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# Phuket Gazette

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Mr Krittasak's days of living it up in Bangkok on stolen gold are over.

## Brazen gold shop thief back in Phuket

GOLD is considered lucky in the Far East, but for one gold shop thief its glitter has been sullied as he faces a possible lengthy prison sentence now that police caught up with "Golden Den", or 25-year-old Krittasak "Den" Heetkaew, as he is now known.

On June 4, 2011, a man wearing a Starbucks t-shirt and jeans entered the Thong Thanet gold shop at the Yee Teng complex on the corner of the Slaughterhouse Intersection in Phuket Town.

After posing as a customer, the man pulled out a replica handgun and threatened the shopowner Chantana Thanetthanasom.

*Continued on page 5*

# Moving On On

After a year of bed care, last guest at famed hotel moved to hospital

By Atchaa Khamlo

AN ELDERLY German expat who has lived for the past 20 years at the On On Hotel in Phuket Town, famed as the Phuket hotel featured in the Leonardo DiCaprio film *The Beach*, has finally checked out.

Hans Georg Artur Maeter, 88, was transferred to Patong Hospital on Tuesday after hotel management could no longer stand by and watch him stay in his room, where he has been bed-ridden for the past year.

Phuket Tourist Police officers Sen Sgt Maj Wichai Boonruen and Sgt Payong Tipsombut received a call from the hotel owner, Anurak Tansiroj, to assist in transferring Mr Maeter to hospital.

The officers arrived at the hotel on Phang Nga Road in Phuket Town at 12:30pm with a Swiss Tourist Police Volunteer and three officers from Patong Hospital, including Hospital Director Dr Phumin Silaphan.

They found the emaciated Mr Maeter lying on his hotel bed, covered with a blanket. After bathing and dressing Mr Maeter, they as-

sisted him into a wheelchair and helped him to an ambulance waiting below.

Mr Anurak, who is also the founder of Phuket International Hospital and the Czech Honorary Consul for Phuket, told the *Phuket Gazette*, "Mr Maeter could not get off the bed for a year. During that time our hotel maid cleaned his room brought him food and drink, but he could not eat much.

"He refused to go a hospital or stay anywhere else. He said he wanted to die here," he said.

"We contacted Mr Maeter's family in Germany and his friends in Phuket, but he declined any help from them," Mr Anurak added.

With a full renovation of the hotel scheduled to start on May 1, Mr Maeter was the last guest to check out.

"We couldn't leave him in the hotel. He needed to be moved to a hospital where he could receive proper care," Mr Anurak said.

Officers received a surprise while gathering Mr Maeter's belongings to take with him to hospital, Sen Sgt Maj Wichai said.

*Continued on page 3*



Tourist Police officers and medical staff prepare Mr Maeter for transfer to Patong Hospital. Photo: Courtesy of the Phuket Tourist Police

## City Police chief transferred over underage nightlife staff

By Chutharat Plerin

PHUKET City Police Superintendent Chote Chitchai has been removed from active duty pending an investigation into underage staff working at Phuket Town nightclubs.

Col Chote told the *Gazette* on Monday that he received the instant transfer order last Saturday, May 5.

"I received the order from Phuket Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul on Saturday to transfer to Phuket Provincial Police Station as a special assignment for 30 days.

"Today is a public holiday. I will report to Phuket Provincial Police Station tomorrow [Tuesday, May 8]," he told the *Gazette*.

Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Sakchai Limcharoen has been installed as Phuket City Police Acting Superintendent during the 30-day period, Col Chote said.

Asked what reason was given for the immediate temporary transfer, Col Chote explained, "This is Maj Gen Chonasit's decision. I will be back as Phuket City Police Superintendent duty after the 30 days."

"This is just a temporary assignment... I have been ordered to 'tighten up' Phuket City Police Station," Col Sakchai told the *Gazette*.

He added that the move follows reports

in the Thai-language media of underage staff being found working in nightlife venues in Phuket Town. The minimum legal age for a person to work in a licensed venue is 18 years of age.

"The Commander [Maj Gen Chonasit] sees this as very important. That's why I have been assigned this task," Col Sakchai said.

"I believe Col Chote will be re-instated and I will resume my normal duties at Phuket Provincial Station as soon as the investigation is complete.

"However, it might take longer than 30 days to complete the investigation," Col Sakchai added.



Phuket City Police Superintendent Chote Chitchai has been transferred to an inactive post pending an initial investigation.

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Bang Jo boys win futsal tournament second place. **Page 47**

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# No lifeguards as surf danger season arrives

By Chutharat Plerin

AS THE southwest monsoon sets in and Phuket enters the most dangerous period for beach swimmers, the Phuket lifeguards have yet to return to their towers at popular tourist beaches along the west coast.

The news comes as the *Gazette* received confirmation that not a single company or organization bid for the government contract to provide lifeguard services at Phuket's beaches.

It was the second time that no one bid for the contract to provide life-saving services at Phuket's key tourist attractions since the previous agreement with the Phuket Lifeguard Club expired on April 2.

"We opened electronic bidding twice but received no bids from any organizations to provide lifeguard services. The second bidding process ended April 26," an officer at the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) Tourism and Sports Department told the *Gazette*.

"We are now winding up the second round of electronic bidding. We will call in the lifeguard companies [who provided the lifeguard services previously] to see



The tourists are still visiting the beaches, but swimming with no lifeguards on patrol can be risky at this time of year. Photo: Chris Hudon

if we can come to an agreement," she added.

Phuket Lifeguard Club President Prathaiyut "Nut" Chuayuan previously explained to the *Gazette* that the main areas of concern for the lifeguards were funding and a lack of support to develop professional training to ensure qualified lifeguards patrol the beaches.

"Last year was tough. We're exhausted and some of us want to take a rest. I think it would be fair if the OrBorJor opened the bidding process to others. But if

they can't find anyone to carry on the service, we will do it. Our top priority has always been public safety," he said.

However, the OrBorJor officer the *Gazette* spoke to said, "We are doing the best we can in accordance with official procedures. If we can come to an agreement, we will pass the new contract on for presidential approval."

"I don't think it will take longer than a month, but we can't promise a date of when lifeguards will be back on duty."

## Police suspect arson in District Office blaze

POLICE are seeking a man seen running from the site of a pre-dawn arson attack at the Thalang District Office compound at 4am on Wednesday.

Firefighters took 15 minutes to extinguish the blaze, with no people reported injured, but the fire destroyed a bamboo sala beside the old Thalang Community Hall.

As the sala has no electrical circuitry installed, officials believe the fire was deliberately set.

Security guard Boonsoong Boonchuay told the *Gazette* that he noticed the flames just after he reported in for his 4am shift. He



Firefighters took 15 minutes to extinguish the blaze.

also saw a man in a balaclava running from the area.

The incident has been reported to Thalang District Security Division chief Siripong Leeprasit, Mr Boonsoong said.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

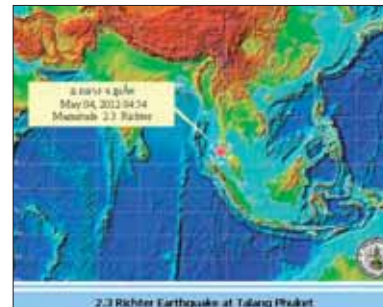
## Small aftershock spooks residents

AN AFTERSHOCK centered in Thalang struck at 4:54am on May 4, waking some residents with a loud bang, while others reported feeling nothing at all.

"The epicenter of the aftershock was at Latitude 8° 00' 36" N, Longitude 98° 21' 00" E. It was almost at the same location as the 4.3 quake on April 16," said Sophon Chaira, of the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) Seismology Center in Bangkok.

"The small earthquake was just an aftershock from the earthquake on April 16. Our center recorded the aftershock at 4:54am, registering 2.3 on the Richter scale," he added.

The seismometer at the earthquake monitoring center set up in Srisoonthorn, which was the epi-



The 2.3 Richter earthquake on May 4 struck near the epicenter of the 4.3 quake on April 16. Image: TMD

center of the April 16 quake, also recorded the aftershock.

"Our center detected the aftershock at 4:54am. However, no one here could feel the tremors," said Srisoonthorn Municipality public relations officer Kanokthip Ganganon.

"Also, we have not received any phone calls or reports from Srisoonthorn residents about the quake or any reports of damage to houses," she said.

"But an officer from Thalang Police Station came here this morning [May 4] and he said he felt the quake at the police station while he was on duty," Ms Kanokthip added.

One resident in Baan Manik, in Srisoonthorn subdistrict, told the *Gazette* that the earthquake woke her family from their sleep.

"I was woken up by a loud bang. I wasn't sure whether it was a lighting strike or an earthquake, but then I felt the tremors. That confirmed what I heard was from an earthquake," she said.

— Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

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# Policeman held for street killing

By Atchaa Khamlo

A PATONG police officer and his brother have both been charged with accessory to murder over a fatal shooting in Phuket Town's red-light district in the early hours of May 4.

Phuket City Police Deputy Superintendent Jamroon Plaiduang told the *Gazette* that the shooting occurred at about 2:30am in Phuket Town's infamous Phun Phol Soi 11.

Pol Cpl Rachaporn Semaksorn, currently serving at Patong Police Station, and his brother Dechaporn arrived in the narrow street and pulled up on the opposite side of the alley where 21-year-old Ekkasit Sangangam was sitting on his parked motorbike.

Mr Ekkasit walked over to Cpl Rachaporn and Dechaporn and began arguing with the both of them, said Col Jamroon.

Cpl Rachaporn, not in uniform and off-duty at the time, apparently pulled out his gun and shot Mr Ekkasit in the left eye, then



Pol Cpl Rachaporn Semaksorn as pictured on his Thai ID card.

sped off on his motorbike.

"Cpl Rachaporn and his brother were arrested minutes later while riding along Wichit Songkram Road," said Col Jamroon.

Rescue workers from the nearby Kusoldharm Foundation, whose headquarters is only one street away, rushed Mr Ekkasit to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

"Cpl Rachaporn and Dechaporn were held here at Phuket City Police Station after their arrest, but they have now been transferred to the holding cells at Phuket Provincial Court," said Col Jamroon.



Phun Phol Soi 11, renowned as Phuket Town's red-light district. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Both men have been initially charged with accessory to murder.

Police have yet to charge Cpl Rachaporn directly with the killing of Mr Ekkasit.

Col Jamroon told the *Gazette* that police had yet to confirm whether or not the shooting was over a woman.

"There were no women present

when police arrived at the scene [early on May 4].

"However, we are still continuing our investigation into the incident," he said.

## Veteran expat checked out of hotel, into hospital

From page 1

"While we were collecting his belongings, we found more than 100,000 baht in Thai baht and US dollar banknotes. We have already opened a bank account for him to keep his money safe in the bank.

"We also found a bankbook in his room showing that he has more than 1.2 million baht in his own bank account," Sen Sgt Maj Wichai said.

Mr Anurak has volunteered to keep Mr Maeter's belongings safe and to pay for his hospital treatment until the German Embassy in Bangkok is contacted and assists in making alternative arrangements, Sgt Payong explained.

A source familiar with the case said the Embassy was aware of the tragic situation, but could not intervene because no laws were broken.

Before Mr Maeter's debilitating condition set in, he returned home to Germany several times during his many years of stay at the hotel, Mr Anurak recalled.

"Later he was unable to go anywhere, so he stayed in the hotel all the time," he said.

Tourist Police said Mr Maeter was staying legally in Phuket on a one-year visa.

Despite his condition, Mr Maeter managed to obtain a new passport from the German Embassy with an issue date of February 12 this year. The passport lists his place and time of birth as the city of Stettin, Germany in 1923. The town, now known as Szczecin, lies in Poland's Baltic region.



On On Hotel owner Anurak Tansiroj flanked by Phuket Tourist Police officers Sen Sgt Maj Wichai Boonruen (left) and Sgt Payong Tipsombut. Photo: Phuket Tourist Police

The On On Hotel, which at 85 years old is reputedly the oldest hotel in operation in Phuket, will undergo renovation work into next year, said Mr Anurak.

"We will hand over the operations to another Thai hotel operator, but the name and style of the On On Hotel will remain the same," Mr Anurak said.

The renovations will see an upgrade in the style and comfort, as well as an increase in the number of rooms, he said.

"However, we will have to increase the room rates a little bit to ensure the prices keep pace with current times," Mr Anurak said.



## Patong Hill road slides again

THE rainy season arrived in force last Saturday and is already taking its toll, causing a landslide along a stretch of Patong Hill road that the Highways Department was hoping to shore up by year's end.

Sampawat Wannasangkam of the Patong Municipality Department of Disaster Mitigation and Prevention said his office received a report of the slide at around 9am.

As an emergency measure his office coordinated with Patong Police in erecting a barricade to alert motorists to the danger.

"We are going to contact the Phuket Highway Office see what step to take next," he said.

The deluges over May 4-5 caused minor flooding over low-lying roads and caused strife for at least two dive boats.

See page 6 for dive boat story



The section of Patong Hill Road slid away last Saturday exposed even more soil to erosion. Photos: Chutharat Plerin



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Phuket Gazette readers overwhelmingly believe that speed cameras would bring the most benefit to Phuket. Photo: PGTV

## Speed radar voted most helpful project

PHUKET Gazette readers overwhelmingly think the installation of radar speed cameras to monitor road traffic and automatically fine violators will be the most helpful of six projects recently approved for Phuket by Cabinet, according to our most recent online poll.

In the poll launched March 23, readers were asked which of six projects approved by Cabinet during the "Mobile Cabinet Meeting", headed by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, would do most to help the province.

More than half of all the readers who voted (52.8%) thought that the 17-million-baht project to install a network of radar speed cameras would be the most beneficial.

The second most popular choice, at 21%, was 'Improvements to Chao Fa East Road': 20mn baht.

Third, at 16.5%, was "Monkey

cheek" reservoirs to supply the Phuket City Waterworks authority: 25mn baht.

Fourth, at 4.5%, was a water pipeline from Baan Bangjo to Phuket International Airport: 24.8mn baht.

Fifth, at 3.6%, was Marine navigation lighting system improvements: 17.3mn baht.

Sixth, at 1.6%, was development of Baan Phraya Wichit Songkram historical site: 9.1mn baht.

The speed camera project was the top choice among all three demographics. Almost three-quarters (72%) of tourists chose this option, followed by 57% of Thais and 47% of local foreign residents.

Local foreign residents were far more likely (27%) to opt for improvements to Chao Fa East Road than their Thai counterparts (11%) or tourists (7%).

— *Phuket Gazette*

# Phuket Town cables going underground

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

PHASE two of the project to remove the unsightly cables that have been obscuring the classic Sino-Portuguese shopfronts along the streets of Old Phuket Town for decades continues this Saturday when workers will pull down the power poles along Deebuk Road.

The removal of the power poles on Deebuk Road this Saturday follows the removal of overhead power cables and the corresponding power poles on Krabi Road last weekend.

The Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) completed phase one of the project along Thalang Road in late 2010 and planned to start phase two in March 2011.

Although the project suffered delays, the PEA has now finished laying underground cables along Krabi and Deebuk Roads, and has since started partial work on the section of Thepkrasattri Road that passes through the area.

The second phase of the project will cost about 39 million baht in total, with PEA putting up 26mn baht and Phuket City Municipality allotting another 13mn baht to see the project finished.

"After the PEA removes all of the power poles, Phuket City Municipality will take care of the road. We will repair the road surface back to normal as soon as possible," Kraingsak Chuchartphong, director of the Phuket City Municipality Public Works Division told the *Gazette*.

"The PEA informed us that they will come to remove the power poles on Deebuk road this com-



Behind schedule and with possible delays in sorting out the telephone cables, the project to bury Phuket Old Town's electricity supply lines has been generally well received by residents. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



With Thalang, Krabi and Deebuk roads complete, only Thepkrasattri Road remains before phase three can start.

ing Saturday [May 12]. As soon as the PEA have done with their part, we will go to take care of ours," he said.

Despite nearly everything going to plan so far, the underground section along Thepkrasattri Road has been put on hold while an unforeseen problem is resolved.

The problem lies with the concentration of existing telephone cables in that area that feed into the main telephone exchange nearby.

"Work on installing the cables underground from the Tua Poh furniture store at the Thaew Nam Intersection to Aram Bridge on Phuket Road is still underway," said Mr Kraingsak.

"It will take a while before we can proceed with installing the electrical cables in that area underground, so to prevent traffic congestion in the meantime we have filled in the road excavation to allow traffic to pass until the telephone cable issue is sorted out," he said.

Reaction to the completion of phase one was generally positive, but locals reported the traffic congestion as "terrible" while the work was underway.

## Hitman cop killer

By Atchaa Khamlo

PHUKET City Police on Monday arrested an alleged hit-man and cop killer wanted in connection with two murders last year, one in Phuket and one in Trang.

Samut "Moot" Keukgong, 44, was arrested by Phuket City Police at about 3:30pm at a snooker hall in Rassada, said the Phuket City Police report.

Mr Samut signed a statement denying a charge of premeditated murder in the first case, claiming that he was acting in self-defense when he killed Sompong "Jack" Inchao-na outside his home in Rassada Village 3 on March 24 last year.

After his 18-year-old son was chased back to his home in Soi Saithong by four men yelling threats, he confronted the group, one of whom was Mr Sompong, he told police.

"I was furious. I went into the house and got a knife. My son



Confessed killer Samut 'Moot' Keukgong, who made a living stealing boats before changing his career to contract killer.

followed me back outside. I told the men to go away, but one of them kept kicking the gate, trying to get inside," he said.

"Mr Sompong and I fought. I am not entirely sure what happened, but I ended up stabbing the man several times," Mr Samut told police.

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# Scores of poor turn out for annual alms festival

PHUKET: More than 1,000 of Phuket's poorest people were at the Kusoldharm Foundation headquarters in Phuket Town on Tuesday to receive donations of food as part of the annual *Te Krajard* merit-making ceremony.

Starting at 2:30pm, Foundation President Benjawan Tamphanuwat led Kusoldharm workers in handing out 4,800 packs of rice, each weighing five kilograms, as well as packs of other dry foodstuffs.

Most of the recipients were from local sea gypsy communities.

The event marks the birthday of the Chinese God *Hui Joh*, who



Kusoldharm Foundation President Benjawan Tamphanuwat led the merit-making drive on Tuesday.

is highly revered by Phuket's ethnic Chinese community, explained Ms Benjawan.

"Today, we handed out scholarships of 2,000 baht each to 200 poor students studying at 18 local

schools in Phuket. We also gave sacks of rice to 28 schools, with each school receiving 250kg of rice," she said.

"We do this twice a year. We also hand out donations of rice to schools during the *Por Tor* ceremony [an annual Chinese festival to celebrate longevity]," she added.

"However, *Te Krajard* [literally "strike the tray"] merit-making is a part of the Kusoldharm Foundation's annual activities to achieve our goal of providing help to people in need in Phuket," Ms Benjawan said.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



More than 1,000 people, most from Phuket sea gypsy communities, turned up to receive donations of food. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong

# 'Golden Den' runs out of luck

From page 1

Ms Chantana, recognizing that the weapon was a fake, produced her own "real" handgun. Unfortunately Mr Krittasak was quick enough to snatch it from her hands and continue the robbery.

With gold necklaces and cash valued at 6 million baht in hand, Mr Krittasak fled the scene on a Honda motorcycle, which was later found parked in a housing estate in Wichit. Police inquiries at the time showed that the getaway bike had been rented in Patong and further questioning of residents revealed that Mr Krittasak had been collected by a blue Ford. Despite a police island-wide cordon, Mr Krittasak made good his escape.

However, his liberty lasted only 11 months. On May 4, Bangkok Police knocked on his door. A search found enough incriminating evidence – stolen gold, a .38 revolver with ammunition and clothing Mr Krittasak wore during

robberies – to ensure his arrest.

Mr Krittasak was taken to Region 8 Police Headquarters in Surat Thani, where he was quickly put on display to the media.

Region 8 Police Commander Lt Gen Santi Pensute said of Mr Krittasak, "He would pick gold shops with poor security measures and that were near intersections, because it was easier to get away... He always planned his escape route before committing the robbery."

At a police-organized press conference, Mr Krittasak admitted to robbing four gold shops. The first in Bangkok in December 2008, followed by another two during 2010, also in Bangkok. Mr Krittasak's last foray was to Phuket. All combined Mr Krittasak claims that the value of the loot amounted to about 11.5mn baht, most of which remains unaccounted for.

It was during the third robbery when things went wrong and a shopkeeper was shot, injured in a



Empty shelves at the Thong Thanet gold shop in Phuket Town following the robbery in June last year. Photo: Yodsak Jarana

struggle for the .38 revolver that the employee had produced.

"I am sorry for what I have done and didn't mean to harm anyone. The only reason the shopkeeper was injured was because the gun fired by itself," Mr Krittasak said at the press conference.

"I always knew I would be caught in the end," he added.

The gold was sold and the money used on what he described as "luxury living". Good natured throughout all public appearances since his arrest, Mr Krittasak posed his hands with a *wai* and

apologized to the shop owners when they came to identify him.

"I will be a good man when get out," he said. "If I had a chance to enter the Buddhist monkhood, I wouldn't leave it."

A large crowd gathered at the Yee Teng complex in Phuket Town on May 6 to watch the re-enactment of the Thong Thanet gold shop robbery. Once again the suspect gave the owners of the family-run business an apologetic *wai* upon entering the shop.

Ms Chantana told *Gazette*, "I am glad police finally caught the bandit. We lost 221 baht-weight in gold, a value of about 6 million baht. Only about 10 baht-weight of gold was returned, a value of about 200,000 baht. Recovery of the remainder is now in the hands of the criminal justice system."

The shop rewarded the police who tracked down and arrested "Golden Den" with 100,000 baht

Mr Krittasak was transferred to a cell at Phuket Court to await his arraignment hearing.

# caught in Rassada

However, the murder of Pol Snr Sgt Maj Jaroon Toomphan, 52, in Trang, was a contract killing, Mr Samut confessed.

"I was hired to kill a policeman. There was a conflict between some local village heads [Phu Yai Baan] over some land.

The police officer, Jamroon, wanted to settle the dispute through negotiation," Mr Samut explained.

At about 10pm on November 12, Mr Samut was among three men who drove to Sgt Maj Jaroon's house and waited at the gate in their pickup truck, he said.

Mr Samut, who was the gunman in the hit, shot Sgt Maj Jaroon as soon as he opened the door, he told the police.

He was supposed to get 500,000 baht for the killing, but

only received 12,000 baht, he said.

**'I was hired to kill a policeman. There was a conflict between some local village heads [Phu Yai Baan] over some land'**

City Police officer said.

Before fleeing Phuket and committing the assassination in Trang province, Mr Samut had been making a living in Phuket by stealing local boats and selling them, a Phuket

City Police officer said.

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# All safe after dive boat rescue

By Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai  
and Isaac Stone Simonelli

STORM weather cracked the hull of a dive boat as it was returning to Phuket last weekend, forcing the captain to ground the vessel and call for assistance.

None of the 16 people on board were reported as suffering any injuries in the incident.

Narong Chaimo, general manager of Kamala Dive Center, who organized the dive tour, said in a public statement that at about 4:30pm on May 4 the captain of the *Parapis 7* sent a distress call to the Royal Thai Navy, Marine Police, speedboat operators and nearby dive boats.

The first boat to render assistance was from Andaman Ocean Safaris, with tour leader and dive instructor Niklas Komradsva on board.

"Our boat and the Kamala Dive Center boat [rented from and operated by Aloha] made the second dive on the lee side of Phi Phi Lei Island because of the wind," said Mr Komradsva.

"When we rounded the island, we started to run into some bigger



The boat was perched in the lee of the island, allowing Andaman Ocean Safaris' boat safe access. Photo: Tom Booth

waves. But the size of the wave wasn't the problem, it was the frequency of the waves," he added.

About 35 minutes later, Mr Komradsva received the *Parapis 7* distress call. Before we got there we saw smoke rising from the boat, so that meant the engine was under the water, he explained.

"We took about 25 minutes to safely get to their boat. By then, their engine had failed. So we had to send seven of our instructors into the water with floatation devices to help everyone over to our boat," he said.

"For what I saw, they were doing the right thing. They went

into the shallow area near Gai Island, which immediately put everyone into safety. They were on the lee side of the island, so by the time we transported the people to our boat we were in flat water," Mr Komradsva explained.

David Minnaar, owner of Andaman Ocean Safaris, said the

incident highlighted water safety concerns.

"It was such an unfortunate event... It was just a combination of freak wave and wrong angle of the boat," Mr Minnaar said.

Andaman Ocean Safaris cancelled their last dive scheduled for the day after retrieving the tourists and crew, to give them enough time to slowly and safely make it back to Phuket and so they could also assist Southern Siam Divers, who were in need of an extra bilge pump.

Everyone was already on board Andaman Ocean Safaris boat by the time the Phuket Marine Police arrived at 6:20pm.

"If we can see evidence that the ship has been checked regularly, its passed inspections and its documentation in order then there most likely won't be any charges filed against the company," said Lt Jeerayuth Onthong of the Phuket Marine Police.

All necessary safety equipment was on board, said Mr Narong in his statement.

The incident is now under the investigation process by Muang Krabi Police station.

## Tsunami aid center targeted by arson gang a third time

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

FIRE broke out at the Austria-Phuket Community Center in Phuket Town on the night of May 4, the second blaze there in less than 24 hours.

Police suspect teenagers, who they believe likely broke into the building to take drugs, were responsible for starting both fires.

Phuket City Police at 9:10pm received a report of the fire from residents in the densely-populated area, to the east of Phuket Town.

By the time Phuket City Police arrived at the scene, they found Phuket City Municipality firefighters assisted by Kusoldharm Foundation workers putting out the blaze, which broke out in a large storage room.

It only took firefighters 10 minutes to bring the flames under control. Subsequent inspection revealed damage to tables, chairs, public relations signs and part of the ceiling.

The cause of the blaze has yet to be fully investigated, but police found drug paraphernalia, including a pipe used to smoke *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine), at the scene of the fire that broke out at the center just 20 hours earlier, damaging the women's restroom on the second floor.

On that occasion Phuket City Police and other officers rushed to the scene, where they met up with Rassada Community Volunteer Police and Kusoldharm Rescue Foundation workers, who



The latest fire in a storeroom caused damage to the roof and destroyed tables, chairs and signboards. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong



The first fire caused damage to the women's restroom at the center.



Police suspect that teenage drug addicts started the fires.

had already successfully doused the blaze with fire extinguishers.

Local residents told police they teenagers enter the building before the fire broke out on May 3.

The fire at the center was the third in recent weeks. The first, on April 21, caused minor damage to another storage room.

The Austria-Phuket Community Center was set up in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami to serve as a child care center, a basic health care center linked to the nursery, a handicraft center, a public library, a skills training center and a public park for the impoverished community living in the area.



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# Andaman Provinces dig in to combat coastal erosion

PHUKET has joined an Andaman-wide project spearheaded by the Prince of Songkla University (PSU) Haad Yai Campus to combat coastal erosion throughout the region.

At the recent sea gypsy *Loy Reua* ceremony at Laem Tukkae last weekend, newly-elected Rassada Mayor Phudit Ruksarag explained to the *Gazette* that Rassada Municipality was working with the PSU Haad Yai Campus and an informal organization dedicated to combating coastal erosion throughout Southern Thailand.

"I have already sent our plan for rebuilding the Laem Tukkae seawall to the PSU for them to study as it needs specialist input. This didn't happen with the previous seawall and it didn't last," he said.

Large waves brought on by the wet-season monsoon last year damaged homes at the small sea gypsy community, forcing villagers to seek refuge with family members or even sleep outdoors.

At least eight houses suffered damage, altogether home to 53 people.

This year, Mayor Phudit expects that employing outside assistance will push the project cost to about 30 million baht, as opposed to 17mn baht for the old seawall, which fell apart within months.

"We need to study factors such as wave action and the specific environment as it needs a unique design. It's not only about building the wall, after deciding on a plan we need to hold a public hearing to ensure villagers agree with it," Mayor Phudit said.

Sawad Samukpong, one of the



Breached sea defences at Laem Tukkae village.



Mayor Phudit Ruksarag backs the anti-erosion plan.

members of the informal group formed to combat coastal erosion, explained to the *Gazette* that a previous plan to stave off coastal erosion throughout the South was drawn up, but never implemented.

Now his team intends to put a pilot plan into practice in a few locations to see how it works to prevent further coastal erosion.

"Phuket suffers serious coastal erosion at Bang Tao Beach in Kamala, at Rawai, at Nai Yang Beach and at the Laem Tukkae sea gypsy village on Koh Sireh," he said.

To facilitate input into the new plan, a large seminar was scheduled to be held at the Katina Hotel in Phuket Town on Thursday this



Experts fear that without adequate defences, the Rawai seawall will not be the only casualty of relentless pounding by the sea. Photos Atchaa Khamlo

week to discuss and decide on a general practical plan to combat coastal erosion along the Andaman coast, he added.

The seminar, organized by Department of Marine and Coastal Resources and PSU Phuket Campus, is the direct result of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra raising coastal erosion as a topic of concern at the mobile Cabinet meeting in Phuket in March.

At that Cabinet meeting, the Engineering Faculty at the PSU Haad Yai Campus was assigned to co-ordinate the drawing up of the six-province plan.

"Attending that seminar will be provincial and local government

representatives from the Andaman provinces and the relevant NGOs [non-governmental organizations]," Mr Sawad said.

"After the seminar in Phuket, we will hold smaller, area-specific meetings in the Andaman provinces of Ranong, Phang Nga, Krabi, Trang, Satun and Phuket," said Mr Sawad.

"We will also study all the damage points because those places have different sets of problems. Once that is done we can then put the pilot plan into action in specific locations, and after that request the budget to carry out the full plan," he added.

— Atchaa Khamlo



More than 30 donors gave blood at the Big C supercenter this week, but the Red Cross needs more.

## Red Cross on the prowl for more blood

THE Phuket Regional Blood Center (RBC) has stepped up its mobile blood collection campaign as blood stocks are dangerously low following the annual Songkran Festival last month, which resulted in a surge in road accidents in the region.

The Phuket RBC, run by the Thai Red Cross Society, is responsible for collection of blood stocks in Phang Nga, Krabi, Trang, Satun and Ranong as well as Phuket.

Kanda Thawonnala, a Thai Red Cross official who works at the center in Saphan Hin, said the RBC will conduct 29 mobile collection campaigns this month to restore stocks to acceptable levels.

Especially needed are donations of A+ and B+ blood types.

The RBC also values donations of rhesus-negative blood types, which are far less common among Thais than Caucasians. However, stocks of negative blood are currently adequate, Ms Kanda said.

Staff at the mobile collection held at Big C Supercenter told the *Gazette* that they received a good response, with more than 30 donors rolling up their sleeves to help others in need.

For details about the mobile blood clinics, contact the Phuket Regional Blood Center. T: 076-251178. E: phuketrbcc@yahoo.com

## Top Phuket cop says snake show arson possibly business related

PHUKET Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul on May 1 inspected the scene of the arson attack at the Phuket Healthy Nutrient and Snake Show on Soi Ta-iad in Chalong.

"Our investigation has led us to rule out personal conflict as it seems the security guard, Anuchit Chaithongngarm, did not have any ongoing conflicts with others. The only motive left is a business conflict," said Maj Gen Chonasit.

"Many businesses like this are opening. This has led to competition," he added.

"We checked the CCTV and saw four suspects who arrived at the shop by car. We are checking other security cameras to see how they got away. We will have the suspects arrested as soon as possible," Gen Chonasit said.



The fire and the damage. Photo Atchaa Khamlo

Security guard Mr Anuchit remains comatose in hospital after being knocked unconscious by his attackers. Although he regained his senses long enough to escape and raise the alarm, he later lapsed into a coma.

"He is still in a coma at the ICU at Vachira Phuket Hospital," said Kongpol Phanuek, of Phuket Healthy Nutrient.

"He is in a stable condition, but is not showing any signs of improvement," he added.

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## QUEER news

### Teenage boy rues injected 'bid for big'

A 16-YEAR-OLD boy is regretting following the latest craze in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province after injecting olive oil into his penis in a bid to make it larger.

The boy's member is rotten and has stopped working as it should, with a high risk the organ may have to be amputated.

Mr Boy (not his real name) said he bought a small bottle of olive oil and used a syringe to inject it into the skin of his penis because he wished it were bigger.

But it soon became infected, started to sting and became swollen, with a large wound in the side.

Mr Boy said that urinating became very painful and his penis could no longer become erect, forcing him to go to a hospital to seek treatment.

The teenager said that the practice had become popular with boys in his area, though most of them did not know about the potential side effects.

A doctor at the hospital where Mr Boy is being treated said his condition was now reaching a critical stage.

The doctor said it was no longer possible to return Mr Boy's penis to its normal state as many of the skin cells had been destroyed.

— *Sanoook.com*

## Speeding express mail truck flips over, no injuries

THE driver of an express mail service truck will be charged with negligent driving and property damage after his delivery truck crossed over a median strip and overturned on Phuket's main road from Phuket Town to the airport on Tuesday afternoon.

Thalang Police were notified of the accident on Thepkasattri Road at 3:30pm.

Arriving at the scene with Phuket Kusoldharm Foundation workers they found a six-wheeled Hino truck overturned in the middle of the road, its front wheels partially ripped from the chassis.

Southbound traffic was backed up more than two kilometers by the resulting impasse. Satitpong Phanthu, the 39-year-old driver, was standing uninjured by the truck.

"We had just picked up mail and parcels from the post offices... I was moving at high speed when I had to swerve to avoid a motorbike that cut me off," said Mr Satitpong.

The dynamics were reminiscent of the horror smash in Phang Nga in February that left four Swedish youths and their Thai driver dead.

— *Thawit Bilabdullar*



Mr Satitpong swerved to avoid a motorbike.

## 600 cyclists arrive with mangrove seedlings for Krabi's anniversary

**Kritsada Mueanhawong**

A CYCLING enthusiast impressed crowds at the 140th anniversary of Krabi Town over the weekend, managing to pedal all the way from Greater Bangkok with his disabled father riding along in a three-wheeler and carrying mangrove seedlings.

Kittipong Kongkaew, who runs a coffee shop in Tibet, was among members of the Thai Cycling For Health Association that set off from Samut Prakan on May 1 to attend the Krabi Town municipality's 140th anniversary celebrations on May 6.

The event marked King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) granting Krabi the status of a town, under the administration of Nakhon Sri Thammarat, in 1872.

About 600 cyclists set off from Samut Prakan with 980 *lamphu* mangrove tree seedlings to be



The group of cyclists brought 980 'lamphu' mangrove tree seedlings.

planted in Krabi as part of the celebrations.

But Mr Kittipong had more than

a seedling to transport over the 800-kilometer distance. Riding behind him in a tricycle was his

elderly dad, beaming with pleasure at the views after being housebound for years.

Despite the extra weight, Mr Kittipong arrived with the other yellow-shirted riders after five days on the road.

"I live in Tibet, but I make it home from time to time," said the native of Nonthaburi province, just north of Bangkok.

"My dad is ill and doesn't get to go anywhere, so when my friends invited me to cycle to Krabi, I decided to take him along. The idea was to make him happy as well as take part in the mangrove planting event. It worked. He is really having a good time," he said.

Krabi Governor Prasit Osathanon welcomed the cyclists at a ceremony in the morning, after which the group rode off to a nearby mangrove forest to plant the seedlings.

## Dome's parents send thanks to Phuket

THE parents of Jaruwat "Dome" Cheawaram, who last Sunday won the national singing contest *The Star 8*, on May 5 publicly thanked the people of Phuket and all Dome's fans around the country for their support.

Dome's parents, Tawatchai and Raewadee Cheawaram, also announced that Dome will sing at the opening ceremony of the Thailand National Youth Games in Phuket on May 26.

Joining Mr and Mrs Cheawaram at the press conference, held at the offices of the Sator 24 Group in Phuket Town on May 4, were Phuket MP Raywat Areerob and Sator 24 Group leader and Khon Rak Phuket Club ("People who Love Phuket Club") representative Boonsuppa Tantai.

The Sator 24 Group is an alumni club for former students of Phuket Wittayalai School, where Dome graduated two years ago.

The group set up the fund that paid for the billboard opposite Central Festival Phuket that features the photo of Dome and carried a message of support for him.

Dome is now a second-year law student at Thammasat University, "On behalf of the Cheawaram family, I would like to thank the



Dome's family and supporters give a thumbs-up for Phuket's support.

people of Phuket and all the people across the country who have shown their support for Dome," said Mrs Raewadee.

Mrs Raewadee commended her son's commitment to supporting his family while finishing high school and supporting the family through his singing.

"We have been through a lot of difficult times together, especially when Dome's father was still in hospital. He was in Matthayom 6 [grade 12] of Phuket Wittayalai School at that time," Mrs Raewadee said.

"Dome had to support the family by singing in many restaurants in Phuket. Each night after he finished singing, he went to stay with his father in hospital. Then he went to school every morning.

"During the competition, we always supported him, telling him to fight on and not to give up," said Mrs Raewadee.

Looking to Dome's future, Mrs Raewadee said she understood if Dome wanted to pursue a career in singing, but that she would prefer he complete his law degree first.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

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# Factory blasts reignite conflict

## AROUND THE nation

AN EXPLOSION at the Map Ta Phut industrial estate in Rayong has killed 12 and refueled a long-running conflict between industrialists and local residents over the safety of the facilities located at the site.

Most of those killed were employees at the chemical factory run by Bangkok Synthetics Co (BST), where the blast took place on the afternoon of May 5.

In response to the explosion, which also injured more than 100 people, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra set up a committee to probe whether the accident had resulted in chemical contamination of the surrounding area.

The day after the blast, the premier visited the scene as well as injured workers in Rayong Hospital.

Rayong Governor Seni Jittakasem said the authorities

were able to prevent severe chemical leakage, but added that residents' eyes and skin were still at risk [from residual vapor].

A local community action group, the Eastern People's Network, said it planned to file lawsuits against BST over the accident.

The network is also calling for the operating licence of Aditya Birla Chemicals to be withdrawn following a chemical leak at its Map Ta Phut factory on Sunday.

Suthi Atchaisai, leader of the Eastern People's Network, said a meeting with Map Ta Phut villagers would be held to sound out their opinions about the filing of lawsuits.

"The company's directors and executives must be held fully responsible for this," he said, adding that the incident was the result of non-compliance with safety measures, which had rocked investor confidence and caused pain and suffering among the families of the dead.

The Map Ta Phut estate has long been a source of controversy.

Over the last decade, the estate has been the subject of numerous protests by local residents' groups



The Eastern People's Network is considering taking legal action against Map Ta Phut. Photo: The Nation

who claimed that its petrochemical factories had caused thousands of local residents to develop cancer.

The Eastern People's Network was among several groups that filed a lawsuit against the estate

with the Administrative Court, which in 2009 ruled to suspend 76 projects for one year pending review.

The move forced the Abhisit Vejjajiva-led government to re-

spond to the groups' demands, which included the establishment of an Independent Health and Environmental Committee as well as the introduction of further safety measures.

# Lese majeste convict 'Uncle SMS' dies, 61

AN ELDERLY man serving one of the harshest sentences ever imposed for insulting the monarchy has died.

Amphon "Ah Kong" Tangnoppaku, whose nickname means "grandfather" in Chinese, was handed down a 20-year sentence in November last year on charges of committing *lese majeste*.

The 61-year-old, who was known to be battling mouth cancer, died at 9am on May 8 after being sent to the prison hospital from Bangkok Remand Prison.

Corrections Department chief Suchart Wongananchai said Mr Amphon had been suffering from stomach pain since May 4.

Mr Suchart added that he was waiting for the results of an autopsy

to confirm the cause of death.

Mr Amphon's lawyer, Anon Ampa of Rassadornprasong Law Office, said on his Facebook page that it was believed Mr Amphon had died from cancer.

He was arrested on August 3, 2010 and convicted on November 23 last year.

Mr Anon recently withdrew his client's appeal, as the elderly man wished to ask for a royal pardon.

Mr Amphon's conviction was based on allegations that he sent four text messages disparaging HM Queen Sirikit to a cellphone belonging to an assistant of former premier Abhisit Vejjajiva. The crime led the media to nickname him "Uncle SMS".

Several activists have claimed



Amphon "Ah Kong" Tangnoppaku died in prison. Photo The Nation

that there was little evidence to prove Mr Amphon had sent the messages and that he did not even know how to send a text message.

# Workers plunge to death

THREE workers fell to their deaths from Thailand's tallest building on May 7 after a cable supporting the platform they were standing on snapped.

Two other men, who were also on the platform, survived after clinging to it until they were rescued from the 68th floor of the 89-story Baiyoke Tower II building.

The men were installing an advertising billboard when the tragedy occurred. The platform reportedly tilted sharply, causing

them to fall.

The men's bodies were found on an outdoor mini-golf driving range on the 18th floor, next to a swimming pool on the 20th floor and on a 36th floor balcony.

Police spokesman Thamarak Reungdit told AFP that the two survivors suffered only minor injuries and were being treated in hospital.

"A forensic team will investigate how it happened and whether or not the platform was

overloaded," he said.

Maj Gen Anuchai Lekbamrung, a deputy chief of the Bangkok Metropolitan Police, later told MCOT that the platform had broken because it was carrying five people, over its rated capacity.

Standing at 304 meters in height, The Baiyoke Tower II is a distinctive feature of the Bangkok skyline.

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# Needed: Common sense, not seawalls

FUNDING for projects to “combat” erosion along the Andaman coast through construction of seawalls, jetties and similar structures would be better spent on environmentally-sound projects like sand-dune stabilization, mangrove reforestation and better enforcement of laws that regulate shoreline construction.

Trying to conquer the forces of time and tide is the quintessential exercise in futility. This is especially true along Phuket’s western coastline, with its strong southwest monsoon season currents and pounding wave action.

A child building a sandcastle on a beach quickly learns a lesson that seems to elude many government officials. Even a sea turtle, with its tiny brain, knows it needs to get well above the high-tide mark to safely lay its eggs.

Yet here in Phuket, we continue to see one money-wasting project after another built too close to shore. Crumbling seawalls create an eyesore and are a public danger along many popular tourist beaches. The politicians who authorize spending for these projects are apparently less concerned with the long-term prospects of containing the sea than the immediate short-term benefits to individuals.

A 17-million-baht seawall built to protect the sea gypsy community at Laem Tukkae on Koh Sireh in Rassada didn’t last a single monsoon season, yet officials there are already planning a replacement structure that will cost about twice as much (see page 7). Let’s hope the sea gypsies pass on some of their knowledge about the sea to the academics and politicians during the public-hearing process.

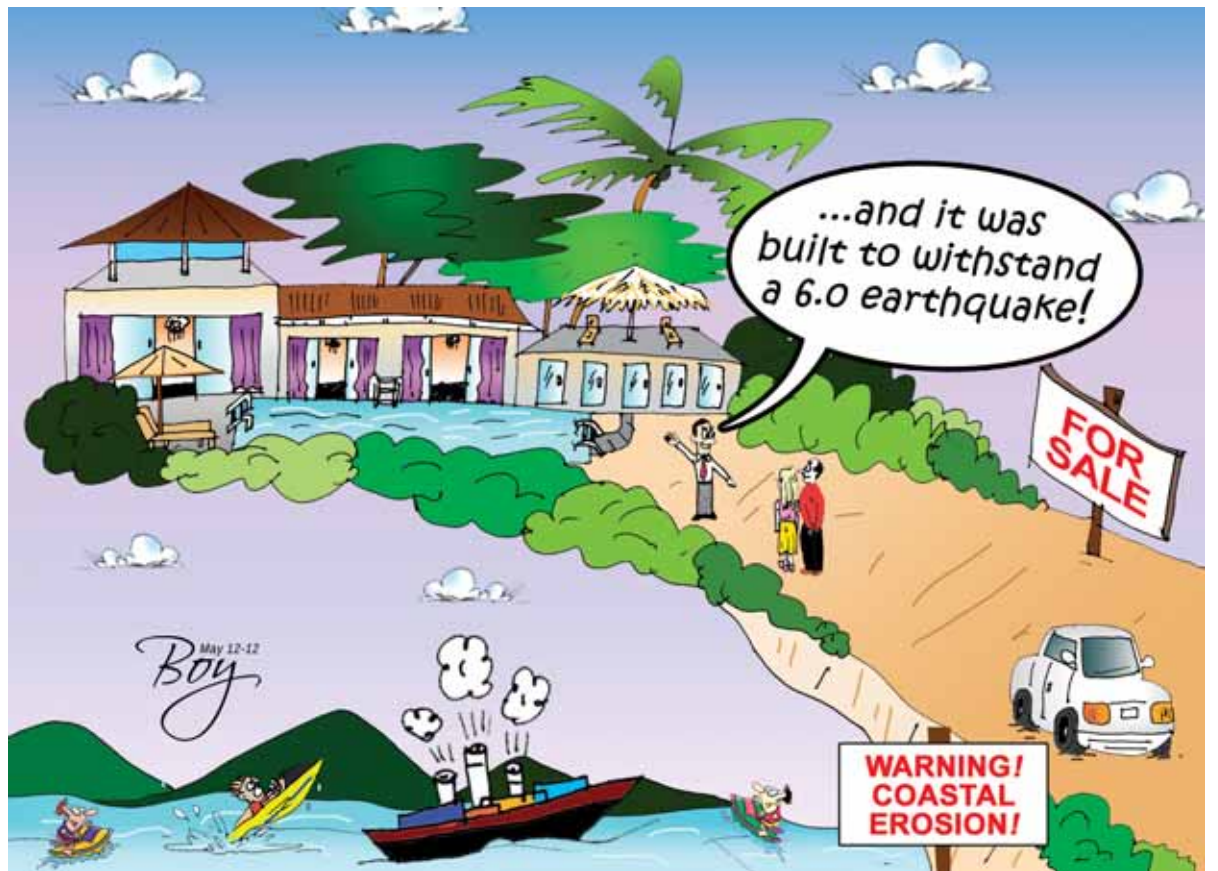
Perhaps the best example of our inability to accept the power of sea currents is the ill-fated Coral Reef Squadron, a collection of decommissioned aircraft sunk in Bang Tao Bay a few years ago to serve as a recreational dive site.

Despite being chained to huge concrete blocks, the sunken aircraft were quickly swept away during their first monsoon season. Bits of their remains have reportedly been spotted as far north as Ranong.

Our elected leaders persist in a fallacious, tin-mining-era mentality insofar as the sea is concerned. A well-known local politician once even seriously suggested a few years back that the runway at Phuket International Airport be extended out into the sea off Mai Khao Beach, so that larger aircraft could land there. Good grief.

Whether one accepts or rejects the idea that mankind’s activities are responsible for the current rise in sea levels, the fact that they are rising is not in dispute. We need to accept this reality and show the sea the due respect that our ancestors did.

We should enjoy the coastline for what it is, an ever-changing interface between land and sea – not a battleground in a Man versus Nature war.



## Sunset on Soi Sunrise

### Letters to the Editor

It’s become a dismal sight walking from Chalong Circle to the pier. Soi Sunrise, or Soi Hippocrocidallapig as many refer to it, has changed forever.

In the first half of the road almost all the bars have closed their doors or been pulled down.

There’s hearsay of rents going up by almost three times to persuade tenants to move on.

So what will it become?

I’ve heard unsubstantiated chatter that it’s all going to end up selling diver-oriented services and trivia with an intentional absence of bars.

Lower down the road, which apparently isn’t owned by a dive company, the rumor is more shop houses are being built.

Whatever happens, it’ll be a shame if it just ends up as boring and sterile-looking as the new buildings going up in Kata-Karon and elsewhere.

RIP Soi Hippocrocidalla.

BlueSkies  
Chalong

### Ask an expert, cause we haven’t a clue

As you know a strong earthquake occurred in Srisoonthorn on April 16 and was followed by more than 100 after-shocks.

I live in Srisoonthorn and my neighbors and I are still feeling and hearing about two to three after-shocks every day.

We in Thalang are still afraid every time an after-shock happens; the last occurred just a few hours ago.

Unfortunately, no reporter, no newspaper and no “officials” are speaking about these events any more.

The worst part is that even the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) doesn’t report the after-shocks that we are feeling

anymore. Strange, because the TMD can report 1.0 Richter tremors in Chiang Mai!

I think it would be both interesting and useful for us in Thalang if the *Phuket Gazette* could reinterview a (TMD) geologist, or a professor of geology in Bangkok, to explain a little more about how ‘things’ seismically are going now? And tell us what will probably happen in the future?

Lastly, how is the work coming on setting up the monitors stations in Thalang?

Dan  
Thalang

### Mt Mayhem: History to repeat itself?

Re: *Gazette online, PHUKET ALERT: Monsoon comes, Patong Hill road goes*, May 5

No problem. This is Phuket.

We can always enter Patong via Karon as we did many years ago.

If I remember correctly, we had to cross a ravine on our motorbikes over 20 inch-wide wooden boards.

We did it 20 years ago, so why not now?

Wolf  
Gazette forum

### Destruction derby

Re: *Gazette online, Speed bumps: more harm than good*, May 6

Speed bumps are only useful in the right places.

I would love to have a few on

our *soi*, where big water trucks drive as if it’s an F1 racing track. The houses shake with every speeding truck, and in this case the trucks are causing more damage than they are receiving.

But the speed bumps on the north of Thepkasattri Road really leave me puzzled. They seem much more dangerous than the road itself.

Tinkerbell  
Gazette forum

### Police, camera... inaction

Re: *Gazette online, Speed radar project most helpful: Phuket poll*, May 3

I know people mean well, but look at the real statistics for speed cameras in use in the UK and other countries and you realize they actually have little affect on road safety.

Tailgating, not concentrating, aggressive driving, drunk driving and so on cannot be policed in this way. And all you have to do is remove your license plate (like so many cars in Phuket already do) to avoid prosecution.

Education and better driving are the solutions for safety.

Roadsafety  
Gazette forum

### Tunnel vision

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket underpass project unveiled*, May 7

Motorcycles will not be permitted to use the underpass?

I wonder who’s going to enforce that, because the police don’t even stop riders heading in the wrong direction against the flow of traffic along Thepkasattri Road.

Agogohome  
Gazette forum

## Phuket Gazette

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# Creating a family to call your own

THE problem the LGBT community has in Phuket is the same problem that LGBT have all over Thailand – discrimination by the public and the government, and alienation from their families.

In fact, things are better for people in the LGBT community in Phuket, Pattaya, Bangkok and Chiang Mai than they are elsewhere, because there is a higher level of tolerance towards gays.

In tourist centers, people can become anonymous. It's easier for members of the LGBT community to work in the tourism industry and live in a way that doesn't directly conflict with the more traditional Thai family values.

Of course there are exceptions, but many Thais who adhere to Thai core family values don't accept gays.

Many members of the gay community here have not come out to their families. So, when I put pictures of a nice party on Facebook, I have to block their faces, despite nothing really happening – it's just because they are there.

Some of their parents find brides for them, so they go away and have a little grandson, only after they have done what is expected of them do they return to our community. This is because in Thailand [with no social security safety net] this is the only way they can guarantee they will be taken care of when they get old. They take care of their families now, but [if they don't have a family of their own] who will take



**Rob Velmeer** is the owner of the Backstage Purple Meeting Point inside the Paradise Complex, the main gay entertainment venue district in Patong. Rob is legally married to a Thai man in his native country, the Netherlands, and has been living in Phuket for four years. Here he speaks about the struggles of members of the LGBT community in Thailand, and specifically in Phuket.

care of them when they get older?

Actually, lots of them don't expect to get old. I've have attended more funeral services in the four years I've been here than I have anywhere else during my life.

The lack of family support for members of the LGBT community is one of the reasons that this year we themed our gay pride event "Join Our Family". We need the support of each other just as much as we need to be recognized as members of society in general. We didn't volunteer to be gay, we were born this way.

Even local members of our community struggle to accept themselves. Many of them believe that they were reincarnated gay as a punishment for a past life, which is one reason Thai society also struggles to accept them.

They miss the point. This is a learning experience. If they don't except the situation, they can't learn



Members of the Gay Pride event in Patong this year. Photo: Marc Mulloy

from it. They should be happy.

However, there will be a tipping point. Just look at how the gay community was treated in Holland 30 or 40 years ago. And look at how they are recognized today.

# A good alternative to cat strangling

VERY often I find myself cringing at the choice of music being played at many of the bars around Phuket. It's usually plain awful Euro pop or "Buddha Bar" music.

The reasons for playing the songs are many, but the result are the same, "check bin krap". Of course there are places that have some great music, sometimes live music as well.

Many expats may know of Ali, who has spent a number of years learning American songs, to the point where even he confesses he can't play any Thai songs. He appears at various locations and is well worth listening to. And there are other cover-artists, ranging from excellent to "please-stop strangling-the-cat". For me personally The Eagles, for one, have been permanently ruined.

So what's the alternative? Well, Thai music is one alternative that I'm getting into more and more. Don't groan just yet. Not all of it is: poor village boy who falls in love with childhood sweetheart, girl goes off to the big city and marries rich townie, buffalo dies and so on.

Listening to any Thai music on a CD is hard work, so don't bother until you've seen the band.

What you need to do is go to one of the many venues in Phuket that locals attend and just listen to the bands playing. Allow yourself to get sucked into the atmosphere. The thing about good music is that it crosses the language barrier. You find yourself desperate to sing along and end up "la-la-la-ing" an awful lot.

Most long-term ex-pats will have heard of the Thai reggae



No matter where you're from, bands like Kangkeng are likely to impress you. Photo: Mark Dee

## Island View

By Mark Dee

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

band Job2do, especially their song "Doo Ter Tam", also known as the "do-do-do" song to most farang. But there are so many top Thai bands visiting Phuket that don't get a mention in the local English language press.

Watch out for local fairs going on and ask what the flyers are announcing. Recently, Phuket has seen many really good performers on stage.

If you don't know where to start, keep on the look out for Da Endorphine, Tanwa, Kangkeng, Baowee and Body Slam. You could end up having a good evening.

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

# Trash: Construction criticism

Three years ago Thai construction workers, with no permit or authority that we know of, moved onto an empty lot in the area of Soi Patak 12 [off Patak Road East, Karon]. Since then, they have dumped tons of their garbage in front of where they are living.

We've tried to talk sensibly with them about it and have also tried to get rid of the garbage ourselves, but to no avail.

They continue to dump tons of garbage in the empty lot. Obviously, it doesn't disturb them at all.

Please help!

Send us a garbage truck to pick up all the rubbish in this area. Thank you in advance.

Johannes Leopold  
Karon Beach

**Karon municipality, Public health department officer Rachapon Sittiwet replies:**

We do not pick up trash from



Cleaning up trash from construction sites is not the responsibility of the local municipality. Photo: Gazette file

construction sites.

We only pick up trash and waste from households according to our policy. Construction companies are responsible for their own waste management and should control their waste holding areas.

In this case I would suggest that you record the construction company's dump truck details

including its registration plate number and, if possible, the company or site name.

Bring this information to Karon Municipality, Public Health Department in person and we will investigate if the area they are dumping the trash is appropriate or not.

Our office is open from Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm.

## No pressure: resident pushes for Provincial Waterworks's answer

I exercise at Bang Wad Reservoir and there is plenty of water in the basin there. For the past week, I have noticed a complete lack of water pressure from my tap from 8am to 6pm daily. What is the reason for that?

Staf Sulaiman  
Phuket Golden Ville 3, Kathu

**Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority Chief Pisak Chonlayut replies:**

As you have noticed, we currently have enough water in the Bang Wad Reservoir to meet the demands of the public.

You are the first person to have reported a pressure drop in your area, so we thank you very much for informing us and promise to check out the problem and make whatever repairs are necessary. Please feel free to call me at 087-0120295 whenever you experience water supply problems.

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)



# Bulk boat transport services lift off

By Steven Layne

WITH Monsoon May's merciless wind and weather shifts comes the official end of another bustling winter cruising season in Phuket – the center of Southeast Asia's booming yachting scene.

Like clockwork, a number of luxury yachts are vacating local berths and off to the calm, conventional summer cruising grounds of the Mediterranean Sea.

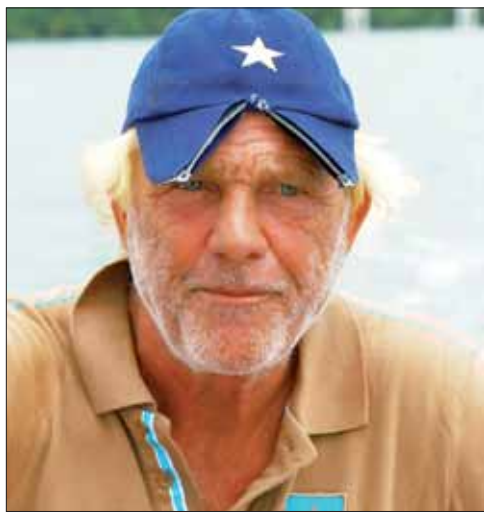
"They'll be back," exclaimed Chris Jongerius, owner of Andaman Sea Club Co Ltd, a local chartering outfit that was recently appointed Thailand agent and service partner of Sevenstar Yacht Transport.

Speaking exclusively to the *Gazette* aboard a dingy floating afoot a massive freighter anchored offshore from Ao Po Marina in Pa Khlok, Chris elaborates: "After the summer in Europe, they [the yachts and crew] will complete the round-the-world cycle, heading either to the Caribbean or ultimately back to South Asia by September."

Several feet from the dinghy, a 10-ton, 48-foot Catamaran was being lifted out of the water – to be fastened onto the deck of the industrial freighter.

"We'll load four yachts here, and the freighter will continue onto Colombo, Sri Lanka to load three more yachts before continuing on to Turkey," Chris explained, noting that the largest of the yachts to be transported weighs about 260 tons.

Chris, a seasoned Dutch seafarer who was a fisherman in Spain before relocating to Phuket seven years ago, went on



**AT THE HELM:** Chris Jongerius was recently appointed by Sevenstar as Thailand agent.

to talk about the advantages of shipping over traditional methods.

"There are many factors in considering whether it is even practical to sail or motor a yacht on an extended voyage.

"The ongoing threat of piracy is one major concern of many clients, but even if there were no threat, we'd still retain at least half of our clients.

"A lot of yachts aren't seaworthy, and newly built yachts will always be shipped to international clients.

"It's a lot like buying a new car. You wouldn't expect someone to drive it thousands of kilometers for delivery, because then it would be second hand.

"On top of safety and security, the costs and time required for long voyages can be



**A ten-ton, 48-foot Catamaran is lifted onto a freighter bound for Europe.** Photos: Marc Mulloy

quite high once you take into account fuel, crew, maintenance and other needed repairs that might arise," Chris explained.

Indeed, an increasing number of boat owners are opting to skip out on such hassles, and Phuket is positioned well to cash in on an ensuing boom in Asia.

"We provide full insurance coverage for all our boats through Pantaenius, and a level of service that is unmatched – very important in this business.

"Many of our clients also live aboard their vessel. So we're not only transporting their yacht but their home as well.

"Such clients need more reassurance than your typical clients. They need to know that their prized possession will be taken care of.

"It's not just about transporting boats. This sector has a large multiplier effect on the local economy. . .

"We outsource work to local workforce whenever possible," Chris added.

For more information, see the following websites: [andamanseclub.com](http://andamanseclub.com) and [sevenstar-yacht-transport.com](http://sevenstar-yacht-transport.com), or email: [sevenstarphuket@gmail.com](mailto:sevenstarphuket@gmail.com)

# Used car dealer fastens trade-in market

By Orawin Narabal

TOYOTA SURE used car dealership held celebrations for the official grand opening of its Phuket showroom on Wednesday, marking a steady transition following a soft opening in February.

Organized at the Toyota Sure used car showroom, located next to Toyota Pearl's main new car showroom on Chalermparkiat R 9 Road (Bypass Road), the ceremonies were presided over by Phuket Deputy Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada.

Headlining the executive guest

list were Wichit, Wiboonchai and Chaipat Na-Ranong – Chairman, Managing Director and Deputy Managing Director of Toyota Pearl Co Ltd, respectively.

Representing the mother company, Toyota Motor Thailand Co Ltd, were Hiroaki Awamura Executive Managing Coordinator and Mr Pakorn Wongwittayapirom Executive Advisor.

Mr Wiboonchai spoke on the occasion: "We at Toyota Pearl see the importance of the used car business.

"So, we launched Toyota Sure to strengthen our service efficiency and offering to customers all over the island of Phuket.

"Toyota Sure will focus on selling used cars in good condition. All the cars will be very carefully verified before release to customers' hands and we will also provide a one year guarantee or 20,000 km – whichever comes first – 24-hour service and two free checkups at our service points.

"Moreover, we offer the service of evaluating the used car price with the option to trade-in for another used car which is in better condition.



**From left, Wiboonchai Na-Ranong, Hiroaki Awamura, Chamroen Tipayapongtada, Pakorn Wongwittayapirom and Wichit Na-Ranong**



**SERVICE MINDED:** Chaipat Na-Ranong (2nd from right) poses with staff at the Toyota Sure's grand opening.

"Our Price evaluating system is transparent, fair and we offer competitively high prices to customers.

"Near the new showroom, we have also established the Sure Car Spa, providing car cleaning and maintenance services, he said.

"We plan to expand with more Toyota Sure showrooms across country. Presently we have a total of 75 showrooms, and are planning for 10 new showrooms this year," he revealed.

Asked about this year's sales

targets, Mr Chaipat told the *Phuket Gazette*: "This year we aim to sell 400 used vehicles. Last month, we sold 25 used cars.

Going on to talk about consumer trends, he revealed: "The most popular colors among customers here so far are white, black and gray, especially white, which has been the most trendy choice in Thailand for the past 4 to 5 years.

"So, we stock many white models for our customers. Another trend we've observed is people seem to prefer Eco [small sized] cars more now, because they are easier to take care of, easier to park, and of course because they save on fuel consumption and

maintenance service fees. For this reason, we also offer a number of used Eco cars in good condition.

Speaking on the firm's overall marketing strategy," Chaipat said, "We want to integrate our used car and new car businesses. If, for example, customers want to trade their old car for [credit towards] a new car, they can also visit us. We will offer them a high and reasonable price."

Also, see photos on Page 26

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# Import car hub in the works

GM of a major luxury automobile importer reveals local business plans and ambitions

By Steven Layne

SINCE officially opening their Phuket showroom in February, TSL Auto Corporation reports steady, promising growth, with its luxury vehicle import market share expanding rapidly.

Speaking exclusively with the *Phuket Gazette*, branch GM Anek Tipparak talked about the Bangkok-headquartered firm's business and expansion plans for the local market and beyond.

"We chose Phuket for our fourth branch, the first outside of Bangkok, because there is high potential for grey-market automobile imports here," he said.

With its first three branches maintaining a stronghold on the Bangkok market, the company has similar ambitions for the South.

"In our first year in Phuket, we aim to sell 240 to 250 cars, or about 20 vehicles per month," he revealed.

As for TSL's five year plan, Anek said that the premiere auto importer aims to make its Phuket branch a hub for the entire Southern region.

"We've sold about 25 cars since the official grand opening of the Phuket show room.

"Even though this is below our projected monthly target, this is acceptable as we realize that we are new players in the market. Starting up is always slower.

"The important thing is that sales has grown each month and we expect this trend to continue," he said.

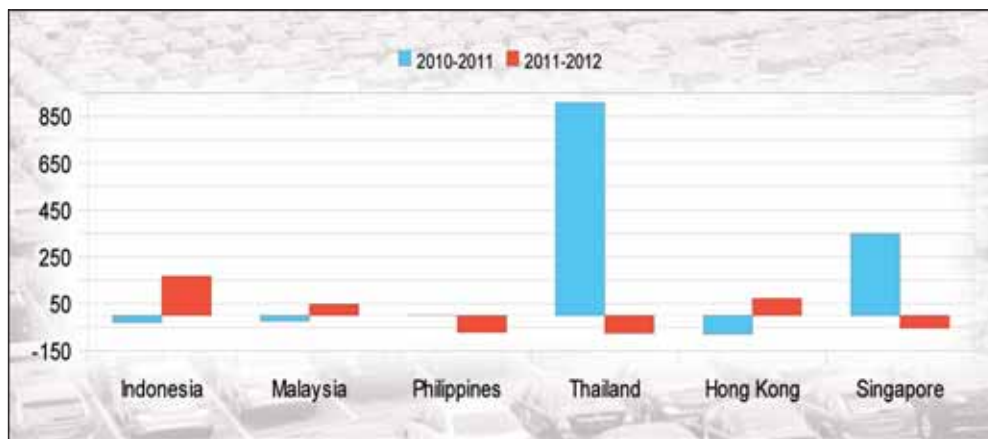
Going on to talk about target groups, Anek revealed that his company's current client base is comprised of about 70% Thais and 30% foreigners.

"We have observed that Koreans and Russians are two key groups here, but initially our marketing will not focus on any particular nationality group, but rather the general high income bracket with high spending potential," he said.

As for his view on competition, Anek



DRIVING THE MARKET: TSL Auto Corporation Phuket branch GM Anek Tipparak said his firm aims for the island to become an import hub for the entire Southern region.



Annual growth of passenger vehicle import market among 5 ASEAN nations and Hong Kong.

went on to talk about his firm's competitive advantage and key selling point.

"I'd say 90% of luxury automobile importers in Thailand don't offer the full package in terms of fully integrated products and service.

"Many companies can import and sell you the cars, but lack the expertise and resources to service vehicles at a satisfactory or high standard.

"Luxury automobiles often have specific copyrights on their technology, components and parts, which require specialized knowledge and tools.

"For example, the wheels of a Mercedes Benz have specialized lug nuts which call for special wrench made by Mercedes.

"Without the proper tools and stock, it's difficult to work on an automobile

properly, which results in delays in service," he explained.

Between the company's supply lines and stockrooms in Phuket and Bangkok, TSL is equipped to source authentic parts and service the most popular luxury brands. It also has channels to source tools and parts for rare models as well.

Another example Anek highlighted was paint.

"Suppose a silver Benz SLK is involved in an accident and needs touch-up work.

"Authentic paint for luxury cars is highly specialized and the producers have specific codes to identify each color.

"Most body shops don't carry the correct paint, but may try to replicate the silver color by mixing different generic paints.

"The end result won't be the same and you will notice the difference.

Going on to address key marketing trends, Anek said, "This business is concerned mostly with European and Japanese cars.

"Right now, our supply ratio of European to Japanese cars is about 60 to 40%.

"With last year's natural disasters in both Japan and Thailand affecting supply chains, the ratio of Japanese has declined this year.

"However, this can change. A key aspect of a good business strategy is to be flexible and always monitor and be aware of trends.

"Our marketing and sales strategy depends a lot on the availability of new products. When there are new models and technology on the market, sales will be self driven.

"But in years when there is not as many new products, like this year for instance, our strategy shifts to a promotional approach.

Asked about current promotions Anek said that his firm is offering free service membership until the end of May.

"Usually we won't accept members who bought from other dealers, but for this limited time we will," he said.

## Thai biomass boom

SUGAR giant Mitr Phol's alternative fuel division is the fastest growing sector of its power business, says Suwat Kamolpanus who heads the firm's three bio-energy units.

Biomass now accounts for 675 megawatts, or 80 %, of renewable sources in Thailand. This amount is set to quadruple by the next decade.

Currently, 84 plants produce biomass fuel. The plants are almost evenly split between small power producers (SPP) that generate more than 10MW and very small power producers (VSPP) that produce less than 10MW.

Total production should rise to 2,828MW from 374 plants in coming years, Mr Suwat projected.

This sharp growth is possible because of strong support from the Ministry of Energy, he says. "Biomass has a positive impact on the environment. It generates cleaner air, solid waste is recycled and green house emissions are cut," Suwat adds.

Mitr Phol's Dan Chang biomass plant in Suphan Buri province showcases its success. Dan Chang produces 65 MW while another Mitr Phol plant, Phu Khieo Bio-Energy, generates 75 MW.

The power business is projected to generate 2 billion baht in revenue this year, with another 1.5bn baht next year when new units are operational. The business is profitable because the plants are built near the source and it owns the feedstock.

It also has the economy of scale and strong financial support. Mitr Phol is also investing about 3.7bn baht in new renewable projects including a solar farm.

The Ministry of Energy is speeding up its program to replace imported fuel with local energy sources. Dr Twarath Sutabutr, Deputy Director General for Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency, says the country should replace about 25% of its fossil fuel in 10 years.

— The Nation

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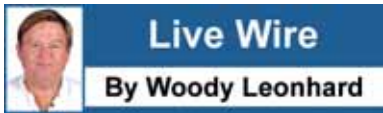
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# Lock down Facebook now



I HAVE friends who figure that Facebook is some sort of fad that is going away soon. They'd rather be drawn and quartered than put anything on Facebook. "You lose your privacy," they say. "I don't see any need for it."

I'm reminded of telephone company executive in Thailand who said that nobody will ever need more than 256K bits per second download speed, but that's another story.

Facebook has become an important part of the daily routine of hundreds of millions of people, and it claims just under one billion registered users. It's been credited with starting revolutions. It's certainly a good source of news – almost as good as Twitter – if you choose your sources carefully.

Facebook has fundamentally changed the way families interact, more so than any other invention since the telephone. It's altered the way people work.

Facebook has even eaten into email, for heaven's sake. Email usage has gone down in the past couple of years because Facebook's one-to-many nature reduces the need for email messages.

To me, that's incredible. I sent my first email message in 1977 and it boggles my mind that so many people prefer Facebook to email. But that's how it is. I'm tempted to stand up and bellow a chorus from Dylan's *The Times They Are A-Changin'*.

You can ignore Facebook, if you want, but some day your kids or grandkids or the young whipper-snappers in the nursing home are going to ask why dad or grandpa or Uncle Fuddydaddy doesn't get off his duff and get with the system.

It's the same argument we all had with Luddites about typewritten letters and faxes a couple of decades ago. Facebook and its ilk are the future, like it or not. Which brings us to the topic of privacy.

Once upon a time, Facebook

privacy settings were comical. Not so now.

Last November, the US Federal Trade Commission came to an agreement with Facebook, where control over privacy became a key feature, privacy warnings became mandatory, and Facebook agreed to regular privacy audits over the next 20 years.

Here are eight steps every Facebook user should take, to lock down their settings:

**Step 1.** Log on to Facebook, click the down-wedge on the far upper right (next to Home) and choose Privacy Settings.

**Step 2.** Read about how you can control the privacy of each item you post.

In my case, I can decide for each item that I put on Facebook, at the time I post it, whether the item (message, photo, whatever) should be visible to Everybody, to Family, to Friends, to Close Friends, only to people located in or near Patong, people who graduated from the same university I went to, and so on. There's a lot of flexibility, and it's easy to get to, every time you



FACE-SAFE: Mr Zuckerberg wants the world to know he's private.

make a post.

**Step 3.** Consider how much privacy you want on "default" posts – posts made where you either don't want to mess around with the fine detail I mentioned in Step 2, or the posts you make when you're using an app that doesn't support the fine detail. For maximum flexibility, click the Custom button and choose your recipients, block lists, your location, etc.

**Step 4.** In the heading How You Connect, click Edit Settings and consider whether you want to keep your personal information searchable. Do you want to let people search for you using your email address or phone number? Who can send you Friend requests, and who can send you messages. Click Done.

**Step 5.** In Timeline and Tagging,

your timeline before they are visible (also recommended).

Facebook has a scary feature that tags uploaded photos with your name if the Facebook face recognition program identifies you.

Unless you change the setting in this part of the Privacy options, that automatic tagging only takes place on photos uploaded by your Friends. You can turn that feature off here, if face recognition gives you the heebie jeebies.

**Step 6.** This is where you get to turn off all of those apps that are following your movements on Facebook. I found one – RockMelt Beta – that had my permission to use my email address and post on my behalf. Mea culpa. I must have clicked something in a weaker (or more harried) moment. So I turned it off: on the Apps you use list, click

think about who should be able to see your timeline, and who should be able to post new items to it.

You can also choose to review posts tagged with your name, before they go on your timeline (recommended), or review tags that have been put on

Edit Settings, then on the right, next to the app, just click X.

One really important improvement to this report: it shows you when the linked apps have accessed your account. So, for example, I can tell that TripAdvisor (I log on with my Facebook ID) last looked at my email address yesterday and looked at my "Likes" last week.

In the same location, you can also control specifically which information is shared with apps – your name, your Friends list, Birthday, Photos, Current City, and so on. Click Edit Settings under the heading How People Bring Your Info into Apps They use.

**Step 7.** Click Back to Privacy, and consider whether you would like to limit the people who can view your past posts, or if you want to block specific people and apps.

As you can see, Facebook's privacy settings are extensive, and more than a little hard to understand.

For basic privacy, judicious use of the privacy drop-down list when you post – limiting posts to Friends or Family, for example – gives you a lot of control.

Tie that in with dropping any apps you don't use and Facebook doesn't sap your privacy as badly as it once did. Go through all of the settings and you can fine-tune it to your heart's content.

LAST week, Live Wire exposed a phishing scam targeted at Siam Commercial Bank account holders. On Sunday, we received a mass email message from SCB warning about the scam. The single most important warning appears at the bottom of the message (in both Thai and English).

It says, "When using SCB Easy Net, please key www.scbeasy.com by yourself." That's precisely correct: if you ever get any email asking you to click on a link, ignore it and type the link into your browser's address bar by yourself, or go there using a Favorites or Bookmark that you've already established.

Earlier security warning messages from SCB advised that you use a firewall and antivirus programs, neither of which would have helped prevent

## SCB phishing update

or ameliorate this kind of phishing attack.

As recently as last month, SCB was sending out messages with hot click-through links. One for "SCB Exchange Booth" invited you to click on the message to apply for a credit card. In February, SCB sent out an

ad for a high yield investment also with a click-through link. I hope they've learned a lesson, and will stop putting links on their email messages.

For those of you with a tendency to cluck about TIT, note that my small town bank in the US still sends out messages with click-through links. I'm writing about them in my next book. Most financial institutions are either savvy enough – or they've been sued enough – to stop using hot links in customer emails. *Photo: Kenneth Lu*

*Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions every other Wednesday afternoon, from 1 to 3pm. If you have a Windows problem, drop by one of Seth's free afternoon sessions, or come to one of our free Sunday morning roundtables at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Details in the Events Calendar. Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.*

Live Wire is *Phuket Gazette* columnist Woody Leonhard's weekly snapshot of all things internet in Phuket. Shoot him mail at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or "like" his page at facebook.com/SandwichShoppes.



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# The noose tightens on UK pensions

LET us take a trip back in time to November of last year and an article I wrote regarding QROPS (Qualifying Recognized Overseas Pension Schemes).

It is worth quickly glancing over the benefits and negatives of this as new legislation that has come into force will no doubt affect many retirees and expats that hold a UK pension scheme and have no plans to return to those wind and rain battered shores.

A QROPS gives you the ability to transfer any UK pension plan offshore, the main benefits of this are:

- No UK income tax is payable on income received if you do not retire in the UK
- No death tax is applied upon death (currently 55% in the UK)
- The ability to pass your pension fund to your beneficiaries upon death
- Enhanced pension commencement lump sum (up to 30%).

And the negatives would be:

- Any final salary status is lost
- The pension fund is dependent on fund performance
- Fees on QROPS tend to be higher than on normal pension schemes.

No doubt many expats have benefited from this type of scheme and, if we take a look at the figures, they are becoming more popular:

- 121.5 million in 2007
- 471 million in 2010
- 500 million + expected in 2012.

This poses a problem for the UK treasury. In a time when austerity measures are unpopular at home, where do you look for extra income to help prop up the UK economy? The amount being transferred into QROPS schemes is not exactly pocket change, is it?

Recent legislation shows that moves are afoot to stem the flow of pension funds leaving the UK. If we take Guernsey as an example, in 2011 the Bailiwick received 32% of all pension transfers out of the UK.

As of April 2012, the UK government introduced new legislation removing 300 Guernsey QROPS schemes from its approved schemes list. This left many clients in

limbo and transfers were put on hold.

Fear not, however, all is not lost. There are still several locations that are on the HMRC approved list and, as one hole is plugged, a new one opens.

The main benefactor of this new legislation is Malta. In 2011, this Mediterranean Republic accounted for only 1 per cent of all QROPS transfers. This figure is due to make an incredible jump, however, as many of the Guernsey-based schemes now look at opening operations there.

Any Guernsey-based QROPS set up before April 2012 will still benefit from all the advantages of the QROPS schemes. Any new applications, however, would have to be transferred into a new

## Island Investor

By Anthony Lyman

‘There are still several locations that are on the HMRC approved list and, as one hole is plugged, a new one opens.’



**PARADISE FOR YOUR PENSION:** The Republic of Malta's double taxation agreements with many EU countries makes it the new hotspot for UK expat pensions.

location, mainly Malta.

So what will happen in the future?

A QROPS remains a very attractive proposition for many expats with UK-based pensions and, certainly, there are many benefits to this. As the HMRC tries to plug the gap of outgoing pension funds there is no doubt that many QROPS locations will come under scrutiny.


Why is Malta different to Guernsey? The answer is double taxation. Malta has around 60 double taxation agreements with European countries, which bodes

well for the future and provides us with a solid location for QROPS benefits, so all is not lost.

There should be no doubt, however, that the noose is definitely tightening around the QROPS industry and, if this is the right scheme for you, it should be taken advantage of sooner rather than later.

For any information or any questions based around QROPS, please contact Alyman@montpeliergroup.com.

Anthony Lyman is a Senior Financial Consultant for the Montpelier Group.

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# KIS opens Kathu campus



THE GATEWAY TO HIGHER EDUCATION: KIS's new campus opens fully in the 2013 academic year. Photos: Chris Hudon

By Chris Hudon

KAJONKIET International School Phuket (KIS) is expanding its reach and opening a new campus off the Phra Phuket Kaew Road in Kathu.

There will be a total of three buildings on-site, one already completed and two currently under construction until the 2013 academic year. Each building will be furnished with its own facilities, including football pitch, swimming pool and parking lots. Presently, KIS students are housed in the same building as the kindergarten EP (English Program)

at the new location. Head of Early Years Gemma Sloan said, "We are using this building until the international building is constructed on the hill behind the current school," she added, "Eventually there will be three distinct areas. When all buildings are complete parents will have direct access to each of the buildings."

The new Kathu campus is equipped with state of the art facilities such as music, drama and dance rooms, a classical-style theater and an impressive library of books imported from educational publishers in the UK.

Staff Member at KIS Lennard Kolthof said, "We have a whole school community approach towards reading. Parents can take books home and children read on a daily basis one on one with a teacher." All teachers at KIS are qualified to teach in their home country. "In fact, a few of us are also finishing our master's degrees in education. We are working full-time and already have our credentials," said Kolthof. To support activity-based learning the new campus has a covered professional astro turf football pitch. When



A student sits on a teacher's lap in an 'early years' classroom.

fully completed there will be tennis courts, basketball courts, football fields and a big activity field.

Head of Primary Years Nicola Chokkuea said about mental maths tests, "We try and extend each child to the best of their ability. We give them questions and have them think about what calculations need to be done. It could be times tables or addition or describing a shape." The whole school community at Kajonkiet has approximately 2,000 students with all programs combined. The international school started last year with twenty or so

students and has since doubled its enrollment. KIS currently provides a Thai Program, an ESC (English Special Class), EP and an International School. The International School is taught exclusively in English, with the exception of Thai & Chinese courses.

KIS has waived its entrance fee to celebrate the new campus. The offer applies to parents who enroll their child before June 30, 2012.

For more information or to enroll a child at Kajonkietsuksa visit [W:kajonkietsuksa.ac.th](http://W:kajonkietsuksa.ac.th).

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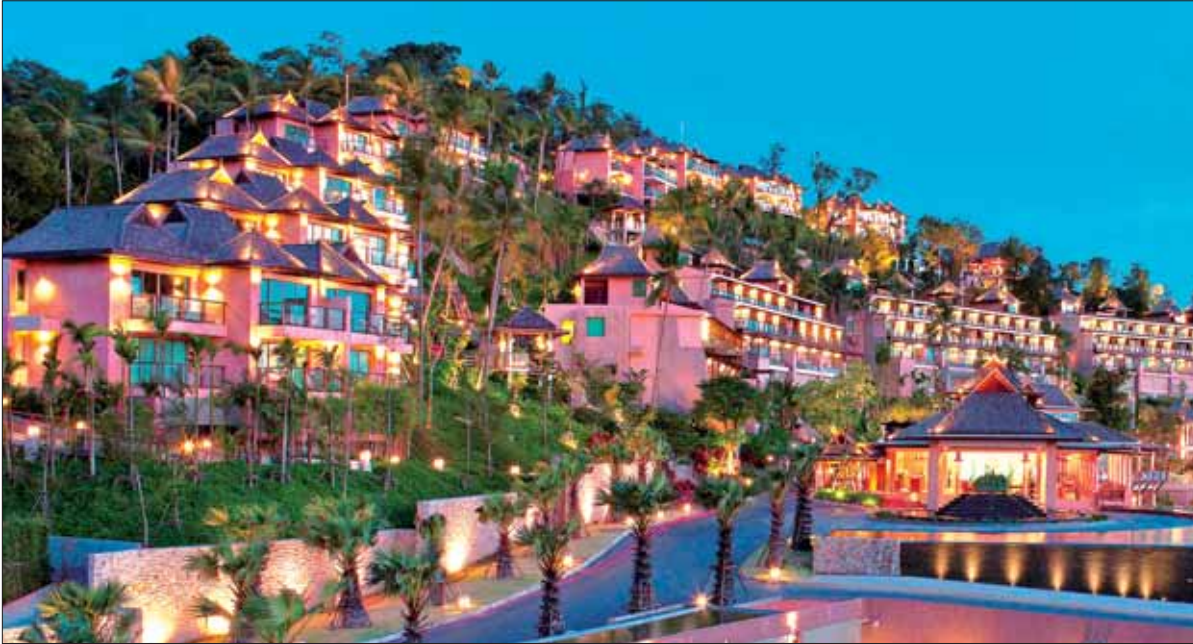
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# Westin gets a new, seasoned manager

'Citizen of the world' Thomas Mueller is named the new GM of Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa.



HOTEL ON A HILL: A night portrait of the Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa on Siray Island. Photos: Chris Hudon

By Chris Hudon

IN AN exclusive interview with the *Phuket Gazette* we asked Westin Resort's new General Manager Thomas Mueller what it takes to become a famous hotelier.

"I had fun every single day," said Mueller, "I enjoyed myself, I worked where other people played. I work hard and I play hard too." Born in Germany, he speaks fluent English, considers himself a 'citizen of the world' and has more than 35 years of experience working in the hospitality industry.

"I am thrilled and honored to be appointed GM at The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa Phuket, I am looking forward to working in Thailand and on Phuket, one of Asia's most popular island

destinations," he said.

Previously based in such countries as China, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Guam, Hong Kong, Belgium and Switzerland, Mueller was most recently GM of The Sheraton Hongqiao Hotel in Shanghai.

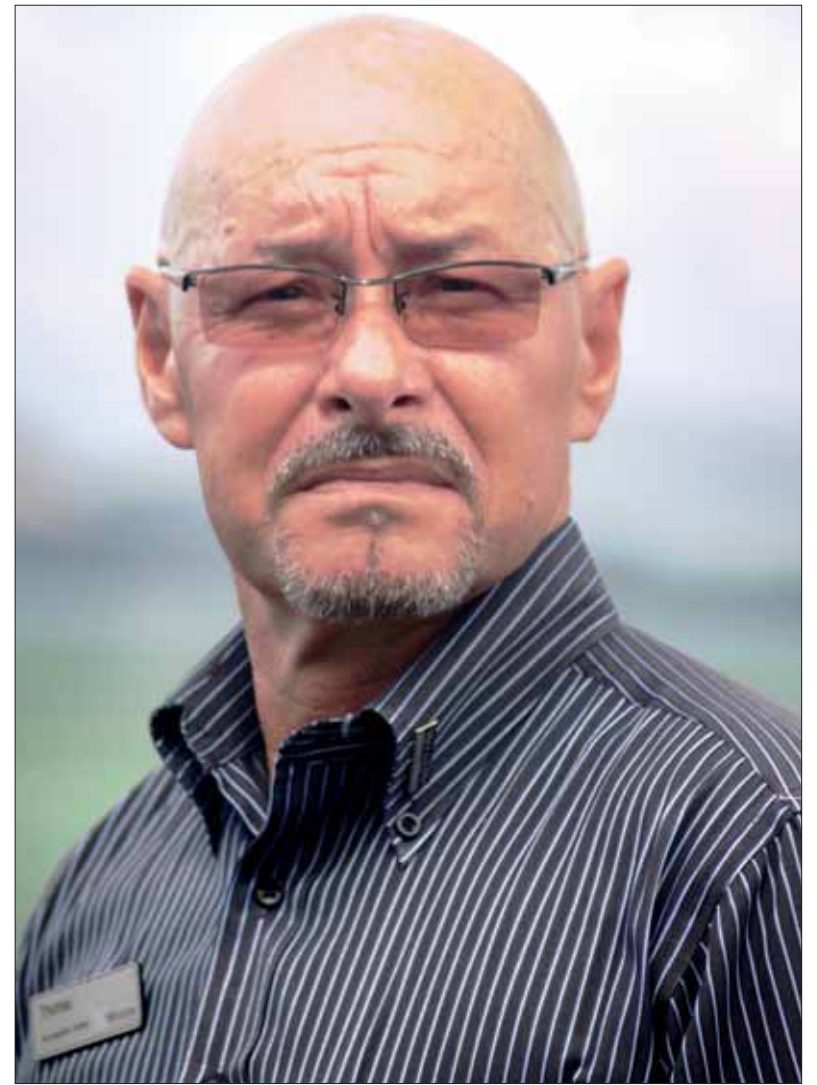
When asked what an ideal locale would be for him, Mueller replied, "Actually, I love places with mountains and the sea together. I lived in Vancouver and it was like that; Sydney, Hong Kong and here as well. I love the sea, the mountains and warm weather.

"After living in Shanghai for two years I couldn't bear to see gray anymore. Everyday you couldn't see the sun. The buildings were gray, the sky was gray, it was terrible. That's the great thing about this part of the

world, it's still relatively unspoiled."

The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa Phuket is the first Westin resort to open in Thailand. Located on Siray Island off Phuket's east coast the resort overlooks Siray Bay and has a secluded beach with direct access. Siray Island is connected to the Phuket mainland via land bridge.

When asked what was the strangest thing to happen to him in his 35 years of hospitality experience Mueller chuckled and said, "One of the strangest things was when I was working in the middle of Australia in Alice Springs. All our guests were flown in by planes, nobody drives it's like a five-day drive to get there. The pilots went on strike for 100 days and we had



GM Thomas Mueller loves to be where the mountains meet the sea.

no guests. "We had a 250 room hotel and we had no guests, not one. So, I got the troops together and I said we have two choices; either we close the hotel or we take a salary cut and try to survive. So we all agreed we'd take a salary cut, everybody got paid fifty per cent of what they did before. And we did local parties. We had brainstorming sessions and held different parties every night.

Each night we had a ball and we survived. Once business came back we paid back everybody who took a salary cut what we owed them and we survived."

The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa has 257 guest rooms, suites and villas decorated in modern décor adorned with stylish furnishings. All rooms enjoy ocean

views, outdoor balconies, Westin 'Heavenly Bed', 'Heavenly Bath', rain showers, LCD televisions, high speed broadband and wireless Internet throughout. Some rooms have private pools.

With an eye towards the future Mr Mueller added, "We are actively going after the Medium and small-size conference business and will expand the offerings of our well-managed and recognized Recreation Team."

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc, which owns Westin Hotels & Resorts, is a hotel and leisure company with 1,025 properties in nearly 100 countries, employing 145,000 people around the world.

Mr Mueller will be 65 in August and has two daughters who are both married and living in Germany now.



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# Local airports slipping down world ranking



## Aviation

By Alastair Carthew

AIRPORTS used to be necessary evils for air travellers. Barn like, full of sullen immigration and customs officials, lax security measures, outrageously expensive food and little to keep people amused.

Today, airports are proud brand carrying gateways for the cities they service. Modern designs, efficient security and shopping paradises make the experience as enjoyable and painless as possible.

So the annual airport ranking awards by SKYTRAX, a British-based aviation consultancy, are an important indicator of how airport authorities around the world are meeting travellers' increasingly demanding expectations.

Thailand, including Phuket, is unfortunately not rising to the challenge as well as its Asian neighbors which occupy the first three places in the world's best airports rankings, and six of the top 10. The top five are Incheon International Airport, South Korea; Singapore Changi Airport; Hong Kong International Airport; Kuala Lumpur Interna-

tional Airport and Beijing Capital International Airport, with Central Japan International Airport in tenth place.

Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport fell to 25<sup>th</sup> from 13<sup>th</sup> in last year's rankings.

Phuket, which is too small to warrant a ranking did score 5.2 out of 10 from 21 reviews recorded by SKYTRAX, but they were a decidedly mixed bag, with complaints about immigration lines, the cleanliness, size, age and taxis, combined with positive comments about how friendly and nice it was with reasonably priced food and drink, and no long walks.

One piece of good news for Bangkok was that the Novotel Suvarnabhumi Bangkok Hotel near the airport was ranked fifth in the world's best airport hotel awards, with Hong Kong's Regal Airport Hotel in first place. Unfortunately, Thailand's famous image as a shopping Mecca did not transfer to its airports, but Singapore, Hong Kong and Seoul were 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively, with London Heathrow Airport at the top.

So, what do rankings like these mean for Thailand, and particularly Phuket, where passenger arrivals are projected to reach 6 million by 2014?

Suvarnabhumi



**OUT IN THE COLD:** Why did Suvarnabhumi fail to impress travellers? Photo: Roger Price.



**LONDON CALLING:** Heathrow Airport took first place as best shopping airport of the year, despite recent criticisms of the management's retail policy. Photo: eGuide Travel.



**CACTI, KOI AND CITRUS FRUIT:** Incheon, Changi and Hong Kong international airports showed the world how to woo travellers at the annual SKYTRAX awards. Photos (from left: Lisa Padilla, Dale Gillard, Cristian Bortes).

is already beyond its planned capacity of 45 million, so authorities are reopening the ancient Don Muang Airport across town for low-cost carriers to relieve the burden. A planned expansion is still at least five years away from completion, by which time arrivals are projected to reach 60 million a year.

In Phuket, a 5 billion baht re-

vamp is under way to meet the increased numbers, but this will not be complete for some time.

In the meantime the Airports Authority of Thailand, which runs Thailand's major airports, is taking stop-gap measures to buy time.

To measure how competitive airports are becoming for Thailand, just consider that in China almost 100 new airports are

planned to be built by 2020, bringing the number to around 244.

Despite difficult economic times, world tourism numbers continue to grow, increasing by 4 per cent to 980 million passengers in 2011. So, Thailand should take heed of the lessons learned by not planning ahead at Suvarnabhumi and, to a lesser degree Phuket.

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## Etihad-airberlin linkage

THE financial merger of Abu Dhabi-based Etihad Airways with Germany's airberlin, which directly services Phuket, foreshadows increased servicing of the island and the continued focus of Middle Eastern airlines on Phuket as a destination. Ras Al Khamah [RAK] a low-cost carrier based in the United Arab Emirates, is another new airline servicing Bangkok.

As of March, there were 140 scheduled flights a week between Thailand and 11 countries in the Middle East: Emirates. These are serviced by Qatar Airways, Gulf Air, Etihad Airways, Kuwait Airways, Oman Air, Iran Air, Royal Jordanian Airlines, Egypt Air, Mahan Air, Turkish Airlines, Bangkok Airways and Thai Airways International.

The Etihad-airberlin connection is important for Phuket. It means airberlin is able launch a new route between Abu Dhabi and Phuket, offering an all-year-round service. Normally airberlin only services



**WET OR DRY:** airberlin will fly to Phuket all year round. Photo: Andrei Dimofte

Phuket during the high season through flights from Munich and Berlin. Etihad is now the largest single shareholder in airberlin, Europe's sixth biggest carrier.

Middle Eastern tourists have high purchasing power, a long average length of stay and don't mind coming to Phuket during the wet season for the shopping, en-

tertainment and medical treatment. Middle Eastern arrivals to Thailand in 2011 were up almost 5.9 percent to 603,227, mainly from the UAE, Kuwait and Egypt.

The Etihad-airberlin connections through Abu Dhabi and Bangkok should see visitors from Abu Dhabi increase that number considerably in the coming years.



# Hanging on jugs at Krabi Fire and Rock Climbing Comp 2012

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THE krast topography and stunning beach-side limestone edifices of Krabi once again played host to the Krabi Rock and Fire International Contest on April 28 and 29.

The 2012 event, organized by the Krabi Rock Climbing Club and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, is designed to highlight Railey and Ton Sai as world-class rock climbing destinations.

The contest was composed of three different events this year, each with their own prize purse: lead climbing marathon (60,000 baht), deep-water soloing (45,000 baht) and a fire contest (16,000 baht).

Each of the three competitions were independently registered for, so the rock climbing gurus weren't forced to play with fire and the fire spinners could keep their feet on the ground.

Stunning weather on the first day of the event left all 24 teams of climbers out in the sun for parts of the lead climbing marathon.

With 50 routes selected for the competition on just five of the prominent climbing walls in Railey, there was plenty of rock for the two-member teams to attack.

Teams were awarded points for each route successfully scaled. Points were dependent on the difficulty level of the route, which ranged from 6a to 8a on the French climbing scale, and how many penalties were committed during the climb. All falls; takes; improper use of quickdraws, bolts, slings and fixed protection; or any other actions the judge deemed inappropriate, were penalized.

Points for routes ranged from a 6a being worth 10 points, to a 8a being worth 195 points. Penalties resulted in the deduction of points.

Given the difficulty level of the majority of the routes, this was clearly an event geared towards the upper echelon of climbers. But despite the big money and the serious nature of the event, climbers raved about the positive and encouraging attitudes of the judges. Unlike the intimidating, stony-faced judges, found elsewhere, the Thai judges, while remaining impartial, were just as vocal as the crowd, when they saw a climber push through a tough crux on a route.

Team FlipFlop, with Theo Valla (France) and Samuel Butler Cody (USA), sacked all fifty available



**SLIPPERY SLOPE:** Two deep-water soloing contestants step out of their kayaks and grab onto the juggy holds at the beginning of the routes as they get their feet under them and onto the wall. Photos: Isaac Stone Simonelli

routes took first place.

In second place was Nolan Edward-Barnwell (South Africa) and Jonas Lars Guran-Wallin (Sweden), and rounding out the marathon lead climbing podium were Urs Christian Schonenberger and Barbara Schonenberger (Switzerland).

The evening festivities started up after dark on Railey West Beach with the fire competition (see *Your Phuket*, page 26).

The deep-water soloing (climbing without rope or protection over deep water) event had a slow start the next day, but eventually climbers were taken out to Railey Bay Resort's barge, anchored close to three selected deep-water soloing routes on Sunset Wall. Music blasting from the barge created the perfect party mood for competitors and crowd alike.

Each climber had five minutes to attempt each of the routes, which ranged from 10 to 25 meters in height. Once completed they had 30 more seconds to jump from the cliff, or they lost half the points gained during the climb.

The most impressive performance on the final route was by Urs Christian Schonenberger

(Switzerland), who ended up taking first place in the event.

Urs, a banker who has spent the last 20 months on a around-the-world trip, spoke with the *Phuket Gazette* about deep-water soloing and the competition.

"This was the first time for me that I really did deep-water soloing like that. I tried it once in a little bit in Croatia, but... not on such good cliffs. This area is a good combination of holidays and

climbing," he said.

Harry Claud Larkins (Australia) finished second in the men's category and Thatthana Raksachat (Thailand) finished third.

Unlike the marathon climbing

event, women competed in their own category for the deep-water soloing event and Pratthana Raksachat (Thailand) and Alessandra Pescosta (Italy) took first and second spots respectively.



One of the deep-water soloing contestants peels off a calcite stalactite attached to the roof of the third and final route of the course.



Graham Hopkins from the United States sails through the extension of the route "Up To You" (7c) on Pra-nang Beach Wall.

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# Bollywood starlet visits Phuket

By Chris Hudon

STAR of Bollywood smash hit *Dabangg*, Sonakshi Sinha visited Phuket last week to blow off steam before the upcoming release of her new film *Rowdy Rathore*, which premieres this June.

*Dabangg* went on to become one of the highest grossing Bollywood films of all time, receiving much critical acclaim. The film raked in US\$2.89 million on the first day of release, making it the highest grossing opener of any film at the time in India.

Ms Sinha was also featured as the cover girl of Maxim Magazine's Indian Edition in December, 2010. Although she had no film release in 2011, her debut performance won her the prestigious *Filmfare Award* and the *Star Screen Award for Most Promising Newcomer – Female*.

'Sona' (as she likes to be called) spoke with the *Gazette* in an interview during her stay at the Vijitt Resort.

## What's on your list of things to do while in Phuket?

You know I've been working non-stop for the last ten months so I've just come to relax, lay back and put my feet up.

**We read from your biography that you have two brothers. What was that like growing up?**  
Double trouble; they're twins. So I was always on one side and they ganged up on me on the other. But it was fun.

They're very protective. It's great to have two brothers they're like your support system now. But growing up, yes I was the one on the receiving end of everything.

**Your father was an actor and is now a member of parliament in**



Awaiting the debut of her second film release in June of this year, 'Sona' soaks up the sun. Photo: Chris Hudon

**India. Do you ever have to participate in campaign events?**

That's his work and I'm not a part of it. I support him at his rallies and I will support him when he stands up for elections. Other than that, I have my job to do. He used to be an actor, he was part of the film industry for thirty years.

**How did you first start acting?**  
It happened so suddenly. I stud-

ied fashion design in Mumbai; I did a three year course but I guess destiny had other plans. But, I'm loving it and am very thankful I ended up in the job I have now. I have been tremendously lucky.

My first film was opposite Salman Khan who is probably the biggest star in India today. He happened to be a friend of the family, my parents knew his parents and he sort of saw me groom myself. He got a role he thought I would

fit perfectly into, which was an Indian village girl. That's the role I won my awards for, the biggest hit of 2010. After that people sort of saw that I do fit into that particular mold they have, which is the typical Indian girl.

**What is the 'typical Indian girl' like?**

Strong, silent, they say beautiful but I don't believe it. Just the particular way you look. I look very Indian, I have an Indian

look about myself.

**If you could be anything besides an actress what would that be?**

I studied fashion so I would be a fashion designer. Personally, I'm a very casual person and I would go day in and day out in pajamas. I like being in my jeans and t-shirts but of course being in this industry you have to 'doll up' a little bit sometimes.

It's part of the job but even then I think simplicity is one of the characteristics I like to stick when it comes to my style.

**Who is your favorite actor and why?**

I would have to say my father. Growing up I always idolized him and he's been my hero always. He has been a tremendous actor. One of the biggest stars we had in our country in the seventies and eighties.

**If you have a guilty pleasure what would it be?**

I think I do...food! Any food, I love food. But, unfortunately, I cannot gorge on it anymore.

I have to take good care of my health and fitness because people look at you a particular way, but yeah, food is my guilty pleasure.

**Is there anything else you want to mention specifically?**

My new film is called *Rowdy Rathore* and it comes out next month. It's again a very commercial Hindi entertainer. I think that's what the audience is majorly attracted to.

The film has action, it has romance, it has comedy, it has drama, everything I think molded into blockbuster material. So I've really got my fingers crossed because it's a big one for me.



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# Vietnamese, please

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

UP UNTIL recently, Phuket-based lovers of Vietnamese food had to trek into town, near the bus station, to sample this very special cuisine at *Je t'aime*. It's a pleasant enough setting and the food there is good, but the environment is far from being inspiring.

Therefore the opening of its sister restaurant, Memtrio, in Kathu, over a year ago is a welcome change from that drab situation. Featuring smart and spacious indoor and garden dining spaces, Memtrio is fronted by a well-tended garden next to a small parking lot with no coaches in sight.

The walkway leads to a pleasant patio lined with glass-topped tables and faux rattan chairs.

Inside, the loft-like area has lots of glass windows and a high ceiling, which lends a light and airy feel to the whole place.

A grand piano dominates one corner of the room, and two small but comfortable sofas another. The center of the room is the domain of a glass table large enough to accommodate a party of ten. The distressed-yellow wall is lined with copies of paintings by the French masters and blackboards with the chalked-in menu of the day. Together with two full wine shelves, all these elements combine to give a believable semblance of a French bistro.

Memtrio's menu offers extensive Vietnamese fare, keeping to the same formula that has proved successful at *Je t'aime* – fresh ingredients, great taste and beautiful presentation. In addition, there are Thai and European dishes to be had, which, after a casual glance at the menu, look like a respectable offering. However, today we are focusing on what the parent restaurant was famous for – the authentic Vietnamese dishes.

Vietnamese food is typified by the extensive use of fresh herbs both in the

cooking and as an indispensable side dish. These herbs are selected based on their strong aroma and pungency. Eating Vietnamese food is fun too, featuring all kinds of wrappings and dippings. Either lettuce leaves or thin rice noodle are used as wraps or parcels, into which go all kinds of barbecued meat and some more leaves.

As with other Southeast Asian cuisine, dipping sauces are an indispensable part of any meal, and here at Memtrio two kinds of sauces are served – one sweet and the other savory.

Crafting your own 'morsel' can be as creative or as plain as you like: include or leave out certain herbs or meats, use just one sauce or a mixture of the two. The combination is endless but you should aim for a layer of flavors and let the fusion of tastes explode in your mouth.

A good introduction would be the crab-meat-filled spring rolls (180 baht). The difference between these and the Chinese version lies in the wrap, the former using dampened rice paper which yields a chewy but nevertheless crisp texture. There's also another healthy version of fresh spring rolls (120 baht) that include the same filling of herbs and meat.

For a contrast in texture, try Vietnamese Pancakes (140 baht), whose crispy crêpe-like envelopes are filled with cooked prawn, pork, mung beans, and fresh bean sprouts. This dish is so tasty (and pretty too) that there's no need to add sauce of any kind.

Charcoal-grilled pork (180 baht) exudes the unmistakable aroma of the lemongrass used in the marinade, among other ingredients. Served with rice noodles and two kinds of sauce, this is a favorite lunchtime fare in Vietnam. It is eaten in the same way as everything else – with lots of fresh herbs.

What could have been a very exciting dish – Fried minced shrimp wrapped around a

sugar cane stick (200 baht) – turns out to be a little disappointing with the shrimp cake being a little 'pasty.' However the saving grace comes in the form of the beautifully presented Chocolate Panna Cotta in orange sauce with, we suspect, lots of Grand Marnier!

The staff here are attentive and courteous and Memtrio is smart enough for a business lunch but also laid-back enough for family gatherings. Most of its clientele seem to hail from the nearby Phuket Country Club. European and Thai dishes on the menu look quite respectable too. But that's for another time.

Memtrio Restaurant, 87 Vichitsongkram Road, Kathu (opposite Phuket Country Club Golf Course). Tel: 076-321251, 076-321442. Open daily 11am – 11pm.



Vietnamese spring rolls abound at Memtrio.



The interior is reminiscent of a French bistro (above) except for the DIY morsels (below).



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# All adrift in a life-less boat

## Books

By James Eckardt

YOU wouldn't expect that a novel that takes place almost wholly at sea could be so dry. Charlotte Rogan's first novel *The Lifeboat* (Little Brown and Company, New York, 2012, 279pp) might have been a stirring tale of survival at sea among a small cast of characters adrift on a lifeboat in the Atlantic. Instead it is curiously lifeless, its characters bloodless and its plot maddeningly vague.

Two years after the sinking of the Titanic, just as World War I is getting underway, the passenger liner *Empress Alexandria*, en route from London to New York, suffers a mysterious explosion. Survivors are crammed into a few lifeboats. One is commanded by able seaman John Hardie. Of the 39 survivors aboard his 23-foot lifeboat, 19 will die over the next three weeks.

In the Prologue, one survivor, Grace Winter, is on trial for murder, along with two other women, Ursula Grant and Hannah West.

"I was twenty-two years old," she writes. "I had been married for ten weeks and a widow for over six."

At the urging of her lawyers, Grace Winter writes an account of her ordeal at sea. This has the advantage of producing some fine simple descriptive prose.

"We had been in the lifeboat

for perhaps five hours when the sky turned a deep pink shading to blue, then purple, and the sun seemed to inflate as it dropped toward the darkening line of water to the west. In the distance

**'Hunger, thirst, exposure, exhaustion - Hannah is weak in describing specific physical suffering, though she is quick in offering up religious conclusions.'**

we could see the black shapes of other lifeboats, bobbing the way we were bobbing, set down in that pink and black vastness with nothing to do but wait..."

Beautiful Grace Winter is frankly a charmer and a schemer. Her father, a New York businessman, was ruined by a partner and committed suicide, her mother went mad, her sister settled for a job as a governess.

Grace set her sights on a young investment banker named Henry Winter and eloped with him to London. He may or may not have bribed John Hardie to allow her on the lifeboat.

The disadvantage of her narrative voice is that it is weak in developing the characters on board the lifeboat and vague about their motives. John Hardie takes charge from the beginning:

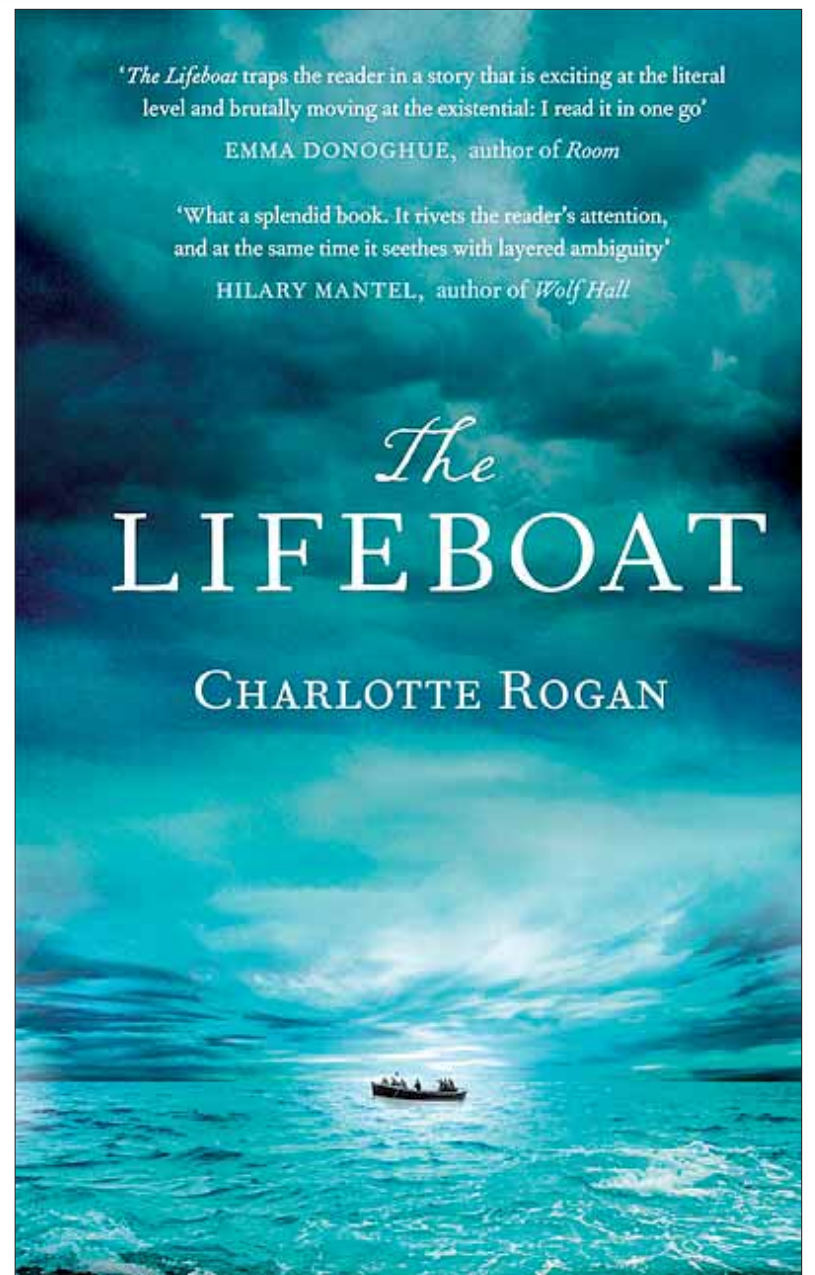
manning the helm, refusing to take on drowning women and children, assigning seats for balance, establishing a bailing rotation, arranging a space for sleeping, and taking charge of rationing water and sea biscuits.

The boat is woefully overloaded, the sea mere inches from the gunwale. When a storm comes up, Hardie draws lots among the men to lighten the boat. Two must go overboard.

Scheming against his authority are a forceful middle aged woman named Mrs Ursula Grant and her youthful protégée Hannah West. Exactly why is unclear.

Meanwhile a host of improbabilities pile up. John Hardie kills two big fish with his knife. In the middle of the Atlantic, this is as improbable as finding a moose atop Mount Everest. Then a flock of seabirds collapse dead around the lifeboat. Come on.

Hunger, thirst, exposure, exhaustion - Hannah is weak in describing, specific physical suffering though she is quick in offering up religious conclusions: "I had always envisioned God as hovering somewhere above us, smiling or frowning depending on his mood and whether he was pleased with us or not, perhaps inhabiting the sun or blowing storms violently out of his cheeks to wake us up from our torpor and deter us



THAT SINKING FEELING: Charlotte Rogan's first novel is a little too wet behind the ears for our reviewer.

from deceit. Now, however, I knew he was in the sea, lurking there, rising up in those big waves and splashing down random pieces of himself on our boat."

When the climatic confrontation explodes aboard the lifeboat, Grace is curiously impassive and then springs into fatal action, though again offering no motive.

She remains content with the existential lesson of the lifeboat, concluding: "I feel both lucky and unlucky about it, suffused with a sort of happiness as it has opened up a whole new world to me, one quite devoid of dependence on other people, devoid even of the fear of death and belief in God..."

## Dark Shadows

**Starring:** Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, Eva Green, Jonny Lee Miller, Jackie Earle Haley  
**Director:** Tim Burton  
**Release Date:** May 11

YOU can bet there is going to be a huge hoo-hah about Tim Burton's new Depp-star remake. Based on a late sixties "cult" (i.e. people who love it also think Clint Eastwood reached his peak in *Rawhide*) TV show, *Dark Shadows* the movie tells the story of the undead Depp coming to terms with the modern world and Michelle Pfeiffer.

The hoo-hah is going to take the form of complaints that the TV series was not a comedy, but so what? The original was also not in color. Is anyone complaining about that?

In fact, the TV show was a daytime soap opera about ghosts, zombies, werewolves and the like that wasn't actually supposed to be about the supernatural at all. Take another look at it: it's downright

## Film

hilarious specifically because it's never actually trying to be funny.

Still, Hollywood has a fairly bad rep when it comes to remaking TV shows as big budget movies. Look at how Ben Stiller "ruined" *Starsky and Hutch*.

In this case, however, we have Tim Burton directing and he has never met a story that couldn't be improved with a bit of nostril flaring from Johnny Depp.

*The Rum Diaries* star is cast as Barnabas Collins, an 18th-century playboy turned vampire, who has quite literally returned from the grave to save his family's fortunes.

The modern Collinses are a dysfunctional breed led by Pfeiffer and her off-the-wall hubby, Jonny Lee Miller. Jackie Earle Haley also gets to chew some scenery as the vampire's Renfield-esque assistant.

That it takes a 200-year-old vam-



pire to straighten out a 21st-century family is Burton bashing home the point that modern life is totally screwed up.

There are a bunch of sub-plots, including a hunt for the witch (Eva Green) who gave Barnabas his fangs, but they really don't matter. Enjoy it for what it's meant to be: a wild Burtonian gothic romp with JD quite literally vamping it up.

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# Suteichok Tossapornchaipluk

SUTEICHOK "Pang" Tossapornchaipluk keeps a daily journal. A typical page entry reads: "It's a lovely day, the temperature is about 27° C. Mizuna looks fresh in the morning sun and is happy to see me."

The Mizuna that Suteichok is referring to is a lettuce by the name of Mizuna Cos flourishing in the greenhouse that is part of his company Natural Green on Chao Fah Road West. Engineer turned agriculturist Suteichok always had a 'green finger'. From a young age, he would pot about in the family's tiny garden in Samkong, planting enough greens and herbs to feed the whole family.

After a short career in the construction sector, Suteichok spotted a niche market that would turn his passion into a profitable trade. In 2001, having done the prerequisite market research, Suteichok established a 4-rai hydroponic (growing plants in water and without soil) farm, producing and selling a variety of lettuce and other greens that, until then, were unavailable on Phuket.

Suteichok explains: "Hydroponic farming has a shorter growth cycle of about 45 days, yet yields higher crops than the traditional earth-bound method. The crops contain an equal amount of nutrients as the usual plants but it is less labor-intensive and requires few chemicals, if any." At one point it seemed that all the hotels and res-

## THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

taurants on the island were his customers and Naturally Green grew from strength to strength. In April this year, Suteichok expanded his venture to include a new store to accommodate retail clients who were beginning to frequent his tiny former outlet near his Chao Fah Road West farm. The new space is modern, lovingly designed and partly built by Suteichok himself, who, judging from the unique furniture to be found, is also a skilled craftsman. In the future, he says, there will be a café and salad bar serving healthy sandwiches and juices. A covered walkway will allow guests to visit the nearby greenhouse.

Suteichok is a researcher as well as an agriculturist. The two disciplines, he says, complement each other. As the technology of hydroponic farming is relatively new in the country, he learns from trial and error. He believes research and notekeeping are an indispensable part of ongoing investigation and experimentation. Now considered an expert in the field, Suteichok travels the country to give talks and share his knowledge with interested

parties for free. Despite this, he says the government does not support him and fails to support its agrarian population.

"I am not very endearing to the officials because I openly criticize their way of working," he reveals. One of the reason he fervently keeps notes of farming processes is partly because he wants to create a database of research papers for posterity. This information, he says, will be shared with anyone who is interested in giving innovative farming a try. Part of him believes that farming communities have to create strong ties and work together independently, not relying on government support.

"If help comes, it's all well and good. But it's most likely not coming," he shrugs. By his own admission, Suteichok is part of that eccentric breed of gardeners who talk to their crops. Very soon, he says, he will leave the business side in the capable hands of his younger brother because he wants to get back to tending his 'beloved' vegetables.

"To me they are more than vegetables. They will complain if the workers have been heavy-handed with them or if I neglect them for too long. I am very attached to them, in a way I can't describe. Government officials say I am mad and even my close friends think I am 'a goner,' but I don't actually care," says 34-year old Suteichok.



### About Thai Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Thai Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket as an international community, and, often, for having made those contributions through successful social and/or working relationships with foreigners. This implies some foreign language skills and an interest in interacting with different cultures. They are people who in our experience help make the lives of expats far more enjoyable here than might be the case without them.

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### May 12, 5-10:30pm: Seafood Chill and Grill at RE KA TA Beach club

Succulent seafood BBQ while listening to our DJ. Price 1,500++ baht per person for food only, and 1,800++ baht per person including one bottle of wine.

### May 12-13, 5-9pm: Weekend Market at Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina, Koh Kaew

Buy, sell and barter on an ever expanding extensive variety of goods, food, etc. Or simply relax and enjoy the vast assortment of other fun stuff we are putting together for all ages. Nobody has more fun than at the soon to be number one Weekend Market & Meeting Place in Phuket! Located within the conveniently situated Boat Lagoon, with easy access, Toilet facilities and lots of free parking. Individual cover boot (2x2m) with power facility available for rent in dedicated zone areas, 100 baht per day introduction rate. Contact 088-7680471.

### May 13, 12-3pm: Sunday Family Lunch at the Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket

Come and enjoy this spectacular lunch on Sunday. Savor a fabulous meal accompanied by our music band. Your whole family is invited to enjoy our swimming pool, kids' pool, lazy river, jumping cliff and water slides! 990 baht nett per person, including soft drinks, water, coffee and tea. 1,390 baht nett per person with one bottle of red, white or rose wine per couple. Free for children under age 5, and half price for children ages 6-12. Valet parking services provided. Limited booking for 80 persons.

### May 13, 10am-3pm: Beachfront Brunch at RE KA TA Beach Club

Decadent beachfront brunch buffet with tunes from our DJ while

## WHAT'S ON in Phuket

relaxing over a glass of sparkling wine. Price: 1200++ baht per person for food only, and 1,500++ baht per person with a bottle of wine for 2. Come 4-7, pay 1 less; come 8-10, pay 2 less, etc.

### May 14, 6pm-1am: Surfnight at Two Chefs Kata Beach

Every Monday we are setting up a great BBQ-Buffer. Filled with loads and loads of food. There will be juicy steaks directly from the BBQs, a big variety of sauces and much, much more. There will be nice and pleasant live music performed by one of the members of the Two Chefs house band. The best with this is that it only costs 495 baht for all of it. For more information please visit us on the web at [twochefs.com](http://twochefs.com)

### May 16, 6pm-1am: Tex-Mex at Two Chefs Karon

Now we start with our very popular weekly Tex-Mex again. Every Wednesday we present for you the biggest Tex-Mex buffet on this island. This year we also have a free flow option for you. As every night, our Two Chefs house band will be there to entertain us. All this for only 495 baht, and for 795 baht you can drink as much as you want from our free flow options. For more info, please visit us on the web at [TwoChefs.com](http://TwoChefs.com).

### May 16, 7-9pm: Ladies Beauty Night at Les Anges Royal Phuket Marina

Ladies Beauty Night at Les Anges. Every Wednesday. For ladies only. Free hair dress-ups, manicures and make-up from beauty specialists. 50 per cent discount on

drinks and 25 per cent off for food in the menu list.

### May 17, 10:30am-1:30pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch at The Holiday Inn, Patong

All are welcome. Members 500 baht, guests 650 baht. Prior registration is essential. Contact [info@phuketiw.com](mailto:info@phuketiw.com).

### May 17, 6:30-11pm: Martini Manicure Ladies Night RE KA TA Beach Club

Free express manicure for ladies. Free martini for ladies on arrival. 50 per cent off the drink list all night long. Cocktail flaring. From 6pm to midnight – DJ till late.

### May 18, 7-10pm: Indian Night at Les Anges Royal Phuket Marina

Phuket's best Indian buffet is back with a new chef and a new menu. Special promotion at just 449 baht. From 5-9pm, buy one get one free for the drinks. Reservation recommended. Call Mr Murat at 081-797 3364.

### May 19, 8:30am-3:30pm: Cambridge KET & PET Exams for UK Visas Requirement

English language requirement for partners. If you are not a national of a majority English-speaking country or do not have a degree taught in English, you must pass an approved English language test with an approved test provider. The KET A2 meets this requirement. Visa for Adult Students. If you plan to study in the UK, your education provider must ensure that you are competent in English at a minimum of level B1 (CEFR).

British International School, Phuket Fees: KET: 1,900 baht. PET: 2,400 baht. The PET B1 meets this requirement. Results will be online 30th June 2012.

## Phuket Health & Fitness Festival 2012

A weekend full of health & fitness fun featuring keynote speaker Dr. John Hinwood from Australia.

Tickets include admission to all seminars, demonstrations, activities and the festival party at Serenity Terraces on Saturday night and are limited to first 200 people. Only 2,200 baht

For more details please visit [www.RawaiNaiHarn.com](http://www.RawaiNaiHarn.com).

## May 11-13, 7-8pm Rawai and Nai Harn Area

This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

### May 19, 8:30-10:30pm: Salsa Night at Royal Phuket Marina

We are delighted to invite you to our Salsa Event at Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Club near Skippers' Restaurant. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba live with the sounds of DJ Miscaro. Entrance: Free. Dress: Colorful. Call Mr Murat at 081-797 3364.

### May 25, 7-10pm: Indian Night at Les Anges, Royal Phuket Marina

Phuket's Best Indian Buffet is back with a new chef and a new menu. Special promotion at just 449 baht. From 5-9pm buy one get one

free for drinks! Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat at 081-797 3364.

### June 4, Visakha Bucha Day – Public Holiday

Visakha Bucha Day is observed on the day of the full moon during the 6<sup>th</sup> lunar month, which usually falls in either May or early June. It is a day to commemorate three important incidents: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha. Miraculously, these events fell in the same month and on the same date in the Buddhist era.

### Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

Is Windows driving you nuts? Looking for a good internet connection? Need to know how and where to get your PC repaired, or your confounding questions answered? Drop by the new Afternoon Computer Clinics, hosted by Woody Leonhard and Seth Bareiss. Bring your computer. Bring your questions. Bring your sense of humor and let's see if we can solve your PC problems. Second and fourth Wednesday of every month, 1-3pm, at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Sponsored by Woody's Sandwich Shoppes and the *Phuket Gazette*.

Free Computer Clinics at

Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - May 16, 1-3pm

Contact at 076-282403, [Woody@KhunWoody.com](mailto:Woody@KhunWoody.com) or visit [KhunWoody.com](http://KhunWoody.com)

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**A CUT ABOVE THE REST:** At the ribbon cutting ceremony were (from left) Hiroaki Awamura, executive managing coordinator of Toyota Motor Thailand co ltd; Wiboonchai Na-Ranong, MD of Toyota Pearl co ltd; Deputy Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada; Pakorn Wongwittayapirom, executive advisor Toyota Motor Thailand co ltd and Wichit Na-Ranong, Chairman of Toyota Pearl co ltd.

## YOUR Phuket



Thatsanee Na-Ranong, deputy managing director of Toyota Pearl co ltd (right) welcomes guests to the grand opening.

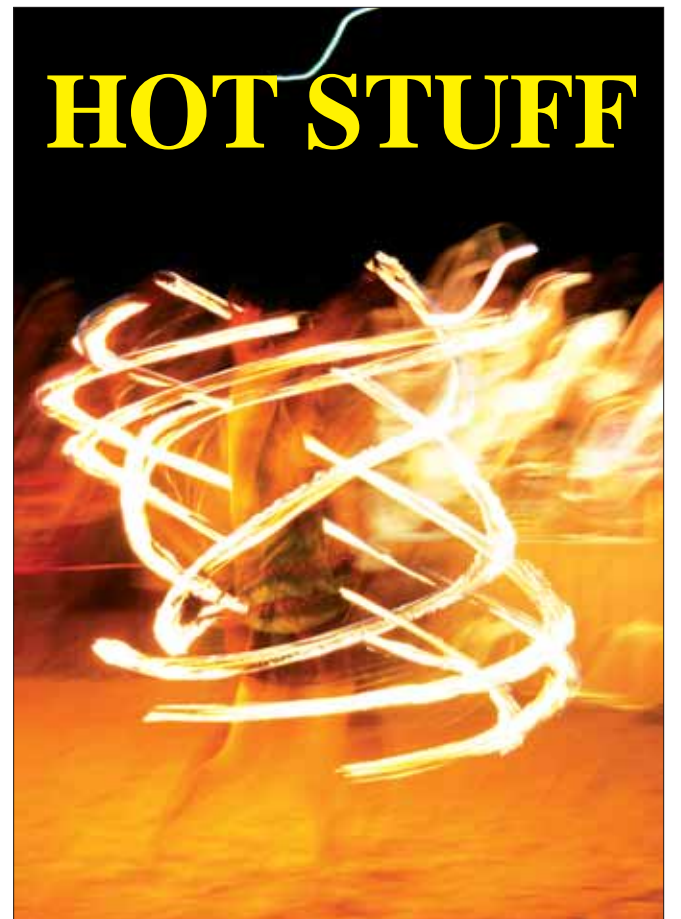
## A Sure Deal

TOYOTA Sure's official opening took place on May 9 at their brand new showroom on the Bypass Road next to the existing Toyota Pearl new car showroom. Toyota Sure deals in used cars only and is the eighth such branch in the South of Thailand. For a business angle on what this means for Phuket take a look at page 12.



THE Krabi Rock and Fire competition on April 28 and 29 hosted an international crowd of competitors in both the rock climbing and fire spinning events. The fire spinning event was dominated by *poi* (chain and ball spinning) and staff performances, though fire-eating and fire-breathing were incorporated into some of the acts.

The competitors were judged on a variety of criteria, including level of difficulty, creativity, entertainment value and the symmetry of the performance. Thai men dominated the fire-spinning competition, sweeping the top three places. Aree Sangrawd finished in first place with Kiattichai Kai-iam and Sanya Dabua finishing second and third respectively. Photos: Isaac Stone Simonelli



## HOT STUFF





**CHARTING A NEW FUTURE:** Phuket Gazette's Graphics Production Manager Suchart "Chart" Changate and his new wife, Jureerat Saksri were married in Nakorn Sri Thammarat recently. They are pictured here with Chart's grandmother Cham Wanmanee. The Phuket Gazette wishes the couple a long and happy life together.



**BENVENUTI:** The Kata Beach Resort & Spa welcomed former Italian Prime Minister Prodi Romano (center) and his wife, Flavia Franzoni (left) to the resort. Here Benasseni Paride (in blue) from Mosaico and Chef Massimo Marcato pose with the couple and Andrew Swatdipakdi, GM of Kata Beach Resort & Spa.



**SWISS TIME:** Andrea Kotas Tammathin (center) was recently made Swiss Honorary Consul in Phuket. Swiss Ambassador to Thailand Mrs Christine Schraner Burgener (left), and Bernhard Bienz, Head of Chancery were there to congratulate her.



**IT'S GOOD TO GIVE:** Ms Cheurchan Panvikarn (left), Marketing Manager of Phanason Group lends support to the Love Charity Project for the Disabled People of Phuket and the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting.



**HOUSE CALL:** Dr John Hinwood visited the Phuket Gazette office for a PGTV interview. From left: Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai, Chef Reporter; Natthira Susangrat, General Manager; Dr John Hinwood, Speaker, Mentor, Author and Facilitator of 'Expect a Miracle'; Michael Massey, Director of Atmanjai Detox & Wellness Centre and Jantana Jaikwang, Assistant Sales Manager.



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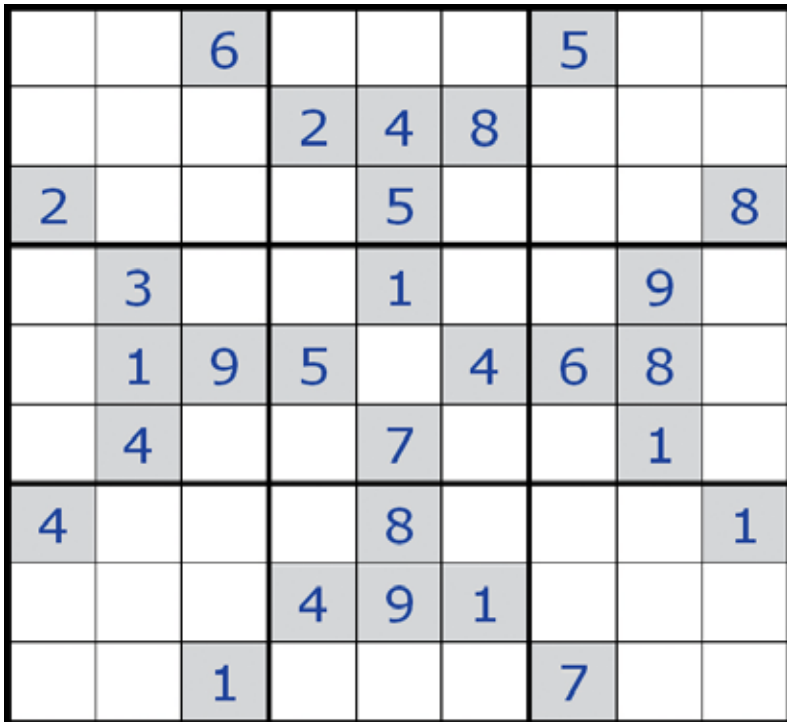
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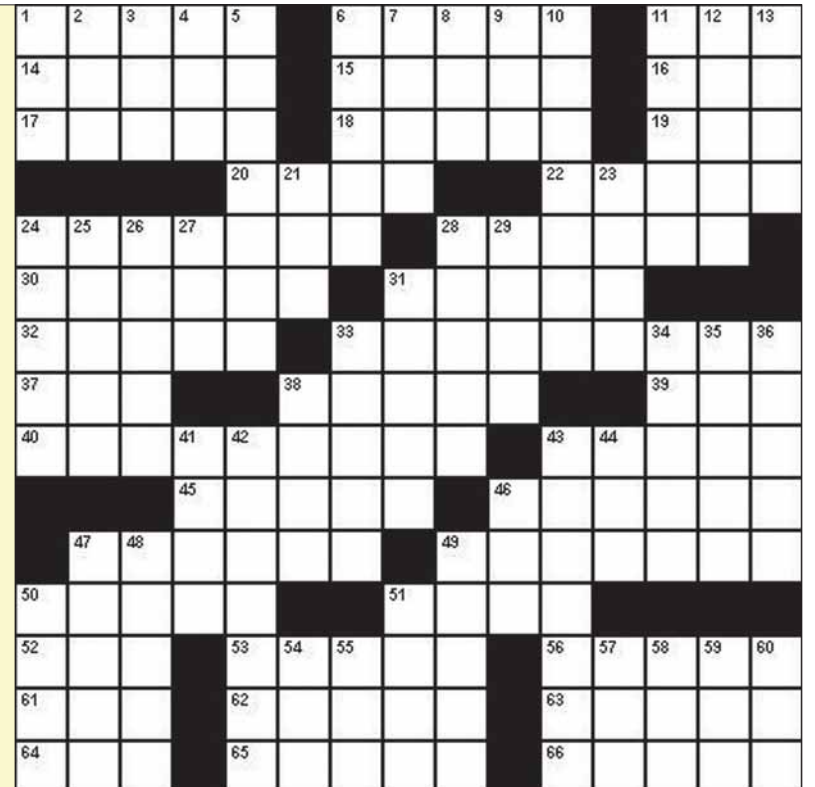


#### Across

1. Putting to work
6. Units
11. Getting on
14. Actress Taylor
15. Device with 88 keys
16. Charge
17. Chad neighbor
18. Composer Bruckner
19. Light brown
20. Pole
22. Farm birds
24. Social outcasts
28. Baby
30. Greek goddess of wisdom
31. Muzzle
32. Tale
33. Fraud
37. Secreted
38. Kofi Annan's home
39. Doctors' org.
40. Solvent used in lacquers
43. "The dog ate my homework"
45. Elude
46. Endangered equine
47. Tranquil
49. Capital of the Solomon Islands
50. Church singers
51. Drop \_\_\_\_ (moon)
52. \_\_\_\_ Lobos
53. Acid type
56. Anatomical passages
61. Former Bush spokesman  
Fleischer
62. Class
63. Tough trips
64. Guys
65. Bridge positions
66. Klondike territory

#### Down

1. Coffee dispenser
2. Cinque follower
3. Gerund maker
4. Maiden name indicator
5. Republic in central Europe
6. Bridge declaration
7. Hue
8. Chow down
9. 6, on a phone
10. Melodious



11. Many times
12. Slightest
13. Sand hill by the sea
21. Eureka!
23. I could \_\_\_\_ horse!
24. Turkish title
25. Room at the top
26. \_\_\_\_ Island
27. Comparative suffix
28. Mindlessly stupid
29. Director Ephron
31. Willow provision
33. Reproach
34. Coniferous evergreen forest
35. The color of honey

36. Currency unit in Nigeria
38. Fed
41. Actress Garr
42. Typical
43. Pension
44. China's Chou En-\_\_\_\_
46. Hollywood Squares win
47. Beach locale
48. Histological stain
49. \_\_\_\_ Perot
50. A type of bake
51. Hardware fastener
54. Give \_\_\_\_ break!
55. Officeholders
57. Capote, to friends
58. A mouse!
59. Citizen Kane studio
60. Common ID

Provided by BestCrosswords.com  
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Puzzle solutions on page 39

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



A calmer cosmic climate allows Taureans to get their thoughts and actions in order. Your luck until the middle of May is steady, providing you aren't tempted to move into the fast lane. The stars suggest that finances will be boosted when a mistake is rectified midweek – investments become healthier towards the end of the month. Those with a birthday in the days ahead see that life is more dynamic in the coming year.

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



An easy-going mood this week allows Geminis to see the sunny side of life. The stars suggest that your optimism rubs off on others – expect a water sign to change their tune dramatically in the world of work. Collaboration and partnerships are highlighted to be fruitful until the end of this month. Another air sign comes up with a business proposition that is right up your street. Your lucky color is shell pink.

#### CANCER (Jun 22 - Jul 23):



Appearances can be deceptive until the middle of the month. Those Cancerians who were convinced they could count on support from a fire sign are forecast to be let

down. The stars indicate that last minute communication with another water sign should save the day. In the realm of romance, there are hints that a relationship with an earth sign may be affected by this person's lack of outside interests.

#### LEO (Jul 24 - Aug 22):



Boredom could be an issue for those born under the sign of Leo this week. The stars suggest that you seek out company of friends who have the power to motivate – an earth sign is ready to include you in their social scene this weekend. Where work is concerned, your feathers could be ruffled by another fire sign's habit of always knowing best. Sparkling days for romance are Wednesday and Thursday.

#### VIRGO (Aug 23 - Sept 23):



New beginnings fall under the spotlight during the days ahead. Those Virgoans who are ready to move on in the world of work will have a lot of food for thought this week. Finances are likely to be tight until the middle of May, but at least one way of saving money should become possible. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, another earth sign's interest is hard to miss.



#### LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23):



Librans are likely to take the world of work by storm this week. A brainwave has potential to turn into a money-spinning venture – expect a water sign to be keen to come on board. Those who have been caught in the middle of family problems should see a way out this weekend. The stars suggest that you remember it's impossible to please all the people all the time.

#### SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22):



Your dreams can have hidden meaning this week. The stars indicate that Scorpios who have been ignoring signals about a work-related issue will be faced with the truth. Finances are steady, but tapping into your resources should be done with caution until the middle of May. In the realm of romance, a light-hearted relationship with an air sign could become too hot to handle. Wear the color bronze to encourage good luck.

#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 21):



Where work is concerned, an air sign's reaction could be less positive than you hoped for this week – the stars advise not trying to rush this person into a decision. Money matters are well-starred this week. Gain is forecast to make the rest of May a time to spoil yourself. Where personal relationships are concerned, another fire sign's confusing behavior becomes too much to take. Sunday is an auspicious day for sharing feelings.

#### CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 20):



Capricorns caught in a predicament at work could find that another earth sign colleague has useful answers this week. The astral atmosphere encourages problem solving towards the middle of this month – in the meantime, it would be wise to avoid over reacting. On a personal level, a fire sign friend who has been giving you a wide berth lately is predicted to explain why.

#### AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19):



Your mental energy is less sharp than usual until the middle of May. Those Aquarians who cannot rely on others to make the best decisions at work should stall for time. The stars indicate that commit-

ments made in the heat of the moment early next week can result in loss. In the realm of romance, treading softly in your approach to an earth sign is recommended. Wear the color apple green to encourage good luck.

#### PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20):



The world of work is well-starred this week for those born under the sign of Pisces. Trust in a project rejected by others is highlighted to pay off and your financial situation should reflect the hard work involved. The stars advise that some Pisceans may confuse friendship with romance where an earth sign is concerned. A relationship with a fire sign shows promise. Your lucky color this week is dark chocolate.

#### ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20):



The tide gradually turns for those Arians who have been struggling at work. Expect a water sign to become more open to your ideas this week – Wednesday is the most auspicious day for discussions. Where finances are concerned, a midweek misunderstanding could be costly; keeping a close eye on transactions is recommended. In the realm of romance, the stars suggest that patience is your best approach with an air sign.



# PROPERTY Gazette

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

# East and West meet at Laguna

INSPIRED by Phuket's unique cultural heritage and Sino-Portuguese architecture, the design of Laguna Village Deluxe Residences reflects a blend of East and West.

The Deluxe Residences have spacious interiors and contemporary décor infused with traditional Thai elements.

With up to five bedrooms in each residence, materials and textures are integrated for an impression of warmth and luxury while maintaining simplicity.

Situated within Laguna Village, which is an upscale residential community of luxury homes amidst lakes, palm trees and landscaped gardens, the Deluxe Residences are not far from the world famous powder-white sands of Bang Tao beach.

Also located within Laguna Phuket are the gardens of the Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket and the Dusit Thani Pool Villas, which are three-story, two-bedroom villas that offer privacy.

Forming a community, the 28 villas are within easy reach of all amenities allowing guests and home-owners to enjoy whatever

luxury they may desire.

The Dusit Thani Pool Villas were designed with meticulous attention to detail and feature modern Thai-style architecture fused with international inspiration.

The resort's neo-colonial style incorporates variations on traditional Thai motifs with bright airy rooms defined by native woods and tiles, decorated with ceramics, antique carvings and textiles.

These contemporary two-bedroom lakeside and oceanfront villas are built on three levels with a rooftop terrace. They have swimming pools and feature a unique view of the Andaman Sea.

Just 20 minutes from Phuket International Airport, Laguna Phuket boasts deluxe hotels and luxury residences set on 1,000 acres of landscaped tropical gardens.

Residents have access to Laguna Phuket's abundant facilities and beautiful beaches, including over 30 restaurants and bars, five world-class spas and an 18-hole Golf Course.

— *Phuket Gazette*



A view from inside the living room of a 'Deluxe Residence', part of a community located inside Laguna Village.

**Laguna**  
PROPERTY

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# From here to oblivion (and back again)...



## Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

SITTING on a big, red AirAsia flying cigar on the way back to Phuket from Bali, the silence of my mobile phone is comforting.

Budget airlines in the region have yet to install on-board Wi-Fi and the deep blue skies remain one of the last great getaways of the mind. That will change sooner rather than later, without a doubt.

A week in Bali has flown by like a speeding bullet. News on the ground had surfing legend Kelly Slater tweeting around the world that if the island didn't do something about the rising tide of floating garbage then riding the waves may become a thing of the past.

Hotels in Kuta, Legian and Seminyak remain under scrutiny for flushing waste directly into the sea. A crumbling infrastructure of public utilities is finding its task a mission impossible.

For all the gridlocked traffic, motorcycle mayhem and development, Bali still remains a happy place for me. Whether it's the more temperate climate, or the hospitable

Balinese culture and art, it continues to somehow define the word 'exotic' for many.

Rarely a day passes when hotel staff or taxi drivers do not say warmly – thank you for coming to the island and please come back. I can't recall the last time I heard this in Phuket. Customary politeness and respect for visitors seems to have vanished despite what you see in brochures and advertisements.

Is comparing the two a matter of "same same but different" or are both magnificent island destinations headed into a mass-market oblivion? These days it's a popular topic in both places and voices are growing from whispers to a dull roar.

A burgeoning hotel pipeline ignited by Indonesia's economic success is showcased everywhere you go. From the mega 800 room and villa Mulia project in Nusa Dua to branded offerings by Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott, Sheraton, InterContinental, Westin, Holiday Inn and Regent.

Battling budget brands are popping up and multiplying from Tune, Fave, ibis, Whiz and Amaris, while monsters of the midway or mid tier properties by Aston, Swiss-Belhotel

and Harris see clusters of critical mass offerings that you can count on all your fingers, toes and those of your next-door neighbor.

The famed Bali Golf and Country Club at the integrated destination resort Nusa Dua is closed for upgrading and a new layout will feature a beach-front luxury Shangri-La property. In the coming months the Legacy Sanur Hyatt Regency will shut down for renovation and expansion.

Whether it's the creeping shadow of construction cranes working overtime on a new international airport terminal, or a massive mangrove toll road linking Bonoa and the gateway aviation hub, work is speeding ahead with the goal of finishing for APEC 2013.

I ran into architect Fredo Taffin recently who splits his time between upscale villa and hotel projects in Bali and Phuket. He commented that more and more work is on the horizon in the former versus the latter, as both domestic and

international investors continue to flock to the 'Island of the Gods' in droves.

Yesterday I met with former banker Stuart Hall, who together with his wife and creative partner Melanie, developed the trendy private hotel Luna2. Next up is a large complex named Luna2 Studios, while on the horizon is a project coming up in Phuket on Kamala's Millionaires Mile.

As business blooms, a growing number of long-time local residents are speaking up about concerns of overdevelopment and the huge looming question mark of a sustainable future."

becoming tourism's Central Business District. What many visitors don't realize is that the other 70 per cent of the island remains rural, and lacking in economic prosperity.

Rumors of a second airport up north continue to be exactly that. This sounds similar to the plight of Phang Nga although, when com-

paring Phuket and Bali, a key difference on the Thai side is the existence of world class medical centers, schools, shopping malls and yachting. Bali on the other hand remains massively dependent on tourism and highly leveraged into the Australian market.

Curses, challenges and the clatter of discontentment rise high above the din in both of our key headlines I'm afraid. Are Asia's two leading resort brands on the verge of self-destruction or is this simply the new world order and the way things will go during Asia's golden age?

We've hit cruising altitude and I've gulped down over-toxic sticky and sweet 3 in 1 coffee. My mind is slowly going numb so while I can chronicle these tales of the two islands, the future remains clouded in a complex web of 'what if's.

I'm not sure if oblivion is a good place to visit but it is somewhere we might all be headed to in the not too distant future.

*Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through his website C9hotelworks.com.*

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**BUILD AND THEY WILL COME:** Bali's famed coastline looks to be changing forever.



# CBRE Thailand bags 8 awards in Malaysia

REAL Estate agency CBRE Thailand won the distinction of being the most awarded office in the Asia-Pacific region at the Asia Pacific Property Awards held earlier this month in Malaysia's capital.

Organized in association with HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Asia, the award gala dinner was held at the JW Marriott Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

The company received five 5-star awards at the national level for Best Consultancy, Agency, and Website in Thailand.

CBRE Thailand then went on to compete at the Asia Pacific level with international property consultants throughout Asia-Pacific including Australia, Japan, North and Southeast Asia.

At the Asia-Pacific level, CBRE Thailand won Best Real Estate Agency and Best Property Consultancy; its competitors included Savills, Colliers, and

Jones Lang LaSalle.

The other five-star winner in Thailand was Hunter Sotheby for their Phuket website.

In 4 years of CBRE Thailand contesting the International Property Awards, the tallied prestige comprises a total of 29 awards, including Best International Commercial Website worldwide.

"We are very pleased to be recognized as the leading property agent and consultant and pleased that we won these awards in open competition with our major competitors throughout the region," said David Simister, Chairman of CBRE Thailand.

Mr Simister thanked all of the 1,081 CBRE Thailand staff for their commitment to high standards and hard work which produced the results.

Ms. Aliwassa Pathnadabutr, Managing Director of CBRE Thailand commented: "The attention and effort put in across the board

by both the agency and professional staff and their close working relationships were key to our market position."

She went on to note the importance and development of electronic marketing in recent years, particularly the company's website, which she cited as "integral to the results and performance obtained."

CBRE colleagues in the region also competed in the awards and its Philippines branch – which entered for the first time – received four 5-star awards out of four entries and went on to win the Best Lettings Agency in Asia-Pacific.

In total, CBRE earned 19 awards in the Asia-Pacific region, at the national and Asia Pacific levels.

The International Property Awards have been sponsored in the past by both CNBC and Bloomberg Television and this year for the first time by HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad and the RICS Asia.



**BRINGING IT HOME:** CBRE Thailand was awarded Asia Pacific Best Real Estate Agency and Best Property Consultancy at the Asia Pacific Property Awards, held last month in Kuala Lumpur.

The awards are the largest and most prestigious awards granted on the international circuit. CBRE Thailand will be going forward as a representative for Asia Pacific for Best

International Real Estate Agency and Best International Property Consultancy, competing against competitors worldwide at the International Property Awards Gala Dinner to be held later in the year.

## Island condo, villa rental demand spikes

ACCOMMODATION rentals in Phuket are seeing strong demand from both Thais and foreigners, resulting in the launch of a number of new budget condominiums.

Knight Frank Phuket Director Nattha Kapapana said that condos are springing up in many parts of the island.

Most of them offer rental return guarantees of 6 per cent per annum.

Some projects in Patong offer this rate for three years, while another project in Karon offers [the return] for as much as nine years, she said.

Prices of studio units range from 3 to 5 million baht, and are estimated to be able to yield daily rental rates of about 3,800 to 4,800 baht during the high season, from November to April, whereas the rate during the low season is forecast at 1,500 baht per day.

Despite the sluggish European economy, Phuket attracts people from around the world and has always been a popular choice for holidaymakers, and more of them are choosing to rent private villas instead of staying in hotels, Nattha insisted.

There was a big improvement in rental demand for Phuket villas and condominiums during the high season last year, he noted.

He added that this time around, lessees are coming from a greater variety of places, with Hong Kong and Singapore expatriates, Russians, Koreans and Indians joining Europeans as key arrivals.

Rental periods range from three days to one or two months depending on nationality. Europeans prefer to stay longer, for at least a month, whereas Asians choose to stay on a weekly basis.

Last year, there was a significant increase in inquiries for rental accommodation on the island. This coincided with the growth of tourist arrivals in Phuket. There were about 4.2mn passenger arrivals at Phuket International Airport in 2011.

The Russian influx has picked up momentum every year. With competitive destinations like Egypt and Turkey becoming politically unstable, it seems that Thailand resort destinations such as Phuket will continue to attract visitors and investors from Russia.

The average length of stay by Russian tourists is about two weeks. Koreans generally stay for four to seven days and mostly prefer Bang Tao beach.

The rental rate varies by unit size, unit type, facilities and amenities of the project as well as the location.

A three-bedroom villa with usable area of 242 square meters in the Laguna area costs about US\$ 1,000 to 1,250 (31,000 to 38,600 baht per night during the peak season.

The rental rate of a project in Kamala is US\$ 2,000 per night for a four-bedroom villa with usable area of 950sqm on a land plot of about 1 rai (1,600sqm).

– The Nation



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# Seeing red



## Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

THE past few months have witnessed a change in the normal weather patterns for Thailand. Parts of the North have been exceptionally hot and dry.

The incineration of rubbish, and widespread slash and burn activity has hardly helped. But here in the South, we have had more precipitation during a season habitually associated with a parched and dehydrated landscape.

We hardly needed the ritual of Songkran to invoke the rain gods and bring the downpours – both natural and man-made. Gardens were already lush and verdant, the trees across the road from my house, usually brown, sere and lifeless by April, had scarcely paused for breath.

For the gardener, this has been mostly a blessing: less watering of borders and container plants, less sprinkling of lawns.

In the case of plants that thrive in desert conditions, they have produced fewer flowers, and more lush greenery.

The only shrubs actually to succumb in my patch have been potted *adeniums* (desert roses) and *euphorbias* (crown of thorns), which I discovered all too late were being enthusiastically watered by another hand after the rains had already done their work.

These plants hold moisture in their swollen stems to see them through lengthy droughts. This year, they

had no need of human aid. Several literally dropped their leaves – never a good sign – and then gave up the ghost.

Tough shrubs such as oleanders and wax roses (*pereskias*) also failed to produce their usual crop of blooms. But for the rest it was business as usual.

Of course, gardeners rely on colorful flowers to make an impact.

Leaving aside the numerous red foliage plants such as *dracaenas* and *bromeliads*, or the bi-annual russet leaves of the sea almond, red is, along with yellow, the dominant primary color in any Thai flower border.

Oddly, blue is not so common. But red, in its numerous guises of cerise, crimson, magenta, scarlet, carmine or vermilion certainly is.

Right now, it is the turn of flame trees, Rangoon creepers, red and orange *ixoras*, and *cordias* to show off their colorful wares.

So red is our theme for the next few weeks. Let's begin with a plant that has been given little space in these columns recently: the hibiscus, a shrub that brightens gardens from Bali to Brazil.

It is not just red; there are pink, yellow, purple and white hybrids



**ROSA-SINENSIS:** The tourists might not approve, but the recent rains have brought Phuket an abundance of flowering hibiscus to set green-fingered hearts aflame. Photo: Francis Chung

too. The generic hue is red, however, and some of the most magnificent cultivars of *rosa-sinensis* are a luminous scarlet or deep crimson, hence such evocative names as *Toreador* or *Brilliant*.

*Rosa-sinensis* is everywhere in Phuket. A shrub up to five meters tall, it is much used as a screen or hedge. The wide, symmetrical trumpet-shaped blooms, which vary in size from a couple of cen-

timeters to twelve or more, are ephemeral and last only one day.

But the hibiscus will flower so profusely in the right conditions that you rarely see a specimen without any floral accompaniment. The leaves are large, ovate or lobed, and one attractive variety often used for low hedges has variegated, pink-flushed foliage.

So what are the snags? Well,

*rosa-sinensis* is surprisingly susceptible to fungal and mealy-bug attacks, and is quite picky about its location. Full sun and a decent supply of moisture are mandatory if it is to flower well. It can become leggy and sometimes drops its leaves. Pruning is therefore recommended.

There are two other varieties, *schizopetalus*, which is always scarlet, and *mutabilis*, which as its name implies, changes color during the blooming period. Both are quite different in appearance from *rosa-sinensis*, and, in my garden at least, fare better. Their turn – and they deserve it – will come next week.

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured, you can email me anytime at: [drpaccampbell@gmail.com](mailto:drpaccampbell@gmail.com).



**SOGGY SELLS AND RED HOT DEALS:** From left to right, *Pereskia* and *Oleander* are both lackluster bloomers during the rains, but the *mutabilis* and *schizopetalis* hibiscus varieties do well in these changeable conditions. Photos (from left to right): Arria Belli, Mike Fisher, Tanak Juuyoh, Botanischer Garten TU Darmstadt.



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## Tip of the week

### Looking after your topsoil

**SOIL** supports the growth of plants and gives them access to water, nutrients and air. Most roots grow in the uppermost layer or topsoil. This layer, which in Phuket is often thin or even non-existent after construction, is biologically active, and is directly affected by the weather.

Improving your topsoil has the most beneficial effect on plant health. It contains about 50 % pore spaces filled with air and variable amounts of water depending on the rainfall, about 45% minerals (mostly rock particles) and 5% organic matter including roots, decaying leaves and stems, materials added by gardeners and soil-dwelling organisms.

Worms normally inhabit this layer and help to enrich the organic content by recycling dead leaves and converting them into humus. Dead leaves left to decompose in the tropics can become a haven for bugs and harmful bacteria.



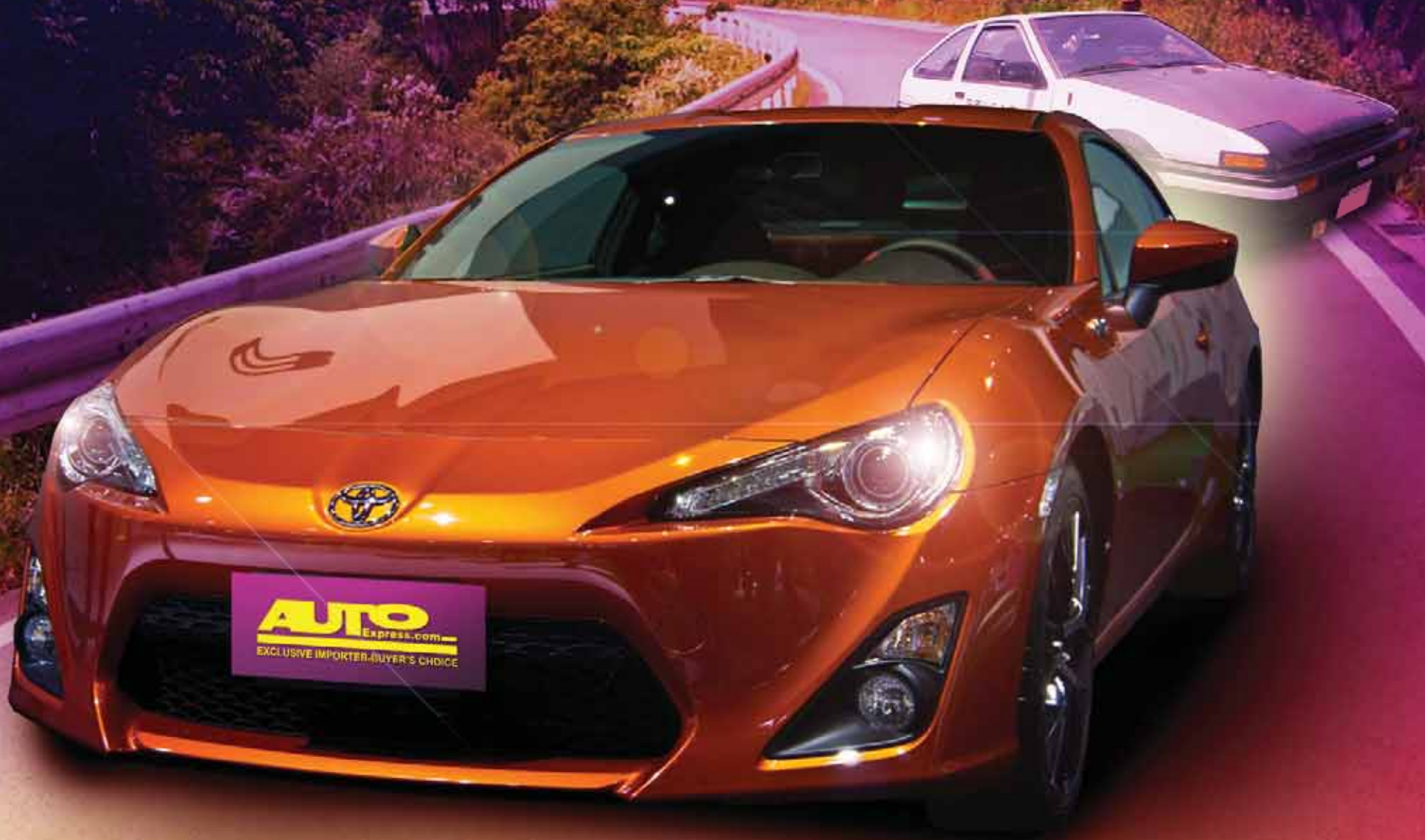
**WORMS:** Topsoil needs 'em. Photo: Jacob Levine.



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## Properties For Sale

### HOUSE FOR SALE: URGENT



4.9 million baht, 89sq wah (include furniture). Stone wall around the house & fruit garden. 4 air conditioners, telephone and Internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 CCTV. Located near the Heroines Monument towards to Tesco Lotus Thalung. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9\_designs@gmail.com

### PATONG CONDOS

2 condos, fully furnished. 4 million baht each for 55.5sqm. Nanai Road properties, high and dry. Tel: 080-040 1057 (English). Email: dvmmodarelli@hotmail.com

### HOUSE FOR SALE

Near British International School. 5-bedroom pool villa, 600/1,000sqm. 22 million baht ono. Tel: 084-185 4746.

### HOUSE FOR SALE IN BAAN PROMPHAN

2.5 floors, 5 mins to town, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Good for stay! 2.85 million baht. Tel: 083-506 9155. Email: sumitra.saetan@gmail.com

### LAND FOR SALE

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### HOUSE FOR SALE AT CHERNG TALAY

Permsap Villa, 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Fully furnished with big lawn and sports club. Price 8.9 million baht. Tel: 02-585 5086, 085-515 6714 (English & Thai), 082-457 4051 (English & Thai). Email: roxern@yahoo.com

### HOUSE IN KAMALA



For sale. 2 houses on land. 1 ngan 89sq wah. Chanote title, near mountain, peaceful and safe, 10 minutes from the beach. 7.5 million baht direct from owner. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: yaris.vios@gmail.com

### HOUSE & FURNITURE

Single house, 60sqm. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms and 3 toilets. In Chaipruek Village at Land & Houses Park, Chalong. Good location and entrance from bypass road. Built 2 years ago. Tel: 084-627 7001.

### LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

390sq wah, nice flat land, quiet area, Chanote. In Pasak Soi 5 near Laguna Home. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118, 086-709 2933.

### D CONDO 1, KATHU

-29.94sqm, mountain view, price 1,278,000 baht.  
-29.70sqm, mountain view, price 1,280,000 baht.  
-29.79sqm, pool view, price 1,330,000 baht.  
-29.70sqm, pool view, price 1,365,000 baht.  
Contact Vutdy on 081-892 3709.

### KAMALA HOUSE FOR SALE



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

### EXCEPTIONAL VALUE IN BKK



Large house in Sukhumvit Soi 54. 24 million baht. 104 sq wah, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 2 living areas, office, conference room, fitness room, large storeroom, laundry room. Quality fixtures & fittings. Space: 600sqm. Parking for 5 cars. Flood free. Email: scott.tanya@hotmail.com

### NICE PLOT FOR SALE



Near Layan Hill Estate. (Manik-Bang Jo area). Ready to build housing/pool villas. 1,400sqm. Chanote title. Price: 7.2 million baht. Neg. Contact owner on 080-520 2989. Email: edc9designs@gmail.com

### PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

### 30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

### GOOD VALUE

3 bed, 4 bath, with pool. 5 million baht, a must to view. Tel: 076-374562, 089-469 2897. Email: adams.derrick75@yahoo.com

### PATONG APARTMENT, 1 BEDROOM

Front overlooks pool, fully furnished, TV, kitchen. Freehold: 4 million baht. Email: markloisw@hotmail.com

### BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



Fully landscaped, 3 air conditioners, telephone and internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen. Located near the Heroines Monument towards to Paklok. Land size is 53sq wah. 3 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9designs@gmail.com

### CONDO IN SUPALAI PARK



for sale. Near Seng Ho Bookstore in Phuket Town. Studio, 30sqm, floor 15, sea view, aircon, furnished. Price: 1.9 million baht. Ready to move in July 2012. Tel: 089-472 9118.

### HOUSE IN PATONG



Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

### CHALONG FOR SALE/RENT

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### TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



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Condo at Royal Place Project, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2fl, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 089-469 1813, 086-476 9612.

### PATONG BANGLA ROAD

XL shophouse for sale. Phar Lap bar building. Have a look, make an offer. Email: coco.diorster@gmail.com

### KAMALA HOUSE LEASEHOLD

18 years left, 300sqm, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, aircon, furnished, sundeck, carport, photos available. Price: 3.75 million baht. Rent 32,000 baht per month for 6 months rent. Tel: 084-716 0502.

### KOH YAO NOI

11 rai 78sq wah, waterfront, unobstructed sea view, Chanote. Tel: 080-144 7801. Email: kohyaonoi999@yahoo.com

### PATONG STUDIO 28SQM

Freehold, all new & furnished. 1.4 million baht. Tel: 089-971 5664. Email: ronny2507@hotmail.com

### 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

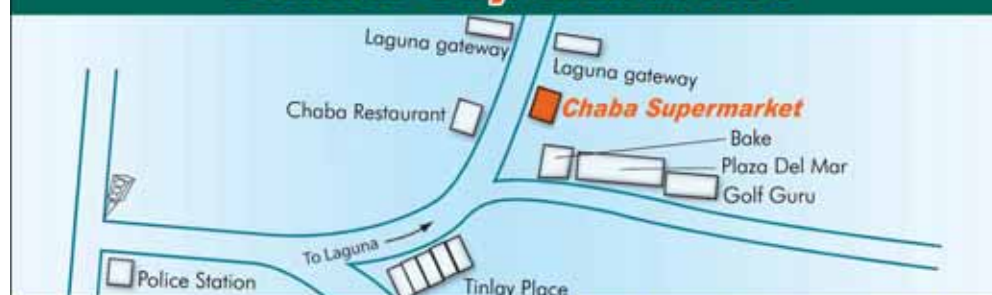
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**Deadline for all other ads: Saturday 12 noon.**



## Properties For Rent

### COZY HOUSE FOR RENT



near Nai Ham. House built to high grade, 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. 22,000 baht/month. Contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-383 0936. Email: hunt17@hotmail.com

### POOL VILLA IN CHALONG

Two-bedroom pool villa in the heart of Chalong. Fully furnished, Wifi, etc. 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-473 7718 (English & Thai). Email: info@saisabaa villa.com

### BIG HOUSE FOR RENT IN KATHU

Big house for rent in Kathu. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms with large yard. 5 minutes' drive to shopping center and golf course. Tel: 090-168 7325.

### BALINESE POOL VILLAS

Luxury boutique villas available for short or long-term rent. Swimming pool, two or three bedrooms. Rates from US\$89 per night. Tel: 076-384691, 087-264 9695. Email: enrico@easyhomephuket.com For further details, please see our website at: <http://villasuksan.com/gallery.htm>

### HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



near Heroine Monument. furnished, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

### SPACIOUS STUDIO

5 mins walk to beach and 10 mins to Jungceylon. Call or mail for details. Tel: +65-9-007 8633 (English), 084-883 5751 (English & Thai). Email: casajope@yahoo.com Please see our website at [www.phuket-patong-condo.com/Studio/](http://www.phuket-patong-condo.com/Studio/)

### CONDO PATONG

Studios and one-bedroom apartments for rent at Phuket Place and Patong Tower. Tel: 081-892 1621.

### RAWAI RENT

Nice, 1-bedroom apartment. 2 aircons, cable, kitchen, fridge, fully furnished. 10,000 baht. Tel: 085-757 3240.

### 2-BEDROOM HOUSE, BANG TAO



2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Chermg Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

### LONG-TERM RENT

1-2 bedroom, furnished houses, beautiful garden, Chalong area 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311.

### PATONG LUXURY APARTMENTS

WiFi, maid, big pool, security, cable TV. Close to Town. From 24,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-052 8082 (English). Email: phvcondo@aol.com

### PAKHLOK BUNGALOWS

2 bathrooms, fully furnished, com pool. Please call for more informations. Tel: 081-079 7121, 086-268 8926.

### ONE UNIT PATONG

One bedroom unit Patong. Fully furnished, aircon, cable TV, WiFi and power, top view and quite 20,000 baht per month. Contact Phtam 082-271 4487.

### CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE



Condo at Royal Place Project, Bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2fl, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 089-469 1813, 086-476 9612.

### LUXURY POOL VILLA



For rent or sale in Loch Palm, only 5 minutes from British International School. Fully fitted European kitchen including Siemens appliances, large pool 12m x 4m, 3 double bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, views overlooking Loch Palm Golf Course 14th & 15th fairways, fully air conditioned, fully furnished. Rent 70,000 baht per month. Rental includes management fees, pool maintenance, garden service and monthly pest control service. This villa is priced to sell at 14.5 million baht. Baan Suan Loch Palm 29/33, Moo 5, Kathu District Phuket 83120. Tel: 087-124 5706 (English & Thai). Email: sasitornbrudhiprabha@hotmail.com, agfarrow@hotmail.com

### ORCHID KATHU HEIGHTS

Stylish serviced apartments. Studio, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Rooftop pool, Free WiFi. Also beachfront condo. Tel: 081-892 0038. For further details, please see our website at [www.orchidkathuheights-phuket.com](http://www.orchidkathuheights-phuket.com)

### B.L. APARTMENT

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.

### APARTMENT FOR RENT

Patong Condotel, 1-year contract, 14,000 baht per month. 1 bedroom, 1 living room, dining room with kitchen, fully furnished. Tel: 081-536 7985.

### THE HEIGHTS 2 + 3 BED APTS

2-bed, spacious, modern apartments, huge terraces & 3 bed pool villas. Free Wi-Fi. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

### HOUSE IN PATONG



Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

## BEACH VILLA NEAR LAGUNA

3 BEDROOMS SLEEP 6  
AVAIL FOR SHORTTERM RENTAL  
AT 2,000 BAHT PER NIGHT  
PLEASE CALL 081-0861428



### 4-Bedroom Villa for Rent / Sale

Fully Finished, Wi-Fi, Cable TV, Maid, Pool Cleaner, and Gardener are included.  
[www.PropertySeekByKMD.com](http://www.PropertySeekByKMD.com)  
(081) 895-7310

### TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

### KATA HILL ONE BEDROOM

Fully-furnished, one bedroom, bath, kitchen, aircon, internet and cable TV. 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

### PATONG CONDO

58sqm, fully furnished, aircon, internet, cable TV. 16,000 baht/month. Tel: 081-891 3740.

### KATA SEAFRONT LUXURY APT

1 bedroom, 5-star, spa, gym, ADSL, quiet with views. Great price! Email: asiasail@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at [www.katasala.com](http://www.katasala.com)

### LUXURY CONDO PATONG

2-bedrooms, 2-bathrooms, fully furnished condo, overlooks swimming pool. Prefer long-term tenant. Available now. Tel: 084-523 1714 (English). Email: bem@global.net.au

### FULLY FURNISHED HOUSE



2-storey house 3 bed, 3 bath near Ao Makham. Tel: 081-892 4311. 20,000 baht/month. For further details, please see our website at <http://panwagreen.weebly.com>

### KAMALA APARTMENT



Fully furnished with kitchen, ready to move in. Starts at 18,000 baht/month. Contact Mr Joke. Tel: 088-751 3066. Email: handyman@phuketplus.co.th

### 3 BED POOL VILLA, KOH KAEW



Behind Boat Lagoon. 60,000 baht per month. 5,000 to 7,000 baht per day. Tel: 084-783 9054 (English). Email: oggyowen@yahoo.com

### MAKHAM 3 BR SEAVIEW VILLA

Cottage-style pool villa for long-term rent by Makham Bay. Tel: 076-391445, 087-386 3388 (English & Thai), 084-305 4333 (English). Email: shanya.arnan@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.374250002616957.78946.374247085950582&type=3>

### ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)

Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

### BANG TAO VILLAS FOR RENT

1, 2, 4 bedrooms, with large pool, fully furnished, from 18,000 baht. Tel: 090-156 7927.

### RAWAI RENT

Nice, 1-bedroom apartment. 2 aircons, cable, kitchen, fridge, fully furnished. 10,000 baht. Tel: 085-757 3240.

### KATHU CONDO

58sqm, fully furnished, aircon, internet, cable TV. 9,000 baht/month. Tel: 081-891 3740.

Let us take your ad to the top of Google with a 20% discount!



Your key to fast-track placement and easy payment for ads at Thailand's LARGEST classifieds marketplace. Hundreds of new ads every week! Like to have one?

Mail: [AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net](mailto:AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net)



**See more classified ads at [www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)**





Phuket International Hospital provides high quality hospital services to both Thai and Foreign Nationals, and is seeking to employ a German speaking coordinator.

#### GERMAN COORDINATOR PHUKET INTERNATIONAL HOSPITAL

**This is a full time position open to both Thai and Foreign nationals**

The German Coordinator's primary role is, at a macro level, to act as an interface between the foreign community and the hospital and at a micro level, between the patient and healthcare providers.

##### Essential Qualifications

- Fluency in German or more European languages
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

##### Desirable Qualifications

- Clinical, nursing or other relevant health care skills or experience
- Thai language proficiency
- Marketing or Management experience
- Professional presentation
- Demonstrated ability to meet defined objectives and deadlines
- Computer skills

Interested candidates should contact James Cawood or Lotte Dietrich for a position description and forward their CV-supporting documents by May 15, 2012 to [james@phuketinternationalhospital.com](mailto:james@phuketinternationalhospital.com) or [lotte@phuketinternationalhospital.com](mailto:lotte@phuketinternationalhospital.com)

**italasia**  
ITALASIA GROUP - THAILAND  
Phuket Branch phone 076 282561



### EXECUTIVE SALES MANAGER - PHUKET

Italasia is the exclusive Importer of Illy Coffee - Gruppo illy products and La Spaziale Coffee Machines in Thailand. Illy coffee quality and services are appreciated by Hotels and restaurants worldwide and enjoyed by consumers at fine restaurants, hotels, cafes, retail stores in Thailand and other 150 countries worldwide. Illy's culture can be described as offering an environment with perfect blend of empowered quality-minded professionals who achieve results through teamwork and innovation.

#### Position Description

Our Phuket Branch has a position available for a motivated Sales Manager who has excellent relationship skills and can demonstrate an outstanding track record in sales.

#### Responsibilities

To help deliver our strategy the successful candidate will be responsible for:

Promote and represent the interests of illy Coffee  
Assist Country Manager in implementing the illy coffee business plan in Phuket  
Develop and hunt for new and strategic client opportunities;  
Achieve monthly and quarterly targets set by the Country Manager.

#### Skills, Experience, Qualifications and Personality Attributes

The candidate MUST HAVE the following skills, experience, qualifications and personality attributes:

#### Skills & Experiences

At least 5 years related working experience; Experience in selling B2B; Experience with HORECA/F&B channels; Excellent in communication skill; Excellent selling skill; Referral from 2 previous job assignments; At least 4 years related working experience;

#### Personality Attributes

A positive, results orientated and customer focused attitude; Be self-motivated and willing to work outside or normal business working hours to meet business and client expectations and objectives; A desire to take responsibility and ownership to see actions/issues through to completion; A flexible attitude.

#### Remuneration and benefits

Attractive base salary, incentives and allowances; professional training from Università del Caffè - Thailand.

#### Contact

Interested candidates please send CV to [illycoffeethailand@me.com](mailto:illycoffeethailand@me.com)

Preferred language for received applications: English - advanced only.

### SUMMER CAMP TEACHERS

British International School, Phuket are seeking ESL teachers for their annual July English Summer Camp programme. Full programme details are available on our school website: [www.bisphuket.ac.th](http://www.bisphuket.ac.th). Applicants are ideally required to have a recognized education degree and a TEFL qualification. Please submit your applications to [ppreez@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:ppreez@bisphuket.ac.th)

### NEED BABYSITTER

Our son is 3 months old. We live in Rawai. We are looking for someone (Thai or Filipino) to watch our son everyday from 9am to 6pm, excluding Sunday (day off). We are looking for a 30-40 year old, English speaking, non-smoker with nurse education certificate. Responsibilities to include homework, preparing dinner and snacks, and other household duties to be negotiated. Contact K.Lek. Tel.086-951 9406.

### ENGLISH TUTOR

English tutor available to teach children of all ages. BA English LIT. TEFL. 300 - 500 baht per hour. Contact: Gene. Tel: 081-827 5574.

### HELP NEEDED

Home help required, good English essential. Mostly babysitting, some housework. Own transport or live in, salary by negotiation. Tel: 083-395 5707.

## ASSISTANT MANAGER IN PHUKET

- Bachelor's degree
- Good English
- Thai National
- Female 25-28 years old

Please send resume, photo & expected salary to [svc@svensonhaircenter.com](mailto:svc@svensonhaircenter.com) or call 076-249657-8

## Phuket Gazette

As the result of a major expansion in its **Classified Advertising** business due to the launch of the newspaper's Nationwide Edition, the *Phuket Gazette* seeks to add a **Receptionist** to its existing team of five.

#### Qualified candidates will be:

- ▶ Thai nationals, aged at least 24
- ▶ Service-minded with an outgoing personality
- ▶ Able to work well with large numbers of advertisers, both foreign and Thai

#### and should have:

- ▶ A Bachelor's Degree from a recognizable university
- ▶ A good sense of organization and respect for details
- ▶ Knowledge of basic office software

Knowledge of InDesign, PageMaker or Quark Express would be a plus.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Khun Porntiwa, Assistant Manager-Classifieds, at [Jeab@PhuketGazette.Net](mailto:Jeab@PhuketGazette.Net)

**The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd**  
79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasatri Rd, Koh Kaew  
A. Muang, Phuket 83000  
Tel: 076-273555, ext 207 Fax: 076-615240

### SALES OFFICER

Required: bachelor's degree, female, good written and spoken English. Computer literate. Tel. 076-244491. Email: [don1719@hotmail.com](mailto:don1719@hotmail.com) Website: [www.layan tara.com](http://www.layan tara.com)

### SALES & MARKETING POSITIONS

Highly successful Sales & Marketing company requires motivated individuals to join our team here in beautiful Phuket. Immediate start available. English speaking, full training, excellent earning potential and startup packages available. Come and join a winning team. Email: [jengore@inspire.net.nz](mailto:jengore@inspire.net.nz)

### SUCCESSFUL SALES & MARKETING

Company requires enthusiastic, motivated individuals to join our well-established and successful team. English speaking. Full training, great commissions & startup / entry packages available. Email: [jengore@hotmail.com](mailto:jengore@hotmail.com)

### ACCOUNTANT

Elite Yachting at Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket is looking for a Thai accountant with a bachelor's degree and min 3-5 years experience. Good knowledge of Quickbooks, well organized and fluent in spoken & written English. Responsible for invoicing, payments, VAT, w/t, salaries, income/expense statements for yacht accounts, etc. Interested. Tel: 081-978 6086 (English). Please send your CV to [jurg@phuket-yachts.com](mailto:jurg@phuket-yachts.com)

### LIVE-IN HOUSE MAID

English couple, no children, need Thai housemaid to live in. Tel: 085-790 2241.

### BOAT CREW WANTED

Looking for experienced crew for 6 months to cruise Phuket / Borneo / Phuket on comfortable 20m trawler yacht. Tel: 082-806 9104 (English). Please send CV to [boatjob1234@gmail.com](mailto:boatjob1234@gmail.com)

### CAN CONNECTION

Can connection to very big company for soft drink. Good commission. Tel: 089-593 8303.

### RECEPTION STAFF

Responsible Thai female needed for reception at Patong hotel. Monthly salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-892 1621.

### SENIOR ACCOUNTANT KAMALA

For trading company in Kamala. We seek an experienced Senior Accountant. Must know Express software, English, and understand the import business. Salary starts at 25,000 baht + transportation+ accommodation+ BUPA health insurance. Work 6 days a week. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-322663, 086-773 4538 (English). Fax: 076-322664. Email: [skgf@skgf.asia](mailto:skgf@skgf.asia)

### DRIVER BANG TAO

Family need a driver with experience, English skills. Salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-719 3470.

### ASSISTANT BRANCH MANAGER

Salary 20,000 baht + excellent commission & benefits. Tel: 081-823 4627, 085-782 1200. Email: [ying@phuketpooltables.com](mailto:ying@phuketpooltables.com)

### JOB WITH A SEAVIEW

Office admin-secretary (Thai) needed for property sales office in Nai Thon. Fluent English and Thai (speaking, writing, computer skills, email, internet) required. Salary from 17,000 baht. Depends on skills, experience. Tel: 084-840 7624.

### KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED

We are looking for a native English kindergarten teacher to join our team to teach 10 -12 children aged 3-6 years. Must have a minimum Bachelor's Degree or equivalent. Tel: 076-383150, 084-520 4978. Fax: 076-383150. Email: [info@cravensnurseryphuket.com](mailto:info@cravensnurseryphuket.com)

**Looking for a job?**  
**Looking for a better candidate?**  
**Find more Recruitment Classifieds at [www.PhuketGazette.Net](http://www.PhuketGazette.Net)!**



# Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

## Administration Assistant

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with an outgoing personality. Experience in business administration combined with good management and organizational skills is essential. A good command of written and spoken English is also important. Knowledge of PageMaker/InDesign and Office software would be an advantage.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to [marc@phuketgazette.net](mailto:marc@phuketgazette.net)

### The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Kaew  
A. Muang, Phuket 83000  
Tel: 076-273555 Fax: 076-615240

## MY STORAGE

Secure, Clean & Cost Effective Self Storage

MY STORAGE – Thailand's No.1 Self Storage facility located at Jungceylon Shopping Center, Patong, Phuket – is seeking a well organised and enthusiastic Facility Administrator / PA.

### Facility Administrator / PA

- Bachelor's degree or related field
- Thai national 25 years old or older, fluent in English (written and spoken)
- Minimum of 3-5 years experience in the related field
- Computer literate with good knowledge of Microsoft Office
- Excellent administrative and communication skills required
- Bookkeeping and office management skills required
- Self-motivated, proactive, flexible and well organized
- Service-minded and must have attention to detail
- Experience in property management an advantage.

Submit your CV with recent photo and a covering letter in English to [hr@mystorageasia.com](mailto:hr@mystorageasia.com) or call 076 29 29 09 for further information.

Want to know more about MY STORAGE? Visit [mystorageasia.com](http://mystorageasia.com)

### THAI STAFF WANTED

Work on shifting schedule, can speak English, customer service. Good salary with bonus. Patong. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

### JAPANESE STAFF

Wedding coordinator. Japanese female, good English and computer skills. Sa-mer Wedding (Boat Lagoon). Email: [info@sa-mer.com](mailto:info@sa-mer.com) Website: [www.sa-mer.com](http://www.sa-mer.com)

### REAL-ESTATE STAFF WANTED

**MOLOKO PHUKET PROPERTY**

Looking for full-time young Thai staff, fluent in spoken and written English with real estate business experience. Tel: 084-060 7050. Please send an email with a photo to [info@moloko-phuket.com](mailto:info@moloko-phuket.com) For further details, please see our website at <http://moloko-phuket.com>

## DIVE SUPPLY

### Dive Supply – Phuket

Challenging position at our head office in Chalong:

#### ASSISTANT WORKSHOP MANAGER

- Foreign national, 28+
- Technical background
- Excellent English
- Managerial experience
- Customer Service Skills
- Experience with Thai staff
- Computer literate

We offer excellent salary & benefits, permanent position  
To apply send CV, photo, availability & salary to [service@divesupply.com](mailto:service@divesupply.com)

## Grace Garden Management Ltd.

Grace Garden Management Co., Ltd. is going to launch a top class dining restaurant on the east coast of Phuket, The Breeze @ Cape Yamu

We are looking for competent, enthusiastic and highly qualified individuals for the following vacancies to join our business:

### Cook 1 Position

- at least 3-4 years experience, fusion cooking, international cuisine.
- be able to manage of supplies and inventory

### Bar Manager 1 Position

- 1 year experience in beverage section, control the bar system, mix drinks and create cocktails

### Waiters or Waitresses 3 Positions

All above position should be able to communicate in English  
Please send your CV to Human Resources Department

222 Moo 7, Paklok Sub-district, Thalang District, Phuket 83110  
Email: [annie@campbellkane.com](mailto:annie@campbellkane.com)  
Tel: 089 4741268, Fax 076 529673

## Villa Manager

- Excellent English communication
- Knowledge of Villa hospitality
- Experience of working in villa/ live in
- Leadership, teamwork
- Experience of housekeeping, food, maintenance
- Driving license, own car

Contact: [hr@phuketvillasandhomes.com](mailto:hr@phuketvillasandhomes.com)

Tel: 076-527633

Mobile: 087-8810003 HR

## GENESIS

THE MAGIC SPECTACULAR  
by DANZE FANTASY

Genesis is a world class show created by internationally known Danze Fantasy Productions. Located in a brand new 450-seat theatre, the business is growing rapidly and we urgently need additional talented, experienced managers to join the team. Contact: [hr@danzefantasy.com](mailto:hr@danzefantasy.com)

## Business Operations Manager

### Experience Required:

- ▶ Degree in Business or Accounting
- ▶ Previously held senior position in a service business
- ▶ Experience in setting up business process
- ▶ Sales/Marketing experience a plus
- ▶ Must be organised and detail oriented
- ▶ Understanding of business IT programs – Quick books, etc.
- ▶ 2+ years experience in managing a Thai business/staff

### Job Description & Responsibilities:

- ▶ Oversee operation of approximately 45 staff
- ▶ Manage Finance, HR, Box Office and Concession teams
- ▶ Drive internal process efficiency for staff, customers and suppliers
- ▶ Produce regular reporting for business owners

## Ocean Resort Group

is currently seeking for the following positions:

- ▶ Bakery Chef
- ▶ Assistant Resort Manager

Contact Human Resources Department

Phone: +66 (0) 76-314263-69 ext 7732 or

email your CV to [hrrsunwing@oceanresortgroup.net](mailto:hrrsunwing@oceanresortgroup.net),

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

## Authorized Agents for Classified Advertising:

### CHALONG

- Julapan Stationery (Chao Fa East Rd) Tel: 076-282254
- KL Mart (Patak Rd, Chalong Circle) Tel: 076-280400
- Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe Tel: 076-282403  
(Fisherman's Way Business Center, Chaofa East Rd)

### PATONG

- Taurus Travel Tel: 076-344521-2  
(Aroonsom Plaza)
- Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe Tel: 076-290468  
(Aroonsom Plaza)
- Deli Supermarket Tel: 076-342275  
(Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd)

### PHUKET CITY

- Earth Language Training Centre School Tel: 076-232398  
(Phang Nga Rd)
- Sin & Lee (Thalang Rd) Tel: 076-258369
- iTree complete printing service Tel: 076-255425  
(Tesco Lotus Phuket Town) bank zone

### CHERNG TALAY

- Chaba Supermarket (at the Laguna gateway) Tel: 076-325586

### RAWAI

- The Network property office (Saiyuan Rd) Tel: 076-613173

### KARON

- EuroStyle Tailors (Luang Por Chuan Rd) Tel: 076-396911

## SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

Crossword puzzle:

**COFFEE**  
**break**

1	U	S	I	N	G	6	I	T	E	M	S	11	O	L	D
14	R	E	N	E	E	15	P	I	A	N	O	16	F	E	E
17	N	I	G	E	R	18	A	N	T	O	N	19	T	A	N
						20	M	A	S	T		22	G	E	E
24	P	A	R	I	A	H	S		28	I	N	F	A	N	T
30	A	T	H	E	N	A		31	S	N	O	U	T		
32	S	T	O	R	Y		33	C	H	A	R	L	A	T	A
37	H	I	D			38	G	H	A	N	A		39	A	M
40	A	C	E	T	A	M	I	D	E		43	A	L	I	B
						45	E	V	A	D	E		46	O	N
						47	S	E	R	E	N	E		49	H
50	C	H	O	I	R					51	T	R	O	U	
52	L	O	S			53	A	M	I	N	O		56	I	T
61	A	R	I			62	G	E	N	U	S		63	T	R
64	M	E	N			65	E	A	S	T	S		66	Y	U



## Articles For Sale

### FREEZER, FUGE TABLE

Sanden freezer, excl cond, 8,500 baht. Fugeball soccer table, as new, 10 baht per game, 35,000 baht. Tel: 086-283 9100.

### 7KW. 3-PHASE WATER PUMP



Barely used (10 hours). Have 2 units for sale. Price: 15,000 baht each. Contact Margy on 089-908 7486.

### NEW INVICTA WATCH FOR SALE

Very large Invicta Men's 6913 Corduba Collection Interceptor Chronograph Blue Polyurethane watch, comes with box and guarantee. Tel: 076-319699. Email: sun parasol@gmail.com

### COFFEE TABLE

Bamboo coffee table for sale. Excellent condition. 110cm square with inset in center (for flower decoration, etc). 10,000 baht ono. Email: beijingmarcher@yahoo.com

### CHINESE TEA

Quality Chinese tea for sale. Contact Peter to arrange a free tea tasting. Tel: 082-278 1575.

### HIX HEAT PRESS DUAL PADS

I am selling my Heat Press Made in USA, very highly used (about 60 t-shirts), like new. I bought it in Bangkok. Paid 125,000 baht, selling 60,000 baht. Tel: 076-283004, 086-742 3437. Email: joelvdo@hotmail.com

### FURNITURE AND MORE

Furniture, sofa, TV and bookcase, chairs, lamps and more. All in good condition. Please call or email for photos. Khun Arno. Tel: 087-827 4991 (English). Email: arnyfirst@hotmail.com

### FURNITURE AND OTHER ITEMS

Wooden frame "L" sofa with mustard color upholstery. 16k. Modern glass chandelier 5k. Huge silver candelabra 5k. All in excellent condition. Standard Lamp 1,500. All reduced for quick sale. Email for photos at beijingmarcher@yahoo.com

## Articles Wanted

### EXTENSION LADDER WANTED

Used 20 to 24 foot (6 to 7 meter) ladder wanted to either rent or purchase. Tel: 081-797 2110. Email: iolare@yahoo.com

### FULL-SIZED USED BATH WANTED

Looking to find an old plastic or stone full-sized bath to use in a pet washing parlor - something large enough to put big dogs in the wash them. Please email gone2thedoggies@gmail.com with photo

## Audio/Video Equipment

### SOKEN SURROUND SYSTEM

Amp + 5 powerful speakers, crisp treble & solid bass. Paid 15,000 baht, sell 7,500 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 082-283 8902. Email: IIBC.Web@gmail.com

### STAGE-SOUND / LIVE MUSIC

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## International Sport

## QPR to decide

By Dean Noble

QUEENS Park Rangers and Sunderland will both be part of the final chapter in this year's Premiership title race, with goal difference very likely being the deciding factor for the first time.

Sunderland have little to play for as they languish mid-table, after showing such good early promise, other than to deny Manchester United their 13<sup>th</sup> premiership trophy. A good incentive in itself.

QPR on the other hand have their Premiership status to fight for.

Alex Ferguson seems to think that there is nothing more United can do to determine the outcome, and has thrown his dice by backing his old stalwart saying, "Mark [Hughes] knows his job. He was sacked by City in a very unethi-

cal way and he will remember that. Mark Hughes' teams always fight but QPR players are fighting for survival. The whole future of the club could be resting on the game and I only wish Sparky was playing... Mark going back to the Etihad is a great incentive for him.



BRIGHT SPARK: Will Mark Hughes snuff out City's dream.

The biggest incentive is that his team need a result to stay up."

Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini finally conceded that the title is their's for the taking after Gennaro Gargani Yaya Touré netted twice against Newcastle, to

edge tantalizingly close to that elusive top-flight title.

So will the Football Association be delivering the trophy to Etihad or to Old Trafford?

It would be great to see the City fans' misery ended after 44 years in the wilderness, however the footballing gods can be cruel and the Blues will need to be at their best.

There is absolutely no reason why City should fail. They have been excellent all season, with the odd exception. Professional and industrious when required, other times sublime in their goal-scoring creation and conversion. They deserve it.

Next week see here for a preview of Chelsea's bid for Champion League glory, and the huge ramifications if they are successful for others.

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES			
MAN CITY vs QPR	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
SUNDERLAND vs MAN UTD	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
WEST BROM vs ARSENAL	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
TOTTENHAM vs FULHAM	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
EVERTON vs NEWCASTLE	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
CHELSEA vs BLACKBURN	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
STOKE vs BOLTON	SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012	21:00	
Norwich vs Aston Villa			
Wigan vs Wolves			
Swansea vs Liverpool			

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE			
TEAM	P	GD	PTS
1 Man City	34	63	86
2 Man Utd	37	55	86
3 Arsenal	37	24	67
4 Tottenham	37	23	66
5 Newcastle	37	7	65
6 Chelsea	37	18	61
7 Everton	37	8	53
8 Liverpool	37	8	52
9 Fulham	37	-1	52
10 West Brom	37	-6	47
11 Sunderland	37	0	45
12 Swansea	37	-8	44
13 Norwich	37	-16	44
14 Stoke	37	-17	44
15 Wigan	37	-21	40
16 Aston Villa	37	-14	38
17 QPR	37	-22	37
18 Bolton	37	-31	35
19 Blackburn	37	-29	31
20 Wolves	37	-41	25

## Testing times

SO TESTING at Mugello is over and we are ready for the next Grand Prix (GP). People are asking why F1 takes a week to test when it could fit-in an extra GP.

One reason is that testing provides lots of the thrills of a GP at a fraction of the cost for fans, and they turned up to watch. Of course it's not cheap for the teams.

In the 1970s, Bernie Ecclestone rearranged F1's commercial rights, and transformed the sport into a billion-dollar business. Previously circuit owners controlled the income of the teams and negotiated with each individually, however Ecclestone persuaded the teams to "hunt as a pack". He offered F1 to circuit owners as a package. In return almost all are required to surrender track-side advertising. The result is that most circuits require state funding to be viable.

Why is Mugello not on the F1 GP calendar? Perhaps even more interestingly, why

are the mundane Spanish circuits included?

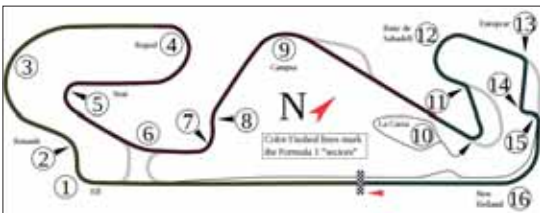
Spain is at the heart of Europe's financial crisis, and it is hard to explain why they keep subsidizing lacklustre tracks. The new French President may not be willing to subsidize the mooted French GP either.

Silverstone failed in its talks with potential Qatari investors that would enable it to upgrade, and the Nurburgring operators face

eviction over rent arrears. So some of the great circuits look shaky.

The F1 series originated with the pre-war European Grands Prix. The "formula" is the rules which all cars must meet. F1 was a new formula agreed during 1946, with the first race that year. The first World Championship race was held at Silverstone in 1950. A championship for constructors followed in 1958.

Spanish Grands Prix have been held at six circuits, remarkable for a minor racing nation with uninspiring circuits.



Circuit de Catalunya. Image: Will Pittenger



BLOOMING: Romain Grosjean testing upgrades made to the Lotus E20 at the Mugello track in preparation for the Spanish Grand Prix. Photo: AFP / VINCENZO PINTO

But like it or not, the circus is now en route to Barcelona for the Circuit de Catalunya, the most over studied track of the year. So many teams test here that every nuance of every corner is recorded in exquisite detail in the databases of every team engineer. Expect no surprises. Why is this not the test track?

So who should we look for at Barcelona? Lotus looks remarkably well placed to provide a fifth race winner in the first five races. The car has been remarkably consistent, even if Romain

Grosjean has not. They look the team to beat after dominating the last two days at Mugello, and have promised a raft of improvements at Barcelona.

And the others will be trying hard; McLaren, Red Bull, Mercedes, and Ferrari. And watch the midfield. The teams there are starting to demand to be taken seriously. The green light is at 7pm Sunday if you want to watch the race live. The forecast at the moment is for rain, which would add spice.

— The Digby

## SPORTS briefs...

**GOLF:** Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant romped to an eight shot victory in the inaugural Luang Prabang Laos Open last weekend.

A final round five-under-par 67, for a 21-under tournament total, saw him secure his third title on the ASEAN PGA Tour.

"It is a very special feeling to win in Laos. It is exciting to be here especially as the game of golf is new to this country," said Thaworn.

Filipino Jay Bayron ended in second place after shooting a 65, while Thai Thanyakon Khongpha was a further four strokes back in third.

**STRANGE SPORTS:** Knockers, the brain-child of Steve Wienecke from Missouri, is a mix of 8-ball pool and bowling.

The game follows the rules of pool, with the exception that the "cue ball" is picked-up and thrown at the object ball to pocket it. Once the cue ball has been touched the player is not allowed to move until a shot is taken.

Of course everything is on a much larger scale, four-times to be exact. The "baize" is approximately the length of bus, with the balls and pockets sized to match.

**ALTHETICS:** Usain Bolt has posted the fastest 100 meter time of the year at 9.82 seconds during the International Invitational.

Bolt, the current Olympic champion, is looking to retain his title at the London Games, which starts on July 25, incidentally opening with women's group matches in football.

The Jamaican has recorded the top three times, setting the World record at 9.58 seconds during the World Championship finals in August 2009.

Yohan Blake, also Jamaican, will most likely be Bolt's biggest threat.

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# Southern Sea Kirin forfeit FA cup, Warlords prevail

## Thai Yamaha 1

By Steven Layne

FC PHUKET became the first Thai club this season to concede their FA Cup campaign without even putting up a fight, forfeiting their opening match, an away fixture scheduled for Wednesday against Division 2 upstarts Trat FC.

The decision, announced by team executives on Tuesday, follows the Southern Sea Kirin losing 1-0 to the Saraburi FC Warlords in league play on Saturday afternoon at Surakul Stadium.

An early goal by Saraburi's Panuwat Promyen was all that was needed to secure the win and move his side past FC Phuket in the league table after eight weeks of play in Thai Yamaha 1 league.

Despite the early deficit, a determined FC Phuket dominated possession throughout much of the match and developed a number of good opportunities to

## THAI YAMAHA 1 WEEKEND 8 RESULTS

Chanthaburi	1 - 5	Sriracha
Royal Navy	2 - 4	Suphanburi
PTT Rayong	0 - 1	Bangkok Utd
JW Rangsit	1 - 0	Rajpracha
Air Force	0 - 0	Bangkok FC

For Southern side results, see below

equalize, but failed to convert.

Commendable drives by Phuket's Ibrahim Kanoute, Seongwon Byeon, Watcharapong Jun-ngam and Porimat Krongborisut kept the pressure on Saraburi's defenses high, bringing the crowd, capped at just over 1,100, to its toes with a number of shots on goal.

However, Saraburi's composed backs, finely coordinated by keeper Chanchai Yuanchit, denied Phuket from equalizing.

The loss plummets Phuket to 17th in the 18-team bracket, with just 7 points from a single win, four draws, and three losses.

Saraburi moved into 14th place



DENIED: Kanoute (green) is halted by Saraburi's backs. Photos: P. Choksakulpan

with their second win, adding to two draws and four losses.

Meanwhile, Krabi FC Andaman Eagles retain their top ranking in the Thai Yamaha 1 with a 2-0 home win over Khon Kaen FC, while Pattalung are stable in 8th place after drawing powerhouse newcomers Ratchaburi in an away match 1-1 – also on Saturday.

Songkhla move up into 5th place following a solid 2-0 win on Sunday over Nakhon Ratchasima FC.

Phuket returns to league action this Sunday with an away match against Southern region rivals, the Pattalung FC Swiftlets.

Kick off for that match, to be played at Pattalung Central Sports Stadium, will be at 6pm.

YAMAHA ONE LEAGUE TABLE				
TEAM	P	GD	PTS	
1 Krabi	7	8	18	
2 Sriracha	7	9	16	
3 Ratchaburi	7	8	16	
4 Suphanburi	7	8	15	
5 Songkhla	7	5	14	
6 PTT Rayong	7	4	14	
7 Bangkok Utd	7	2	13	
8 Pattalung	7	1	11	
9 Korat	7	-4	10	
10 Bangkok FC	7	1	9	
11 Air Force	7	-1	9	
12 Rajpracha	7	-2	9	
13 Khon Kaen	7	-3	9	
14 Royal Navy	7	-3	8	
15 Saraburi	7	-8	8	
16 JW Rangsit	7	-1	7	
17 Phuket	7	-5	7	
18 Chanthaburi	7	-19	1	

## WEEKEND 8 FIXTURES

SATURDAY, 12 MAY 2012		6pm
Korat	VS	J.W. Rangsit
Bangkok Utd	VS	Songkhla
Khon Kaen	VS	PTT Rayong
Suphanburi	VS	Krabi
Saraburi	VS	Chanthaburi
SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012		5pm
Bangkok FC	VS	Rajpracha
SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012		6pm
Pattalung	VS	FC Phuket
Air Force	VS	Ratchaburi
SUNDAY, 13 MAY 2012		6:30pm
Sriracha	VS	Navy

# Phuket United get gov's backing

## Thai Futsal League

LAST year's CAT Regional Futsal Tournament champions Phuket United have been assured financial support from "Phuket's father", in a gesture that will ensure the team can compete in the prestigious Thailand Futsal League (TFL) for the upcoming season.

Club administrators met with Phuket Governor Tri Augaradacha at his office on Tuesday.

Their first agenda was to appoint

Gov Tri as the club's Honorary President, a gesture which was followed by discussions about sponsorship and budget matters.

Phuket United acting club president Preechawut Keesin told Gov Tri that the team does not have an up-to-standard facility to stage home matches, adding that the 4,000 spectator capacity gym at Sapan Hin in Phuket Town, which the team has used in the past, is ideal.

However, the team has yet to receive permission from the Phuket City Municipality, who own and control the facility, he said.

"The city municipality administrators' terms are up this month, and as a result we have been unable to obtain any confirmation from them," he said, adding that the 2012-2013 season is set to commence in July, and finish in March of next year.

Preechawut added that while some potential sponsors have come forward to support the club for the upcoming season, it will not be sufficient for the season's budget.

Thus, the team needs supplemental support from the province to provide access to a facility that meets the league's requirements.



Governor Tri was appointed as Honorary President of Phuket United.

Gov Tri said he is pleased to support the team in "all areas", especially since the team has built a reputation for Phuket.

As for concerns about a competition facility and budget, Gov Tri said he doesn't see it being an issue, and is pleased to coordinate with the team and support them so that they can be ready for the season.

Phuket United earned their spot in the TFL after being crowned CAT Southern Region Champions, defeating Ranong 4-2 in the finals in July, last year.

The Andaman Pearl went on to be crowned CAT Champions League champions in December after defeating Highway Thonburi FC – the Bangkok regional champions – 7-3 in the final.

In that tournament, the list of Phuket's victims included Northern region champions Chiang Mai (5-



Phuket were crowned Champions League champions in December.

4), Isaan region runners-up Maha Sarakham (3-1) and Central region runners-up Pattaya SAT (6-2).

In contrast to 11-aside football Thailand is one of the more advanced futsal nations, currently ranked 11th in the world, having qualified for and made a number of appearances in the FIFA Futsal World Cup, held every four years. Thailand will host the Futsal World Cup in November, this year.

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# Bang Jo boys bring it home

YOUTH futsal teams comprised of boys from Bang Jo and Chong Talay on the North of the island came in second and fourth place at the Honda Super Cup Futsal Championship last weekend.

The teams qualified for the tournament after winning at Nai Yang, Patong and Kathu.

Bang Jo United's 'Under 11 years old' (u11) Team A was awarded a purse of 20,000 baht for 2nd place and Team B was awarded 5,000 baht for their 4th place finish.

Micah Duchowny scored seven goals and received the Fair Play Award; Hasaan Yaye also scored seven goals and Faad Thaksin scored six.

"It was a really great experience for all the kids to have this chance to compete at such a high level in a professional futsal arena," said Bobby Duchowny, Micah's father. Bang Jo United's U11 A team were last year's regional champs.

Player Faad Thaksin said, "It [The Honda Super Cup] was more difficult than most that we've played in but really a lot of fun."

Since competing in The Honda Cup, Bang Jo United (u11) has



THE BOYS FROM BANG JO: (under eleven) A and B futsal teams pose for a picture after winning second and fourth places at the Surat Thani Futsal Championship. Photos: Bobby Duchowny

gone on to further success as the A and B teams played each other in the finals of the Wing 7 Air Force Base Tournament in Surat Thani Tuesday. Bang Jo United brought home first and second place trophies at the tournament, playing seven aside football, with Team A beating Team B (4-2) in

the finals.

Coach Don Thaksin evaluated his team's performance this season, "After all of the kids hard work for the past two years it's great to see that Bang Jo is having so much success. They love representing Phuket in tournaments and in other provinces."

"With the recent wins Bang Jo has been invited to play in larger tournaments in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. League play doesn't begin again for another two months."

— *Phuket Gazette*



Micah Duchowny is presented with the Fair Play award by MP (Member of Parliament) Suthep Thaugsuban after scoring seven goals at the Super Cup Futsal Tournament.

## Golf Guru

THE European tour finally returned home for the Reale Seguros Open del Espana at Real club de golf de Sevilla this week.

The Spanish players were desperate for a home win, but the question was: "Could they handle the pressure?"

The course was designed by José María Olazábal, this year's Ryder cup captain, with numerous water hazards and a very deep rough to highlight wayward shots from the teeing areas.

The bad weather played its part during the first three days keeping the scoring down, and going into the last round Spain had two players in the top five though Englishman Simon Dyson led at 5-under-par. The weather improved with sunnier conditions prevailing, and all looked set for a last round shoot-out. The first to show signs was Italian Francesco Molinari starting at 1-under, older brother of Edwardo who won the US Amateur Championship in 2005; the first European to do so in 94 years.

Edwardo also won shortly after turning pro on the Challenge Tour which seemed to have spurred Francesco to become a very consistent performer on the European tour.



Francesco Molinari.

Incidentally both brothers made the team for the Ryder cup in 2010. Francesco by the turn had gone to 5-under par, with the back nine still to play. Pablo Larrazabal who began the day at 4-under completed the first nine at 1-over, though recovered with two birdies on the back to finish at 5-under.

Alejandro Canizares also tied for second place with his Spanish compatriot Larrazabal, with 1-over par for the front nine, but managed a strong finish eventually recording a 5-under par finish. Dane Soren Kjeldsen had a mixed bag and tied with the two Spaniards, where as Dyson started like a train, making birdie on the first and second to take a commanding lead, only to be derailed with six bogeys, dropping all the way back to 1-under overall.

This left Molinari to continue his onslaught with three more birdies and shoot 65 for the round, the lowest score of the day carding a 8-under par.

So the Spaniards failed their mission, leaving Molinari to take home prize and remain a serious contender for the Ryder Cup again.

Martin Platts, *TheGolfGuru.com*



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# Trail blazing masters in Phuket

THE second edition of the Columbia Trail Masters was held at the Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club (TSLC) on May 6 with larger than expected crowds and participants making it a very successful event. There were more than 350 runners of all ages competing in a

3km fun run, a 10 km trail run, and a 21.5km half marathon run.

Serge Henkens, managing director of the organizer AMA Events, was overjoyed at the turnout as well as the way the things panned out.

"It was a fantastic event and I still can't believe how many people

showed up," said Henkens after the races had been completed.

Trail running is different from simple road running in more ways than just the terrain the race is run on. Hydration, joint impact effects as well as unique navigation challenges make trail

running a more enjoyable form of endurance racing.

A total of 30 awards were given out for each race in different age group categories, for the top three positions for men and women who were divided up into age groups: 12-15, 16-29, 30-39, 40-

49 and 50 and above.

However, all racers who went home, with or without a trophy, left with a smile on their face and a great sense of accomplishment.

The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV were proud to have sponsored this inaugural trail running event.



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