

# Phuket Gazette

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## FINALLY!

### Ambassador warns of Europe-wide travel advisory for tourists in Phuket not to hire tuk-tuks

By Stephen Fein

THE continued failure of local authorities to address problems of tuk-tuk drivers with foreign tourists could force European Union (EU) member states to issue a joint travel advisory warning against using tuk-tuks while in Phuket, the Austrian Ambassador to Thailand warned on Wednesday.

Austrian Ambassador to Thailand Johannes Peterlik issued the warning to local officials during the third meeting between honorary consuls and Phuket officials at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Dr Johannes, who grew up in Thailand from 1976 to 1981 and has served as ambassador to the country for two years, said he and fellow EU diplomats in Bangkok had been monitoring the situation closely, but had seen little progress.

"I think it is important for all the stakeholders involved to realize the EU stands together as one today. More than half of the consuls here are from EU member states... This is not a coincidence. You can check the numbers of



Ambassador Johannes Peterlik

tourists that arrive from these countries annually," he said.

In the future all of these states will share information and issue travel advice with the same wording, Amb Peterlik assured.

"We have been watching this situation very closely for the last one-and-a-half years, to be precise... and we are concerned in Bangkok.

"We are happy to support the Thai police and authorities in implementing the law. We know how difficult it can be, but we have to rely on the rule of law as it is written. We have to rely on your

leadership – the personalities of leaders, both provincial and national representatives.

"If we can rely on that you will see the support we are trying to give you. If we cannot rely on that... we will be forced to specifically highlight Phuket as a destination in Thailand where it is not advised to use a tuk-tuk, one of the symbols of Thailand, as a means of transportation," he said.

Sitting next to Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha, he told the gathering he understood "how difficult" some EU tourists could be, but said that he and other diplomatic staff were duty-bound to protect their citizens traveling in the country.

His address followed the strongest comments yet by Phuket-based honorary consuls, who urged Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pekat Tantipong to take action and bring to justice tuk-tuk and taxi drivers who assault foreign tourists.

German consul Dirk Naumann said, "Days ago a German national (Kurt Trotnow: see page 3) was

*Continued on page 2*



A disaster-response worker inspects a landslide in the hills north of Patong after the heavy rains this week. Photo: Sampawat Wannasangkam

## When the earth crumbles

THE heavy rains this past week caused several landslides across the island, one plunging a house down a slope and striking the side of a commercial laundry nearby – while workers were still in the building.

The back-up power supply at Patong Hospital went offline, forcing the hospital to transfer more than 40 patients and suspend inpatient services for five days.

Elsewhere, traffic was disrupted, boulders tumbled down hills and a Chinese goddess nearly fell from grace. See page 6 for our full-page special.

## Police probe into Brit tourist death falters

By Atchaa Khamlo

POLICE have yet to make any progress in the investigation into the death a British tourist who was electrocuted in front of the Ocean Plaza shopping mall on Patong's Soi Bangla.

"We are still not sure what precisely caused the electric shock: whether Ocean Plaza was negligent or whether this was just a short circuit," Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Kitipong Klaikaew told the *Gazette* on Wednesday.

"We are still investigating the incident and questioning witnesses about what happened," he said.

The tourist, 20-year-old Charles Anthony Thomas, reportedly placed his hand accidentally on an outdoor, floor-mounted power socket covered with water on the night of August 25 – amid the heavy downpours the caused flooding across the island (see page 6).

Mr Thomas was sitting in the undercover forecourt of the Ocean Plaza mall at about 6am when the incident happened.

Several people, including Mr Thomas' travelling companion tried to help, but they too received electric shocks. All were treated for minor injuries.

Mr Thomas' friend was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town.

"Although his physical injuries were not serious, he is suffering from the emotional shock of losing his friend," said one hospital worker.

Whether Ocean Plaza management will face legal action over the death remains to be seen.

"We are also still waiting for Mr Thomas' relatives to contact us about whether they will take any legal action against Ocean Plaza or not," said Lt Col Kitipong.

The power socket has been removed, the *Gazette* was told.

The *Gazette* can confirm that the socket is now sealed with masking tape and a paving stone placed on top.



A paving stone is now placed over the now-removed power socket.

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## This Week

**Deadly dozen getting fixed**  
Phuket's 12 most dangerous traffic black spots are getting a makeover.  
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### Business



Changing petrol prices and why some pumps cost more. **Page 11**

### Live Wire



Woody expands on his 'bang for baht' internet speed survey. **Page 12**

### Film



We look at a slew of new releases about to hit Phuket. **Page 16**

### Pets



What not to feed your favorite four legged friend. **Page 18**

### Sport



This week the *Gazette* starts regular bios of FC Phuket players. **Page 43**

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# Campaign for standard tuk-tuk fares moves on

By Janpen Upatising

TUK-tuk drivers in Kata-Karon are stepping up their campaign to have drivers operating in their areas certified as "safe" and conforming to a schedule of standard fares.

The certificates, to be issued annually, are to assure tourists they will be treated politely and not overcharged for their ride, said Vice Governor Nivit Aroonrat at a meeting on Monday.

The standards will mainly focus on the condition of the vehicles and the "condition" of the drivers, meaning whether they are polite and dressed appropriately, with the standard fares displayed clearly at each tuk-tuk rank, explained Teerayut Prasertphol, chief of the Phuket Land Transport Office.

He added that he hoped the system would encourage all commercial passenger vehicles in Phuket to become registered, even "black plate" taxi drivers working illegally, he added.

Most of the problems stem from tourists negotiating a fare with the driver and then being asked to pay more than the agreed fare when they reach the destination, Chief Teerayut explained.

He added that the new standard fares will differ according to the

## List of fares currently charged by tuk-tuks and Taxi KT group:

### From Karon to:

Kata Beach: B200  
Patong Beach: B300  
Phuket Town: B500  
Phromthep Cape: B600

### From Kata to:

Karon Beach: B200  
Patong Beach: B400  
Phuket Town: B500  
Phromthep Cape: B600

\* These are the minimum fares, charged for one-way trips for one up to four passengers. Fares for more than four passengers incur a surcharge.

type of vehicle providing the service, but that the new set fares will be used consistently by all tuk-tuk and taxi ranks participating in the campaign.

In response to complaints that some drivers in Kata-Karon were demanding resorts to pay a "service fee" for local drivers to pick up guests – but at the same time forcefully denying any other drivers to enter the resorts to collect passengers – Ponthep Charmkhao, president of Tuk Tuk and Taxi Kata-Karon KT group, said it was the local drivers who were "suffering".

"We are okay if hotel guests buy package tours and the tour agents provide the transportation by picking them up at hotels, but

sometimes hotel guests ask our drivers in front of the hotel how much to go to an attraction but are undecided and go back to their hotel.

"Later the guests contact hotel staff to help them, and the hotel staff call a tour agent to get a vehicle to pick them up. This type of incident is what we feel bad about.

"Why don't hotel staff contact our drivers parked in front of their hotel?" he asked.

"We don't want hotel staff to do this. They get a commission for making a phone call while our drivers do not have a monthly salary like they do. We are asking for cooperation from hotel staff not to do that," he added.

## Tuk-tuks warned of EU ban

From page 1

beaten almost to death by tuk-tuk drivers in Patong. I don't know how in 'Tourist Thailand' we can have the rule of law taken into the hands of the mob...

"If I had a dispute for 10,000, 100,000 or 1 million baht, I would go to the police and file a complaint, asking for help. But apparently the police in Phuket allow the tuk-tuk drivers to take the law into their own hands. The dispute was for 100 baht."

Admitting that the German victim was drunk at the time and had a role in instigating the incident, he reiterated that the 200-baht minimum fare was the root cause of the tragedy – and many similar incidents that never get reported. An

800-meter taxi ride (once in motion) in Bangkok cost just 14 baht, whereas the same distance journey in Patong costs 200 baht, he said.

Maj Gen Pekad said the event was a regrettable "crime of passion" that could happen anywhere when tempers get out of control.

He gave the recent shooting death of a Thai man by another Thai over a 1.82-baht dispute at a filling station as an example.

While not defending the prices charged, he said it wasn't fully accurate to compare distance-based fares with local price structures.

Maj Gen Pekad expressed deep sorrow over the incident and promised to do everything possible within the law to bring the perpetrators to justice.

## Prisoners to go live on CCTV

PHUKET Prison will install 12 CCTV cameras around its perimeter wall and throughout the compound as part of a crackdown targeting mobile phone and drug deliveries to inmates.

The cameras will be installed around the prison walls and in the main dormitory where prisoners serving long jail terms for serious crimes – and major drug convictions – reside, said Prison Director Rapin Nichanon.

The project will cost 90,000 baht.

Chief Rapin said he expected the installation of the CCTV system to take a few months to complete.

"Over the past six months, about 12 mobile phones have



Prison Director Rapin Nichanon

flown in over the prison wall, but we have yet to catch the people throwing them," he said.

"It is so easy to throw mobile phones and drugs over the wall –

just ride past and throw. They don't worry about whether or not the intended prisoner inside gets it because phones now are very cheap," he added.

"The CCTV will also help us to monitor the behavior of prisoners convicted of drug charges," Director Rapin said.

The prison is currently home to about 1,500 inmates, with more than 80 per cent of them incarcerated for drug convictions, he added.

"CCTV will help a lot, but it will be no guarantee against people trying to smuggle in drugs. People still try hiding drugs in food and other items that 'relatives' bring for the prisoners," he said.

– Pimwara Choksakulpan



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SEE YOU SOON? Thaksin Shinawatra

## Thaksin due back soon: Phuket Poll

FORMER Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will return to Thailand by the end of 2012, a clear majority of *Phuket Gazette* online readers believe.

In the *Phuket Gazette* Poll that went online August 10, readers were asked: Given current political events, how long do you think it will be before fugitive former PM Thaksin Shinawatra sets foot on Thai soil?

Overall, 64% of those taking part thought the fugitive older brother of current prime minister Yingluck would return by the end of this year (28.8%) or by the end of 2012 (35.2%).

Only 35.9% thought Mr Thaksin would return at a later date – or never.

In a breakdown by demographic, those identifying themselves as “local foreign residents” were most likely to think Mr Thaksin’s return would come before the end of 2011 or 2012 (71% combined).

Those identifying themselves as Thai were more than three times (37%) as likely to think Mr Thaksin would never return to Thailand than local foreign residents (12%).

## Bangla blockade drivers surrender to police

THE four tuk-tuk drivers wanted for setting up a blockade on Patong’s beach road on August 1 have surrendered to police.

The men were wanted for setting up the blockade after being involved in a fight with Dutch tourists, which resulted in the tourists requiring hospital treatment.

The incident sparked comment from the Dutch Ambassador to Thailand, Joan Boer, in his recent meeting with Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha.

It also spurred Phuket Provincial Police Superintendent Pekad Tantipong into laying down the law to the tuk-tuk drivers, saying that street blockades will no longer be tolerated.

“The four tuk-tuk drivers surrendered themselves last week,” said Patong Police duty officer Lt Col Kittipong Klaikaw.

He declined to name the four drivers.

The men were charged with obstructing traffic, which Patong Police Chief Arayapan Pukbuakao earlier told the *Gazette* carries a maximum fine of no more than 1,000 baht.

“As they have surrendered themselves to the police, they have now been released. They will have to come back to plead guilty or to deny the charges,” said Lt Col Kittipong.

“If they accept the charges, they’ll pay 1,000-baht fine each. If they deny the charges, their cases will be handed over to the court for further action,” he added.

“We are starting by using minor charges with light penalties only, which is a warning to them. Now let’s see if they behave,” he said.

– Chutharat Plerin



A tuk-tuk driver in Patong courting fast-passing business at the east end of Soi Bangla.

## Mob victim out of coma

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

A GERMAN man who is in intensive care after being beaten by a mob in Patong is conscious but still on a respirator.

Jiraporn “Joy” Chuchep, wife of German national Kurt Trotnow, told the *Gazette*, “Kurt is conscious now but still cannot talk because he is on a respirator. When he wakes up, I talk with him and he looks at me. He understands my words.”

Mr Trotnow, 53, is recovering at Phuket International Hospital after being set upon by a group of men not long after he refused to pay a 200-baht tuk-tuk fare for an 800-meter ride.

After arguing with the tuk-tuk driver, Mr Trotnow shoved him to the pavement and walked away. As Mr Trotnow and Mrs Jiraporn headed toward the nearby Aroonsom Plaza, the men attacked.

He was originally in a coma but has since regained consciousness.

Mrs Jiraporn explained that



Kurt Trotnow is no longer in a coma, but he has yet to speak.

she had known Mr Trotnow for a long time and they had married one month ago.

“We planned to go back to Germany on September 7 so he could have an operation for a medical condition on the 15<sup>th</sup>,” said Mrs Jiraporn.

She had given up hope of finding the men who attacked them, but still hopes for Mr Trotnow’s full recovery, she said.



Jiraporn ‘Joy’ Chuchep at Phuket International Hospital, where her German husband is recovering after being beaten by men in Patong.

“I cannot remember the number of people who beat him or even the [tuk-tuk] driver’s face.

I think no one dares to tell the truth because they all know each other and they continue to earn a living there,” Mrs Chuchep said.

“I don’t expect to find the offenders, my only wish now is that Kurt gets better,” she added.

A friend had informed Mr Trotnow’s family, but she was not sure when they would come to Phuket, she added.

## Foreigner dies in plunge

NEPALESE tailor Ohn Bahadur drowned when his car plunged into a canal in Thalang district last Sunday night.

Thalang Police were notified of an accident near the TOT offices on the road to Baan Don at about 9:40pm.

At the scene, police and rescue workers found a Honda Civic almost fully submerged in fast-moving flood waters in the roadside canal.

Working in the dark, difficult conditions they managed to pull the body of the driver from the wreckage.

Mr Bahadur, an ethnic Nepalese from Burma, ran a tailor shop near the entrance to the Laguna Phuket resort complex.

The initial police investigation revealed that Mr Bahadur was making a delivery to a customer to a resort hotel in Mai Khao when he lost control of the car in rainy conditions and plunged into the canal.

He apparently opened a window

to try to escape, but the force of the floodwater was too strong and he drowned, police said.

Efforts by Phuket Kusoldharm Foundation workers failed to revive Mr Bahadur.

His body was taken to Thalang Hospital morgue.

– Wichai Witthawat

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# Tush-tattooed teens end clerical career

A MONK in Nakhon Sawan province has been defrocked after tattooing the buttocks of two 15-year-old schoolgirls.

In a single session, Phra Theera Chaya Chansophana tattooed the two girls and nine male students, all of whom were wearing school uniforms when they arrived to see him.

Parents and teachers of the teens claim the tattoos made the children aggressive and unable to concentrate in class.

Phra Theera's antics first came to light when the girls' furious mothers, joined by the deputy superintendent of Nakhon Sawan Police and the director of the girls' school, went to complain to Phra Thep Pariyatmethi, head of Nakhon Sawan provincial clergy.

Phra Theera had broken regulations of Buddhist monkhood by taking money in exchange for performing magic, as well as experimented with magical symbols, they charged.

Siwarom Siriphap, director of Photisarasuk School, said the



two girls were persuaded by a gang of nine boys in their class to skip school and go visit Phra Theera.

The wayward monk collected 124 baht from each of the children, performed a *khuen khru* ceremony and set about tattooing them.

The boys received tattoos on the middle of their backs. The two girls received tattoos extending from their hips to their bottoms.

After the children were tattooed, they became more aggressive, challenging teachers and refusing to listen to them, Ms Siwarom said.

Some writhed around on the classroom floor.

The mother of one of the girls said she had no idea her daughter had been to see the cleric.

Then she began to notice some

strange behavior in her daughter, such as violent shaking.

She also started to spend long periods of time alone in her room. Every night she would lie on her bed talking on the phone, calls often lasting hours.

The truth finally came out when another woman visited her house with her daughter and told her that the girl had been tattooed on her bottom. At that point, the two girls revealed the whole story.

Phra Thep Pariyatmethi summoned Phra Theera to demand an explanation. In his defence the accused monk said the kids had come for the tattoos of their own accord. He claimed he donated all the money they paid him to pay for temple upkeep.

When one of the furious mothers asked why he had to tattoo the girls on their bottoms, Phra Theera went pale and could not answer.

Phra Thep Pariyatmethi accused the monk of abusing his position and ordered him to be defrocked.

— Daily News

# Roadwork

Millions of baht are being spent on making Phuket roads safer and a selection of 12 'black spots' are currently receiving the campaign's first changes. The *Phuket Gazette's* Pimwara Choksakulpan reports.

MEASURES used to fix a dozen road "black spots" by the end of this fiscal year include relocating roadside vendors, installation of traffic lights and adding lanes, an officer with the Phuket Highway Office (PHO) has told the *Phuket Gazette*.

Sathaporn Sornchana, PHO Deputy General Manager, said that a budget of 8.9 million baht was allocated to the project.

The project is part of a broader campaign to fix a total of 50 black spots under a 94-million-baht budget that will extend into the next fiscal year.

"Locations where accidents occur at least three times per year are considered black spots," Mr Sathaporn explained.

He provided the following details on the ongoing changes at the 12 locations:

1. The intersection near the airport is to have a traffic light installed, while the road between this junction and Thepkasattri Road (Route 4026) will be expanded to four lanes. Project cost: 2 million baht.

"There are no traffic lights at this junction and cars driving to and from the airport are often in a rush, causing accidents... we improved visibility by cutting the bushes on the traffic median as a temporary measure," Mr Sathaporn said.

2. Work has been done to improve vehicle traction along Ha Roy curve on Thepkasattri Rd in Mai Khao. Cost: 70,000 baht.

"Road accidents were occurring at this corner often, especially when it rained. In the year since work was completed, no accidents have taken place there," Mr Sathaporn said.

3. Suan Maphrao curve, near Ha Roy, curve has had a warning light installed and the roadside drainage system cleared. Cost: 150,000 baht.

4. Kho En curve underwent work to improve vehicle traction to its road surface and a roadside warning light was installed. Cost: 500,000 baht.

"Khon En is still experiencing accidents so we may add speed bumps to slow drivers down before they take the corner," Mr Sathaporn said.

5. Bang Duk curve has had a blinking light and speed bumps installed. Cost: 100,000 baht.

"This area is dangerous because it actually is a series of curves and accidents are still happening there. Future plans include straightening of the road so there are fewer bends.

"One accident I remember clearly was when a Phuket Provincial Administration Organization water truck overturned, killing the driver," Mr Sathaporn explained.

6. The warning lights next to the U-turn on Tha Rua Temple curve were repaired. Cost: 100,000 baht.

7. Bang Jo junction has had warning lights and speed bumps installed. Cost: 200,000 baht.

8. The lane markings have been repainted and roadsides refurbished along a 10-kilometer stretch of Srisoonthorn Rd between the Heroines' Monument and Surin Beach. Cost: 1,862,000 baht.

9. The Baan Don to Cherng Talay road has had its traffic lines repainted. Cost: 994,000 baht.

10. The red-and-white "no parking" indicators on curbs along both sides of the bypass road between Tesco Lotus and Dara-

samuth (Central Festival) intersection have been repainted. Cost: 100,000 baht.

"Drivers kept parking along the roadside, adding to rush-hour traffic congestion. The repainted curbs will make it clear that parking is prohibited along this stretch of road," Mr Sathaporn said.

11. With cooperation from the Koh Kaew Tambon Administration Organization, market vendors in front of the Bang Khu School were instructed not to sell their goods from the traffic lanes. No cost.

12. Phra Baramee Road, be-



**'We have worked very seriously on this project since April 1 and found that aside from drivers breaking traffic laws, traffic engineering is also a major cause of road accidents.'**

— PHO Gen Manager  
Sathaporn Sornchana

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# on 'deadly dozen' rolls on



Patong Hill made the list of 'black spots' to be addressed in an effort to prevent accidents such as the one pictured, when a tour bus overturned on one of the sharp curves descending into Patong. Photo: Gazette file

tween the shrine atop Patong Hill to Suwankiriwong Temple (Patong Temple), is currently awaiting a budget to install blinking lights and cat's eye reflectors, repaint traffic lines, improve surface traction and make other repairs. Cost: 2,833,000 baht

"We all know this is a very dangerous stretch of road, but we have to wait for the budget. If it doesn't come through this fiscal year, we will have to ask Patong Municipality for the budget," Mr Sathaporn explained.

The nationwide initiative is part of a larger goal set by United Nations members to make 2011 to 2020 a "Decade of Action for Road Safety", Mr Sathaporn explained.

Information released by the Ministry of Public Health shows that 1.27 million lives were lost globally in road accidents in 2009, an average of 3,479 deaths per day.

A further 20-50 million people were injured, including five million people permanently disabled.

"The numbers are higher than those lost in war," Mr Sathaporn said.

On June 29, 2010, the Thai Cabinet initiated a campaign with the goal of reducing road accident fatalities to 0.0001 per cent of the population annually by 2020.

"In Phuket, each year there are about 200 lives lost in road accidents. We began fixing black spots and promoted helmet use before the Cabinet's approval in 2010. Traffic fatalities have decreased by 30 per cent since then," Mr Sathaporn said.

"Between last October until July of this year, there have been 121 deaths in road accidents, 102 seriously injured and 1,934 minor injury cases.

"We have worked very seriously on this project since April 1 and found that aside from drivers breaking traffic laws, traffic engineering is also a major cause of

road accidents," Mr Sathaporn explained.

The committee formed to tackle these problems, which is chaired by Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha, includes members from the Phuket Provincial Police, PHO, Phuket Provincial Disaster Prevention and Mitigation office and the Phuket Provincial Health Office.

All drivers should do their part to make Phuket's roads safer, Mr Sathaporn advised.

"We can take measures to fix

traffic engineering problems, but it shouldn't be forgotten that drivers are a cause of road accidents. No matter how many black spots we fix, if drivers break traffic laws, drive over the speed limit, cut off other vehicles, race, park in prohibited areas or drive in the opposite direction, accidents will keep happening.

"So please control your temper and follow traffic laws. If everyone does this the roads will be much safer," he said.

## The Big 12

- Phra Baramree Rd (Patong Hill)
- Bypass Rd between Tesco Lotus and Central
- T-junction near Phuket International Airport
- Ha Roy curve (Thepkasattri Rd)
- Suan Maphrao curve (Thepkasattri Rd)
- Kho En curve (Thepkasattri Rd)
- Bang Duk curve (Thepkasattri Rd)
- Tha Rua Temple U-turn (Thepkasattri Rd)
- Bang Jo junction (Srisoonthorn)
- Srisoonthorn Rd
- Baan Don - Cherng Talay Rd
- Bang Khu School



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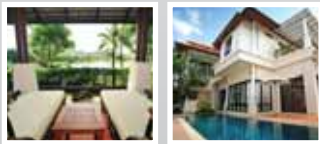
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# Floods: cost and clean-up

By Pimwara Choksakulpan  
and Chutharat Plerin

EMERGENCY response crews across Phuket continued their clean-up operations on Monday as the flood waters subsided and breaks in the rain came late in the afternoon.

"Today, there are no major flood waters left standing in the Patong area. We started our cleanup work yesterday, especially in the hard-hit areas," Wisit Methasoonthornpot, chief of the Patong Municipality Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Division (DDPM), told the *Gazette* on Monday.

Locations in Patong that suffered the most were the Laem Petch and Loma Park intersections, the Sainamyen intersection, Baan Zaan Market, Soi Sansabai in front of Soi Kuan Yang, the entire length of Ratchapatanusorn road, Phang Muang Sai Kor Road and even and 50 Pi Road, which runs across the base of the hills



A torrent of water cuts across Chao-fa West Road, disrupting traffic during rush hour. Photo: Dean Noble

at the back of the resort town. "Yesterday, we emptied the basement level of Patong Hospital. We also removed the sand that washed onto the road in front of the Novotel Hotel at Kalim and at Kuan Yang curve on Patong Hill. Rain always washes sand

onto the road at those two spots," said chief Wisit.

At the time of going to print, officials told the *Gazette* that it was still too early to assess the full impact of the floods island-wide.

According to the damage report

issued by the provincial DDPM office (DDPM-Phuket) on Monday, Kamala was particularly hard hit, suffering an estimated total of 1.22 million baht in damage.

Floods there directly affected an estimated 1,000 residents and about 150 households, with about

90 buildings sustaining damage totaling about 800,000 baht.

Four roads and seven dams were damaged to the tune of about 400,000 baht, and a five-rai rubber and banana plantation was reported as suffering damage valued at about 20,000 baht.

A combined 500 residents in about 250 homes were directly affected in Rassada and Chalong, said the report.

In Thalang, about 360 residents in 120 households in Thepkasattri and Srisoonthorn sub-districts were affected by the floods.

An estimate of the damage to Patong had yet to be reported to the DDPM.

"We are waiting for more updated damage reports from the local administrations throughout Phuket," one DDPM officer said.

The officer added that – apart from British tourist Charles Thomas being electrocuted on Soi Bangla – there had been no other deaths or people reported missing as a result of the floods.

## Patong hospital reopens

FLOOD waters that crippled operations at Patong Hospital last Saturday were the worst the facility had experienced in a decade, the hospital director told the *Gazette*.

"Outpatient and emergency cases are now being accepted and there are many Thais and foreigners coming to the hospital now," Dr Phumin said on Monday.

Electricity was connected through an adjacent building, but the second to fourth storeys were still in the dark, he explained.

The hospital had only three inpatients after moving the rest to other Phuket facilities on Saturday. Normal operations including dentistry and laboratory work re-



sumed on Wednesday, after maintenance was conducted.

Citing ongoing construction in the resort town as an exacerbating factor, he recommended that local authorities address Patong's flooding problem.

## Home dumped onto factory

THE onslaught of heavy rains caused a landslide that plunged a house in Kathu down a slope, over a small retaining wall and onto an industrial laundry nearby.

The house, only two years old, cost 2 million baht to build, said Narachai Chumsri, who owns the house and the laundry, operated under the name Phuket Island T. Group Co Ltd.

Luckily, the house was unoccupied at the time of the landslide and nobody working in the laundry below was injured, Mr Narachai added.

"At about 10am, dirt and rocks slid down the hill, pushing the house toward the factory," he said.

The house toppled over a retaining wall and collapsed into a space between the wall and the laundry's main building.

"The house was destroyed. Some of it fell onto the laundry and some of it onto our two Isuzu pickup trucks and a motorcycle," said Mr Narachai.

The trucks were worth about



The mangled remains of the house beside the laundry complex.

120,000 baht each and the motorcycle about 10,000 baht, he said.

Kathu Mayor Chai-anan Suthikul inspected the damage.

"He asked me to file a complaint with Kathu Municipality to see if they can help. For now, they are helping us to clean up the mess," Mr Narachai said.

"I have talked to Kathu Municipality's Civil Engineering

Department to find a permanent solution to prevent future landslides.

"In the meantime, we are looking into installing a [bigger] retaining wall as a temporary measure," Mr Narachai said.

"We have house insurance, but it does not cover natural disasters, so I have to deal with this on my own," he added.

– Chutharat Plerin

## Chinese shrine site falls victim

A LANDSLIDE at a Kalim construction site for a shrine to the goddess Guanyin sent large boulders tumbling down a steep hillside yet again last Sunday.

No injuries or deaths were reported in the incident.

Patong Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation officers visited the area on Monday after a busy weekend responding to floods and other landslides caused by recent heavy rains.

Accompanied by construction workers, the officials travelled up the obstructed road to the site in



The landslide covered parts of the road. Photo: Sampawat Wannasangkam

four-wheel-drive pickup trucks with the goal of assessing the situation and building barriers to prevent further erosion.

The landslide covered sections

of a recently completed access road which connects the construction site with Phra Baramee Road.

"Luckily the road down the hill was finished, because it acted as a kind of barrier preventing the landslide from affecting buildings below," a source told the *Gazette*.

However, an inspection of the steep new road, built in sections with reinforced concrete, revealed cracks and other damage indicating that its base had already been compromised by subsurface erosion.

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# Suspect cries rape in croquet president murder

THE suspect in the murder of World Croquet Federation president Charles Edmund Jones claims he acted in self-defense after the victim pulled a knife and attempted to rape him.

The victim's family has angrily denied the claims, saying that Mohamad Shanar Ryad, the former Syrian commando accused of the murder, "will say anything to get off", according to the *New Zealand Herald*.

Mr Jones, 56, was found stabbed to death in a condominium complex in Pattaya late last month. The crime has shocked the genteel world of croquet and made headlines in Mr Jones' home country of New Zealand.

His body was discovered in the Chom

Thian Complex condominium in Chon Buri's Bang Lamung district on August 22. A notebook computer, mobile phone and watch were missing from the apartment.

On August 27, Mr Ryad, 22, was arrested for the crime. Police said Ryad, a Syrian refugee fleeing the recent unrest there, was found in possession of the stolen items as well as US\$40,000 in cash.

Mr Ryad reportedly told police he met Mr Jones on August 19 in South Pattaya. He said Jones invited him to smoke marijuana with him in his room and paid him 400 baht to perform oral sex on him.

The Syrian claimed that on the night of

the murder, Mr Jones invited him to his room again. He said the pair got into an argument, during which Mr Jones pulled a knife on him and attempted to sodomize him.

According to police, Mr Ryad admitted to using his pocket knife to stab the victim about 20 times before fleeing with the valuables and hiding in his Thai girlfriend's room, elsewhere in Pattaya.

In an interview with the *New Zealand Daily Herald*, Robert McMillan, Mr Jones' brother-in-law, angrily rejected Mr Ryad's claims.

He said a postmortem had found no traces of marijuana in Mr Jones' blood.

"We know damn well he didn't smoke

marijuana," he told the paper. "It's utter rubbish. This guy is on a murder charge. He will say anything to get off."

Meanwhile Stuart Yeatman, a close friend of Mr Jones, claimed the Syrian was a "professional thief" who befriended tourists before robbing them.

"This guy would have relied on the fact that the people he robbed were quite secretive and guarded," he said. "He was a professional thief. I think he felt it was just another tourist."

Mr Jones was on his way back to New Zealand following a croquet tournament in London at the time of his death.

# Chalerm vows 'war room' in Lese Majeste crackdown

DEPUTY Prime Minister Chalerm Yubamrung has vowed to set up a "war room" to crack down on websites deemed insulting to the monarchy in a move that will disappoint critics of Thailand's draconian Lese Majeste law.

"The first thing I must tackle as a matter of urgency are those Lese Majeste websites. They are not allowed during this government," he told reporters, according to AFP.

"I will set up a war room, a working group to take care of this immediately, starting today. It must be done as soon as possible," he said.

Protection of the monarchy is enforced through Article 112 of the Thai penal code, which mandates a jail sentence of three to 15 years for anyone who "defames, insults or threatens the King, Queen, the Heir-apparent or the Regent".

Lese Majeste convictions have soared in recent years, while Thailand also blocked or suspended 75,000 websites from 2007 to 2010.

Anyone can file a Lese Majeste complaint and police are required

## AROUND THE nation

to investigate each one, leading critics to claim the law is being abused.

David Streckfuss, a leading scholar on Lese Majeste based in Khon Kaen, has likened the atmosphere to McCarthyism.

"It's the easiest, most vague and ambiguous shot at people," he recently told the *Guardian*.

In an interview with the *Independent* in July, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra described Lese Majeste as a "big sensitive issue".

"We don't want people to use Lese Majeste too often," she said. "We don't want Thai people to misuse this law."

In the run-up to the July 3 elections, Lese Majeste complaints were filed against several red shirt leaders who backed the Pheu Thai party.



Deputy PM Chalerm Yubamrung Photo: The Nation

# Matichon VP resigns amid bribery scandal

THE vice president of the *Matichon* group of newspapers has resigned from the National Press Council of Thailand (NPCT) in protest against its investigation into a media bribery scandal.

*Matichon* journalists were among seven who were allegedly paid 20,000 baht to provide favorable coverage of Yingluck Shinawatra during the recent election campaign.

In his resignation letter, Sommai Paritchart admitted that the allegations had damaged the reputation of Thai newspapers, including *Matichon*, but claimed the NPCT had failed to give the accused parties the chance to defend themselves properly in its probe.

Mr Sommai said the council had presented the results of its probe to the public and the Election Commission before an appeals process could be launched.

The scandal broke with the leak of an email written by Pheu Thai deputy spokesman Wim Roongwattanaajinda to his boss in which he said he had paid journalists.

In the email, Mr Wim allegedly explained how the party had tried to "manage" the content in five newspapers during the campaign: *Khao Sod*, *Matichon*, *Thai Rath*, *Daily News*, and *Kom Chad Luek*.

The NPCT investigation found that the first three papers tended to run positive stories about Pheu Thai.

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# Meth, mobiles and keeping the peace

THE fact that persons unknown recently enjoyed success smuggling *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) and mobile phones into Phuket Prison by concealing them inside dead rodents may have a comic aspect to it, but the revelation [*Phuket Gazette, Rats! Now they're smuggling drugs, August 27*] reflects a serious problem with the security situation – if not the hygiene – there.

The problem of smuggling at an overcrowded prison is by no means unique to Phuket. Prison inspections nationwide typically yield large caches of contraband, mostly mobile phones and methamphetamines.

The *Phuket Gazette* understands why mobile phones are so highly prized among those cut off from general society, but it is hard to believe that any of the more than 1,500 inmates crammed into the six-rai prison could surreptitiously acquire, use, recharge and pay usage bills, without help. The very same mundane tasks can be problematic enough for people on the outside.

The *Gazette* appreciates the straightforward manner with which prison director Rapin Nichanon admitted to the scale of the problem, but we nevertheless doubt such a situation could exist if some small percentage of the wardens there weren't somehow complicit, even if just by looking the other way.

Hopefully the current installation of more CCTV surveillance cameras will shed more light on how these problems have been allowed to persist.

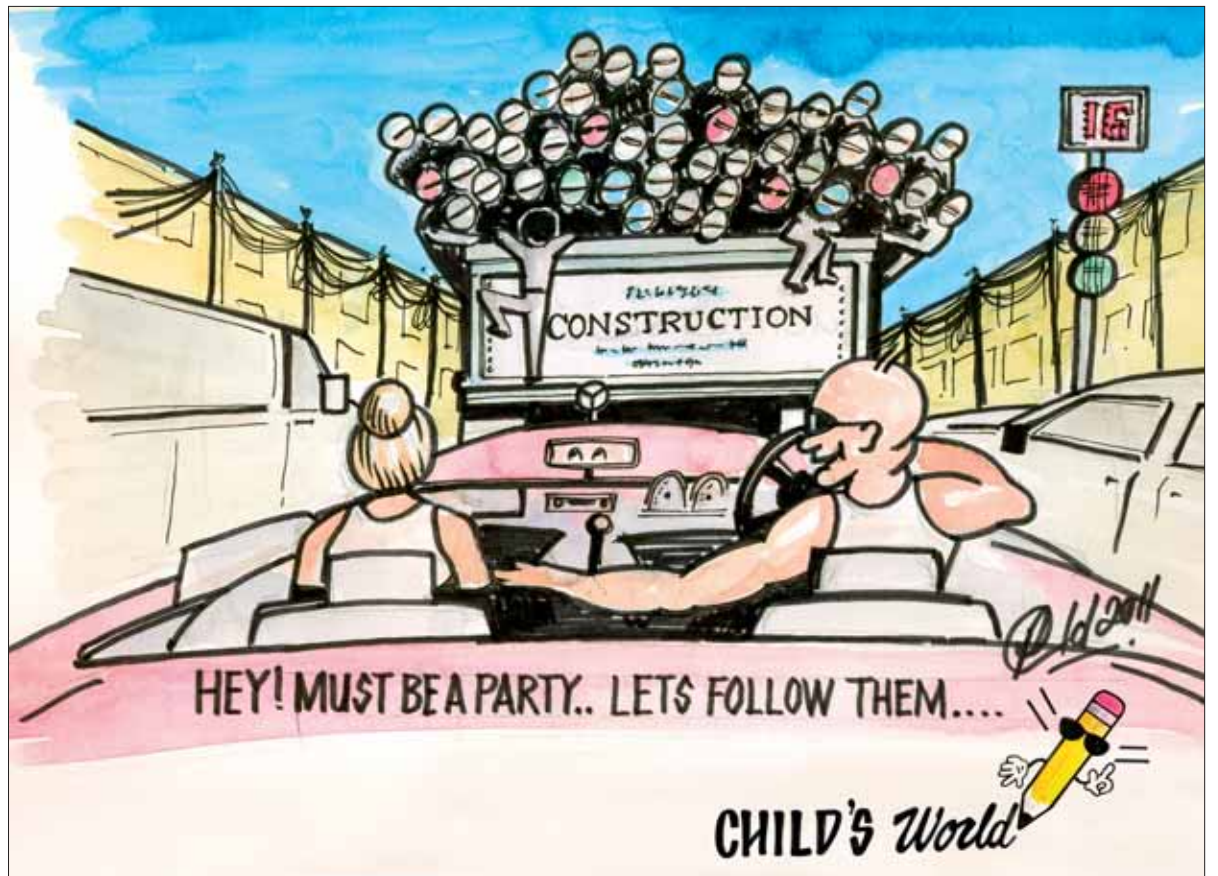
As for the other contraband of choice, methamphetamines, it is much harder to understand why inmates continue to generate such a demand for the drug that put so many of them behind bars in the first place. One would expect the last thing an inmate would want to do would be to “amp up” the prison experience, not to mention further pressurize the inevitable social tensions that develop by confining so many felons to such a small area for such a long time.

Then there is the inevitable “crash” that ensues when the drugs wear off. Given the conditions inside, one might reasonably expect that antidepressants would be the drugs favored by inmates.

Society generally prefers to remain ignorant of what goes on behind prison walls, but the overcrowding at the prison coupled with the availability of communications technology and a powerful stimulants is a combination we should all be worried about.

There have been no reports of serious unrest at Phuket Prison in recent years, but never has it been so overcrowded. Keeping the population there free of meth and mobile phones is the best way to keep the peace, so we wish the wardens there success in the ongoing cat-and-mouse game.

– The Editor



## Running out of reasons

Two months ago there was a report on German television (which was shown all over Germany, Austria and Switzerland) about sewage canals around Kata and Karon Beach.

My wife and I are both really big fans of Thailand, especially Phuket, having spent vacations there for 15 years.

We have noticed some sad changes the last few years. Anybody who walks around the Kata and Karon Beach area will notice those open canals. Not only do they look disgustingly dirty but they stink like hell! Is the Kata municipality doing something about it?

If they don't want to lose good-paying tourists they have to do something to save these beautiful beaches and they have to do it fast!

Johannes L  
Karon

### Money, the world's universal language

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket to get speed and traffic cameras, August 26*

Let's hope some of these new road safety laws will start to work, and the police enforce them.

It won't happen overnight, but like the helmet law, more and more people are taking notice.

Hit them where it hurts – in their pockets. They will soon learn.

Us foreigners are just as bad. I counted eight foreigners riding with no helmets today, from near Land and Houses to Chalong circle. They were also running red lights.

johndev  
Gazette forum

### Letters to the Editor

#### Powerlessly in power

Re: *Gazette online, Tropical depression: two suicides in Phuket in one day, August 28*

The problem is there is no “blame” here.

In the west, blame eventually forces accountability, which forces reform.

Thailand's recent election showed that those with money can buy anything, even within the top levels of government.

A recent story in the *Phuket Gazette* had a Thai politician basically admitting that he is powerless to fix the transport problem here.

What hope do the Burmese laborers have?

Not the Land of Smiles for many  
Gazette forum

#### A Phuket love affair, over

Re: *Gazette online, Tuk-tuk drivers surrender to Phuket police, August 27*

I have vacationed in Thailand on 10 separate occasions.

Bangkok taxis are some of the cheapest in the world and far cheaper than in the USA.

I have been to Phuket three times, but have not been back after the incredible price gouging and rude treatment during my last trip.

In the four trips since then I have refused to venture to Phuket and cannot see returning until there is some real evidence of improvement.

Tim  
Gazette forum

#### The neighbors do it better

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket to go light on tourist visas, but don't 'look suspicious', August 27*

It is interesting that Laos and Vietnam are communist countries yet it's easier to get a long term visa for them than it is for Thailand.

Malaysia has the right idea for tourism and expats, 90 days on arrival and also using Langkawi as a tax free island destination to promote tourism.

Vietnam, you can extend your stay from within the country. Thailand is making it so hard that their “customers” are going elsewhere.

Not good for business.

Bar Owner  
Gazette forum

#### If system is broken, standardize it!

Re: *Gazette online, More Phuket tuk-tuk drivers move toward standard fares, August 29*

Get Real. Tuk-tuks can never be safe.

They are not built to safe standards and lack even seat belts for the passengers.

In most countries they would not be allowed on the street, much less allowed to carry passengers. Drivers are not licensed and the idea of a “safe” tuk-tuk ride is a big joke.

Sanctioning fares is condoning robbery.

Create a working public transportation system with fair prices and Phuket would have a chance of regaining its credibility as a tourist destination.

Gorge Yamamoto  
Gazette forum

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# Hoteliers call for boost in workforce

## FIRST PERSON

THE six organizations involved at the Andaman Hotelier hospitality expo – the Food and Beverages Managers Club (Andaman region), Phuket Spa Association, Phuket Chef Association, Housekeeping Management Club, Phuket Chief Engineering Club and the Phuket Artisans Club – want to build a good workforce and see a lot of workers entering the island's hospitality industry.

Many hotels here are suffering from a shortage of labor. We wanted the event to show new workers and students how the hotel industry works and the potential it holds for them.

The younger generation can be inspired by industry professionals and take up hotel management in their studies.

Local government should help support and develop a skilled labor force as well.

Authorities have held many roadshow events both internationally and domestically to attract customers and tourists to Phuket but they never consider the situation of those working behind the scenes. They need to support the development of skills in order to accommodate the tourists who are coming in.

We are in discussions with Phuket Skill Development Center (PSDC) regarding the winners of the 70 skills and competency competitions that were held for hotel



**Vasan Tongsanga**, 42, is manager of the Serene Phuket Resort in Kata Beach and president of the Food and Beverages Managers Club (Andaman region). Here he talks about how the recent Andaman Hotelier Hospitality Expo aimed to help develop skills within the industry and meet demand in Phuket's hotel workforce.



A participant at the expo.

staff throughout the show.

We would like the winners in each field to be part-time lecturers for the PSDC. This would be beneficial to newcomers in the industry. For example, the housekeeping winners have skills that are rare.

They can teach their skills and knowledge to others who may not be able to take expensive classes elsewhere.

Many workers do not have a good understanding of how ho-

tels work because each have a lot of rules. When students finish studying hotel management at the undergraduate level, they will begin their careers and it will not be as they expect.

Some people who specialized in food and beverage, are made to wipe cutlery, while others who work as maids have to clean toilets.

They often can't stand these kinds of work and gradually disappear from the industry.

Working in hotels is like working in government. You should begin as a low-level member of staff and work your way up.

Educational institutes should change the mindset of the students to show that they will have to be proficient in their work to become a big shot.

If they start as executives right after graduation, they will not be able to handle the problems that come their way without an understanding of what is required at the lower levels of employment.

# Go ahead rain, make my day!

THE weather this past week has been miserable. Lashing rains, howling winds and flash floods have wreaked havoc on Phuket.

It's a depressing time to live on a tropical island. There just isn't much to do for fun when the sky falls upon us.

Tourists will brave the weather to see the attractions. They have to, they only have a small window of opportunity, but expats who have seen all there is to see here, what are we to do when it pours?

Movie? Seen all four movies playing at the cinema. Museum? Err, no thanks, seen them all, not impressed. Cafe? Done, highly caffeinated and it's only 10am. Library? What, there is one here? Gym? Done, only takes an hour, almost killed driving there. Golf? Don't be silly, not in this weather. Wait, got it, what about drinking? Yes, beer and lots of it, all day long.

While daylight binge drinking is one option that sadly many expats seem to be resorting to come rain or shine in Phuket, there are a few ways to stimulate your mind without killing brain cells when the weather is bleak.

Here are five things to do at home when it's "pishing" down outside:

Art: Go out and buy a small canvas, some pencils, a few brushes, paint (acrylic, watercolor, oil – go wild). Plonk yourself down at home and paint.

Photography: If you don't take photos, then learn how to. This is for everyone. If you live close to the beach, grab your raincoat, walk to your local strand and start snapping photos of waves



Photo: Ulf Mikaelson

## Island View

By Blair Christopher

Do you have an opinion to voice?  
Email [Editor@PhuketGazette.net](mailto:Editor@PhuketGazette.net)

crashing onto shore.

Write: What ever happened to that long lost cousin of yours? When was the last time you wrote to your son or daughter? When it's pouring outside, what better time to finally write a letter to your family? Tell them you miss them – you never know when your time is coming.

DIY: Dust off your tools and finally get round to putting that bookshelf up. It won't take long and your better half will love you for it. Alternatively, you could just clean the house.

Think: Peeved about parking issues or riled over railway plans in Phuket? Get writing and send the *Phuket Gazette* a letter to the editor, or you could sign up for the online forum and spend the rest of the day setting the world to right.

Apologies for the long letter, Mr Editor, but it is raining outside, what else am I supposed to do? I've done everything else on my list.

## Issues & Answers... ...asking the questions that affect you...

### Shocking ATMs

Today, I went to the ATM at the Family Mart at the corner of Soi 2, Nanai Road, Patong, to check my bank account. I have done this many times before, but in nice weather.

Today, my flip-flops were wet from the rain and so was the floor in front of the ATM.

The first key I touched when entering my PIN gave me an electric shock as if the ATM power supply was not grounded.

Only recently did I read about the poor guy [who was electrocuted] on Bangla Road, and I consider myself lucky to just get a small shock from the ATM.

I just used my purse to push the Cancel button, took my card and left. The next time I won't touch any ATM in the rain.

Are there any rules for proper wiring during the installation of ATMs, phone booths or anything with an electrical supply?

Are these machines checked regularly?

Who is responsible for the risk

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.

Submit your issue at

[www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers](http://www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers)

of accidents, the bank or Family Mart? Where can I claim compensation for the inconvenience?

*Nanai shocker  
Patong*

**Giramet Chartdang, supervisor at the Family Mart on Soi Nanai 2, replies:**

The ATM is the property of Siam City Bank. It was installed at the Family Mart many years ago. The bank has a deal with Family Mart to rent the area used by the machine.

However, we hold no responsibility over the ATM as everything is installed and maintained by



The ATM in question.

Siam City Bank.

In the case of electrocution from the ATM, Family Mart will help you contact the bank via the telephone number on the machine so they can send their technicians to check.

We are not sure which depart-

ment is responsible for the machine.

A similar occurrence happened a few days ago when a lady touched the ATM after being soaked by rain.

However, when I pressed buttons on the machine, I was fine. I

think that people are shocked because they are wet.

I will contact the bank to have a warning sign posted to prevent injuries.

Siam City Bank's call center number is 1770.

**An officer at the Siam City Bank maintenance department replies:**

We will send technicians to check the ATM. The machine uses the Family Mart store's electrical supply, so we will check whether the electrical charge is due to the ATM itself or wiring within the store.

**A call center officer at Siam City Bank replies:**

For compensation claims, I recommend contacting Siam City Bank's head office [in Bangkok] at 02-2202000 between 8:30am and 4:30pm.

Please explain the situation to them and they will transfer you to the legal department. The call center has no information regarding legal matters.





HOT TOPICS: Gov Tri Augkaradacha discussed hotels and traffic issues.

The Governor is driving a project to build a road connecting Chalong and Patong, among other things.

# Gov addresses hotel money laundering and traffic woes

PHUKET Governor Tri Augkaradacha says foreign investors are looking to take over medium-sized hotels in Phuket, estimated to be worth between 200 to 300 million baht.

The governor cited the island's potential as a world-class tourism

destination as the drive for such investments.

However, he has warned authorities to keep a close eye on transactions, in case they are used for money laundering purposes.

Gov Tri said the investment climate was healthy, with the

continuing expansion of tourism resulting in large amounts of money pouring into hotels, resorts and accommodation.

Such investments allowed investors to get a return on their investment and start making profits in a short period of time, he said.

Gov Tri explained that investors from Europe and the Middle East were looking to take over medium-sized hotels with 80-100 rooms, renovate them and run them at a profit.

The governor said that investment in cheap accommodation was also growing continuously. However, he said the market for projects costing upwards of 50mn baht was slowing down because of economic problems in Europe, which were causing foreigners to think twice before buying vacation homes.

Gov Tri said he was concerned about the hotel takeovers. "I've received news that investments of this type may or may not constitute money-laundering," he added.

The province has ordered relevant agencies to keep a close eye on takeovers of medium-sized hotels in particular, but they have to do it without damaging the province's investment climate, he said.

The governor then turned his attention to the island's infrastructure. Gov Tri explained that traffic was a serious problem for Phuket, and that related agencies were working hard on permanent solutions to the problem.

The authorities are focusing on traffic black spots such as the Tesco Lotus and Darasamuth School intersection, he said.

Gov Tri said the Highways Department had requested more than 400mn baht for each junction in next year's budget.

The money would be used to

build tunnels and elevated highway sections that would fix the traffic problems.

The province is also driving the project to build a road connecting Chalong and Patong.

The thoroughfare, which would join Wat Luang Pu Sapha with Nanai Road, is expected to relieve traffic elsewhere as well as shorten the distance between the two areas.

The Department of Rural Roads has allocated 12mn baht to perform an environmental impact assessment of the project and produce a detailed design.

The province will also push for completion of the Koh Phi Canal Road project, which will join Saphan Hin to Sakdidee Road.

The Department of Rural Roads has already approved a 200mn baht budget for the road. However, construction will involve the destruction of a mangrove forest, so the project is still awaiting the approval of the Cabinet before it can go ahead.

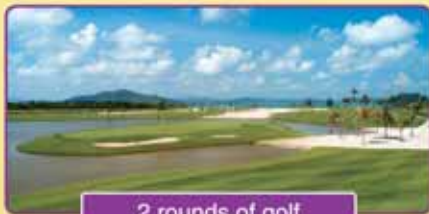
The province has also produced new regulations regarding advertising signage next to major roads. Tourists and residents have complained that there are too many advertising boards by the side of the roads. Not only do they look messy, but they block the views of the scenery and are blamed for causing accidents.

Gov Tri said he had asked the relevant local authorities to pull down any signs that had been erected without permission. The enforcement should begin at the end of this month.

## Would you like to enjoy

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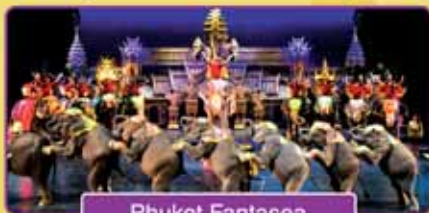
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# Petrol policy pumping prices

By the Nation and Phuket Gazette

FUEL prices in Phuket and the rest of Thailand embarked on a roller coaster ride last month following a series of measures implemented by the Yingluck administration that coincided with the government's energy policy to reduce the cost of living.

As an immediate result of the suspension of Oil Fund levies last week, prices plummeted for diesel, 91 and 95-octane benzine (unleaded regular and premium gasoline).

The State News Agency MCOT reported on Saturday that some people had even made the trip across the border from Burma just to take advantage of cheaper gasoline prices in Thailand.

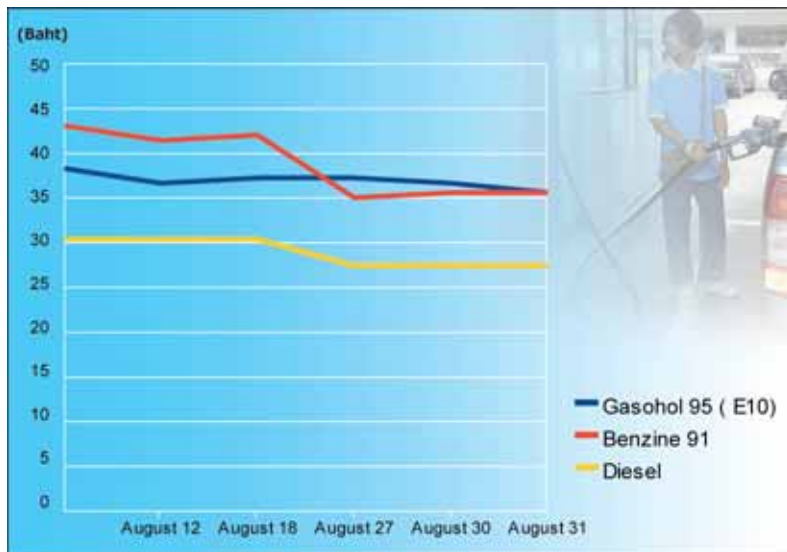
Meanwhile, the sale of gasohol – a mixture of gasoline and ethanol – sharply declined as gasohol consumers switched to the suddenly cheaper benzine.

Though consumers throughout the country were happy to pay less for fuel, analysts are concerned that the benefits of the government's fuel price policy will fail to outweigh the costs.

According to a report by *The Nation* on Wednesday, the levy cuts slashed monthly contributions to the Oil Fund by 6.1 billion baht.

Energy Minister Pichai Nariphaphan met with state agencies earlier this week to discuss ways to reduce the impact on gasohol businesses.

By Tuesday the Energy Policy Administration Committee made the decision to widen the price gap between premium petrol and gasohol, and make the price of gasohol competitive with benzine



as it had been previously.

The price gap for 95-octane petrol over gasohol 95 will be widened from 3.48 baht per liter to 4.55 baht while the premium for 91-octane petrol and gasohol 91 will grow from 1.43 to 2.93 baht.

It is estimated that the decision will cost the budget 454mn baht a month.

Energy Minister Pichai said total contributions from all petrol products will be only 10mn baht per month, however.

With these projections, the Oil Fund looks set to borrow soon, as its net cash position is only one billion baht.

Against total assets of 16.7bn baht, the fund shoulders 15.35bn baht in liabilities, derived mainly from subsidizing the sales of Natural Gas for Vehicles (NGV) and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).

The Oil Fund has the green light to borrow up to 20bn baht, but with estimated monthly expenses running at 3.5 to 4bn baht, the loan limit would be reached within

five to six months.

Regardless of consumers' joy, the government's policy is being watched with concern, especially since the government promises to keep fuel prices down for a year.

It remains unclear whether or not the policy will help core inflation. Siam Commercial Bank's research unit said the suspension of levies would help lower transportation costs and slice headline inflation by one percentage point.

However, goods prices are not expected to drop significantly since businesses are bracing for the increase in the minimum wage.

Minister Pichai told reporters that Tuesday's decision was meant to show the government's commitment to promoting alternative energy, while lowering fuel prices to ease the cost of living.

Deputy Finance Minister Boonsong Teriyaphirom said the government would not raise fuel excise taxes, as Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra believes the government should maintain all



ROLLERCOASTER RIDE: Petrol prices have been fluctuating lately.

types of fuel excise taxes for a certain period to hold down people's daily expenses.

"The government will not touch oil and luxury product excise taxes for at least six months and will see what this will do to state revenue," Mr Boonsong said.

The excise taxes should be maintained in line with the suspension of Oil Fund levies, he explained.

The Cabinet endorsed the extension of the diesel excise tax rate at the present level of about 0.0005 satang per liter by another month.

The excise tax was initially set to expire at the end of September.

The minister also reaffirmed that the government would give importance to the long-term promotion of alternative energy and the positioning of Thailand as an ASEAN hub for energy plants.

## Budget for Andaman Embrace now decided

PATONG's first Sino-Portuguese hotel, Andaman Embrace Hotel & Spa, is set to open its doors on March 1, 2012 after acquiring a 500-million-baht budget for extensive renovations.

The new establishment will occupy the beach road location of the former Club Andaman Beach Resort, which shut down operations on April 30 after more than 20 years. Alterations to the accommodation areas will be thorough, bringing a hint of Phuket Town's unique architectural feel to the island's liveliest tourist center.

As reported by the *Phuket Gazette* in May, Andaman Embrace will feature a 570-square-meter swimming pool – shaped in the likeness of its logo – and will retain the previous resort's tropical gardens and "lotus cottages" alongside modern facilities, five other room types, shopping and wellness services.

Salisa Limsakul, Managing Director of Andaman Embrace Hotel & Spa, explained that the opening

date was moved from December 2011 to March of next year so the renovations wouldn't be rushed.

"We wanted to achieve 100 per cent completion with the renovations, both in design and quality, so the opening date was moved to March 2012 to allow for this," Ms Limsakul said.

## How Phuket's prices are determined

ML Sittichai Chaiyanan, a PR representative for PTT, Thailand's largest energy firm and the largest company in Thailand overall, told the *Phuket Gazette* that petrol prices throughout Thailand are determined by the Ministry of Energy in Bangkok. "Prices are fixed and are set first by the Ministry of Energy who adds a transport surcharge that varies for each province outside of Bangkok," he said.

"In addition to the transport surcharges, minor adjustments may be made depending on local competition factors and brand strategies at each pump," he added.

An officer of Energy Policy and Planning Office at the Ministry of Energy conferred and explained that all price adjustments are ordered directly from the Ministry of Energy. The of-

ficer explained that the reason Phuket's prices vary from the prices listed on the Ministry of Energy website is due to transport surcharge adjustments, which vary for each district throughout the country. The rate for Phuket – set in 2006 and unchanged since – is as follows: Muang District, +0.44 baht, Thalung, +0.48 baht and Kathu has a surcharge of +0.49 baht.



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# What to expect from your ISP

This week Live Wire explains how the 'bang for your baht' internet speeds were calculated.

LAST week, with Khun Roger's help, I published an updated 'bang for the baht' chart that shows you what kinds of international download speeds various Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are actually providing, and at what price. These aren't the 9 Mbps or 100 Mbps advertised speeds; they're real international download speeds, measured by real customers, like you and me, all over Phuket.

The most important point is the amount you pay for an Internet line has almost no correlation with how fast the line runs internationally. That observation generated a lot of mail, with people from all over the world wondering what they can do to get a good internet line when they visit Phuket or move here. That's a good question with a tough answer.

This week I would like to step you through the process we used to come up with those numbers, and explain both the benefits and shortcomings of the study. Starting next week, I'll go through the method folks can use to find a decent Internet connection. Then I'll step you through the process of signing up for Internet service. It isn't as simple as you might think.

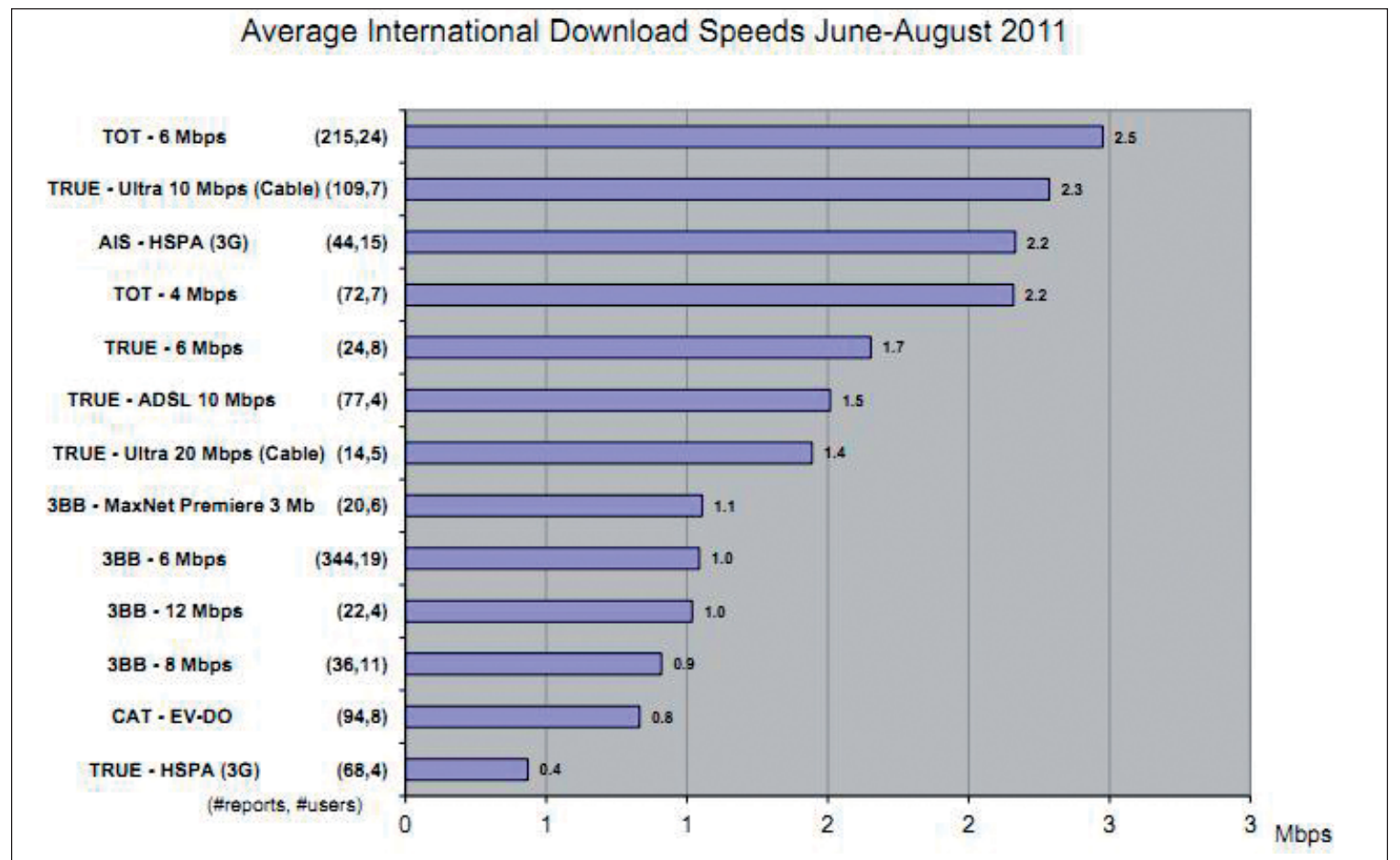
The 'bang for the baht' chart came from all the internet speeds posted at PhuketInternetSpeed.com. Hundreds of people, from all over the island, measure their international download speeds using a specific testing location in Los Angeles, and post the results on this web site. The data posted there is available, free, to anyone who wants to download and analyze it.

Computer Clinic regular Khun Roger downloaded the 2,000-plus observation points submitted after we changed the reporting site on June 17. He deleted any observations that weren't made with DSLReports, our standardized measuring site. Then he deleted any



**Live Wire**

By Woody Leonhard



**BANG FOR YOUR BAHT:** These are the real internet speeds for the major ISPs on the island, as reported to PhuketInternetSpeed.com

Internet service that had only one user reporting speeds with that service. He deleted the zeros, which indicate a broken connection. He then averaged all of the reported speeds for each individual service, and the result is the graph you see on this page. (The two numbers in parenthesis are the number of reports we had for that service, and the number of people reporting speeds for the service, separated by a comma.) Differences of 10 per cent, or even 20 per cent, aren't particularly significant.

You'll notice that international download speeds tend to group up depending on the provider, not on the service. So, for example, there's almost no difference between the cheap 3BB 6 Mbps service, and the con-

siderably more expensive 3BB MaxNet Premiere 3 Mbps service.

To create last week's 'bang for the baht' chart, I grouped similar services, added a few observation points based on new data (for GPRS and TOT AirMax), and tagged the monthly price on the top of each bar.

The 'bang for the baht' chart doesn't tell you how fast your Internet connection will be. That's dependent on a huge number of factors – whether the sites you visit are cached, what kind of software you use for downloading, how frequently you hit domain name servers, latency factors, and a myriad of other details. The chart also doesn't analyze outages, their causes or duration, so it only tells part of the story. But it's an important part, and one that we can measure and replicate with some accuracy.

If you aren't yet reporting your speeds on PhuketInternetSpeed.com, please drop by and sign up! It's free, only takes a few seconds, and the results help everybody figure out what's working and what's not worth the effort.

Remember that all of the data – more than 21,000 reported sightings at this point – is immediately available to anybody who wants to download, look at, or fiddle with the results. Also remember that the Internet Service Providers are watching the reports. We need your help.

To keep up on the latest Phuket internet news, drop by one of the Sunday morning Computer Clinics, follow Woody on Google+ (send mail to Woody@KhunWoody.com if you need an invitation), or on Twitter: @PhuketPC.

## Apocalypse continued



**Island Investor**

By Graham Macdonald

THIS is the second installment in a three-part article describing the potential "Economic Apocalypse" approaching us, and what to do if it arrives. In the first part (August 20-26, volume 18, issue 34), I described the fragility of four prime currencies, particularly the Euro.

THE planning and introduction of the Euro was yet another example of the results of the tidal wave of global liquidity that flooded markets in the 1980s and 1990s.

The liquidity flowed into the most immediately rewarding (and generally riskiest) asset classes causing asset bubbles to grow exponentially until 2008 when they began to burst.

The idea of the Euro project was also at least partly underpinned by an impetus that has been a constant theme in European history throughout the last three millennia; namely the evolution of hundreds of tribal states in the face of hegemony from a succession of various dominant empires from

within or outside Europe.

With the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, modern Italy and Germany did not even exist, while the various Slav and Balkan states were embarking on a course of self-determination that ultimately resulted in the tortuous journey to the status that they enjoy today.

Additionally, the Ottoman, Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires which had once been the major bulwarks on the eastern side of Europe were already declining.

Balancing aging empires against the nascent force of nationalism preoccupied the major European powers throughout much of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and was a significant factor in the conflicts

of the last century, with very mixed results.

Italy has achieved successes this year despite its strong sense of being a collection of disparate regions and city-states – united by a post-Napoleonic desire to achieve a homegrown democratic republic rather than pay homage to rulers whose power base was imposed from outside.

However, the greater the economic stresses that Italy faces, the greater the risk that regional tensions will rise ever closer to the surface, as they did in the 1930s.

While Italy may still be very much a work in progress, Germany seems to be the finished article. More in two weeks' time.

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# Silver Lining on a dream voyage

A superyacht, made in Thailand, will soon be leaving Phuket's shores on a circumnavigation of the World.



Photos: Christian Mouchet & Silver Lining



ALUMINIUM ALLURE: The 31.5-meter hull is made of aluminum.

By Fraser Morton

IT HAS taken more than three years and 375 workers to build, but at last superyacht *Silver Lining* is ready for its round-the-world voyage.

And Canadian owner Chris Lenz, 45, can finally look forward to early retirement when he and his family set sail from Yacht Haven Marina later this week.

Formerly one of Hong Kong's most successful food and beverage entrepreneurs – with 37 restaurants, clubs and factories when he sold his company in 2006 – Chris knows what it takes to build something from nothing.

But his most ambitious venture has been his 31.5-meter aluminum hull superyacht, built in the small village of Chebilang, Satun, on Thailand's southwest coast.

"Many in the yachting community said this standard of yacht could not be made in Satun... I take a lot of pride in proving those people wrong," Chris said.

*Silver Lining* is not just a triumph for the Lenz family – and their home for the next two years on the world's seas – but also a shining example of southern Thailand's yacht building capabilities.

"This is the first-ever yacht built in Thailand to achieve the American Bureau of Shipping Maltese

Cross, the highest level of standards they have," Chris said.

If *Silver Lining* were to be built in Europe, Chris said the cost would have been more than US\$20 million (600mn baht), but building in Satun saved him millions of US\$ in production costs.

Building *Silver Lining* has been a monolithic challenge and a logistical minefield in bringing all the parts of the building process together.

After scrapping plans to build a 30 meter catamaran, Chris found the unfinished hull of *Silver Lining* sitting in a shipyard in northern China, while searching an Israeli website.

Shipping it out of China, and trying to find a place to build his new boat, took time.

"I went to Taiwan, a few shipyards in southern China; either they couldn't handle a hull this big or they wouldn't do it.

"Finally I went to Satun, because there was a similar size boat being restored, so I knew they could handle the size."

But when Chris visited the shipyard, he found there was a canvas roof being used to shelter the boat building projects. This wouldn't do.

So he constructed his own building for his *Silver Lining* project and put his team to work.

No money changed hands with the owner of the shipyard, instead, a simple deal: When *Silver Lining* was finished, the building would transfer to the shipyard's ownership. Simple.

But the next chapter in the story of *Silver Lining* was anything but simple.

After transporting the hull from China on a Russian cargo ship, and then towed by a 14-meter sailboat from Malaysia to Thailand, Chris was vexed to find the hull was leaking.

Some seven months later, with the hull fixed and a new roof, a



FAMILY VALUES: Chris, Vicky and Kanon Lenz inside their stunning superyacht.



ENGINE ROOM LOW-DOWN: Chris Lenz explains the intricacies of the room.

team of 110 full-time employees were working around the clock on *Silver Lining*. Most of the team were Phuket locals and expats.

Chris said they even had local egg and roti naan bread vendors who turned up each day to sell their goods.

*Silver Lining* launched from Satun on January 20 this year and arrived at Yacht Haven Marina in March.

At the time of writing, the crew of nine was making final preparations to leave Phuket.

*Silver Lining* will first head to Langkawi and then onto Singapore, Bhutan and Bali before setting sail to Christmas Island and Mauritius.

The crew will anchor off the coast of South Africa from late November to March. Then it's off to the world's second oldest British colony and the death place of Napoleon Bonaparte, Saint Helena Island in the south Atlantic.

After island hopping in the Mediterranean Sea and then navigating across the Atlantic from the Canary Islands to Venezuela, the crew will set a course for the Caribbean, Miami and then Canada.

Chris said that returning to his hometown of Thunder Bay,

Canada, and sailing down the Saint Lawrence Seaway will be the highlight of the trip for him.

He has even reduced the mast height of *Silver Lining* so it can get under bridges on this leg of the voyage.

"This will be the biggest ever single-mast sailboat to go down the Saint Lawrence," he said.

Along with Chris's wife Vicky, 46, daughter Kyana, 9, and son Kanon, 8, the family will be joined onboard by teacher Kenny Li, 26, first mate Samuel Serapion, 46, captain Jose Serapion, 48, deck hand Mark Anthony and chef Yanti, 32.

When they arrive back in Phuket in 2013, the Lenz family plans to move into one of their new homes being built on the fringe of Loch Palm golf course.

And for 45-year-old Chris, he has no intention of rushing back to work.

"We will come back to Phuket to live, but what I will do when I get here? I love having no idea," he said.

If you would like to find out more about the adventures of *Silver Lining*, the website [yachtsilverlining.com](http://yachtsilverlining.com) will be live next week.

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# Fans going crazy for new rom-com

## Film

By Scott Phillips

HOW refreshing it is to walk into a theater and see an unapologetic romantic comedy fully embrace the subject matter of love and relationships. The last movie that I can think of that made a romance as entertaining as *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, was *Love Actually* – back in 2003.

Men who walk into the theater ready to assume their role as the disapproving beacon of masculinity should fear not. Women who quietly hope the movie isn't as horrible and cliché d as the last rom-com they dragged their significant other to can also rest easy. Both men and women will walk out of *Crazy, Stupid, Love* with that classic sense of cin-



### Crazy, Stupid, Love

**Director:** Glenn Ficarra, John Requa

**Starring:** Steve Carell, Julianne Moore, Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone, Kevin Bacon

**Genre:** Romantic Comedy

**Gazette Rating:** 4.5/5

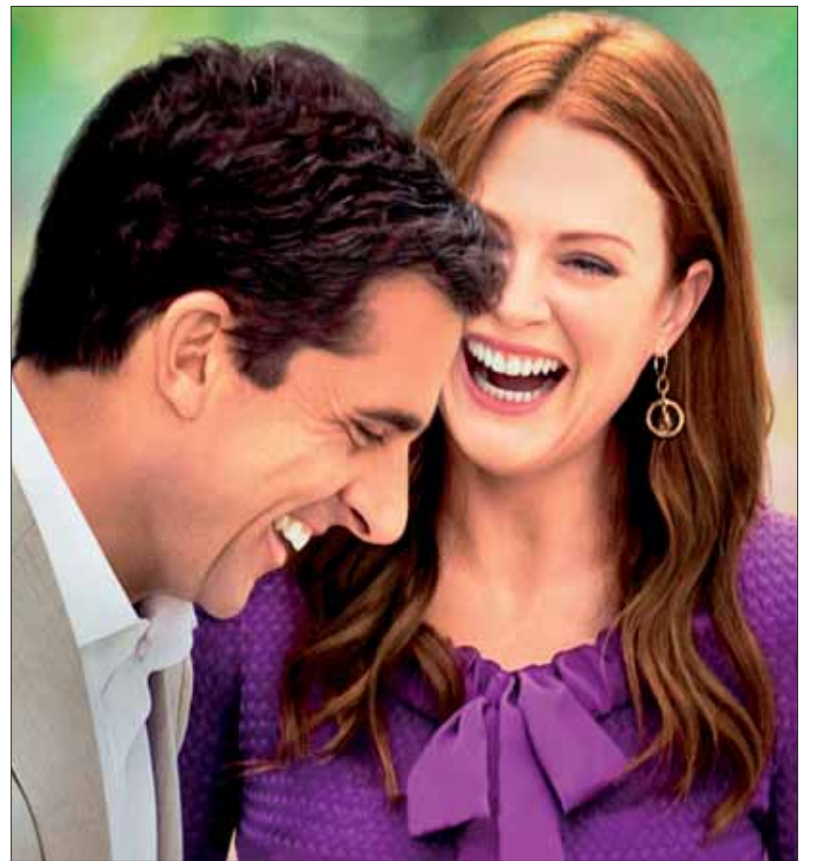
**Opens:** September 22

ematic fulfillment, and neither party will be indebted for making a bad choice on movie night.

Movies like *Crazy, Stupid, Love* deconstruct stigmas by

blending romantic comedy with genuine sincerity – the kind that most writers shy away from because they're afraid it won't be funny. Indeed, it does take a talented writer to portray the pitfalls of romance without making it overly depressing – and everyone in this film is in a problematic relationship.

Considering the team behind the camera, the film is an interesting product. Directors Glenn Ficarra and John Requa, best known for the raunchy and hilarious *Bad Santa* in 2003, teamed up with writer Dan Fogelman, who has only penned a handful of animated movies that include *Cars*, *Bolt* and *Tangled*. The film takes the best from both worlds – the innocence and sweet intentions of youth, and just the right amount of bawdy comedy.



**THE STRUGGLE:** A tender film about modern romance from the perspective of both adults and teenagers.

The interconnections of the film keeps the story engaging and relevant for the audience, and it sends a subtle message that just about everyone struggles with romance, whether they're a seasoned husband and wife, young adult, or adolescent.

Though the characters in *Crazy, Stupid, Love* all struggle with the trials and tribulations of love, there is not a single ill-willed character in the film, which is a very rare find.

When written material is this good, everyone – actors, directors, and audiences – gets to have fun. If you're looking for something to do with your significant other, look no further.



Emma Stone as Hannah.

*Crazy, Stupid, Love* is scheduled to hit theaters in Thailand on September 22.



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## New Releases

For show times, go to [www.phuketgazette.net/movies/](http://www.phuketgazette.net/movies/)

### Mr Popper's Penguins

**Director** Mark Waters

**Starring** Jim Carrey, Angela Lansbury, Carla Gugino

**Release Date** September 1

**Genre** Comedy/Drama

Mr Popper is a businessman who inherits six penguins that turn his apartment into a snowy winter wonderland and his life upside-down.

### Apollo 18

**Director** Gonzalo Lopez-Gallego

**Starring** Lloyd Owen, Warren Christie

**Release Date** September 1

**Genre** Sci-fi/Thriller

Old footage from NASA's abandoned Apollo 18 mission reveals the reason the US has never returned to the moon.

### Vengeance is Beautiful

**Director** Olivier Mé gaton

**Starring** Zoé Saldana, Jordi Molla, Lennie James

**Release Date** September 1

**Genre** Action/Thriller

After witnessing her parents' murder as a child in Bogota, the young woman grows up to be a stone-cold assassin.

### Ceremony

**Director** Max Winkler

**Starring** Uma Thurman, Lee Pace, Michael Angarano

**Release Date** September 1

**Genre** Drama

A lopsided love triangle emerges when a privileged pair find their wedding is crashed by a man who intends to steal the bride.

### Fright Night

**Director** Craig Gillespie

**Starring** Anton Yelchin, Colin Farrell, Toni Collette, David Tennant

**Release Date** September 1

**Genre** Horror/Comedy

This remake of the 1985 Tom Holland film is about a man who finds out that his neighbor is behind the disappearances of his friends.





# Asia on flight path to success

NEWS that Phuket International Airport (PIA) is improving facilities to meet a healthy increase in demand is timely since aviation in Asia Pacific is booming and driving global aviation growth like never before.

Phuket – and Thailand – are small players in the overall scheme, but with passenger traffic at PIA increasing almost 14 per cent for the October 2009 to September 2010 fiscal year and international passengers up by 25 per cent for the first three months of this year, it's clear that something has to be done to upgrade the airport if Phuket is to keep pace with the rest of the region.

According to the Airport Authority of Thailand, renovations to the passenger terminals and departure halls, and upgrades to baggage claim belts, aerobridges, docking guidance signs, walk-through body scanners, CCTV cameras and check-in counters, will be completed by September this year.

These upgrades may need to be continuous, as such growth into Phuket reflects on a small scale what the International Air



## Aviation

By Alastair Carthew

Transport Association calls "a shifting of the industry's center of gravity to the East."

In 2009, the Asia Pacific surpassed North America for the first time for passengers who travelled in the respective regions. The numbers were 662 million and 655 mn respectively.

The market capitalization of the top 20 airlines in the world and where they come from underlines the dominance of the Asia Pacific region. The first four are Air China, Singapore Airlines, China Southern and China Eastern. Cathay Pacific, All Nippon Airways, Qantas Airways, Hainan Airlines, China, and Korean Airlines also made the top 20. In total, Asia Pacific took nine of the top 20. The first large American carrier is Southwest Airlines in ninth position. Thai Airways International came in at 22<sup>nd</sup>.

New types of aircraft are also coming out of Asia Pacific – and more are to come as a result of this boom. For example, China has unveiled a 168-seat, commercial jet called the C919 to compete with Boeing's B737 and the



EMBRAER E145: built in China under a joint venture agreement. Photo: Todd MacDonald

Airbus A320 from 2016 onwards. Large Brazilian manufacturer Embraer is building its E145 regional jet in China under a joint venture agreement. Japan is also developing its own regional jet, the MRJ.

As one industry observer put it, China will become the "third leg" of the aerospace industry after North America and Europe. But development is not confined to China.

Singapore has rapidly become a center of excellence for both manufacturing of airline components and, particularly, servicing, contributing thousands of jobs to the island state's economy.

It is a pity that, so far, Thailand has not cashed in on the Asia Pacific aviation expansion like Singapore. With its centralized location and cheap labor force, Thailand ought to be well placed to get a share of the action, but there is little sign of it at present.

For example, the Civil Aviation Administration of China estimates that Chinese airlines will need 290 new aircraft this year and 43,300 aircraft in the next 20 years, with the China fleet becoming the largest outside the US market. There have to be servicing and maintenance opportunities there for Thai companies, with a focus on high level technical skills and a robust technology infrastructure, like Singapore.

Aviation industry insiders also point to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Thailand is a member, as another source of huge potential growth outside of China. The region led the global economic recovery with a growth rate of 9.3 per cent in 2010, compared to 3.9 per cent experienced by the global economy as a whole. ASEAN countries are looking at around 8 per cent growth this year.



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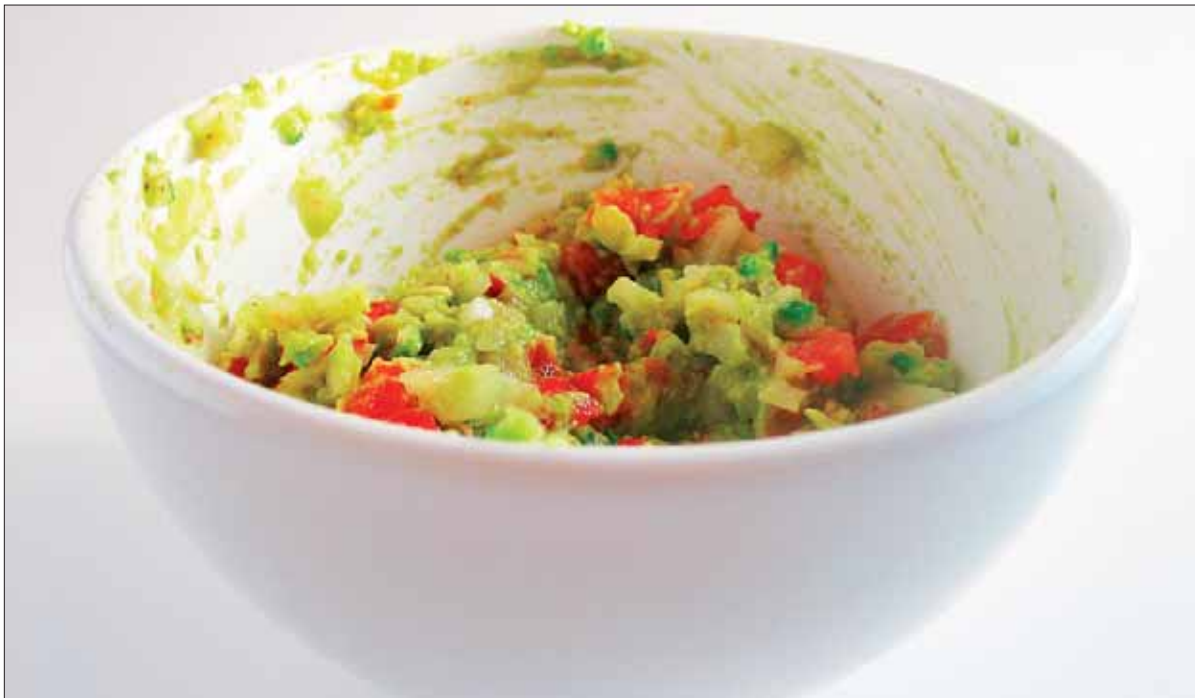
# We are what we eat...

And that's not always good for you OR your dog

READ any number of websites or dog magazines and you'll enter a whole world of discussion on what is best to feed your dog. Some advocate a complete raw diet and others believe that commercially processed foods are designed with your dogs nutrition in mind. However, while that debate rages on, generally speaking there is less disagreement on the specific foods that all dogs should avoid. Admittedly, the following is not exhaustive; and naturally some people will say, "Rubbish, I feed my dog that all the time." Fine, but at least you'll have the information.



**Dog Whisperer**  
By Russell D Russell



**NOT EVEN FOR CHIHUAHUAS:** Guacamole contains both avocado and onion which are potentially lethal to dogs.  
Photo: Craig Dugas

## AVOCADO

Avocados contain a substance called persin which is harmless to humans (unless you're allergic) but can be toxic to dogs, causing vomiting and diarrhea. In large quantities, it can also be fatal. So keep the guacamole to yourself.

## ONIONS

In all forms – powdered, raw,

cooked, or dehydrated – can destroy a dog's red blood cells, leading to anemia. That can happen even with the onion powder found in some baby food.

Just eating a large quantity once, or eating smaller amounts regularly, can cause poisoning. Symptoms of anemia include weakness, vomiting, loss of interest in food, dullness, and even breathlessness.

## CHOCOLATE, TEA & COFFEE

All of the above contain the substances theobromine and caffeine which are both nervous system stimulants. When ingested by dogs, these methylxanthines can cause vomiting and diarrhea, panting, excessive thirst and urination, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, tremors, seizures and even death.

Different types of chocolate have different levels of toxins, with white chocolate containing the least and baking chocolate the most. It's worth noting that aside from tea and coffee, caffeine can be found in numerous other products such as cocoa, colas and stimulant drinks like Red Bull, and it's also to be found in some cold medicines and pain killers.

## GRAPES AND RAISINS

Science is a little hazy here. Most will agree that grapes and raisins can cause kidney issues but they're not sure why or how, and it only takes a small quantity to cause complete renal failure.



**HEALTHY TREAT:** Bananas are actually good for dogs in moderation but grapes can cause complete renal failure. Photo: Vizzual

## MACADAMIA NUTS

Like humans, some dogs have a general nut allergy. So while peanut butter is an awesome treat for most, it can be troublesome for a very few.

Macadamia nuts can also cause problems for some dogs. Symptoms include muscle tremors, weakness or paralysis of the hind quarters, vomiting, fever and rapid heart rate.

Lots of packaged biscuits are cooked with macadamia nuts, so try to ignore the big brown eyes and give them a doggie treat instead.

## XYLITOL

Some sweets such as chewing gum, toothpaste, baked goods, and some diet foods are sweetened with xylitol.

This artificial sweetener can cause an increase in the insulin circulating through your dog's body. That can cause your dog's blood sugar to drop and can also cause liver failure. Initial symptoms include vomiting, lethargy, and loss of coordination. Eventually, the dog may have seizures, and liver failure can occur within just a few days. In addition, too much sugar, in general, is as bad for dogs as it is for us, leading to obesity, dental problems and even diabetes.

## SALT

It is not a good idea to share salty foods like potato chips or pretzels with your dog. Eating too much salt can cause excessive thirst and urination and lead to sodium ion poisoning.

Symptoms of too much salt include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, tremors, elevated body temperature, and seizures. It may even cause death.

So it's a good idea to keep the potato chips to yourself!

## YEAST DOUGH

Before it's baked, bread dough needs to rise – which is exactly what it will do in your dog's stomach. As it swells, it can stretch and even rupture the stomach or intestinal lining causing severe pain.

In addition, when the yeast ferments it produces alcohol which can in turn lead to alcohol poisoning. Because the risk diminishes after the dough is cooked and the yeast has fully risen, pets can have small bits of bread as treats (as long as it is not raisin bread).

However, these treats are fattening and should not constitute more than 5 to 10 percent of your pet's daily caloric intake.

## HUMAN MEDICINE

Reactions to drugs commonly prescribed for humans are the most common cause of poisoning in dogs, whether ingested by accident or fed to the animal in the hope of curing another underlying symptom.

Just as you would do for your children, keep all medicines out of your dog's reach. And never give your dog any over-the-counter medicine unless you're told to do so by your vet.

Ingredients such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, which are commonly found in pain relievers and cold medicine, can be deadly for your dog.

There are many vets on the island, so if your dog is ill take the animal to a proper clinic as soon as you can.

*As mentioned, this is not an exhaustive list and some of it is pure common sense. If you'd like some more information on what you should be feeding your dog, feel free to get in touch with us. [www.tk9a.com](http://www.tk9a.com) or [canineworld@me.com](mailto:canineworld@me.com)*

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# Roberto Ugolini

ROBERTO Ugolini has been one of Phuket's most dynamic entrepreneurs over the past five years, opening a variety of restaurants and bakeries around the island, most notably under the Watermark brand.

He was born in Rome and graduated from the University of Rome in 1979 with a major in finance. He worked during the 1980s for a shipping company specialized in air freight and customs clearance. He started as marketing sales manager and was eventually promoted to MD.

"I have always been a workaholic and like to see how much business I can create. But I also enjoy having fun. When I was young, I played the drums in a band with my brother. We always won music competitions. I exercise and have run in five New York marathons, and I love motorcycles. I still enjoy riding my Harley."

In 1990, he joined Italy's San Paolo Bank where he worked in investment banking, tax planning and wealth management. He was sent to manage the bank's Bangkok office in 1994 and has been based in Thailand ever since. An investment in three condos at the Royal Phuket Marina in 2005 stimulated his interest in projects on the island.

"I immediately recognized the beauty of Phuket and its ongoing potential to draw visitors from around the world. I decided to build restaurants as everyone in the world loves Italian

## EXPAT gallery

By Bruce Stanley

food. I first opened Limoncello restaurant at RPM and then acquired Watermark at the Boat Lagoon. I also added the bakery at the Boat Lagoon and realized the potential to build a factory to supply baked goods not only to resorts on Phuket but also to restaurants as far away as Europe."

Roberto is developing projects in Europe as well as opening new restaurants in Bangkok. He spends most of his time in Thailand but his two sons are studying in Europe.

"I love to visit my family in Switzerland where I can cook for them. I am having my sons educated in Europe as I want them to have a classical education where they learn the importance of the rule of law."

Roberto estimates he spends seventy per cent of his time working in Thailand. He bought Toto's restaurant and the Pizza Garden at Cherngtalay and made impressive renovations to the dining room and kitchen. He contracted John Underwood to build an impressive architectural statement across the road from Tinlay Place which he plans to use as a conference and special

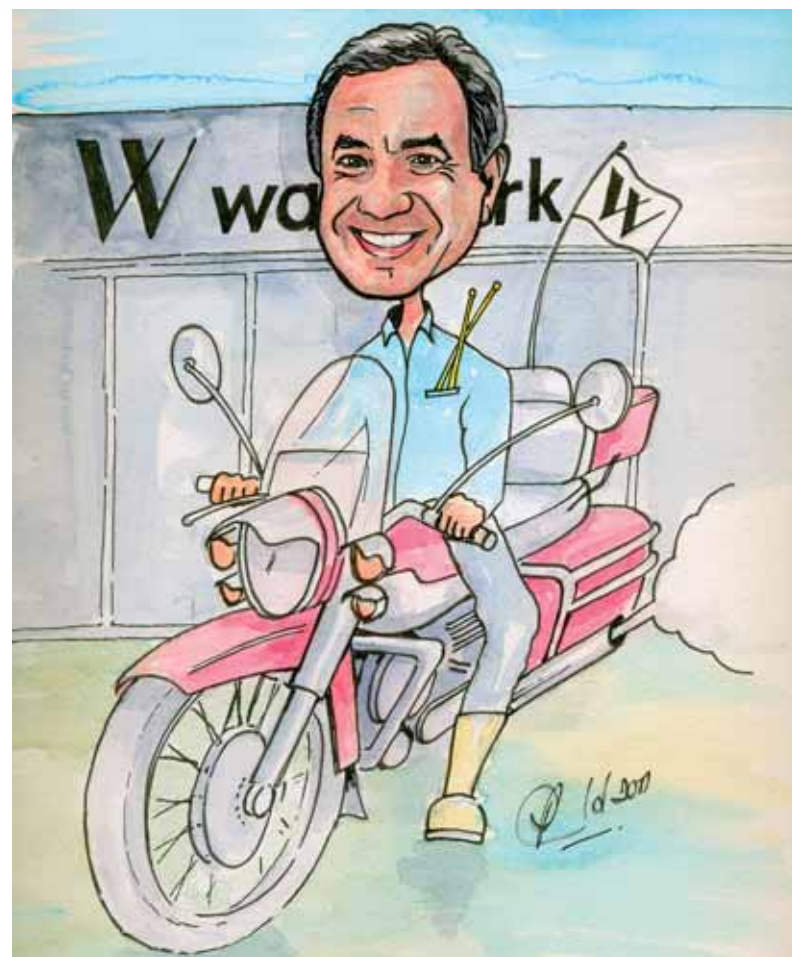
events center for corporate meetings and parties.

His interests in Phuket real estate extend to the popular Babylon Beach Club, a small pensione at Surin Beach, and the upscale housing project 'Miramare', now under construction and due to open next year.

Perhaps his most ambitious project is the Watermark Bakery on the Bypass Road. He recruited Phuket's renowned pastry chef Peter Webber, who opened Les Anges at RPM and ran bakery operations at the Oriental hotel in Bangkok, to design and produce chocolates and pastries to be sold to Phuket's finer resorts and restaurants, and also to be sent to Roberto's business contacts in Italy.

"We have built the first factory on Phuket that produces world class chocolates and pastries. I send these to my Calderazzo & Ugolini restaurant on Soi Langsuan in Bangkok, and to the three new Watermark restaurants I've opened in the city. And part of the production goes to our clients in Phuket, of course."

Roberto is opening new concept restaurants on Phuket later this year. On one side of his Toto Italian restaurant he is designing Phuket's first upscale vegetarian bistro, and on the other side he will open the island's first *rosticceria*, a Euro-deli concept where his guests can buy cooked foods to take back to their villas.



By Peter Child for the Phuket Gazette

## About Expat Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Expat Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket, and for having made those contributions in successful partnerships with Thais. For many, the contributions have entailed significant investment, often in the mid-80s and 90s when the rules of business were, ahh, not always clear. Some are not in business at all, but all have one thing in common: if there were a *Who's Who in Phuket*, they'd be in it.

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**Phuket Promise: The beach guards 'will be back'**  
PHUKET: Lifeguards will soon be back on the beaches in greater numbers and with more new lifesaving equipment. Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) President Paiboon Upatising has confirmed to the Phuket Gazette - The news follows the February 26 expiration of the contract for the Phuket Lifeguard...  
March 6, 2011  
Full Story

**Greater Phuket: Shock TAT report on stinking beach**  
PHUKET: Despite regulations of the local village government stipulating that garbage not be placed out for collection before 8pm, trash continues to be dumped on Krabi's Ao Nang Beach in broad daylight. Tourists say they don't like it. The stink and the unsightly mess are a source of harsh complaints not only from tourists....  
March 1, 2011  
Full Story

**Phuket lucky license plate auction raises more than BT23mn**  
PHUKET: The sixth annual "Lucky License Plate Auction" held in Phuket Town over the weekend raised 23,504,500 baht. Kanok Siripanichkorn, chief of the Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO), has told the Phuket Gazette - "I am very happy with the revenue raised - it's five million baht more than last year," he said....  
March 1, 2011  
Full Story

**Phuket Police target ladyboy meth users**  
PHUKET: Almost fifty per cent of the ladyboys rounded up in a sweep of Phuket's Soi Bangla area last night tested positive for methamphetamines. Patong Police say. The random testing, led by drug suppression division inspector Akanit Danphithuksart, targeted transsexuals along Soi Bangla and...

**Events Calendar**  
The island's NEWSpaper... since 1993

Add Your Event

Date	Hours	Title
Mar 7 - 13	08:00 - 23:30	RPM Facebook: Guess the Beach Game
Mar 7 - 11	21:00 - 01:00	Mango House Festival
Mar 12	07:00 - 16:00	Transforming Felicity and Adversity at Mind Centre
Mar 13	20:30 - 12:30	Salsa Night @ Les Angeles
Mar 16	09:00 - 12:00	Phuket Yacht Club Kid's sailing
Mar 17	10:00 - 12:00	FREE Computer Clinic - Laguna
Mar 18	19:00 - 22:30	Celebrating The Burgundy Grand Crus by Drouhin
Mar 19	10:00 - 14:00	Phuket International Women's Club AGM and lunch
Mar 20	19:00 - 23:30	Curry Fridays
Mar 25	20:30 - 10:30	FREE Computer Clinic - Chalong
Mar 26 - 27	10:00 - 12:00	SIX of the Best in Phuket
Mar 26 - 31	18:30 - 23:30	Phuket Youth Sailing Squadron Island Regatta
	08:00 - 17:00	Bacon and Stone Visual Arts Exhibition
	11:30 - 23:30	Second Belly Dance Party
		FREE Computer Clinic - Chalong
		St. Patrick's Ball 2011 at Movenpick Karon Beach
		FREE Computer Clinic - Chalong
		Curry Fridays
		FREE Computer Clinic - Chalong
		Chakri Memorial Day - Patong
		Stock Market Investing for Beginners (FREE)
		FREE Computer Clinic - Laguna
		Phran Festival - Public Holidays

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## WHAT'S ON in Phuket

**September 2-4. Phuket Pet Fair**  
Come visit the pet fair and find everything you need for your pets from 12.30pm to 6pm at the Exhibition Hall of Royal Phuket Marina. You can also enjoy contests, music, shows and many more activities. Contact Murat Can at T:081-7973364 E: [muratc@royalphuketmarina.com](mailto:muratc@royalphuketmarina.com) or visit W: [royalphuketmarina.com](http://royalphuketmarina.com).

### September 2 and 16. Curry Fridays

From 7pm to 11.30pm, Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant at Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa present Curry Fridays twice per month. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian curry buffet. Selections include all-time favorite chicken tikka masala, spicy mutton vindaloo, juicy kebabs, Goan fish curry, chickpea curry and more, served with nan bread and basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett! Special discount on beverages as well. Make reservations at T:076-286464 ext 4 E: [sm@karonseasand.com](mailto:sm@karonseasand.com) or visit W: [karonseasand.com](http://karonseasand.com).

### September 3 and 17. Saturday Brunch at Two Chefs Kata

Every Saturday Two Chefs host their now famous Saturday brunch from 12pm to 3pm at Two Chefs Kata Center. The delicious food is inspired by Scandinavian cooking. The buffet is only 395 baht, and if you add another 300 baht you can drink all you want from the free flow options. The Filipino house band will perform live, with MJ & Megan on the microphone and Mr Ollie on the drums. Only at Two Chefs Kata.



## September 10. 7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Concert

Central Festival Phuket cordially invites you to their 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Come and enjoy a grand concert featuring famous Thai singers Christina Aguilar and Gold Pichaya (pictured) on September 10 from 6.30pm onwards at Lanlom Zone, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor. For any purchase of 2,000 baht or more at Central Festival, you can collect two free concert tickets at the Tourist Information Center close to the entrance to Zen restaurant. Seats are limited.

Contact Siromanee at T:076-291111  
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W: [centralfestivalphuket.com](http://centralfestivalphuket.com).

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E: [katacenter@twochefsphuket.com](mailto:katacenter@twochefsphuket.com) or visit W: [twochefs.com](http://twochefs.com).

### September 8. BBQ & Surf Night at Two Chefs Kata

There will be another BBQ & Surf Night 6pm to 2am at Two Chefs Kata, back by popular demand. Grills will be lit, the big buffet will be set and the beach brought to the restaurant. A house band will be performing so it's sure to be a great party and a lot of fun. Only 495 baht. For more information, contact T:076-284155 E: [kata@twochefs.com](mailto:kata@twochefs.com) or visit W: [twochefs.com](http://twochefs.com)

### September 5 and 19. Cowboy Night at Two Chefs Kata

Every Monday night from 6pm to 2am, there's a large buffet inspired by the Old West. So come on down to Two Chefs in Kata and enjoy the buffet for only 495 baht. With Francis & Ollie performing live music, it can't be anything but a success. Don't miss it. Make reservations at T:076-284156 E: [info@twochefs-phuket.com](mailto:info@twochefs-phuket.com) or visit W: [twochefs.com](http://twochefs.com).

### September 7 and 21. Tex-Mex at Two Chefs Karon

Wednesday night is Tex-Mex Evening from 6pm to 2am at Two Chefs Karon Beach. Possibly the best Tex-Mex Buffet in Phuket. The price is only 495 baht. With great prices on drinks and MJ & Megan on the microphones, there will doubtless be a good party too. Make reservations at T:076-286479 E: [karon@twochefs-phuket.com](mailto:karon@twochefs-phuket.com) or visit W: [twochefs.com](http://twochefs.com).

### September 16. AMCHAM: Allan Zeman on Brand Andara

At this AMCHAM Phuket event, well-known entrepreneur Allan Zeman will speak about how he has developed Andara into a much sought-after brand, and how his

investment in Phuket has paved the way for a continuing success story. Organized by the American Chamber of Commerce Thailand (AMCHAM) and its Greater Phuket Chapter, this is a fantastic opportunity to see one of the region's highest profile business personalities up close and personal. Registration starts at 4pm, with the program commencing at 4.30pm. After Allan's presentation and a Q&A session, networking drinks will follow at about 5.30pm. Attendance is open to the public with an entry price of 100 baht. Event time is 4pm to 7pm at Andara Resort, Kamala, Phuket. For more information contact Sheree Tanpensuk at T:02-2541041 ext 212 E: [sheree@amchamthailand.com](mailto:sheree@amchamthailand.com) or visit the

website W: [amchamthailand.com](http://amchamthailand.com).

### September 27-October 5 Vegetarian Festival

This annual festival is always held during the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar. Although the origins of the festival are unclear, it celebrates the Chinese community's belief that a strict 'vegetable only' diet will purify the mind and body. Sacred rituals are performed at all the Chinese temples in Phuket. The processions from each temple show strict vegetarians, known as devotees, ostensibly possessed by gods, piercing their tongues, cheeks and other parts of their anatomy with sharp implements. The devotees apparently feel no pain and show no sign of real injury.

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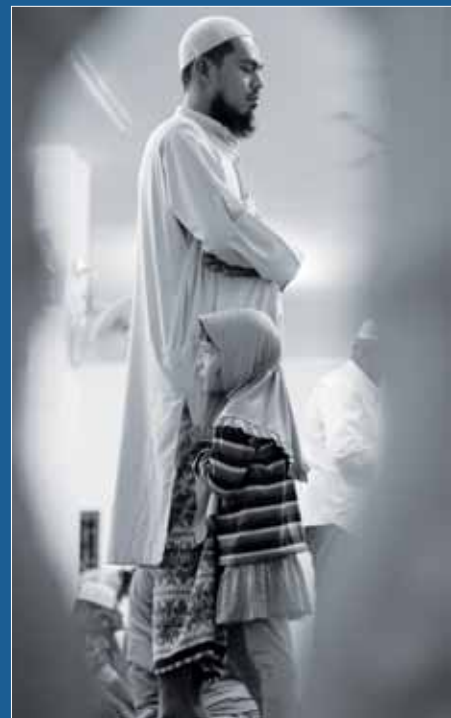
AND THE WINNING SMILES GO TO: Annalisa Auricchio (left) and Pim Sernara 'putting on the Ritz' at the Brush Oscar night.

# Artists' Brush

It was all glitz and glamor at Brush's 'Oscar Night' on August 27 as Phuket's A list braved the lashing rain to attend the premiere of the locally made film *Eve of Destruction* followed by live music from the Colin Hill band featuring Jimmy Fame. Photos: Alastair Carthew



BRUSHING UP: Brush owner John Underwood gives his vote.



The PIWC scholarship committee spent an intense few days interviewing and approving the final students, who had to show the assessors that they were "ready and willing to learn."

## PIWC hand out this year's scholarships

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PHUKET International Women's Club (PIWC) presented 40 new scholarships to Thai students, in a ceremony at Satree Phuket School on August 24, bringing the number of students currently being supported by the charity to 202.

PIWC raises funds for the scholarships through a variety of events, such as golf tournaments, luncheons and an annual gala event in November.

PIWC has now assisted 705 students in total over the last 22 years of its existence.



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# Snapping it up

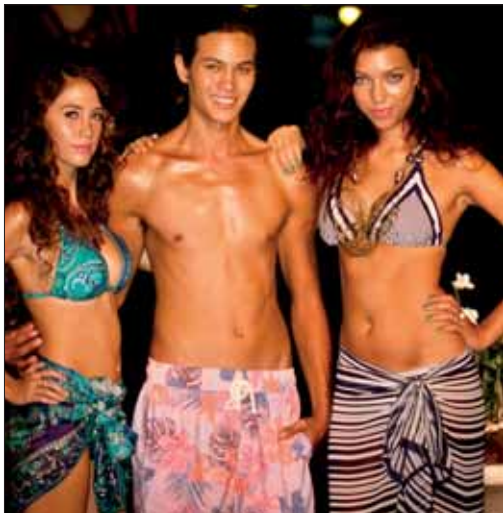
Wichit Municipality held their second annual photo competition 'Carrying Your Camera to Wichit' on August 25. An exhibition of the photos will be shown in Big C from September 2 onwards and is open to the public.



## Mamma Mia!

BOAT Lagoon Cruises celebrated the launch of their latest charter boat, *Lady Katalina*, on August 26 with an exclusive fashion show featuring women's and men's swimwear from the Katalina Collection served up with delicious Italian food.

Photos: Dean Noble



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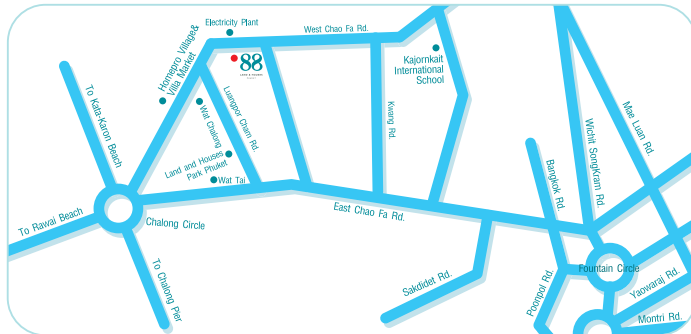


Photo of actual house with simulated environment

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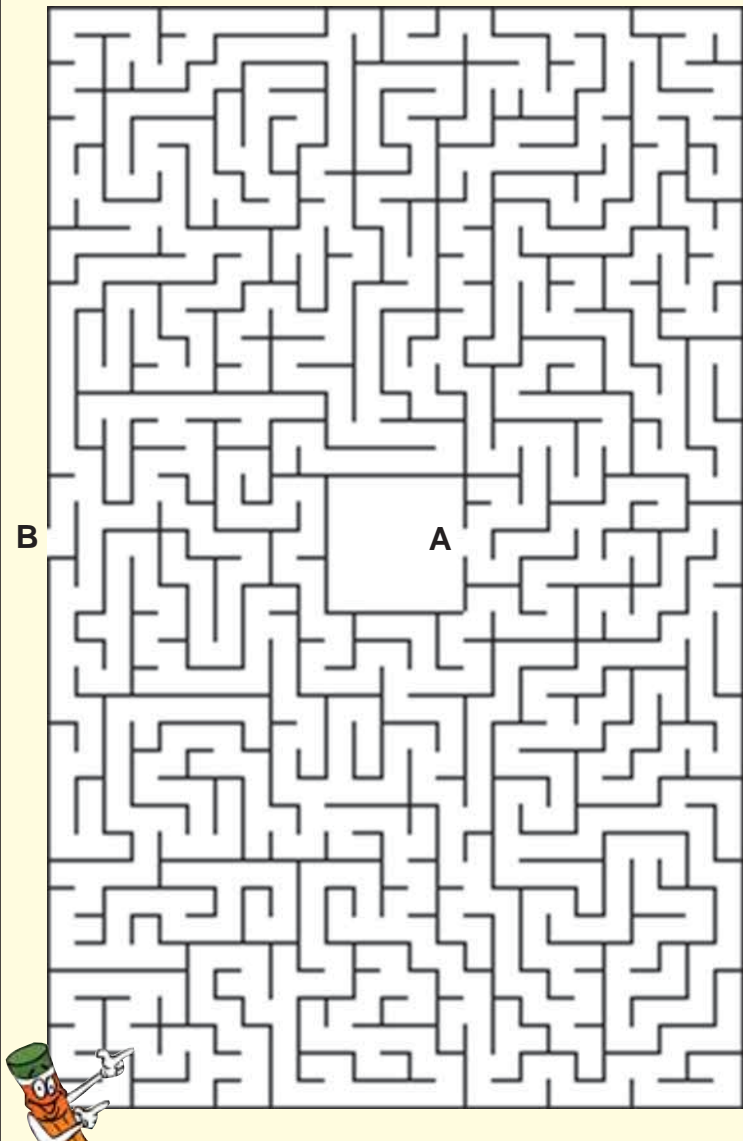


Project Owner : L.H.Muang Mai Co.,Ltd. Managing Director : Khun Pitaya Tantipiriyakij Registered Capital : 900 Million Baht (Fully Paid) 88 Land and Houses Phuket, Location : West Chao fa Rd. Chalong sub-district, Ampher Muang, Phuket, Title Deed No : 3901 Project Area 14 Rai, Financial Institution : Siam Commercial Bank Public Co., Ltd. Construction Start : January 2010 Expected Completion : 2013. Operation License No.19/2010 dated 2 December 2010. After full payment is completed transference is made within 7 days.





A *Gazette* staff member completed this maze in 30 seconds. Can you beat their time? Make your way out of the maze.

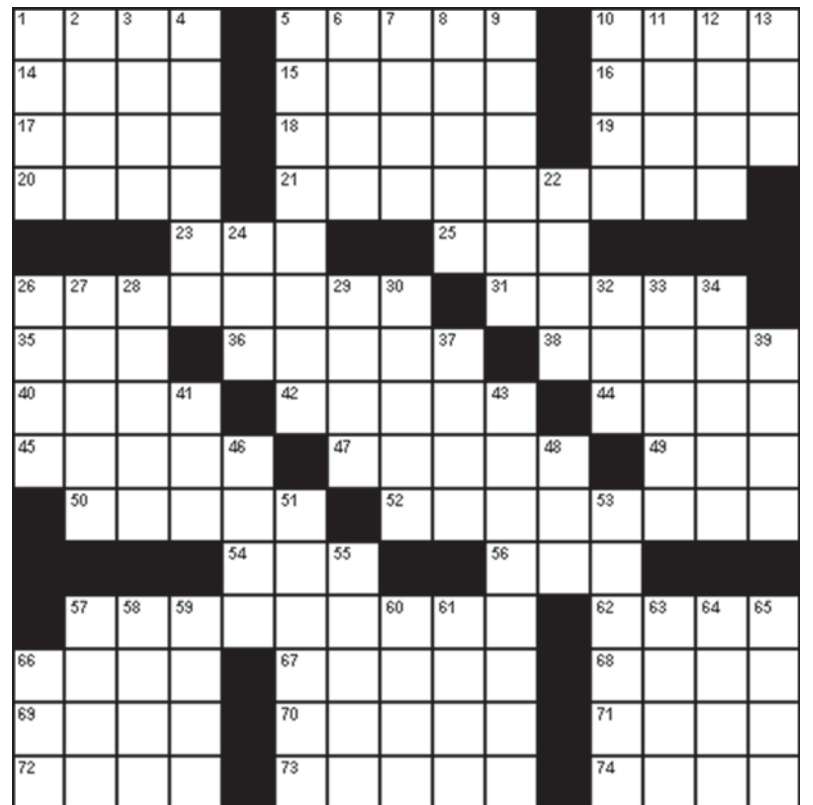


#### Across

1. Compact by pounding
5. Grain to be ground
10. Queue after Q
14. A dish with many ingredients
15. Coniferous tree
16. Norwegian king
17. Baum barker
18. Bellowing
19. Skater Lipinski
20. Bird feed
21. Having a downward curve
23. Acapulco article
25. According to
26. Evolves
31. Hybrid beast
35. "Hold On Tight" band
36. Chew the scenery
38. Advert
40. Intentions
42. Methuselah's father
44. Cube creator Rubik
45. Nymph presiding over rivers
47. Old Nick
49. 7<sup>th</sup> letter of the Greek alphabet
50. Mar. honoree
52. Municipal native
54. -- -- the season...
56. Understanding
57. Now and then
62. Bones found in the hip
66. Singer Mitchell
67. Molars, e.g.
68. Sleeveless garment
69. Citrus coolers
70. Madonna role
71. Prepare a book or film for release
72. Golfer Aoki
73. Continue a subscription
74. Actress Turner

#### Down

1. Small children
2. Burn soother
3. Microscopic arachnid
4. Breed of dog
5. Delightful
6. Describes a gently cooked steak
7. Camaro model



8. Milan's La \_ \_ \_
9. Pleasurable feeling
10. Roster
11. Bed support
12. Shipping deduction
13. Charlottesville sch.
22. Depilatory brand
24. Cheer for Manolete
26. Faculty head
27. Inventor Howe
28. Throw up
29. Soprano Lily
30. Brown ermine
32. "Fancy that!"

33. Violinist Zimbalist
  34. Oscar de la \_ \_ \_
  37. Prefix with plasm
  39. Horse color
  41. Dupe
  43. Detective
  46. Go out with
  48. Vane dir.
  51. Stifled laugh
  53. Whine
  55. Sift
  57. Lays down the lawn
  58. Draft classification
  59. Japanese soup
  60. Chow \_ \_ \_
  61. Kitchen addition
  63. Moon of Jupiter
  64. The doctor \_ \_ \_
  65. \_ \_ boy!
  66. \_ \_ alai
- Provided by BestCrosswords.com  
Used with permission

Puzzle solutions on page 39

#### VIRGO (August 23-September 23):



Virgoans have good reason to count their lucky stars this week. A decision made in August will prove to have been the right one, although people close to you advised against it. September is a positive month where money is concerned. While not everything you touch will turn to gold, there are signs that unexpected gain is imminent. Those celebrating a birthday this week should develop a more sensible approach to finances in the year ahead.

#### LIBRA (September 24-October 23):



Chilling out this weekend is recommended for those born under the sign of Libra. The stars indicate that events during the last part of August may have left you hot and bothered. Life is predicted to calm down as September progresses, but the area of work and business remains uncertain until the middle of the month. Those considering starting a new business are advised to wait until after then.

#### SCORPIO (October 24-November 22):



Where work is concerned, a shot in the dark pays off for those born under the sign of Scorpio this week. Your financial outlook is bright during September, although there are signs that romance could become costly if you are trying to impress a potential partner. The stars advise keeping it real – let this person see you for who you are and not what you can provide.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Sagittarians who did not do their homework thoroughly in August could be disappointed this week. A business related situation that you were led to believe would bring easy profit is forecast to turn out to be more complicated and could become too hot to handle. Another fire sign can be trusted, but a water sign deserves no second chances.



December 21): Sagittarians who did not do their homework thoroughly in August could be disappointed this week. A business related situation that you were led to believe would bring easy profit is forecast to turn out to be more complicated and could become too hot to handle. Another fire sign can be trusted, but a water sign deserves no second chances.

#### CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20):



Your outlook picks up as September gets underway. Capricorns who made educated choices in August will be relieved to see that their lives becoming less complicated. Personal relationships are well-starred until the middle of this month and love is in the air this week. A second chance with a water sign could come at the right time for many, but another earth sign is



forecast to be on the same romantic wavelength this weekend.

#### AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19):



While friends and colleagues appear to be moving at full steam ahead, the pace of life is slow for most Aquarians. Your preference is for action, but the stars suggest that many will realize that there are benefits in developing a calmer routine. Where finances are concerned, the stars show that a profitable situation is bubbling under. You should remain patient until the middle of September when your luck strengthens.

#### PISCES (February 20-March 20):



Pisceans could be too quick to jump to conclusions this week. The stars suggest that you will not get to the bottom of a story until the middle of the month. In the meantime, gathering facts will be to your advantage, but reacting too soon will work against you. Those seeking different employ-

ment learn of an interesting possibility from an air sign midweek.

#### ARIES (March 21-April 20):



Arians are advised to spend quality time in their own space this week. As September progresses, your social life is forecast to be action-packed and taking time out for yourself beforehand is advisable. The stars indicate that problems regarding property are best handled on Monday or Tuesday. In the realm of romance, a water sign's lukewarm response to your romantic approach should be enough to send a clear message.

#### TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



Travel plans begin to take shape for many of those born under the sign of Taurus. The stars indicate that a last minute change of heart may mean that a companion backs out, but there are also signs that time alone away from home will have hidden benefits. September is an auspicious month to adopt a healthier lifestyle – taking tips from a water sign this weekend will stand you in good stead.

#### GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



Geminis who believe they have been treated unfairly in the world of

work should see tables turn this week. Luck is on your side and the stars suggest that the first half of September will be a time when wrongs are put right. While it may be tempting to burn the midnight oil this weekend, there are signs that your physical health would benefit from more rest.

#### CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Communication is forecast to be affected by cloudy astral conditions this week. Cancerians are advised to be very clear when involved in important discussions, particularly on Tuesday and Wednesday. Those who are single should be cheered when Cupid enables a meeting with another water sign this weekend.

#### LEO (July 24-August 22):



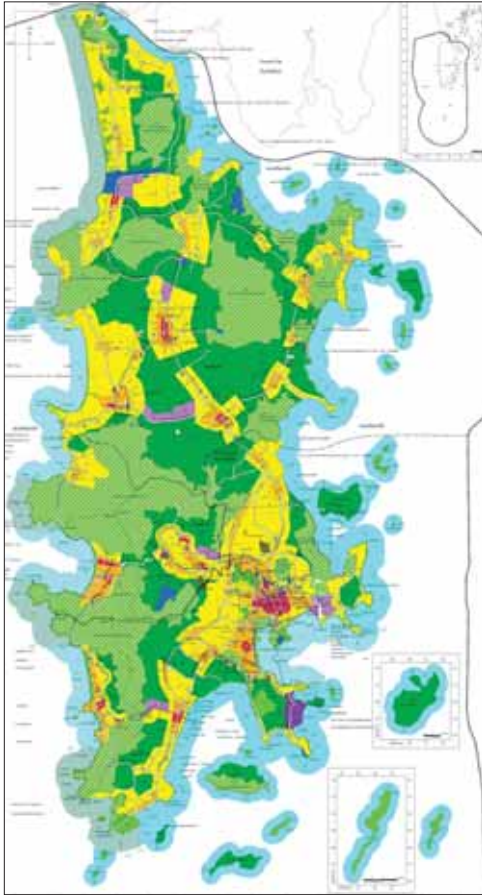
A wind of change finally brings welcome progress in your working life this week. Those who have been searching for a new job should find something that suits their skills perfectly as September unfolds. New businesses are also well-starred this month. Love could be blind for certain Leos this week. The stars suggest that an earth sign's flattery may get this person in exactly the position they have been aiming for.



# PROPERTY Gazette

News | Construction | Gardening | For sale | For rent | Classifieds

# Developers mull effects of zoning



There are significant changes in the new plan, including three new zone colors.

By Atchaa Khamlo

THE Phuket Real Estate Association (PREA) organized a seminar on August 20 at Royal Phuket City Hotel to discuss with property businesses how best to deal with the effects of the new zoning law announced on July 7.

A secretary of PREA and Phuket Goldenville managing director, Phattanan Pisutwimol, said business owners have to adjust by getting more information before buying land.

"Some people don't know about the law changing and are just following the old law but they cannot plead ignorance later," Mr Phatthanan said.

"Banks also need to know the new law because if they release a loan to a property business who are not allowed to build, then banks will be in a risky situation," he added.

Mr Phatthanan explained that while entrepreneurs need to adjust to the situation, the government should also prepare more information.

"The new act is a good thing as it protects Phuket's environment, but the government has to use its database to support businesses as local organizations are still not ready to give enough information to us," he said.

Other investors have attacked the plan, claiming it will adversely affect developers and land owners and slow the growth of



Secretary of PREA Phattanan Pisutwimol

the island's economy.

PREA president Thanan Tanpaiboon said the previous development plan had run from 2005 to 2010 and was supposed to be extended for two years while the new plan was being drawn up.

"Deals have previously been done on plots of land that are now zoned differently, preventing development of them as originally planned, he explained.

Discussions with the Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning have resulted in some of the issues being fixed, but the process has been extremely slow, he added.

Mr Thanan said that he hoped future decisions on local laws would be made in

collaboration with all relevant stakeholders in order to ensure that problems did not follow.

Phattanan Phisutwimol, managing director of Caps Property, said that the new plan emphasized the protection of the island's environment, which was a good thing.

However, the changes in the plan would have unavoidable effects on those in real estate who had already planned to invest or buy land and were unaware of the changes to the development framework, he said.

Bun Yongsakul, deputy managing director of Phuket Boat Lagoon, said the development plan had both advantages and disadvantages.

He praised the fact that the new plan was clearer about what land could be used for what purpose. However, he said he expected some trouble in the short term concerning developers who had already made plans that would be affected.

The 2011-2016 plan features some significant changes from the previous one. In particular, the number of zone colors has increased from 13 to 16.

Of the new colors, sky-blue zones are reserved for looking after the quality of the environment, tourism and fishing.

Sky-blue zones with diagonal white stripes are reserved for recreation and conservation of coastal environments while sky-blue with brown borders and diagonal stripes are reserved for natural resources.

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# Property high stakes

Lucking out in the real estate game.

“SELLING out” is one of those terms with an edge-like quality that tends to cut both ways. Be the subject line in black or white, or beaten into a compromising color of gray, there is no right or wrong answer. It's all multiple choice answers.

One of my favorite movie exchanges in the Vince Vaughn flick “Swingers” has him debating over the prospects of “doubling down” (a blackjack term for when you are allowed to double your bet after receiving your first two cards). His dilemma is slamming into a crossroads with a choice of casino jackpot or taking the money and running.

For real estate owners or investors, the crisis of when to sell is one of the most critical decisions they face. It's a daunting task of balancing risk and reward, the downsides or unrealized upside gain.



Traditionally in the days of old or the legacy property market you had some fairly well defined resources and structured cycles that, while not exact, were as close to a science as possible.

Next came the Asian contagion of 1997 and sub-prime became a death knell for common wisdom. Property investors who relied on what now equates to the urban myth that prices never fall in a significant way are now looking at a lifetime of working into their twilight years.

What was once considered a sure thing, that equity and rising capital appreciation of homes would soar indefinitely, has cre-



**DOUBLE DOWN OR FOLD: Selling property requires luck.** Photo: Arnaud Fraioli

ated a new generation of skeptics.

For Phuket buyers and sellers, perhaps the most prolific questions in the coming decade will come from the great debate of market growth.

Yes, in some camps, small tribes of survivor-like “recoveryites” are waiting on the beach for the return of the European investment buyers. It's nearly a *Lord of the Flies* scenario though, with reality and a dreamlike state intermixed.

What most people ignore is that the island's resort grade real estate – the villas, condos and town houses – which tend to be located away from the island area, remains the domain of foreign buyers.

What mostly affects the return of these buyers has nothing to do with Phuket but the greater world of economic turmoil, currency machinations and political change.

When folks walk up to me and ask in hushed tones when things are going to be the same – my current response is, when the world gets better. Anyone who knows a more complete answer please let us in on this evasive secret.

For owners looking to transact there simply are no rules. We live in irrational times. Transactions simply need one buyer and one seller to hook up. It's not a complete mess but it's no sure thing either.

Pricing remains under attack on the larger scale. As resale listings surge, conditions that favor buyers will prevail at least for the short to medium term.

Premium properties are trading though, be it oceanfront, ocean view, or dynamic in design or location. Crè me will always rise to the top. What concerns many is what lies below in the dense dark depths of the larger mass market.

While strategy comes into action, in many situations the accidental trade or sale is increasingly the norm. Go back to the concept of doubling down and welcome to the casino of luck. Knowing when to list a property and promote it remains confusing and there is no right or wrong way.

Globally, expectations in most developed markets are not in survival mode. A blessing for Phuket is the absolute lack of leveraging or debt by the foreign property buyers in their local assets. In the worst case for most, the horizon may be flat but at least there is no immediate danger of falling off the edge of a cliff.

All we can say at the moment is that there is a form of stability in fundamentals here which is absent in other regions. For sellers and buyers – yes, no and maybe continues to be the play of the day.

*Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through [www.c9hotelworks.com](http://www.c9hotelworks.com).*

## In brief...

### Private hotel opens in Samui

A NEW trend has emerged in the world of luxury, where high-end ultra villas are rented out as private hotels.

In Koh Samui for example, designer Riccardo Tossani's project the Akatsuki Resort has recently opened.

It accommodates up to 15 guests and features four swimming pools and an in-house spa.

Highly personal service is on hand with a full array of butlers, driver, concierge and private chef.

Opening rates have just been launched at US\$2,000 (about 6,000 baht) a night.

### Phang Nga Bay Resort fund under siege

THE saga over the Thai-listed Luxury Real Estate Investment Fund's key asset Six Senses Hideaway Yao Noi remains contentious.

Financial institution TMB Asset Management has required the company Pakhoh Hotel to undertake a public auction over shares in order to provide investors' guaranteed returns.

While the second round of bidding was wrapped up recently, the default over repayments has triggered attempts to resolve the dispute.

Some financial analysts have noted interest by Thai companies in acquiring shares which could lead to a takeover bid further on down the road.

### Bali gears airport for 25 mn passengers

IN BALI, Perhaps the most significant development, aside from the lightening-quick construction of the behemoth mega hotel The Mulia in Nusa Dua, is the island's airport expansion.

Set to be completed in time for the Bali APEC 2013 Conference, the combination of new buildings and improvements will increase the stated passenger handling capacity to 25 million.

According to the *Jakarta Post* the new international terminal will be double the size of the existing facility, where the current domestic terminal is located.

Visa-on-arrival immigration counters will increase from the current 12 to a new total of 35.

Total passenger traffic hit a reported 11.5 million in the last year in Bali. Phuket is anticipating coming close to 8 million this year.

New high-standard baggage handling and security systems are also being installed.

– Bill Barnett



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# Thai influx spurs condo growth



## RATCHAPORN PLACE

Price	990,000 to 2.5mn baht
Total Area	32 to 44sqm
Location	Wichit Songkhram Road, near Ket-Ho intersection
Type	Condominium
Amenities	Swimming pool Fitness center Shops CCTV, Key-card access
Units	132 units
Units sold	75 per cent
Developer	LP Connection Co Ltd

**LARGER UNITS:** Ratchaporn Place boasts large, 36sqm condominium units that are close to Phuket Rajabhat University. Many units have already sold to students and professors.

RATCHAPORN Place is the latest project to take advantage of Phuket's bubbling condominium market, with developer LP Connection targeting both Thai and foreign buyers for a 250-million-baht property in Kathu.

Chayut Siriphong, managing director of LP Connection Co Ltd, said that Phuket's real estate market was growing in a promising direction because a large number of Thais from outside Phuket were moving to the island for work.

As a result, demand for property in Phuket is growing, with the condominium market being par-

ticularly popular, he said.

Mr Chayut said that people moving to the island wanted homes that were convenient and met the needs of the modern consumer.

LP Connection is behind the Baan Mak Song Hotel, a hotel and serviced apartment complex close to Phuket Country Club in Kathu.

Ratchaporn Place is the company's attempt at tapping into the quality condominium market. The project occupies 6,000 square meters of land on Wichit Songkhram Road, close to Baan Mak Song and about 500

meters from Ket-Ho Intersection.

The project will feature a swimming pool, fitness center and shops. It will also be fully secure, with CCTV and a key-card system for entering the residences.

Mr Chayut said the project will comprise two 132-unit phases. The first phase received a good reception from customers and will sell out soon, he said.

Mr Chayut said that 75 per cent of the units had been sold, with just 60 units left. Many of the units have been bought by students and professors at Phuket Rajabhat University, which is close to the



Mr Chayoot Siriphong MD of LP Connection Co Ltd and guests.

development, he explained.

Ratchaporn Place is different from other developments as the units start at 36sqm, whereas most other condominium units start at 32sqm, he said.

Units start at 990,000 baht, with larger 44sqm units costing 2.5mn baht, he said.

The project is set for completion by the end of 2012.

— *Phuket Gazette*

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SAME SAME, BUT DIFFERENT: Left is *Chlorophyllum molybdites* and right is *Lepiota procera*. They may look similar, but one is in fact poisonous. Photos: pella

# Be picky when you pick

READER Bo Jonsson recently wrote in with an inquiry concerning mushrooms. He wondered whether the *Lepiota procera* he found in his garden grows naturally in Thailand, or if a spore may have come with a shipment of books from Brussels that they had carried when picking mushrooms in the forests there.

"My wife is not certain it is a *Lepiota*," he said, adding that they were hesitant to taste the mushrooms due to the risk.

Well I am no expert on mycology (the study of fungi), as Bo clearly is, but my first thought was that you might actually have introduced it to your garden from Europe.

After all, many plants not indigenous to Thailand have been successfully established here, and



**Gardening**  
By Patrick Campbell

many more will be in the years to come. This variety of parasol mushroom definitely cannot be found in local fresh markets.

However, the romantic notion of introducing a new species to Phuket was later knocked on the head when Bo informed me that the variety also grows in a neighbor's garden, suggesting that it is not alien to Thailand after all.

*Lepiota procera* is a very distinctive variety, and is much sought after in Europe. In fact, its range is supposed to be restricted to temperate regions.

But relatively little is known about macro fungi and even less

about tropical species. There are more than one and a half million varieties in total. Like snakes, they are much maligned, as about 150 fungi are poisonous.

However, many of these can have their toxins (mainly alkaloids) neutralized by being parboiled before consumption.

But you do need to be either very knowledgeable like Bo and his wife or exceedingly careful. For example, a parasol mushroom that's very similar in appearance to *Lepiota* is *Chlorophyllum molybdites*, which, as its name suggests, has a greenish tinge to its gills because it produces small quantities of chlorophyll. Most fungi produce none at all.

*Lepiota*, on the other hand, has an ovoid, egg-shaped appearance when young, but in maturity opens up like an umbrella, a lady's parasol atop a long stem.

It is a large mushroom that grows up to 40 centimeters tall. It has a distinctive, snakelike pattern of scaly growths, brownish in color, on predominantly white

skin. It prefers dryish soil, unlike so many other mushrooms, and it can grow alone or in groups. It's both attractive and desirable.

In fact all fungi are useful, and not just the edible ones. We've all eaten cultivated mushrooms,

Relatively little is known about macro fungi and even less about tropical species.

There are more than one and a half million varieties in total. Like snakes, they are much maligned, as about 150 fungi are poisonous.

grown commercially in most parts of the globe, and we've all dreamed of eating truffles, an underground woodland species sniffed out by trained pigs or dogs. Truffles are one of the most expensive and sought after delicacies in the entire world.

However, the real importance of fungi is linked to the fact that they are mostly *saprophytic*, that is to say they feed mainly on decaying organic material.

Along with bacteria, fungi are the primary decomposers in most terrestrial ecosystems, degrading organic material into inorganic molecules that other plants can utilize.

Fungi collectively produce a range of chemicals which are being increasingly recognized in the battle against disease including the production of antibacterial, antiviral, antiinflammatory and above all, anticancer agents.

Without fungi, the world would be a poorer, less varied and conceivably less healthy place.

Oh, and by the way, Bo's mushroom turned out to be *Chlorophyllum molybdites*, the poisonous one.

It only goes to show that you can't be too careful.

If you have a question, or a garden that you would like featured contact pcampbell45@gmail.com

## Tip of the week

### Watering techniques



Bromeliad Photos: Nooks

THE shape of a shrub may offer important clues for watering your plants.

Rosette-shaped shrubs for instance, with their stiff, sword-like leaves, stop rain from soaking the earth below the foliage.

I have several large *agaves* in ceramic pots at home, and attempting to water the container soil is frustrating.

It's better to follow nature and water the center of the crown. The moisture will filter down through the leaves. Some will stay at the base of the leaves; the rest will reach the soil beneath. It is a more efficient way of retaining water.

The same technique should be used for bird's nest ferns (*Asplenium nidus*), and for epiphytic plants that rely on occasional heavy downpours.

*Bromeliads* mostly have broad, fleshy leaves in a rosette-shape: rainwater collects in the center and obviates a need to moisten the roots.



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### KAMALA HOUSE FOR SALE



Near Phuket FantaSea. Price: 3.2 million baht. Negotiable. Tel: 081-719 1041. Email: teddykong0222@hotmail.com

### KAMALA SEAVIEW

Nor Sor 3 seaview mountain land. Access road. From 4.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 087-921 4260. Email: Odni.gg@gmail.com

### LAND FOR SALE IN RAWAI

1 rai with Chanote title. 5 minutes to Rawai beach in secure area. Contact owner directly. Tel: 089-472 9870. Email: d\_chaibut@yahoo.com

### LAND NEAR PIA: 1,730SQM

Land plot, Chanote, in a housing estate with underground electricity and security, next to Mission Hills golf course and PIA. For quick sale: 2.79 million baht. Tel: 081-343 0777.

### KATHU LUXURY POOL VILLA

Near BIS and Patong Beach, 3-bedroom villa. Price: 9.5 million baht. Tel: 076-321445, 089-724 7211 (English). Email: info@botanvillage.com For further details, please see our website at www.phuket-cot.tages.com

### GUESTHOUSE NEAR THE BEACH

10-bedroom guesthouse in Patong for sale. 100 meters from the beach. Price: 24.9 million baht. Tel: 089-724 7211 (English). Email: julien@phuketimmo.com

### GOLF VIEW LAND

Near BIS, 1,728sqm fully serviced, Nor Sor 3 Gor. Price: 8.7 million baht. Tel: 076-321445, 089-724 7211. Email: info@botanvillage.com

### URGENT SALE!



Nice plot at a good location near Two Villas project (Manik area) with Chanote title. Price: 1.5 rai at 6.9 million baht. The land has electricity, access and ready to build on. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: pakaporns@yahoo.com

### RAWAI BAR POOL HOTEL 9 ROOM



648sqm plot with building for sale. 18 million baht. Reduced from 12 million baht with 6 years financing. Optional long lease available, 3 to 30 years. 60m from the sea. Close to Nikita's restaurant. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: phuket7@yahoo.com

### THE BEST PROJECT



Close to nature. Prices range from 5.4 million to 7.4 million baht. "The Grove" by Khirithara Village Co., Ltd. Tapsakea, Prachup Khiri Khan. Includes clubhouse and 24-hour security.

- One-storey house with 2 bedrooms and two-storey house with 4 bedrooms.

- Built-up area: 148sqm. Land size: from 560sqm. Tel: 081-018 3311. Fax: 032-815151. Email: keree\_thara\_kae@hotmail.com See our website at www.kt-village.com

### 4 RAI LAYAN/ 4MB PER RAI

By owner, Nor Sor 3 Gor, concrete road, house 2 minutes from beach. Tel: 084-714 8391. Email: andreapaoletti1@hotmail.it

### LAND FOR SALE

At Pasak Soi 8, Cherng Talay. 135 sq wah plot, Chanote title. Plot is in front of villa project and hotel. Price: 3.5 million baht. Call owner. Tel: 080-698 3028.

### SUPER CHEAP, PATONG

Now only 4.7 million baht. New pool villa with seaview. 3 storeys, 6 rooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 4 aircons. Tel: 087-053 6016.

### RUBBER PLANTATION 48 RAI



For sale. Located on the main road to Laguna Phuket. Suitable for a housing project. 4 million baht per rai (Nor Sor 3 Gor). Please contact owner's representative. No agents please. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: pakaporns@yahoo.com

## HOT PROPERTIES AT BARGAIN PRICES



This 2-storey private pool villa is only 5 minutes away from pristine Naiham Beach. On the first floor there is an open living and kitchen area, as well as a guest bathroom, and direct access to the private swimming pool. The second floor has 3 bedrooms, all with en-suite bathrooms. The third bedroom has stairway access to the swimming pool. It's deal for guests. Now the price is reduced by 1.3 million baht. The list price was 10.8 million baht.

**New Price: 9.5 million baht**



This fully furnished 4-bedroom private pool villa is located in a quiet area of Naiham. The villa consists of 2 buildings. The main building has a big open living, dining and kitchen area, plus the master bedroom and a second bedroom with en-suite facilities. The second building has 2 guest bedrooms with en-suite facilities and separate entrances. Everything is very private. It's only a 2-minute drive to Nai Harn Beach and nearby shopping. Original asking price was 19.9 million baht.

**VERY SPECIAL NEW PRICE: 16.9 million baht**



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www.kb-realestate.com

### 100,000 BAHT (US\$3,350)



Per year. Rawai Beach studio, furnished, WiFi, cable TV. 200 meters from beach. 30-year lease. Selling for 1 million baht. Paid over 10 years. Monthly rent 5,000 baht (US\$ 170) per month. Tel: 080-328 9986. Email: phuket7@yahoo.com

### 4-BEDROOM FAMILY POOL HOME

For sale or rent. 5 mins from Laguna Phuket, 1,000sqm land, 330sqm built-up area. Contact for details. Agents welcome. Tel: 087-418 5924 (Thai), 089-875 9609. Email: claudelbates@gmail.com

### BEACHFRONT CONDO

2 bedrooms on top floor. Freehold. North Patong Price: 8.9 million baht (reduced from 9.7 million baht). Tel: 086-276 5117. For photos, please email jihshand@gmail.com.

### NICE HOUSE FOR SALE

Best value house for sale in Chuan Chuen Lagoon. Quiet, safe, good security. 5 mins to British school. 3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, 2 bathrooms. Fully furnished, includes washing machine. 3.95 million baht. Contact Scott. Tel: 081-866 8716. Email: stormbay2@yahoo.com.sg

### CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

Close to Phuket International Airport. 4 rai, Chanote title. 3.8 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-868 7676. Email: phuketann@gmail.com.

### THE CHERNG' LAY CONDOS



Only 1 Unit available, fully furnished, (ready to move in) 196.37sqm with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms on the second floor. 5 minutes to Layan and Bang Tao Beach. Price: 9.9 million baht/unit. Tel: 084-848 5273 (French, English) or 081-747 6571 (English, Thai). Email: jessy@phuket.asialand.com or michel@phuket.asialand.com Website: www.condominium-phuket.com

### TWIN VILLA IN KAMALA



For sale with rental income, very good money. 10 mins walk to beach, fully furnished, 6 bedrooms, on 500sqm land with Chanote title. Freehold or leasehold. Price: 14.5 million baht. Call owner. Tel: 080-698 3028. Email: suchada\_villas@hotmail.com

### URGENT SALE

House in Bang Tao, 2 bedrooms, parking, fully furnished, 100sqm, land 350sqm, Chanote title. Price: 3 million baht. Tel: 084-851 6121.

### 3-BEDROOM HOUSE

62sq wah, 2 bathrooms, Villa Dowroong. 4.5 million baht. Contact Khun Tar. Tel: 076-377052, 089-971 1268.

### SEAVIEW LAND FOR SALE

Near Supalai Resort on the east coast of Phuket slope. A 3-rai plot with road and electricity access. Price: 3.6 million baht per rai. No agents please. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: pakaporns@yahoo.com

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1 bedroom, nicely furnished at Phuket Palace. Pool and parking. Rent : 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 1621.

## 3-BEDROOM VILLA

Furnished, aircon, TV, garden, located in Land & Houses Park in Chalong. 24-hour security, clubhouse with pool, fitness, spa, restaurant, walking distance. Rent: 25,000 baht per month, long term only. Call for viewing. Tel: 081-846 9981 (English), 081-537 8774 (English & Thai). Email: ursaeabi@gmx.net

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5 minutes to Nai Ham Beach. A rare, private, quiet 2-rai property with all the comforts needed for a great life in paradise. Includes 2 houses, full wall, electric gate, security system, swimming pool, high-speed Internet, TV, big garden with fruit trees plus more. Available now, 48,000 baht per month rent long term. Tel: 076-288050, 086-950 7788 (English & Thai). Email: greatphukethouse@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://tinyurl.com/GreatPhuketHouse>

HOUSE FOR RENT  
KAMALA

House for rent in Kamala. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, with TV and computer. Includes large pool. Tel: 086-971 9776. Email: Natacha\_phuket@hotmail.com

5 MINUTES FROM  
LAGUNA

For rent or sale. 4 bedrooms, family pool home, 1,000sqm land, 330sqm built-up area. Contact for details. Agent welcome. Tel: 087-4185924 (Thai), 089-875 9609 (English). Email: claude baltes@gmail.com

BAR POOL HOTEL/  
RAWAI BEACH

5-year lease: 3 million baht (\$100,000) or 800,000 baht yearly rent. No key money. Bar, pool, hotel, 9 bedrooms, 9 bathrooms, WiFi, cable TV. 60 meters from the beach. Email: phuket7@yahoo.com



## POOL VILLA IN RAWAI

Fully furnished, with 3 bedrooms near Lotus Rawai, in quiet and secure area. Tel: 089-472 9870. Email: d\_chaibut@yahoo.com

THAI VILLA AND POOL  
NAI HARN

Soi Naya, Nai Ham. Luxury rent: 40,000 baht per month. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-270 5126. Email: mervyn.crocker@yahoo.com

RAWAI/POOL  
GUESTHOUSE

5-year lease. 1.4 million baht or 480,000 baht yearly rent. 6 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, furnished, with WiFi, cable TV, 5 motos. 300 meters from beach. No key money. Email: phuket7@yahoo.com

## HOUSE IN CHALONG

Near Palai Beach for long-term rent. 3 bedrooms, aircons, fully furnished, with cable TV and car park. Tel: 089-728 8311.

SERVICED APARTMENT  
IN PATONG

Fully furnished, swimming pool, free wireless internet. Tel: 081-894 4730 (English & Thai), 081-892 5983 (Thai). Fax: 076-292149. Email: nanaivillaphuket@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at [www.nanai villa.com](http://www.nanai villa.com)

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Fully finished quality home for vacation/family house for rent. Located in the peaceful area nearby Natai Beach. Under 10 minutes drive to Natai Beach, 25 minutes drive to Phuket's airport and a 45 minutes drive to Phuket Town. Maid and gardener included, contact Mia for more information, or visit the website for pics and more details. Tel: 081-926 3286 (English & Thai). Email: miakcg@yahoo.com [www.phangngarealty.com/real-estate-in-phang-nga.php?t=5](http://www.phangngarealty.com/real-estate-in-phang-nga.php?t=5)

EXCLUSIVE HOUSE  
NAI HARN

3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, jacuzzi, 800sqm land. For long- or short-term rent. For further details, please see our website at [www.phuket qualityhouse.com](http://www.phuket qualityhouse.com)

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New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, and car park. Rent: 7,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-692 3163.

COZY HOUSE  
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High-grade house, furnished and conveniently located. Minutes from Rawai and Nai Ham Beaches. 2 spacious bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. Aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage removal service. Rent: 20,000 baht per month. Contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-383 0936. Email: hunt17@hotmail.com

2br twin house for rent  
in Phuket Town (20,000 THB/month)

- Surface: 45 Sq Wah (180 Sqm)
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## KATHU HOUSE



2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 balconies, 107sqm. Fully furnished with internet, cable TV and small garden with car parking. Near golf club, quiet. 7 mins to Patong and 4 mins to Central Festival. Rent 15,000 baht per month. Long-term rent. Tel: 089-872 6895. Email: jospeder@live.no

## RAWAI SEAVIEW

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 160sqm. Large apartment, swimming pool. Tel: 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.com

2-BED APARTMENT  
IN PATONG

120sqm apartment with 10sqm balcony. Large sunken living/dining room, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Full built-in kitchen, storeroom. European standard. All aircon. Tel: UBC, WiFi, etc. 20,000 baht, long term pref. Tel: 081-185 8536.

## RAWAI POOL VILLA

3 bedrooms, aircon, internet, TV. Short terms to December 15 + 2 weeks in January. Ask rates - contact Hockey. Tel: 084-852 4091. Email: sales@thaiwaitravel.net

## POOL VILLAS FOR RENT

Bang Tao area, 1,2,4 bedrooms, fully furnished, ADSL, Sat TV. Tel: 085-674 6786.

## HOTEL FOR RENT KATA

Running business, located 200 meters from Kata Beach. Three year contract minimum. 22 fully furnished rooms. Call Sidd for more information. Prime Location. Tel: 082-539 6966, 081-498 5915 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-330503. Email: rajay001@hotmail.com

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3. Good spoken and written English and Thai.
4. Good literacy with Microsoft Office
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Interested candidate please send resume, a recent photo and expected salary to Khun Pissa Tipsombut Email: [pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com](mailto:pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com)  
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- Proven track record of sales success
- Perseverance, passion to excel and natural "Hunter"
- System sales background is a plus, particularly in a comparable environment as system selling or hospitality / hotel or food and beverage sector
- Self motivated a independent
- Consultative selling skills, recognising the customer needs
- Excellent Language Skills in English [spoken, written]
- Own car

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**Working day:** Monday – Friday  
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E-mail: [recruitment.bangkok@saralee.com](mailto:recruitment.bangkok@saralee.com)  
Tel: 02-6886792**

**MR CYRIL**

Looking for lady who speaks Thai, English and French very well, good experience. Salary 10,000-20,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-143 8523, 084-898 1065.

**THAI STAFF NEEDED**

Work in the sun. Must speak English. Basic salary, commission and contacts included. Patong area. Contact Mike. Tel: 081-270 1370. Email: [m@bayshoreprojects.com](mailto:m@bayshoreprojects.com)

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Austrian Captain, 55 years old, is looking for a very good female cook and honest girlfriend. I can offer you a job as a cook on my sailing vessel in Phuket. You must speak English or German. Free eating, drinking, living and salary **15,000 baht per month. Call Captain Frank:**

Visit Frank at Big A Resort 67/18 Moo 4, Soi Sermuk, Rawai.

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**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

New IT Company is seeking Graphic Designers to join our rapidly growing company. A creative mind and willingness to work as part of a team is a must. Skills required: Adobe PhotoShop (HTML not compulsory). Monthly salary is 20,000-35,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-951 3478. Email: [kirrin.lisiecki@nriteam.com](mailto:kirrin.lisiecki@nriteam.com)

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Full-time, speak English. Please contact for more additional details. Tel: 089-652 5664.

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Seeking a creative, experienced, outgoing professional with great customer service and management skills. Send CV to: [frank@cape-sienna.com](mailto:frank@cape-sienna.com)

**THAI STAFF WANTED**

Need four Thai staff for a sandwich shop and delivery business. Must speak basic English. Salary: 8,500 baht per month plus tips. Tel: 083-738 7139 (English). Or send email: [rambomuis@hotmail.com](mailto:rambomuis@hotmail.com)

**AQUACULTURE  
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Australian-owned barra-mundi farm (Pla Kra Pong) located close to Khok Kloy. Seeking English-speaking Thai assistant manager for immediate start. 20,000 baht per month. Onsite accommodation provided. Please Contact Alan for more information. Tel: 082-640 7486. Email: [al.debwaap@gmail.com](mailto:al.debwaap@gmail.com)

**NEED THAI STAFF IN  
PATONG HOTEL**

Waitress, cook and bartender needed. Good salary and housing included. Contact Manuela. Please contact for more additional details. Tel: 081-270 1370, 083-392 8462. Or send email to: [m@bayshoreprojects.com](mailto:m@bayshoreprojects.com)

**TOUR STAFF**

Speedboat charter and event company is seeking tour guides and an admin supervisor. Thai nationals only are invited to apply by sending your CV by email. Tel: 076-354074, 081-956 9961 (English). Email: [info@coralseekers.com](mailto:info@coralseekers.com)

**RESERVATIONS  
ASSISTANT**

Part time position, flexible hours. Must be western fluent in written and spoken English, good communicator, excellent computer skills, be home based and have a fast/reliable internet connection. Please send CV to [admin@esxoasia.com](mailto:admin@esxoasia.com)

**TELEMARKETING  
STAFF**

Telemarketing staff required for real estate developer. Needed to generate leads from our booths marketing program (not time-share). Must speak English. Basic salary and commission. Patong area. Contact Mike. Tel: 081-270 1370. Or send email to: [m@bayshoreprojects.com](mailto:m@bayshoreprojects.com)

**ACCOUNTANT  
WANTED**

Need accountant that can multi-task. Must have good understanding of P&L and Balance Sheet reconciliation, ERP Software Data Entry and Report Running BS in Accounting from accredited Thai UV required. Must be able to read, write and speak English fluently.

**Contact:**  
[martin@phuketfishboat.com](mailto:martin@phuketfishboat.com)

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**ACCOUNTANT NEEDED**  
Working in Rawai. Please contact Khun Wit. Tel: 084-844 0008. Or send email to: [m@bayshoreprojects.com](mailto:m@bayshoreprojects.com)

**KINDERGARTEN  
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Native English-speaking teacher with experience to teach class of 10-12 children age 3-7. Mon - Fri 8-4 Chalong start Sept 5. Email: [buds.span@yahoo.com](mailto:buds.span@yahoo.com)

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MANAGER**

Needed. Thai National. Excellent written and spoken English. Excellent organization skills. Good computer skills. Smart appearance. Outgoing with strong personality. Tel: 081-823 4627, 085-782 1200. Please send CV to [ying@thailandpooltables.com](mailto:ying@thailandpooltables.com)

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Reception staff, four waitresses or waiters, four bartenders or barmaids, two cashiers, two accountants. Contact Victor. Tel: 088-819 1976 (Thai). Fax: 076-366204. Email: [admin@hemingwayshotel.com](mailto:admin@hemingwayshotel.com)

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Must have experience in programming, software development and project management. Tel: 086-478 0322. Email: [kannika.liva@gmail.com](mailto:kannika.liva@gmail.com)

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## Phuket Gazette

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• Infinity Bar Manager  
• F&B Supervisor  
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• Cook Helper  
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Interested candidates should contact James Cawood or Lotte Dietrich for a position description and forward their CV-supporting documents by August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011 to [james@phuketinternationalhospital.com](mailto:james@phuketinternationalhospital.com) or [lotte@phuketinternationalhospital.com](mailto:lotte@phuketinternationalhospital.com)

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English Speaking Meetings  
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Wed and Sun 7 PM

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Patong Hospital - Patong  
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Green Man Pub - Chalong  
Tue, Thu, Sat 1 PM

Stereo Lab Restaurant - Surin Beachfront  
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Scandinavian Meeting - Karon  
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## Public Notice



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**SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES**

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# Thai ladies finish sixth



YOU GO GIRLS: Thailand Women's National Volleyball team pose in Macau. Photo: FIVB

By Steven Layne

SIXTEEN of the world's top womens' national volleyball teams assembled in Macau to contest the 19<sup>th</sup> edition of the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) Grand Prix from August 5 to 28.

Considered the equivalent of the FIVB World League of men's volleyball, the annual tournament is one of the sport's most prestigious events, second only to the FIVB World Championship.

In recent years, the Thailand Women's National Team – currently ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the world – have shown they are a new force to be reckoned with.

The Grand Prix was yet another chance to prove this.

Working hard to reach the finals, the Thai ladies fell three straight sets to Japan – number three in the world – on Saturday to finish in sixth place of the tournament.

Despite the loss, the result marks Thailand's best result in its nine FIVB Grand Prix appearances.

In the other matches, Italy edged China three sets to two, 101 to 89, for seventh place, while Serbia took third after serving Russia three sets, 75 to 57.

Defending champions, USA retained their title to achieve their fourth Grand Prix championship,

beating eight-time champs and current world number one, Brazil in three sets, 76 to 65.

Along with China (6), Japan, Korea (19) and Kazakhstan (18), Thailand represented Asia in the Grand Prix, having qualified after taking the silver medal in the Asian Women's Cup held in September in China last year.

In that event, Thailand beat Japan, Vietnam, Taipei, Iran and Korea before going down three sets to China in the final, 75 to 68.

Thailand would get their chance to avenge the loss in this year's Grand Prix.

The first week of preliminary matches saw Thailand pooled with Peru (15), Cuba (8) and Russia (5).

They had little trouble in their opening match against the Peruvians, winning all three sets: 25:20, 25:13, 25:16.

Their second match against Cuba was a close one, and the Thais narrowly got the edge in five sets, 23:25, 17:25, 28:26, 25:23, 15:10.

However, they were unable to overcome Russia in their third match, losing three straight sets, 18:25, 19:25, 25:27.

Thailand finished second in their first week's pool with a winning point ratio of 1.043 (245/ 235).

For the second week, Thailand was matched with Brazil (1), Italy

(4) and Kazakhstan.

The Thais were no match for the world number one, and went down all three sets, 16:25, 23:25, 16:25.

Thailand looked like it would oust the Italians in their second match, winning the first two sets.

However, their opponents came back to win in five, 26:24, 25:19, 22:25, 15:25, 12:15.

The Thai ladies breezed past Kazakhstan in three sets, 26:24, 25:23, 25:21 and finished the week with a .920 point ratio (231/ 251).

In the third and final week of preliminary round play, Thailand were pooled again with Brazil and Cuba, along with a new contender, Argentina (25).

The Thais had little trouble with the Argentines, winning all three sets 25:23, 25:15, 25:14.

In their second meet in the tournament with Cuba, Thailand proved that its first victory was no fluke, this time beating the Cubans in only four sets, 23:25, 25:21, 25:21, 25:13.

Likewise, Thailand was unable to get the better of their second meet with Brazilians, again losing all three sets, 16:25, 12:25, 18:25, and finishing the third week with a ratio of 1.058 (219/ 207).

Tallying up the three week total, Thailand won 17 sets and lost 15, barely breaking even with 695/ 693 points.

## Asian Championships next week

The Thai women's volleyball team will now head to Chinese Taipei, joining 13 other Asian teams to contest the 16<sup>th</sup>, biannual, 2011 Asian Women's Championship from September 15 to 23.

The last time this tournament was held in Vietnam was Septem-

ber 2009 and Thailand upset China in the final, three sets to one (95-86), to take their first ever gold medal within an inter-Asian volleyball competition.

That victory sent a warning to the traditional dominators of Asian volleyball, namely Korea,

China and Japan.

Whether the Thai women's team can maintain their form next week remains to be seen. For starters, they've been pooled with Vietnam (101) and Australia (103) and playing them on September 15 and 17 respectively.



Thailand's Nootsara Tomkom sets the bar high for the Thai ladies.

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3	Serbia
4	Russia
5	Japan
6	Thailand
7	Italy
8	China
9	Korea
10	Poland
11	Cuba
12	Dominican Republic
13	Germany
14	Argentina
15	Kazakhstan
16	Peru

1	Brazil
2	USA
3	Japan
4	Italy
5	Russia
6	China
7	Poland
8	Cuba
9	Serbia
10	Germany
11	Turkey
12	Netherlands
13	Dom. Rep.
14	Thailand
15	Algeria
16	Peru

The numbers were just enough to put Thailand in eighth place and secure a spot in the final 8 playoff round. They were put in Group B with Russia, Serbia and China.

They lost to Russia in four sets. Their highlight, however, was in dominating the Chinese in four sets before going on to lose to Serbia in three sets.

After finishing third in the group, Thailand finished sixth overall, fol-

lowing their defeat to Japan.

Their impressive performance at this year's Grand Prix has shown the world that the team is competitive enough to play at the same level of teams like the USA and Brazil and that it is capable of winning.

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# Lomas come closer than ever on a national level

In an exciting tournament at the Thammasat University grounds in Bangkok, the Lomas boys bagged third place.



**STANDING STRONG:** Despite an older and physically larger opposition, the boys were determined and played well.

HAVING won the Southern Division Rugby 7s qualifying tournament for Under 17s in Ao Luk recently, it was time for Phuket youth rugby stars The Lomas to contest the National Championships last weekend.

Thammasat University, with its fantastic facilities was the venue. Division winners from around the country gathered for what would be two days of spectacular 7-a-side rugby.

The draw placed the Lomas into a difficult group with Samut Prakan, Surin and Kings College. It would take something special for the lads to progress, especially since the opponents were

two years their senior.

The first game was against Samut Prakan. The boys had no idea what to expect, knowing nothing about the opposition.

The bigger Samut boys went onto the offensive from the kick-off, but the trademark Lomas' tackling soon wore the opposition down, and a turnover ball on the halfway line saw Lek, the center, race away to score under the posts which was duly converted by the Lomas' fly-half, Kaa.

But Samut weren't going to make life easy for the Lomas and surged to within a few meters of the line when a desperate tackle by scrum-half, Beng, just meters from

the line, saw prop, Fai secure the ball and drive towards the 22.

The resulting scrum was won against the head by the Lomas who spun the ball wide to wing, Add. He then managed to evade the covering tackle and out-sprint the defense to score in the corner, which was unconverted.

Going into half time, the score was 12-0 to The Lomas. The Lomas had the upper hand and after some thrilling end-to-end play finally sealed the win when prop Fai scored under the posts for a converted try seeing the Lomas win 19-0.

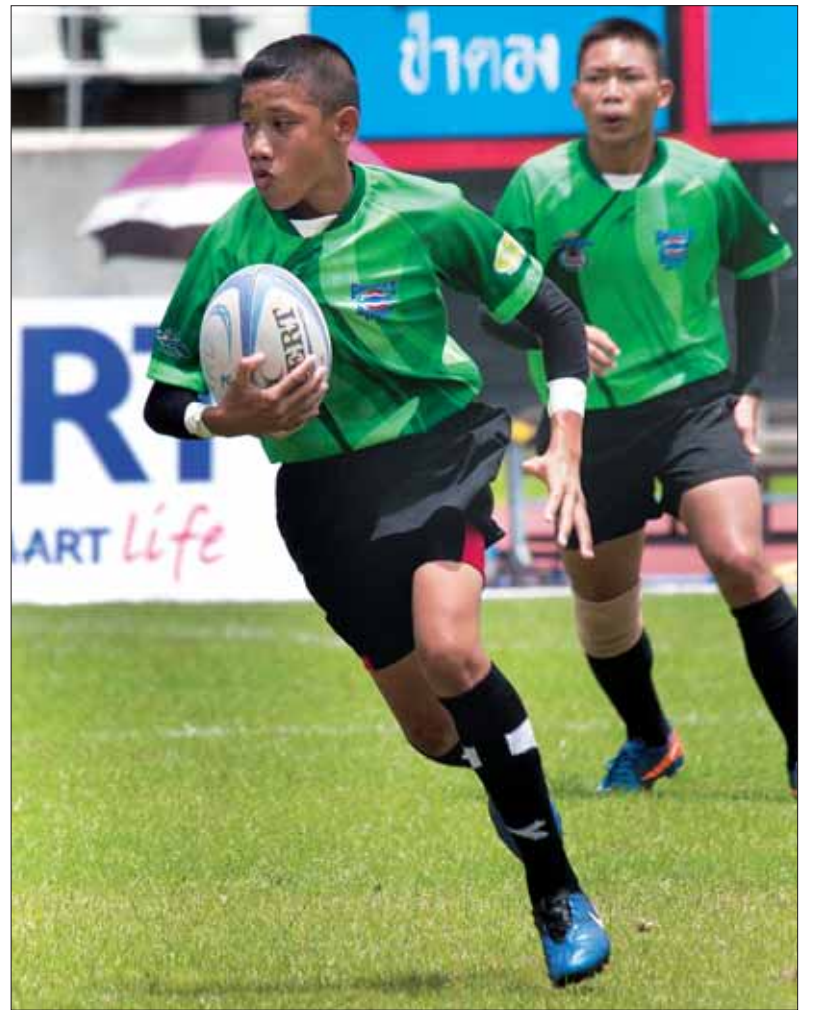
The second game was against an up-and-coming side, Surin who have been one of the recognizable revelations in Thai rugby over the last few years.

From the kick off it was evident that the Surin lads thought they would steam-roll the smaller Lomas boys, and it seemed that they would after scoring in the corner for an unconverted try in the second minute.

One thing with this Lomas squad is they won't be intimidated. They immediately took the game back to Surin with prop Fai and hooker, Mac getting in the faces of the Surin players and forcing errors which led to a turnover ball on the Lomas side of halfway.

This saw center Lek surge towards the Surin line before being brought down just short and a quickly recycled ball saw Fai go over between the posts for Kaa to complete a simple conversion.

Lomas were up 7-5 at half time and rearing to play in the second



**PRIDE OF PHUKET:** The Lomas are stars on the Phuket youth rugby scene.

half. They caught Surin napping from the kick-off and scored on a simple try under the posts after a mix-up by the Surin forwards saw the ball squirt out to scrum half, Beng who broke the line to set up Lek for the try, which Kaa dually converted to put the Lomas 15-5 ahead.

Surin knew it was now or never and threw everything at the Lomas defense with their big forwards driving on relentlessly, but being held up by resolute Lomas tackling.

Something had to give though and a missed tackle saw the Surin center crash under the posts for a converted try which brought the scores to 14-12 in Lomas' favor with two minutes left to play.

Sensing victory, Surin charged forward but couldn't break down the Lomas' defense and a huge tackle by prop, Buk saw the Surin player knock on and the resulting scrum was the last play of the game for the Lomas, who earned the hard fought victory. The final score was 14-12.

Having secured a place in Sunday's knockouts with two wins, two Lomas substitutes who hadn't had a chance to play got to be in the start lineup against one of the favorites, King's College.

It was evident from the start that the well-drilled and physically superior King's College team were not taking the Lomas lightly, and after a hard fought game the

Lomas went down 24-0.

The boys were in a buoyant mood having come a step further than last year and earning a semi-final berth against the number one ranked side in Thailand, Vjiravhud College. The match was held in the impressive Asian games stadium the Tudome.

From the kick-off, gaining possession was always going to be a problem but the Lomas weren't going to give in easily and put in big hits, constantly knocking the bigger VC boys back.

However, possession was key and the VC lads ran in two tries to take a 12-0 lead into the second half. The VC coach was obviously impressed by the Lomas' tackling as he told his boys to stay out of contact during the second half, but again the Lomas hunted them down.

They just couldn't make the line, however, and two more tries saw the Lomas knocked out of the competition 24-0 with their heads held high.

It was a great performance by the Lomas last weekend who finished third overall in the National Championships. Next year they are working to go a step further.

The team extends a great thanks to Island Furniture and the Aussie Bar for their support of Phuket youth rugby and to Ajarn Phanom, Ajarn Prom, Mike Whippy and Pat Cotter for all their hard work.



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# FC Phuket up close and personal

FOOTBALL fans in Phuket are increasingly sporting green in support of the island’s semiprofessional football team FC Phuket. Home matches at Surakul Stadium continue to see swelling local support. In rain and shine, through thick and thin – win, lose or draw, Phuket fans are keen to celebrate goals by the Southern Sea Kirin, and are always ready to scream bloody murder when an opponent gets the advantage. We certainly do love our FC Phuket! Yet little is known about the players off the pitch. Who are they? Where are they from? What do they do in their free time? Due to popular demand *The Phuket Gazette* will publish brief player bios and interviews every week, starting this week.

1

BIO

Leuchar “Pui” Juntawong

Born: March 17, 1983

Position: Goalkeeper

Height: 187 cm

Weight: 70 kg

Nationality: Thai

Q. Apart from FC Phuket who is your favorite football team?

A. Muangthong United and Manchester United.

Q. What has been the biggest challenge in your career?

A. Being upgraded to Division One after playing Buriram at the national stadium.

Q. What interests do you have outside of your work?

A. Spending time with my family and enjoying the vegetarian festival. I will help in this year’s procession as a bearer.

Q. If you were not a football player what would you like to be?

A. I’d work in my family’s business installing ceilings.

Q. What do you like about Phuket?

A. I was born here so I love everything.

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BIO

Kone “Kone” Adama

Born: April 4, 1987

Position: Forward

Height: 185 cm

Weight: 79 kg

Nationality: Ivory Coast

Goals: 5

Q. Apart from FC Phuket who is your favorite football team?

A. Manchester United.

Q. What has been the biggest challenge in your career?

A. Playing in the 2009 Championship when I played for Muangthong United.

Q. What interests do you have outside of your work?

A. Playing video games, specifically FIFA on X-BOX.

Q. If you were not a football player what would you like to be?

A. A teacher.

Q. What do you like about Phuket?

A. The climate and the people.

If you have a question you'd like to ask any of the players, don't hesitate to write to our sports desk. E: [neil@phuketgazette.net](mailto:neil@phuketgazette.net)

FIXTURES		
WC2014 QUALIFIERS	September 2	17.00
Australia vs Thailand @ Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane (Live Coverage, Channel 11)		
AIS LEAGUE SOUTHERN REGION	September 3	16.00
Nara Utd vs Pattani FC @ Naratiwat Municipality		
		17.00
Surat Thani FC vs Yala FC @ Surat Thani provincial field Pattalung FC vs Phang Nga FC @ Pattalung Provincial Admin Org. field		
AIS LEAGUE SOUTHERN REGION	September 4	17.00
Nakhon Sri Thammarat FC – Trang FC @ OrBorJor field, Nakhon Sri Thammarat Satun Utd – Chumphon FC @ Satun Provincial field		
		18.00
Hat Yai FC – Ranong FC @ Jiranakorn Hat Yai		
THAI FA CUP		
Songkhla vs Krabi @ Pathom Sulanon Stadium, Songkhla (winner will play TOTSC on October 19)		
WC2014 QUALIFIERS	September 6	18.00
Thailand vs Oman @ Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok (Live Coverage, Channel 11)		

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## Liverpool legends cancel Phuket stop

THE Liverpool Legends tour series football matches, scheduled to take place in Phuket and Bangkok in October, have been canceled.

Cris Rosenbergs, creator of the Football Legends Tour concept, informed the *Gazette* earlier this week that the series of charity fund-raising events could not take place.

"Due to the obstacles and issues beyond our control we have found that the Legends of Liverpool tour is not possible to operate in 2011," he said.

The Phuket leg of the event had been intended to raise funds for the Phuket Youth Football Home Foundation in Thalang, a charity set up by the late Hong Kong-based philanthropist Henrik Lorenz.

Mr Rosenbergs told the *Gazette* that all who bought tickets will be entitled to a full refund and that a press release will be issued soon with more information.

By Michael DesPortes

RATTHAPARK "Feem" Wilairot, Thailand's first and only representative in top-tier motorcycle racing, crashed out of the Red Bull Indianapolis Grand Prix last Sunday, delaying any comeback prospects until the next race in Misano, Italy.

The 23-year-old Chonburi native competes in the intermediate Moto2 class on board a Honda 600cc race machine with Thai corporate backing. He broke into the class in 2006 when it still featured 250cc two-stroke motorcycles, and has progressed steadily over the years, coming close to podium results on a number of occasions.

The change to four-stroke engines and a different chassis has been hard for Feem, and his Thai Honda Singha SAG team struggled last year. Matters were not made easier when their rider was injured in a road accident during the off-season, the ill effects of which Feem has suffered for some time.

As the 12<sup>th</sup> of 18 rounds of the Red Bull Indianapolis Grand Prix – if Japan remains on the calendar – approached, Feem was given positive feedback from doctors and looked to improve as the season headed into its final stretch.

## Comeback hopes dashed



WHEELIE FAST: Aussie Casey Stoner won the MotoGP race, while Thailand's Ratthapark 'Feem' Wilairot fell off.

Positives could be taken from Feem's performance in practice sessions on Friday and Saturday, when he placed as high as 14<sup>th</sup> in a competitive field of over 30 riders.

That form couldn't be replicated in the qualifying race however, and the team was to start from 27<sup>th</sup> on the grid – a tough outcome on a track where passing does not come easily.

The setback did not hurt Feem's

resolve however, as he launched into the race and gained two positions in the opening two laps. By lap eight he was in 20<sup>th</sup> position and still pushing, but began to slip back down the order as the race wore on. Then, with only five laps to go, Feem crashed out.

On television, he was shown lying in the gravel, seeming in pain, but later reports indicated that he was "OK".

It was a weekend to forget for the Singha SAG team but motorcycle racers and the personnel who support them are known for their tenacity. Barring disaster, Feem will be out there putting in the hard work as the MotoGP circus heads back to Europe and the South Pacific with the aim of improving one step at a time and setting a good base for a potential 2012 campaign.



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