck on Sunday.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): The end of April payday should include an unexpected bonus. There's a chill in the air regarding romance; now is the right time to organize your thoughts. Aries will remind you of a long-forgotten promise – do not try to wriggle out of it. Wednesday is a lucky day for shopping.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): When the elephants are stampeding, you should ignore the monkeys throwing coconuts. You are advised to keep your worries in perspective – someone without your best interests at heart is happy to add fuel to your fire. Regarding business, the best course of action is to branch out on your own. If this is impractical,

## What does fate have in store for you this week?

cal, try to gain more independence.

**LEO** (July 24-August 22): Chasing a romantic rainbow can never bring the satisfaction you hope for. Keep your desires realistic where love is concerned. Wait for a positive sign before making your feelings known. Money matters are well-starred during the first week of May; a way to turn your hidden talents into cash emerges. On Thursday, you won't win an argument against Scorpio.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): Life is looking brighter as May gets underway. You will find a way of getting more respect at work; ask for a salary increase now. This weekend, a friend asks you to intervene in a personal situation. This will have negative consequences, so back away with a smile. The color lavender encourages a tranquil outlook.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): Your outlook is serious this weekend and others will keep their distance. By Monday, your mood lightens when good news comes from afar. It will be safe to act on intuition midweek when a chance meeting causes romantic sparks to fly. If you're single, the chances are that your status will change within a month. Wear emerald green to enhance your appeal.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): If you have been neglected by your partner recently, you will soon glow in a shower of attention. On Monday, you are likely to suffer from forgetfulness; leave aides-memoire in prominent places. If your social life is in a rut, host a party; others will appreciate the gesture and reciprocate accordingly. Number 9 is lucky on Sunday.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November

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# better

Although once described as primitive and crude, the Mercedes-Benz M-Class SUV has been a big seller. The new M-class – with the faults ironed out – looks set to build upon the success of its earlier incarnation.

More aerodynamic, powerful and fuel-efficient than its predecessor, as well as more handsome, it boasts plenty of pulling power – great for climbing curbs, cliffs or society.



liter V8, which produces around 300bhp (223kW) and will power the ML 500 model.

The permanent four-wheel drive has been refined and there are now two versions, with an optional, more complex drive train for severe off-road terrain. Air suspension is standard on the ML 500 and optional on the other models. Traction control and the latest electronic stability program are fitted, as is speed-sensitive power steering.

With the various engine selections available, the slowest top speed, that of the ML280 CDI, exceeds 200kmh while the ML 500 is electronically limited to 250kmh.

Fuel consumption has improved over the outgoing model,

thanks in part to a reduced coefficient of drag, reduced to 0.34 from the previous 0.40.

The makers claim the diesel models require only 9.4 liters of fuel per 100 kilometers, making them the most economical off-roaders in their class.

Mercedes-Benz built an all-new factory in Vance, Alabama, to produce the new SUV. The plant features the latest production facilities although, with no other auto manufacturing in the area, the majority of employees had to be trained from scratch.

The latest M-Class is arguably the most comprehensively equipped SUV in this segment, far surpassing the XC90 and X5. All models feature a unique, seven-speed automatic transmis-

sion, which can be operated manually by paddles on the steering wheel.

Also standard is start-off assistance which prevents the vehicle rolling backward on a decline, and a downhill speed regulator to prevent the car running away on steep downslopes.

“Headlamp Assist” – sensors measure ambient light and switch the lights on or off – is also a standard feature.

On the safety front, two-stage adaptive front airbags are fitted, along with side airbags and full-length “window” airbags to prevent head and other injuries resulting from a lateral impact. In addition to this host of standard features, there is a vast array of options, including a sports package, an off-road package and a luxury interior trim option.

The M-Class saga is undoubtedly a success story, both

for DaimlerChrysler and for the people of Alabama. The launch of the second-generation model is testimony to the quality and refinement to be found in this luxury SUV.

It will go on sale in the US later this year and in early 2006 in Europe.

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

by Isla Star

23-December 21): If you can't take the heat, then get out of the kitchen. If you have been wondering just how much more pressure you can take, then remove yourself from the situation. Career changes are highlighted this month, with a strong possibility of relocation involved. Ask Aquarius for advice. Thursday is the best day for signing agreements.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Adjusting your spending to better suit the thickness of your wallet is recommended. A temporary cash-flow problem needs to be taken seriously, unless you are prepared for debts to mount up. Finances will remain unsettled until the end of May, when your bank balance is set to swell. If you're planning an important date, Sunday is the best day for romance to bloom.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): Giving ultimatums may not come as second nature for you, but it's high time to put your foot down over an overdue debt. The first few days of May are set to be auspicious for discussions; your silver tongue will ensure that others will find it hard

to dispute whatever you say. Something lost will be returned to you this week. Wear earthy shades to stay in touch with reality.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): If you have been concerned about the lack of excitement in your life, there's a treat in store on Tuesday, so be prepared. A surprise is brewing that could open your eyes to a new future. Career changes are still highlighted – keep your ear to the ground in order to hear subtle messages. Ignore gossip: something you learn on Monday has not a single element of truth.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): You won't need to have green thumbs to make your garden beautiful this week. Anything you plant will thrive in the face of possible droughts. Auspicious astral conditions are prevalent until the middle of May, so decide what seeds you really want to sow and get digging. The cosmic consequences of an introduction earlier this month are about to become obvious. Wear light peppermint to attract interest.

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## Bill collectors need to do their jobs a lot better

With fuel prices rising to ever-higher levels, the government has taken measures, such as regulating shopping mall hours, to ensure that the private sector doesn't waste fuel. At the same time, however, it refuses to address gross inefficiencies in its own agencies that actually result in energy wastage.

A good example of this is the bill collection practices of the public utilities. Public bill collectors are paid to ring doorbells, allow a reasonable amount of time for someone to answer, and then collect the money, if possible. Although this seems simple, very few of them actually achieve this – or even attempt it.

Instead, they ignore doorbells completely and drop bills into mailboxes – or wherever else appears most convenient – in order to complete their rounds as quickly as possible.

The result of their indolence is that what should be an efficient system becomes anything but, with perhaps thousands of customers having to make their way to the utility offices during working hours to pay up – most wasting valuable time and energy in the process.

Other options are electronic transfer at the bank or paying at a "Counter Service" desk at the local 7-Eleven or other service provider, both of which entail a service charge. While these services prove convenient at times, is it really right that such enterprises should have sprung into existence and should show good profits in a market that, in large part, owes its existence to governmental inefficiency?

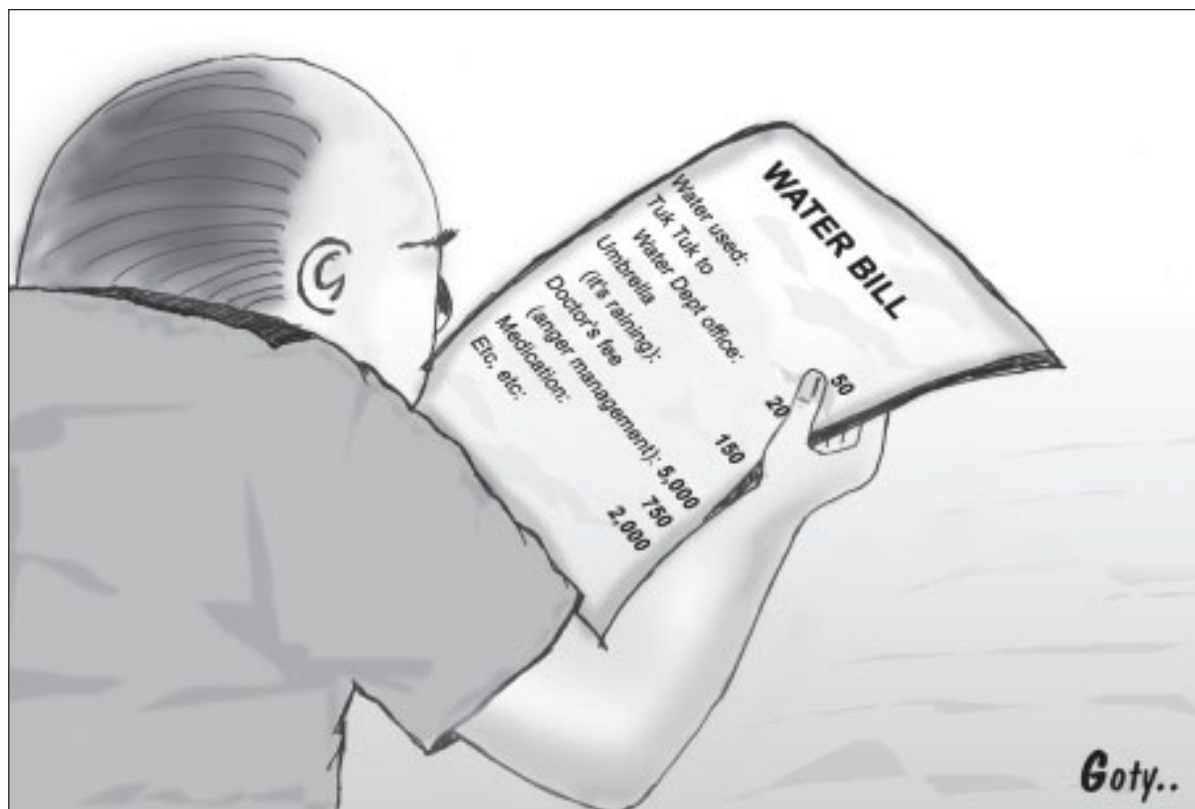
The government has long talked of its plans to adopt "e-citizen" identification cards which will put an end to such wastage. In the meantime, the Information and Communications Technology Ministry, which has responsibility for e-citizenship, has become sidetracked in futile pursuits, such as registering buyers of prepaid SIM cards to stop them using use mobile phones to detonate bombs.

Any householder in Phuket knows which government agencies are the offenders: the Provincial Electricity Authority, the Post Office and its EMS Delivery Service, and – worst of all for residents of Phuket City – Phuket Municipality Water Department (PMWD).

Most of the PMWD's customers pay a monthly bill of around 50 baht. It can be paid only at the PMWD's office.

If the homeowner takes a tuk-tuk to the PMWD's office, it will likely cost a minimum of 200 baht for a round trip – about four times the amount on the bill.

Even the tuk-tuk mafia, it seems, profits from the indolence of the bill collectors, employees of a government that claims to be increasing efficiency and fighting organized crime. – **The Editor**



## Letters

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

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

### No thumbs up for eel-bitten diver

In response to the story about Matt Butcher, the diver who had his thumb bitten off by a moray eel (see News pages), I'd like to say that it serves him right.

Wild creatures should be respected and left in peace, not fed.

Also, Mr Butcher's comment that he didn't have time to reach for his knife was a dumb comment.

Was the idiot going to kill the eel just because it wasn't nice to him?

Robert  
By email

### Force the banks to be called to account

One thing that could help accelerate recovery in Khao Lak after the tsunami is getting some of the smaller resorts up and running.

The owners of some of these resorts are getting very poor responses from their banks with regard to refinancing and the restructuring of loans.

It is in the interest of banks not to be heavy-handed, and to provide support, assistance and guidance to these people in the aftermath of the tsunami.

Many of these resorts have not been paid for prior bookings by agents and the guests that were staying during the tsunami. Surely these operators should be compensated by insurance companies?

There should be independent people appointed to assist and guide these people, who have provided jobs in the past and will provide them in the future.

The Cousin Resort men-

tioned in a recent edition of the *Gazette* fits into this category. It is run by a good person, who is getting a rough deal from her bank. There is concern that there is an ulterior motive to squeeze these small landowners out.

If this is the case, this breaches all the ethics of banking and business. These banks have an obligation to their clients.

Like everyone with any kind of investment, banks are taking a risk, and they have to be in for the good as well as the bad times.

These small resorts embodied the uniqueness and character of Khao Lak. Their owners probably need assistance in interpreting their insurance policies. The damage here was not caused by an earthquake; it was caused by a water surge, and perhaps some of them are covered for this.

Stuart Davie  
Darwin  
Australia

### Lows and highs of a trip to Phi Phi

When my husband and I were planning our stay in Thailand – part of a round-the-world trip – Phi Phi was top of our list of places to visit. Then the tsunami happened and we weren't sure if that would be possible.

But after reading coverage in the local papers, we booked a three-day trip.

A representative from the hotel, the newly-rebuilt Chao Koh Bungalows in Tonsai Village (where the worse damage was done), met us off the boat and walked us through the village.

It was shocking. I have

never seen an area that was so obviously once full of life look so dilapidated and destroyed. And this is months later, after a mammoth clean-up effort by volunteers and locals.

After we checked in we went for a walk along the beach and we passed a volunteer putting debris into trash bags.

Later, I joined a free guided tour organised by Hi Phi Phi voluntary organisation. The guide, Charlotte, arrived on Phi Phi a month after the tsunami and has been working with locals to clean up the village.

Charlotte told us that Hi Phi Phi is paying local men 300 baht a day to help with the clean-up. It is extraordinary what an incredible contribution Hi Phi Phi and other organisations have made.

From such a tragedy something positive is starting to happen, but a couple of niggling questions remain: Why aren't the big resorts rebuilding? Where is the government and international aid?

Small businesses are opening up again but times will be hard if the big resorts don't do likewise

I understand that the government is still discussing plans for the beach area around Tonsai Village, and that the decision is expected at the beginning of May.

This means that the people of Phi Phi will have been waiting at least five months to restart their lives.

To donate to these volunteer groups, visit the following websites: [www.hiphphi.com](http://www.hiphphi.com) and [www.phiphi-releve-toi.com](http://www.phiphi-releve-toi.com)

Sarah Husselmann  
By email

**The Phuket Gazette**

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



# What are the rules for a right turn?

Please can you tell me the rules for traffic when turning right at intersections, especially traffic lights?

Pippa  
Phuket

**Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of Phuket Provincial Transportation Office, replies:**

Some traffic lights have arrows to indicate when drivers should turn right. Usually, if there is a signal for turning right only, it does not turn to green until the light for drivers going straight ahead has turned back to red.

Only when drivers going straight ahead have been told to stop should the arrow for drivers who want to turn right turn to green.

At traffic lights where there is no right-turn arrow, you can turn right any time there is a green signal for you, although you should make sure no vehicles

are coming towards you before you turn.

You should wait at the white line until the road is clear for you to turn.

In Phuket, at intersections where there is no right-turn arrow, it is common to see drivers – especially on motorbikes – turning right as the lights are about to turn green, trying to get through the lights before the oncoming traffic crosses the intersection.

This may be a common sight, but these drivers are breaking the law, which states that drivers turning right must give way to oncoming traffic and should attempt to turn only when oncoming traffic has passed through the intersection.

In theory, offenders should be punished – they are breaking the law – but in practise it is difficult to single out and identify them so, usually, the police don't bother trying to fine them.

# Confusion over visa for a child

I have had two one-year visa extensions as I was married to a Thai and have a son – now two years old – who was born in Australia. He has an Australian passport, but has his Thai father's name on his birth certificate.

My husband died in February. I was promised that I could get a new extension but then I was told this would not be possible, apparently because my son was born in Australia and has an Australian birth certificate. I should have obtained a document from the Thai Immigration office in Perth, Australia, but I wasn't told about this at the time.

I work and support both of us legally in Thailand, and I have a work permit to work in the dive industry and so have a Non-Immigrant B visa.

Is there any way I can get an extension for myself and my son? I do not have an overstay but my son has a three-month overstay.

Pip Gower

# Issues & ANSWERS

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

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

**Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at [www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)**

**Pol Col Chalermpong Vadhanauskha, Deputy Superintendent of Immigration Division 3 in Bangkok, replies:**

A foreigner who can prove he or she has at least one Thai parent can stay in Thailand on a one-year visa, which must be renewed annually.

The easiest thing would be for the son to apply for the visa, and include his mother on the visa. All that would be required is for his birth certificate – showing his Thai father's name – to

be presented at the Immigration office.

However, the mother should first have an officer at Phuket Provincial Immigration Office check the child's passport and confirm how long he is allowed to stay in Thailand, and on what status.

About two years ago the Immigration Commissioner decided that any foreign child may stay in Thailand – without being fined for over-staying – until he or she is 18 years old.

**The Gazette continues to receive many letters from readers offering thoughts and suggestions on what might make Phuket and the region a better place post-tsunami. The snail-like speed of official aid and the re-emergence of jet-skis are two consistent themes.**

## Cleanliness and safety supreme

I propose two quick and cheap ideas to revamp Patong Beach:

Litter, including broken glass, should be removed. The beach always used to be kept clean.

Floating lines should be used to mark safe areas for swimmers. My wife and I were subject to two near-misses from jet-skis.

Implementing these measures will attract tourists back to Patong.

David Sangster  
Scotland

## Jet-skis threaten serenity of Surin

We have been frequent visitors to Phuket over the past five years and we particularly enjoy beautiful Surin Beach, with its clean water and wonderful swimming.

But we – and other tourists we have spoken to on the beach – are concerned about the increasing number of jet-skis on this idyllic stretch of coast.

Not only do these smelly, polluting machines shatter the tranquility of this beautiful beach, but they come disturbingly close to swimmers as their drivers patrol the length of the beach touting for business. This is both polluting and dangerous to swimmers.

We are especially concerned about the danger this poses to children, the elderly and people who are not strong swimmers.

We understand some tourists like these and other types of watersports; however, there should be some regulation of their use.

For instance, the jet-skis could be in one area of the beach and their riders directed to ride at least 200 meters offshore, with a buoy-marked channel for the machines to leave and return to the beach.

If no controls on these jet-skis and motor boats are put in place, it is more likely than not that an accident will occur. The resulting publicity from such an accident is the last thing the Phuket tourist industry needs at this time.

Greg and Sue Costello  
Australia

## Jet-skis: unnatural and unwelcome

Coral reefs are one of nature's wonders. I explore the reef at Kata Beach often and I take joy in seeing exotic fish I've not seen before, or coming upon a colony of anemones populated by clownfish.

I can spend up to an hour searching the reef, forgetting myself in its myriad lifeforms.

Unfortunately, I almost lost myself literally the other day: my head was almost taken off by a pair of jetskis.

I was diving well within the reef. As I surfaced, one jet-ski missed me by no more than a meter and another was barreling right at me. I tried frantically to wave this one off; the girl riding it saw me at the last moment and turned away, spraying me with

water. I was unnerved; I had come very close to becoming another Thai tourist casualty.

I am a regular visitor to Phuket and I stay for long periods. Last year, before the tsunami, several buoys marked off the boundaries of the reef at Kata Beach. Even then I had close encounters with jet-skis, but now there is only one buoy and, frankly, it is very dangerous out there for snorkelers or divers.

The jet-skiers do not know the boundaries and I am sure the people renting out the jet-skis do not tell them to avoid the reef.

Something has to be done about this dangerous situation. I fear going out there now, and when I do, I am constantly on the lookout for the jet-skiers and I cannot enjoy the reef and find those moments of peace that mean so much to me.

There is really no one in authority that I can talk to concerning this problem at the beach, such as a lifeguard or beach security, so I hope this letter will be read by someone with the authority to effect change.

When a person rents a jet-ski he or she should be given a list of written rules and the renter should make sure these are understood. The reef should be marked off with a line of buoys.

Mark  
Patong

## Eye of the beholder

I understand that the government will press ahead with its silly plan to color-coordinate the beach umbrellas along Patong Beach. This will create difficulties for

swimmers, especially those – like me – with weak eyesight.

I can find my beach chair only by remembering the color and the placement pattern of the umbrellas. If they are all the same color and placed equidistant, it will create confusion among beach users.

I also call on the government to understand – and try to meet – tourists' needs, such as reinstating the cordoned-off safe zones that are out of bounds to jet-skis and speedboats.

Must someone be ripped in half by a boat's propeller before action is taken?

Bespectacled Bather  
By email

## The desperate need for a solution

I have read with interest in the *Gazette* about the government's reaction to the cries for help from the people of Phuket and Krabi. And I have had to pause and reflect whether this is reality or a bad dream.

As I write, it is March 26, three months since the tsunami, and only now has the (watered down) budget been approved in Bangkok. How long will it take to come to Phuket and where will it be spent?

Best case scenario says six-to-nine months, with most funds going to grand projects such as the aquarium or widening the road by Central Festival Phuket.

But Phuket's prosperity is driven by SMEs – small/medium business enterprises – such as ours.

This week alone we paid

land and house taxes, signage taxes, three types of income tax, employee tax, a 10,000-baht water bill – all of which amounted to more than 100,000 baht, and that doesn't include staff salaries. The dreaded electricity bill has not come yet.

Our total occupancy rate for last month was less than 20%, and at half price, too. We asked about possible tax breaks, deferring or paying by instalment, but the answer was no, since we have not heard any news from Bangkok.

Airlines have mentioned halving ticket prices and waiving airport fees. This was proposed three months ago, but there still has not been an answer from Bangkok. But MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) participants and government officials can get 2,000-baht roundtrip tickets to Phuket now.

There is something wrong with this approach. Phuket people pay full price and people not affected by the tsunami pay half price? MICE meetings last 3-4 days, usually at five-star hotels, with catered food bused into and around Phuket. How many participants go to tailors' shops, dive shops, small restaurants and hotels or use taxis and tuk-tuks?

The other strategy is to ship in more Asian customers, on pre-paid packages and using pre-arranged establishments, but just six months ago, the development of this tourist segment received a lukewarm reception at best.

We need a sensible solution, and we need it now.

Steve  
Phuket



# The last angry survivor

The title of Ian Denys Peek's book, *One Fourteenth of an Elephant* (Doubleday, New York, 2004, 520pp), refers to an incident during the construction of the infamous Death Railway, when the author was one of a crew of 14 working in tandem with an elephant. He was in love with that elephant.

This is likely the last memoir about the Death Railway, as the youngest survivors are in their mid-eighties now. The book opens with no preamble, as Peek's pioneer group of 1,600 – British and Australian soldiers and his own group of ex-civilian Singapore Volunteers – arrive at Ban Pong on October 17, 1942, and march east into the jungle to set up the first construction camp at a place called Wampo.

A year later, the Thailand-Burma railway would be complete and 22,000 POWs dead. The toll on Asian civilian workers has been estimated at 110,000.

Peek survives through the help of a close group of comrades, which includes his brother Ron, who relentlessly scrounges for food and look after each other.

This is not the noble picture portrayed in *The Bridge over the River Kwai*. With the exception of two colonels and

almost all the medical officers – most notably Sir Edward "Weary" Dunlop – the officer class cruelly fail their men. They keep themselves to themselves, in their own huts, exempt from labor, drawing superior rations, reading, playing bridge, being waited upon by batmen.

The enlisted men are abandoned. They are swiftly reduced to emaciated figures, barefoot and clad in nothing more than hats and loincloths, while their officers remain resplendent in full uniform.

Peek and his brother had grown up in Shanghai and, after secondary education in England, they were reunited with their parents in Singapore in 1939.

They are more savvy than the raw recruits from England. Their first stroke of luck is getting assigned to a small camp south of Wampo to build a bridge over the Kwei Noi River.

For five months they are left pretty much on their own, devising their own solutions to construction problems, enjoying clean water and a disease-free environment. They are paid four pence a day and can buy eggs and fruit from Thai river traders.

## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

workers, only 32 are still on their feet and able to work – 700 are too far gone to stand, and the rest are dead.

Worse is to come. Cholera strikes. Peek and his friends are dispatched to a nearby civilian camp to remove the heaped corpses of Tamil laborers. It's a scene of unforgettable horror. Some 60 years later, Peek is still full of rage against "the savage, brutal Nips". No forgiveness for him.

His rants against the Japanese, God, politicians and the officer class become repetitious and should have been edited, but Peek redeems himself through his keen insights into the survival instincts of his fellow prisoners.

In March 1943, they are returned to the crowded filth of the big Wampo camp, rife with sickness and death. Then they are transferred further north to Tongchan camp, ruled by a tyrannical Japanese sergeant known as "The Tiger".

When Peek and his comrades arrive, they find that, of the original 1,600

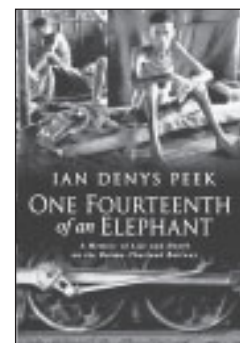
Peek saves himself by volunteering for small work parties where the work is lighter, the food better, the chance of catching disease less.

But in the end, just before the completion of the railway, he comes down with a severe case of beriberi and is sent downriver to the Tarsao "hospital" camp. There he is reunited with his brother Ron, whose leg is afflicted with a monstrous tropical ulcer and is to be amputated the next day.

Ron beats the 16-to-1 odds to survive the operation. With the railway complete, the prisoners move into central Thailand and dense population centers, where the kindness of the people enable them to survive the war.

If there is any moral to this gruesome story it is this:

"Accepting things as they are (totally outside any man's experience) while holding to a firm faith in the future (against all logic) and somehow distancing the soul from unpleasant daily reality, these are all essential to maintaining sanity, our personal wholeness and pride, and the determination to behave as civilised and intelligent men."



# Antivirus protection for free? Try AVG

I have had several readers write to me over the past few weeks asking how to tell Norton or McAfee to take a hike.

CC put it most succinctly: "Is there a virus protection program that doesn't constantly ask you to pay more than 1,200 baht (US\$30) for a new update? I have had Norton for about six months and it seems I have given them money twice before. Now they are saying I need to open up a vein again. What gives?"

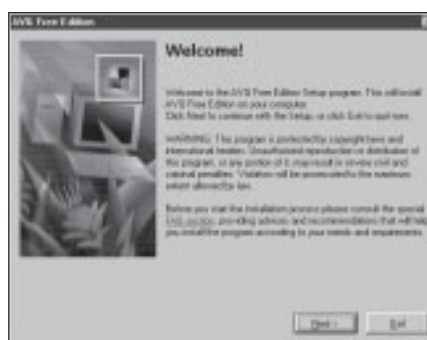
I have quite a few friends who work for antivirus (AV) companies, so I'm not going to throw brickbats at the working stiff who keep us all one step ahead of viruses, trojans, worms and other malware.

But while I have endless praise for the folks in the trenches, the people who run those

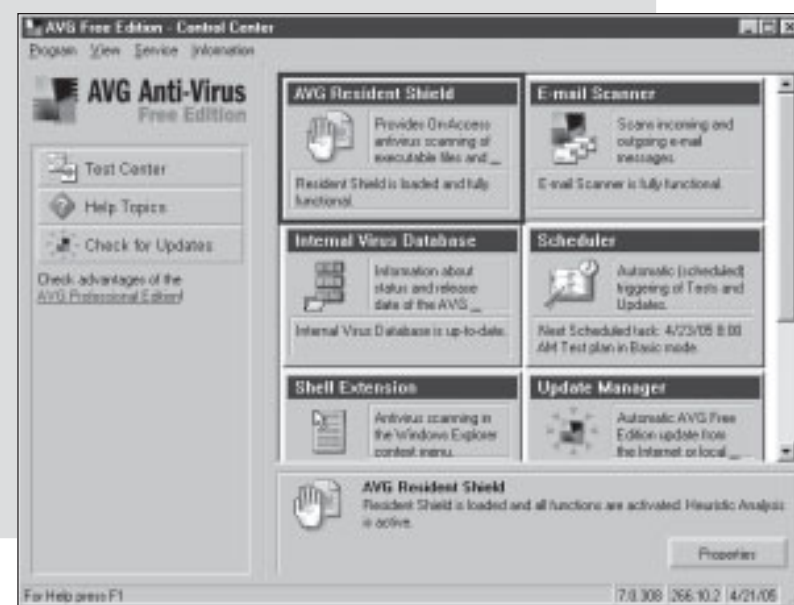
antivirus companies realize they've hit a goldmine, and they're going to strip it for all it's worth.

The business model for most antivirus companies is just like the business model for a shaving company: give away the razor and sell the blades. AV companies frequently give away their software – almost all new computers come with Norton or McAfee installed – but after a week or a month or two, the AV company charges for the updates.

No matter how you slice it, an AV program isn't much good if you don't update it frequently. So millions and millions of Windows users demand their AV updates, gladly shelling out shillings, shekels and *satang* for stop-gap solace that grows stale on a daily basis. It's an incredibly lu-



After installing AVG Free (above), head for the Test Center panel (left) and scan your computer for unwanted viruses and trojans.



crative – and enforced – addiction.

One company marches to a different drummer. Grisoft, a privately-held German company with offices in Europe and the US, claims 20 million users of their AVG antivirus package worldwide. Their business model parallels the one used by some shareware companies: they let individuals use the product for free, and sell low-cost licenses to companies, schools and other institutions.

Remarkably, folks who install the Free version of AVG get all the protection that paying subscribers receive. Those who pay (about 1,300 baht, total, for two years) get to download their updates from a faster server, and they qualify for technical support.

I'm writing another computer book – starting another new

series of *Dummies* books – and the antivirus advice I give in the book is short and to the point.

No matter what AV program you have now, download AVG Free (from [free.grisoft.com](http://free.grisoft.com)); disconnect your computer from the Internet; uninstall your current AV program (click Start | Control Panel | Add or Remove Programs, and be prepared to re-start your computer a couple of times); install AVG free; re-connect yourself to the Internet; go through the AVG setup program and download the latest updates; then sit back and watch in wonder.

AVG Free works like a champ. It has hooks into major applications (such as Word and Excel), so it'll scan files before you open them. It works with your email program (in Outlook or Outlook Express) to scan attachments.

It fetches updates automatically in the middle of the night, every night, and runs complete scans according to the schedule you set. When it finds a piece of malware, it lets you zap the bugger out, or quarantine it (in case you change your mind later, you can bring the offending file back).

In short, AVG Free has all of the features you'd expect from any full-priced product – and it doesn't have the temerity to ask you to feed the corporate coffers every time you turn around.

I don't understand why any individual pays for antivirus protection any more. And if your company spends more than 800 baht per unit per year for anti-virus programs, support and updates, you're paying too much! See [www.grisoft.com](http://www.grisoft.com) for details.

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



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# Zero applications for new 7-seat taxis

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET: Nearly a month after the April 1 launch of the "Taxi Phuket Development Project", not a single person has applied for a government-subsidized loan to buy one of the 100 metered taxis on offer.

The high-profile launch took place at Central Festival and was presided over by Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura, who said he supported the idea of putting more metered taxis on the road as a way of giving tourists more "transport options".

Although heralded as an attempt to break up the transport syndicates that have made hired taxi services in Phuket the most expensive in the country, the scheme has thus far been a non-starter.

The loans are being offered by the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank (SME Bank), whose Phuket Branch Manager Sumate Oplod told the *Gazette* that only about 10 people had contacted the bank during the first three weeks of April to learn more about the loans or ask for application forms.

Under the scheme, prospective buyers can buy one of the



**NO TAKERS:** But the manager of the local branch of the SME Bank believes that would-be owners are trying to amass the down payment, and that the scheme will take off.

vehicles and 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. Total vehicle cost under the plan is 920,000 baht.

K. Sumate said loans could be issued only to private individuals, who would be limited to one vehicle each. No collateral is required to secure a loan, though all applicants must have

a suitably qualified guarantor. For example, in the case of those using government officials as guarantors, these guarantors must be at least C6 level or higher, he said.

Applicants with good credit ratings and no criminal record could get immediate approval and the SME Bank would then directly pay the Bangkok-based manufacturer of the vehicles, Thai Rung Union Car (TUC).

When asked why he thought the program was off to such a slow start, K. Sumate said he believed it might be because those interested in buying a cab were still working to amass the down payment. He said he expected to begin receiving applications soon.

If they are allowed to operate freely – a big if – the seven-seat station wagon taxis should allow their independent operators

to make a fairly handsome profit.

Virat Kulsri, Senior Assistant Managing Director of TUC, said earlier that the vehicles get 16 kilometers per liter and can carry more passengers and luggage than other taxis currently operating in Phuket.

Operating at a government fixed fee of 50 baht for the first 2km, then 7 baht per km thereafter, the vehicles will also be cheaper than other current options.

K. Virat said owners should be able to collect between 2,500 baht and 4,000 baht a day in fares – enough to pay off the SME loans, which work out to 477 baht a day.

The vehicles are also available for cash purchase directly though TUC, he added.

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), told the *Gazette* that none of the TUC taxis had been registered at his office since the plan was put in place.

He said that although the vehicles could be registered only in Phuket, they would be allowed "an exception" to take fares to destinations in nearby provinces such as Phang Nga and Krabi.

## ON THE MOVE

Bangkok-born **Andrew Cornelio**, 35, has been appointed Director of Sales and Marketing of the Dusit Laguna Resort Phuket.

Mr Cornelio joined the hospitality industry in 1990. He started his career as a concierge at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Bangkok. He later moved to the sales department, where he eventually became Director of Sales.

He then joined Meritus Suites State Tower, Bangkok, as Director of Sales and Marketing, a position he held until he took up his post at Dusit Laguna Resort Phuket.



**Pattiya Klinchaem**, 34, from Chiang Mai, has been appointed Guest Service Manager at Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club. K. Pattiya, who holds a diploma in marketing, joined the company eight years ago as a guest relations officer in the front office.

Briton **Simon Maynard** has been appointed Deputy Managing Director for Courts Megastore (Thailand) Ltd. Mr Maynard, 45, is based in Phuket.

A business graduate of East London University, he worked for Ikea and for the Dixons Group in London, until he moved to Asia with the Jardine Matheson Group in 1997.

In 2001, Mr Maynard joined Courts as Director of Merchandise and Logistics for Courts Mauritius. From there, he was promoted to the position of Managing Director of Courts Domenica.



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

# Rising US interest rates hit carry trades

**W**hat a carry-on: The recent rise in US short-term interest rates has had a noticeable effect on global financial markets. It is also accepted that by the end of 2005, many people are going to understand what is meant by the term "carry trade".

A carry trade is a very simple concept. Large investors, mostly in the US, have been taking advantage of low interest rates to borrow money in US dollars, then invest the proceeds in higher-yielding assets.

These assets include bonds not only in emerging markets such as South Africa and Latin America but also in high-yield bond markets such as Australia and New Zealand. Some of the money has found its way into various stock markets and some is held on deposit in high-yielding currencies.

All major investors are watching the US Federal Reserve with close attention. Every

speech by its chairman, Dr Alan Greenspan, is analyzed to the nth degree. Investors are extremely alert for the slightest change in tone to signal changes in policy.

US interest rates are rising following virtually every meeting of the US Federal Reserve, with the latest increase taking the base lending rate to 2.75%. Although this is still low, it marks a considerable rise from 1%, which was the base rate just over a year ago.

For those who are considering using carry trades as an investment strategy, be warned that each US interest rate hike increases the cost of borrowing and lowers the investment profit.

With this trend of rising interest rates almost guaranteed to continue during 2005, many carry trades are going to be unwound.

This will lead to a substantial flow of money leaving both emerging and high-yielding markets, and it partially accounts for

the rise – after each rate hike – of the US dollar against other currencies.

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

## MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson



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# Samui set for week of sailing excitement

**SAMUI:** The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Koh Samui International Regatta will run from May 22 to 28. The week-long event, now officially recognized by the International Sailing Federation, will feature five days of racing around Koh Samui.

The event is organized by the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand, the Royal Varuna Yacht Club and the Royal Thai Navy, which will have an entry in every race.

All onshore activities will take place at the host hotel, the Central Samui Beach Resort on Chaweng Beach.

The start and finish lines for all races will be just offshore from the hotel, offering guests and spectators a grandstand view of the action.

Races will include passage races and some exciting "round-the-cans" competitions in Chaweng Bay.

Although May 22 is the official registration day, crews arriving on May 21 may register early and then attend the Pre-Regatta Welcome Party on Chaweng Beach.

After three consecutive days of competition, which begin May 23, May 26 will be a rest day and sailors keen to take a swing will be invited to a Regatta Golf Day to be held at Santiburi Samui Country Club.

Following the final two days of racing, there will be an awards ceremony and closing party at the Central Samui Beach Resort.

## Divers complete Khao Lak-Similans swim

**Between April 7 and 9, Khao Lak-based dive instructor David Allen and eight of his colleagues and friends did a sponsored swim in aid of a campaign to protect sharks.**

**But this was no ordinary sponsored swim or a few lengths of the local swimming pool; this was, in swimming terms, an epic journey, around 60 kilometers in the open ocean, from the coast of Phang Nga to the renowned Similan Islands.**

**Here, Mr Allen, who came up with the idea for the swim, gives his own personal account of what those three days were like:**

**Y**ou know when you have one of those crazy ideas and you jokingly tell someone: "Wouldn't it be cool if...?"

Normally, people laugh at you and then forget what you said. But not everyone has employers like ours – Peter Muller and Sally Burbage, the owners of Sea Dragon Dive Center.

They didn't laugh at my crazy idea and forget about it. No, they just said: "So, why don't you swim to the Similans then?"

And, after two years of (pretty poor) planning, we did. The trip was funded by our employers, and we were sponsored to raise money for the PADI "Protect the Sharks" campaign.

When the first day of the



The team all joined in for the last leg. They are seen here swimming into Ao Gurke on Similan Island.

swim finally arrived, I could not believe we were actually going to do it. But there we were, my colleague and I, at 6:30 am, on a beach at Khao Lak that was empty apart from us, a small group of well-wishers, one kayak and our masks and fins.

On Day 1 we made good progress and covered 26.7 kilometers; our average speed was 2.36kmh. We were lucky with the sea conditions; it was pretty flat and the current was falling for most of the day, which seemed to speed things up.

At 5:50 pm, after 11 hours of swimming, we marked our progress with the GPS and headed for port and a deserved pizza.

On Day 2 we swam well again, and even against a rising current we were doing more than 2kmh on a flat sea. At one point, the others decided to empty the water from inside the kayak and left me to swim out on my own for a while.

The total for Day 2 was even better than for Day 1, though: 28.3km, with an average speed of 2.57kmh. We still hadn't

seen many fish, and my spear was taken off the kayak and put on the boat.

We marked our location with the GPS and spent a mosquito-free night in the Similans.

With only 11km left to go, we were all looking forward to a lunch-time finish on Day 3, which meant we would have time for relaxing, and maybe a fun dive.

With a mostly rising current, we averaged only 2.1kmh, but the Similans were soon in sight. We were soon swimming over Breakfast Bend Reef off Koh Bangu and cutting through the rocks at Snapper Alley.

We all swam the final leg into Ao Gurke on Koh Similan and celebrated our time of 27 hours and 45 minutes with the customary spraying of Champagne. Mission accomplished!

One thing that did concern me during the swim was the lack of fish. Maybe there have always been so few around, or maybe they stay near the seabed in the day, or could it be possible that the whole area is overfished?

## Patong Darts League

**PATONG:** OffShore kept their commanding lead in the current round of the Patong Darts League with a crushing 9-0 victory over Piccadilly, while Queen Mary kept pace by sinking Valhalla 7-2.

**April 19 Results:** Amigos\* 5 Pickles 4; Didi's 2 Shakers\* 7; Nag's Head\* 7 Dog's Bollocks 2; OffShore 9 Piccadilly\* 0; Valhalla 2 Queen Mary\* 7; Champs v Two Black Sheep postponed. (\*winners of beer leg.)

**May 3 fixtures:** Amigos v Shakers; Champs v Pickles; Didi's v Dog's Bollocks; Nag's Head v Queen Mary; OffShore v Two Black Sheep; Valhalla v Piccadilly (home teams first).

**Standings:** 1. OffShore (34pts); 2. Queen Mary (28); 3. Shakers (21); 4. Pickles (20); 5.= Amigos, Nag's Head, Didi's (16); 8.= Piccadilly, Valhalla (15); 10. Champs (13); 11. Dog's Bollocks (6); 12. Two Black Sheep (4).

# Croats win FedCup cliffhanger in Patong

By Stephen Fein

**PATONG:** Croatia's FedCup team pulled off a 3-2 win over Thailand after star player Jelena Kostanic paired up with Matea Mezak to win the deciding doubles match 6-4, 6-2 over Tamarine "Tammy" Tanasugarn and Napaporn Tongsalee.

The win capped an exciting two days of tennis, with about 2,000 people braving the sweltering heat to cheer on the home team in the first international tennis match held in the province.

On the first day of the two-day competition, Thailand got off to a good start when Tammy, the world No 68, beat long-legged Croatian beauty and world No 96 Sanda Mamic.

In the first set, the two stayed on serve until Tammy broke Mamic in the 11<sup>th</sup> game to go up 6-5 and then served out the final game to love, to go up 1-0.

In the second set, Mamic saved two break points to win the first game, but after that it was all Tammy, who broke Mamic's next two serves on the way to a 7-5, 6-1 win, giving Thailand an early 1-0 lead.

In the second singles, the athletic Kostanic (No 36) took on Suchanun Viratprasert (No 202), winning a tight first set 7-5. Suchanun fell behind 2-0 in the second set before breaking Kostanic twice to win 6-4.

In the decider, the pair exchanged breaks to stay on serve, until the Croat finally broke Suchanun while up 4-3, then held serve to win the match 7-5, 4-6, 6-3, leveling the best-of-five tournament at 1-1.

In reverse doubles the following day, the first match pitted both teams' top-ranked players, Tammy and Kostanic. But despite partisan Thai support, the left-handed Croat played some of the best tennis of the competition, downing Tammy in straight sets (6-3, 6-2) with a series of booming down-the-line forehand winners to put the Croats up 2-1.

Few expected 22-year-old Suchanun to have much of a chance against Mamic in the second match, but she started off by immediately breaking the Croat and winning the first set 6-3.

The match offered a sharp contrast in on-court personalities, Mamic groaning loudly, banging her racket on the ground and

cussing in Serbo-Croat, whereas Suchanun played in a very businesslike fashion throughout.

There was a brief rain delay in the second set with Mamic up 2-1. The raindrops vaporized as soon as they hit the court, adding to the oppressive humidity.

When play resumed, Suchanun battled back with breaks in the eighth and 12<sup>th</sup> games, and the pair found themselves deadlocked 6-6, forcing a tie-break.

It was Suchanun's composure and greater ability to deal with the crushing heat that allowed her to go on and close out the match by winning the tie-break decisively at 7-1, evening the tournament score at 2-2 and keeping Thailand's chances alive.

For the doubles showdown, Croatia coach Goran Prpic made a wise move by replacing Mamic, who was originally listed for doubles play but was suffering cramps and heat exhaustion, with 20-year-old Matea Mezak. She was paired with Kostanic, while Tammy took to the court with doubles specialist Tongsalee (No 306).

The first match stayed on serve until the 10<sup>th</sup> game, when the Croats, up 5-4, broke the Thais to take the first set 6-4.

In the second set, the heat appeared to be taking its toll on Tammy, who made more unforced errors than normal. The Croats took advantage by breaking the Thais in the fourth game to go up 3-1, and then never looked back as they held on to win game, set, match (6-4, 6-2), and tournament.

Despite the 3-2 loss, Tammy said she was happy with the way the Thai team played, especially Suchanun.

"I played well in singles. In doubles, Napaporn [Tongsalee] did a good job, but I could not maintain my game and went for some bad shots. Croatia has more experience and we did our best in our first FedCup Group II match," she said of the team, which found itself in the FedCup's Group II after a shock upset victory over Australia in the last round.

When asked if he was happy with the win, a rather taciturn Coach Prpic told the press "Of course ... and I am glad to get out of these conditions."

All the Croat players agreed



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Jelena Kostanic (white hat) slaps the hand of doubles teammate Matea Mezak after winning a point during their winning doubles match against Tamarine Tanasugarn and Napaporn Tongsalee. The Croats went on to win the crucial match 6-4, 6-2.

Right: Because of the heat and humidity – or poor promotion – there were few spectators to witness Suchanun Viratprasert's defeat of world No 96 Sanda Mamic.

that these were by far the hottest and most humid conditions they had ever competed in.

Chewing bubble gum and looking ashen, Mamic said the heat had caused her to vomit during a break the organizers gave both players "due to extreme conditions".

"At the Australian Open it gets hot too, but it's dry heat. No, I have never played in conditions like this before," she said.

The heat had its effect on the fans, too. Despite a steady supply of ice water and chilled hand towels, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura lasted less than a full set and Phuket Senator Paiboon Upatising, children in tow, stayed for only two games.

Turnout for the event, which was televised on UBC and abroad, was surprisingly low, though it is not certain whether it was the extreme heat or poor promotion that kept the fans away.

The irony of the poor turn-



out, given the planning and expense the event clearly entailed, was made clear in the first day, when one of the Croat players held up her serve because of a noise distraction coming from outside the stadium.

Little did she know that the disturbance was coming from a sound truck playing a recorded message in Thai to encourage

more people to attend the tournament.

As for the court, built to International Tennis Federation standards and at a cost of 3 million baht by the Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand, rumor is that Patong Municipality will tear it down and restore the site to its original condition – a grass-free vacant lot used as a soccer pitch.

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The high walls that surround this six-bedroom, contemporary-styled house in Rawai add an air of privacy to the grounds, a welcome feature for those using its 28-square-meter swimming pool.

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The lower floor consists of a large open-plan living/dining room with a well-equipped Western-style kitchen and breakfast bar.

This floor also has two bedrooms – with a shared bathroom – a pantry and a storage area. Polished hardwood is used for flooring throughout. There is also an as-yet-unfinished 30-sqm games room-cum-office.

The remaining four bedrooms of this 234-sqm house are on the upper floor, including the master bedroom, which features an en-suite bathroom, built-in closets and a balcony overlooking the pool. There is also a third bathroom.

Utilities include UBC/TV, two telephone lines, well water,

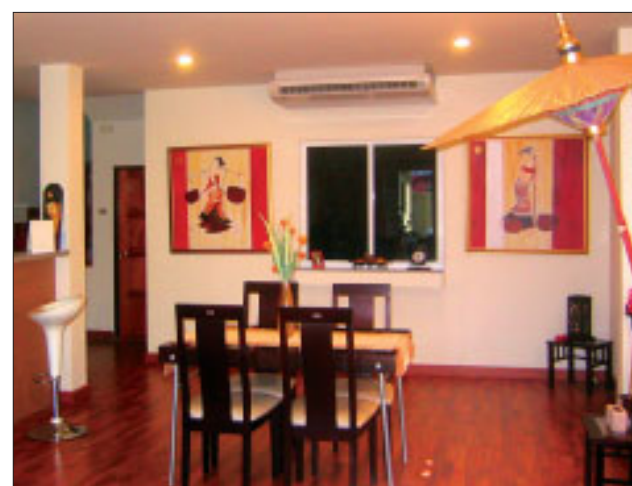


a water heater, three-phase electricity, air conditioning and fans. The window frames and sliding patio doors are made from low-maintenance aluminum.

The property, which has a *Nor Sor 3 Gor* land title, is for sale at 16 million

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## Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

I had a bit of a negative view of gardening when I was a youngster. It seemed to be done by grizzled old men who smelled of stale pipe tobacco, who had hands like sandpaper after years of scrabbling about in the dirt, and who mumbled to themselves. They weren't the sort of role model to fit a young man's aspirations.

The closest to a "gardening hero" I can remember was an old bloke called Percy Thrower, who made regular appearances on a children's TV show called *Blue Peter* until he went up to that rather large garden in the sky a few years ago.

He at least looked like the sort of old gentlemen you might want as a grandfather, rather than an old, scary "gardener" type. But gardening was still definitely a pursuit only for old people.

I was wrong, of course. So, in an effort to redress the balance, here are some ideas that will hopefully kindle in kids at least a little interest in the pursuit of growing green stuff, and begin to dispel the myth that gardening is just, well, boring. Who knows, the Percy Thrower of the future may be here in Phuket.

**1. Root causes:** The first idea explores whether or not plants grow in different soils. Get four small pots all of about the same size. The only thing that really matters is that they have some kind of drainage holes at the bottom. Styrofoam or waxed paper cups are perfect.

Fill each pot with a different soil: some soil from your garden, a handful of sand from the nearest beach, some rough soil with stones and debris (there are plenty of construction sites to choose from), and some potting compost, out of one of those 30-baht bags from a garden center.

Put five or six rambutan (or anything similar) seeds on the soil. Now sprinkle about half a centimeter of soil over the seeds and lightly pour on some water. Any excess water should dribble out of the holes in the base. Wa-

# Homegrown science



**FRANKENFRUIT:** Want to learn the how to grow the best of whatever you want from your garden, such as these rambutan? Try a few home experiments and use the best techniques you discover.

ter each pot lightly every day with regular tap water.

After the shoots appear from the soil, put all the pots together outdoors, in a fairly bright spot. Label each pot with a name or number, and keep watering lightly every day. Measure the plants every few days and write down the heights of the plants in the different pots. Which is best, and why?

**2. Light fantastic:** How about finding out if plants grow better in different light? Once you've figured out from the first experiment which soil is best, prepare five more pots in the same way. You could even try different seeds this time, but if you've already eaten the fruit that they came from, then so much the better. In gardening there are no rules against gluttony, as far as I'm aware.

The day the seeds sprout, put each pot in a different location, such as next to a kitchen window that has some sun, outdoors in the shade, outdoors in

full sun, in a well-lit room that gets no direct sun, and in a room that is not well lit. Again, measure the plants every few days and write down the sizes of the shoots in the different locations.

**3. A good talking-to:** This is one experiment in which you can display your sensitive (or not) side. You will also find out how much

of a prat you're prepared to look in the name of science. It involves finding out if plants grow better if you talk to them.

Start with four pots, all prepared in the same way. Water them all as usual, but apart from that you should completely ignore plant number one. Never pick it up or give it any attention whatsoever.

For plant number two, you should greet it, smile and say a few pleasant words every day, for a few seconds – but nothing over the top. Number three should become your favorite plant. You should totally fawn over it, gently stroking the leaves and being generally very affectionate.

Number four is the opposite. It should be told how ugly it is and how you dislike it. Had a bad day at school? Vent some anger on it.

Which of the four will grow the quickest and highest? Being totally cynical about this whole idea, I think I know what the results will be, but do let me know if you reckon talking to plants makes a difference.

Remember, smelling of stale pipe tobacco and mumbling to yourself aren't always necessary for good gardening. You can still enjoy scraggling around in the dirt. And why not?

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

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Rachapluk



There is always someone with a sad tale about building a house. Every night last week I was talking to somebody who was moaning and groaning about building a house.

When are people going to learn? The popular myths are that any person can build his own house or that he can get some locals to build it for him – at a rock-bottom price, naturally.

Those are myths. The reality is that building a house in either of those ways usually ends in tears, and I'm sick of hearing about it.

Why is it that every second worker who decides Phuket is going to be his home thinks that he knows more than people who have been here for donkey's years? You simply can't build a house unless you are a professional builder.

Such people tend to hit the 90%-complete mark, expecting the remaining work – such as the finishings, floors, doors, windows and kitchens – to be simple, a doddle, a formality. They also expect to find local builders who work to the same standards of the master craftsmen of their home countries.

Alas, nobody told them that in Thailand, if you want a Western-standard home, finishing is 90% of the job. The moment when they had thought the house is nearly finished but then realize it is not, is when the

# Frankly, just finish it

The bathroom may be the smallest room in Graham Doven's office, but at least it's well-finished.



sackcloth and ashes, the wailing and renting of hair shirts begins.

But it doesn't have to be that way, not if one relies on the right people from the start. However, if you put your trust in the smiling local builder and sought the sagacity of the

"Local Barstool Consultancies & Expertise Co Ltd", then as far as I'm concerned, too bad.

Many people in Phuket

know how to start building houses, but very few know how to finish them.

The first rule is not to rely on advice given freely from the font of all knowledge in the pub. Yes, we all know the local pub is the best place to get the lowdown on what's going on, and one of the best places to get help when you need it – unless you need money – but the local pub is also full of opinions, many ill-considered and often dangerously misleading for a newbie.

## LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven



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Construction Update

## Phuket's

PHUKET CITY: Construction of Phuket's new Juvenile and Appeals Court should be completed in September.

The court is under construction on a 10-rai site off the bypass road, near Tungka Wittaya School. The land was donated to the court by Pamake Wongsakul, Chairman of the committee of judges in the Youth and Family Cases Department (YFCD).

Whichan Phungprasit, Chief Judge in the YFCD, said that although K. Pamake had donated the land in 2001, construction had started only in the middle of 2004 because securing the funds from the government was a complicated process.

The new court will have five floors and 8,170 square meters of floor space. It is being built to the standard Thai court design, and following plans supplied by the Design and Construction Department (DCD) in Bangkok.

Judge Whichan says that having a standard design for court buildings makes them easily recognizable. He added that the grade and quality of the construction materials used are also laid down by the DCD.

In the grounds of the court building there will be a canteen, waste collection point, flagpole, two security kiosks and 40 car parking spaces.

Power will be supplied by two 630 KVA generators and the PABX telephone system has the

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by Anongnat Sartpisut

# new court starts to rise

Work continues on Phuket's new five-story Juvenile and Appeals Court, which is on schedule for completion in September.



capacity to handle 20 external calls and 1,000 internal ones.

Each floor will have a fire alarm system, closed-circuit television monitoring and air conditioning.

The water supply will come from the Phuket Provincial Water Department, and the water will be stored in a 30-cubic-meter underground tank; there will also be a 25m<sup>3</sup> reserve tank.

In addition, water supplies will be boosted by a rainwater

collection tank, and a wastewater treatment system will reduce the chances of polluting the surrounding area.

The juvenile court has been occupying rented premises at Saphan Hin on the Prince of Songkhla University, Phuket campus, since April 1997, said Judge Whichan.

"At present, we don't have a permanent office, and the space we have is too small anyway," he said.

"But when the new building is finished, we will have a permanent base, which will be much more convenient for staff and service users alike.

"In addition, the new court is in a much more accessible area."

He continued, "The court handles an average of four cases a day, but at the moment, we only have two courtrooms. When the new building is finished, though, we will have five."

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Le Raffiné Sukhumvit 31 Project developer and owner: Le Raffiné 31 Company Limited Registered capital 30,000,000 Baht fully paid up. Office location: 31 Sukhumvit, 31/31 Sukhumvit Road, Klongtoey Sub-District, Klongtoey District, Bangkok 10110. Planning Director: Prapin Nantakul, P.E. Resident/condominium 31 floors with 45 units. Site location: On road area No. 28/5, Klongtoey Sub-District South Bangkok, Phromphong District Bangkok, Bangkok. Land area: (Plot 1-1-16) approximately 170 sqm. Project numbered and supported by Klongtoey Sub-District. Building construction permit has been approved. 1-4-63494. Construction progress: July 2004. Completion expected November 2005. The project shall be registered at the condominium after completing the construction. Common area fee will be paid by buyers in accordance with registration of condominium price period.

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- Lees fighting chair (not included in the price)
- Outrigger, Penn down-rigger
- Integrated live bait well & fish box
- New canvas top

New paint & stripes. New all-weather enclosure. Tel: 09-8126515. Fax: 02-6758439. Email: seiry106@yahoo.com

## KAYAK

Used one-person Kayak wanted - red if possible. Please contact me with details. Tel: 076-383080, 06-9401860. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

## 20FT BAYLINER

Made in America: 1996 Bayliner 2052 Anniversary Edition fiberglass speedboat with 5.7-liter V8 Mercruiser. Includes trailer, Bimini sun top, complete zippered canvas rain top, Raytheon depth and fish finder, West Marine VHS 2-way marine radio, Italian racing wheel and custom fit canvas storage cover. This very fast boat is in excellent condition with the engine dyno checked @ 4,500 RPM. Price: 1.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-0794 043. Email: southbaycott@yahoo.com

## 15HP YAMAHA

+ 10-foot polyester dinghy + nearly new 15HP Yamaha outboard, 1 year old, has run about 100 hours. Price altogether: 39,000 baht, including fuel tank, and all extras. Pls contact for info. Tel: 07-8919620. Email: catnoina@yahoo.de

## 27FT SPEED BOAT

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

## 54FT CATAMARAN

Built 2004 in plywood, glass fiber and epoxy. 6 big double-berth cabins (9 sqm each), galley with dinette, two toilets/shower, big 20sqm middle cockpit. Engines: 2 x 15HP outboards. Asking price: US\$49,000, or make me an offer. Tel: 07-8919620. Email: catnoina@yahoo.de

## DINGHY

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

## SPEEDBOAT 4 SALE

28ft, twin engines, good condition. 350,000 baht. Tel: 01-5358555.

## SEADOO JETBOAT

2 x 115hp, 1996, 15 feet, 5 pax. New canvas; needs a little attention (carb and trailer need fixing). Very fast, fun boat. Have spares worth approx 20,000 baht. Will sell altogether for 649,000 baht, or without spares and trailer for 599,000 baht. Located at Boat Lagoon Marina, house 23/76. Pls contact for more information. Tel: 01-2734000. Email: bbonello@web.de

## 27FT SPEEDBOAT

Inboard Hino EH600 engine. Plywood and epoxy overlay. Illness forces sale. 300,000 baht. Tel: 075-266282, 09-9711480. Email: arthur2@cscms.com

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# Island Job Mart



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Attendant/ Telephone Supv.  
/Telephone Operator

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Coordinator/English Instructor

### Housekeeping Dept.

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Attendant/Houseman/Public Area  
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Please send your CV with a recent photograph to: the HR Department

**Crowne Plaza Karon Beach Phuket**, 509 Patak Road,  
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Fax: 076 396122

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**QSI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PHUKET**

The QSI International School of Phuket is in the process of hiring four teachers for the 2005-2006 school year. All teachers must be college graduates and be fluent in the English language. The four positions available are:

### Secondary English Teacher

Candidates must be qualified to teach literature, grammar and writing skills to students 12 through 17 years of age.

### Nursery Teachers

Candidates must be able to teach pre-reading and readiness skills to students 2 through 4 years of age.

### Intensive English Teacher

Candidates must have experience teaching English as a foreign language, extensive experience and training in testing and placement procedures and the ability to develop a successful Intensive English Program.

### Music Teacher

This is a part-time position teaching vocal music to students from nursery through secondary school. Candidates should be able to play the piano, teach rhythm instruments and recorders, direct a chorus and prepare students for musical performances.

Preference will be given to teachers with school teaching experience and who hold a valid teaching certificate. Candidates selected to be interviewed will be called for an appointment. Please include contact numbers in the resumé.

Interested candidates should send their resumé to:

**QSI International School of Phuket**

P.O. Box 432, A. Muang, Phuket, 83000, Thailand



**Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH**

## Coordinator for Tsunami Rehabilitation Projects

In the framework of the German tsunami-rehabilitation program, the GTZ has been commissioned by the German government to work for the **rehabilitation of the tsunami-impacted regions of Thailand**.

In order to strengthen direct communication with different stakeholders and to support the implementation of measures, the GTZ is looking for a Coordinator for Tsunami Rehabilitation Projects

### Main tasks:

- ◆ To coordinate the many activities and measures of the program
- ◆ To assist partner organizations in organizing the implementation, and in preparing technical proposals
- ◆ To network with local Thai government agencies, business member organizations, NGOs and development organizations
- ◆ To identify potential projects for German government and private sponsor contribution
- ◆ To monitor the progress of ongoing technical assistance measures
- ◆ To prepare and facilitate the work of short term and long term experts.

### The Coordinator is expected to

- ◆ Possess strong Communication and Relationship Building Skills
- ◆ Have experience in project work
- ◆ Have Thai nationality and a Bachelor's Degree or higher
- ◆ Be fluent in English (speaking and writing) and computer literate

The coordinator will be part of a program team, stationed in Bangkok and intermittently working in the Andaman coast area. The coordinator's office will be based in Phuket, Krabi or Phang Nga.

The GTZ (German Technical Co-operation, Bangkok) is an international development enterprise with a long tradition in planning and implementing Thai-German cooperation projects.

Interested candidates are requested to submit resumé and cover letter in English to:

**Khun Rada Rergsomboon**

GTZ Office Bangkok

P.O. Box 11-1485 Nana Bangkok 10112

Email: [Rada.Rergsomboon@gtz.de](mailto:Rada.Rergsomboon@gtz.de) [www.gtz.de](http://www.gtz.de)

### HOTEL MANAGER

Small hotel with bar and restaurant looking for experienced Thai lady fluent in English. Excellent opportunity for the right person. With experience only, please. Please call for more information at Tel: 076-340464, 07-8871733, or email: [whharris042004@hotmail.com](mailto:whharris042004@hotmail.com)

### THAI SOUS CHEF

required for restaurant in UK. 3 years' continuous references must be available. Interviews in Phuket or Bangkok, starting Monday, 18 April. Reasonable spoken English is necessary. Email: [johnleach@greenclose.co.uk](mailto:johnleach@greenclose.co.uk) For more information, please see our website at: [www.senspa.co.uk](http://www.senspa.co.uk)

### SAILING SKIPPER

required. Kia Ora Catamaran Charters, located in Koh Samui, requires an experienced skipper to operate our 52-foot day-charter sailing catamaran. Please contact for more information. Tel: 077-425264. Email: [mark@kiaorathailand.com](mailto:mark@kiaorathailand.com) please see our website at: [www.kiaorathailand.com](http://www.kiaorathailand.com)



# Island Job Mart



[www.lagunaphuket.com](http://www.lagunaphuket.com)

Laguna Property is currently looking to recruit a Property Sales Executive to join our friendly team. We are seeking the following qualified candidate to work for one of the leading developers of luxury residential resort properties in Phuket.

## PROPERTY SALES EXECUTIVE

1 position

- College diploma or higher required
- Excellent command of both spoken and written English
- Previous property sales experience would be a distinct advantage
- Must be based in Phuket
- Self-motivated and enthusiastic
- Must be a team player with a friendly personality and positive attitude

We offer attractive remuneration packages and the opportunity for career growth.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at the Laguna Resorts & Hotels office, or email your detailed English resumé, stating current and expected salary, together with a recent photo to: [sunisas@lagunaphuket.com](mailto:sunisas@lagunaphuket.com)

**Group Director of Human Resources**  
**Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd.**

390/1 Moo 1, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang,  
Phuket 83110, Thailand  
Tel: 076 324444 Ext 16, 17 Fax: 076 271718



ANDARA, the luxury villa and spa located at Kamala Beach, Phuket, is seeking a qualified and energetic person to fill the following position:

## Assistant Sales Manager - Property

- ▶ At least 2 years' management experience in property businesses
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Business Administration or any related field
- ▶ Excellent spoken and written English, and computer literate
- ▶ Positive attitude toward teamwork and willing to work hard
- ▶ Pleasant personality

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Rungrapa Sakdiwong, Administration Manager, by e-mail, fax or post to:

**Paradise Group: The Plaza Surin**  
5/50 Moo 3, Cherngtalay Sub-District, Thalang District, Phuket 83110 Fax: 076 271242  
E-mail: [onn@paradisephuket.com](mailto:onn@paradisephuket.com)

## Employment Wanted

### INTERNET EXPERT

I am looking for suitable work in Phuket. I have my own Web server with unlimited space, etc. I also have an easy-to-use e-commerce shopping cart package. I would be interested in working for a company that would benefit from my expertise and resources. Please email at: [mkever@coastlineweb.net](mailto:mkever@coastlineweb.net)

### QUALIFIED PROJECT

Manager. Experienced Phuket-based project manager with QS background seeks position in Phuket. Wide experience of site management, programming, managing contractors and consultants, cost control, quality control and final accounts, etc. Previous experience of projects in Phuket. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-333224, 07-9752326. Fax: 076-333224. Email: [siam\\_int@msn.com](mailto:siam_int@msn.com)

### DRIVER

I am 28 years old, male, from Trang Town. I can speak a little English. Now working with diving company in Phuket. I am looking for a new job from May 1, 2005. Call me anytime if you want a good driver. Tel: 05-0680190.

### URGENTLY SEEKING

work. Young Thai/English male, grew up and educated in the UK. Fluent in English (British accent) and Thai. Experienced in IT, international sales and international relations work, and interested in any opportunities in these fields or willing to take on a new challenge. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-26719-24. Email: [cmaneesukrot@hotmail.com](mailto:cmaneesukrot@hotmail.com)



## 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](mailto:info@divesupply.com)**

## INT'L SCHOOL TEACHERS

Looking for experienced native-English speaking teachers qualified to teach primary and/or lower-secondary international curriculum for September 2005. Horizons Learning Centre is a small, high-caliber English-medium schooling venture in Phuket. Please send CV, salary expectations and cover letter by email, stating interest in teaching in a student-centered, progressive, inquiry-based learning environment. All inquiries will be treated in strictest confidence. Tel: 076-238 756, 01-8942560. Fax: 076-325403. Email: [pamela@greenhouse-phuket.com](mailto:pamela@greenhouse-phuket.com)

## EXPERIENCED STAFF

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

## THAI COOK WANTED

Thai restaurant opening soon in Singapore needs a hotel-experienced cook (male only). Please call for more information. Tel: 01-7615711.

## 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](mailto:siamuk@loxinfo.co.th)

## KATA GROUP

Resorts Phuket invites applications for General Manager for its new property on Koh Samui, Kandaburi Resort & Spa, opening January 2006. Position available from October 2005. Interested? Send application with CV and one recent photo to: Alan Wade Group General Manager Kata Beach Resort 1 Pakbang Rd, Karon, Phuket 83110 Thailand. Tel: 076-330530. Fax: 076-330942. Email: [aw@katagroup.com](mailto:aw@katagroup.com) For further details, please see our website at: [www.katagroup.com](http://www.katagroup.com)

## RECEPTIONIST/

Assistant. International law office in Phuket seeks active, hardworking individual: Thai female, 18-30 years old, bachelor's degree or experience, good English, good computer skills, willing to take responsibility and work under pressure, service-minded. Salary: 9-10,000 baht per month, depending upon experience. Interested parties, please email your resumé and photo to us or call for more information. Tel: 06-5556602. Email: [cv\\_staffs@hotmail.com](mailto:cv_staffs@hotmail.com)

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367/2 Yaowarat Road, Phuket City  
Tel: 076-236555 Fax: 076-213971

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# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Articles For Sale

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High-end furniture. Two George Nelson coconut chairs for sale. Original from Vitra, Germany. Tops in design and seating. George Nelson's award-winning chair in black leather. Bought in Denmark one year ago for approx 280,000 baht. Selling both for 70,000 baht obo. Tel: 01-0838675. Email: mdamkvist@yahoo.com

### LEFT-HAND CLUBS

Full set of graphite left-hand golf clubs plus extra driver, steel lob wedge, ball retriever and bag. 17,000 baht. Tel: 076-333244, 09-9091917. Email: porterat@phuket.ksc.co.th

### BOSE SPEAKERS

Pair of self-amplified Roommates. 8,000 baht. Tel: 076-333244, 09-9091917. Email: porterat@phuket.ksc.co.th

### BABY COCKATOOS

Electus parrots, sun, conures and many more birds for sale at Phuket Bird Paradise. Tel: 01-5979255.

### 3-DOOR FRIDGE

Refrigerator, about 180cm x 200cm x 70cm. About 3.5 years old, in good condition. Good for restaurant or shop. Only 9,500 baht. Pls call for more information. Tel: 01-6912881.

## Bulletins

### Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English at the following places:

#### Phuket City

Mission Hospital

on Wed and Sun at 7 pm

Bangkok Phuket Hospital

on Fri at 7 pm

#### Patong

Patong Hospital

on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun

at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm

For more info, please call  
01 788 6027, 06 745 8910  
and 01 2732053.

## Business Opportunities

### SHELL COMPANY

Phuket Villa Services. No trading history, zero liability: 220,000 baht. Tel: 01-6060200  
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### RESTAURANT/BAR/

rooms. Lease for 5 years, 1.3 million baht. Good location 100m from the beach. Includes 3 rooms plus 1 for staff. Restaurant/bar has 46 seats. Fully furnished and fitted out with TV, aircon, etc. Rent at 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 04-8448381. Email: garyone1@hotmail.com

### TSUNAMI RESORT

Active investor/partner sought for redevelopment of eco-resort on Phra Thong Island in Phang Nga. Site is a world-class setting, with two beautiful beaches, abundant wildlife, years of successful operation based on a love of nature. Email: simi@losthorizonsasia.com

### KATA CENTER

Siam Silk & Work of Art. For sale; urgent. 3 rooms and stock: 740,000 baht. Please call. Tel: 01-9798540.

### BAR FOR SALE

Large, successful, established bar in soi off Soi Bangla for sale. Pool table, sound system plus all fittings. Please call Tel: 06-2832285 for more information.

### BUSINESS FOR SALE

in Kata Plaza. Options No. 1 Internet café, with flat screens and ADSL + USB; motorbike & chopper rental tour counter with high turnover. Price: 750,000 baht. Pls call for more information. Tel: 04-8374429.

### HOTEL FOR LEASE

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### TOUR COMPANY

for sale. Incl Toyota Commuter, high roof, yellow, luxury interior; contract with many agents. For more info, call Steve. Tel: 06-6821310.

### KATA BAR FOR SALE

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### SONY PLAYSTATION 2

Sony Playstation 2 "Small", including remote, chip, memory, 2 dual controllers, stand and 20 games. It comes in perfect shape and was bought for 18,000 baht just 3 months ago. Best offer over 12,000 baht gets it. Please contact for more info. Tel: 06-2749915. Email: erwintrepka@yahoo.it

### EPSON USB FLATBED

scanner. Epson Perfection TM660: one-touch copying, photocopy function, USB port, 600 DPI + 48 bit. Original box, 3 months old, used only once. New price: 2,500 baht. Will sell for 1,999 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8924282. Email: taxiregio@freenet.de

## Miscellaneous for Sale

### DAY TRIP TO RANONG

New double-decker tour bus (not minibus), non-smoking and smoking areas, toilet, films/music, snacks and drinks, on-board buffet lunch. No extra to pay, fully inclusive. Only 1,300 baht. Every Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sunday. Tel: 04-7457024.

### INT'L DRIVERS LICENSE

5,000 baht, valid up to 10 years, 6,000 baht valid up to 20 years. Sole agent in Thailand. Free pick up & delivery, open 365 days a year. Please contact Khun Christine for more information. Tel: 04-0068736.

### WORLD GAMES INC

WGI online Internet: gaming, gambling, worldwide - www.worldgamesinc.com Two Danes in Phuket in May to introduce WGI. Tel: 06-2672161. Email: tlodden@yahoo.no

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## Mobile Phones

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Phone for sale; Nanai Rd, in Patong. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-397 1808.

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### ART CLASS FOR KIDS

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## Personals

### WANT SOME ENCOURAGEMENT?

Would you like a free weekly or daily email that will give you encouragement or inspiration? Send a blank email to us to subscribe, or visit our website for more information. Email: subscribe@thoughtforweek.net For more info, see my website at: ThoughtForWeek.net

### BACKGAMMON

Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Please call if interested. Tel: 076-386113, 01-5778443.

### USA MAN SEEKS THAI LADY

Businessman is traveling to Phuket in May and is seeking to meet a Thai lady for romance and companionship. Email with details about yourself and a picture. Email: Imbrjack60@yahoo.com

### ROMANCE

I am 52, physically fit, and traveling to Phuket early next month. Seeking to meet an attractive and sincere Thai woman 25 to 33 years old. Email with details about yourself and picture. Email: ydelk@hotmail.com

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