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AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL AGENT MICHELLE SMITH FATALLY STABBED METERS FROM HER RESORT

Killed for 300 baht

Killer confesses to stabbing tourist, local residents threaten duo during crime re-enactment

By **Gazette reporters**

THE confessed killer of Australian tourist Michelle Smith allegedly carried out the botched purse-snatch robbery on June 20, during which Mrs Smith was stabbed, for the sake of 300 baht to pay a bar bill.

Surasak Suwannachote, 26, originally from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, was arrested on Monday morning in Chumphon province. At the time of his arrest, he was heading to Samut Sakhon, near Bangkok, he told reporters.

His accomplice, Surin Tadthong, 37, was also arrested on Monday, but in Samut Sakhon. Surin confessed to being the driver of the motorbike used in the attack.

Surasak and Surin had racked up a bar bill at a venue in Kata that needed paying, prompting them to scour the streets for the victims to rob, reported state-news agency MCOT.

Surasak later confessed to stabbing Mrs Smith with a large hunting knife, which punctured her heart and lung.

Mrs Smith, a 59-year-old mother of three from the city of Perth, Western Australia, was in Phuket on a "familiarization tour" with nine other travel agents when she was attacked about 100 meters from the Katathani Beach Resort, where she was staying.

Mrs Smith and her compatriot Tammee Lee Lynn were walking back to the hotel after dinner at about 10pm when two men approached on a motorbike, according to the Chalong Police report.

CCTV footage then shows Surasak attempting to steal Mrs Smith's purse. Mrs Smith struggled to keep hold of her bag, but then Surasak pulled out a large knife and stabbed her.

Ms Lynn suffered a slash to her right arm while fending off her attacker.

The video then shows the men fleeing empty-handed and the two women walking away from the scene, seemingly unaware of the seriousness of their injuries...



Surasak, the killer, sits behind purse-snatch driver Surin at the police re-enactment. INSET: Michelle Smith

SWEDE HORROR SMASH

Driver avoids sentencing – again

THE handing down of the court sentence to the driver of a refrigerator truck that killed four Swedish tourists and their Thai driver in Phang Nga in early February has been deferred for the second time.

The driver, 27-year-old Muhummadyukee Jehyusoh,

turned himself in to Khok Kloy Police on February 3, two days after the refrigerator truck he was driving crossed over a median strip in Khok Kloy District and crashed head-on into a compact car driven by 26-year-old Wichit Phromluang of Udon Thani...

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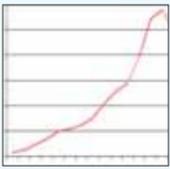
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Swede horror smash driver sentencing deferred – again

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Mr Wichit and his four Swedish passengers all died instantly from the impact.

Mr Muhumadyukee walked away from the collision unhurt and fled on foot, but surrendered to police after conferring with his employers, Chotepatama Company in Narathiwat.

The Swedes were identified as: Johan Svensson, 21, and his girlfriend Frida Falk, 22; Tobias Larsson, 21, and his girlfriend Elin Hedbris, 21.

Mr Muhumadyukee was released on 300,000-baht bail three days after the crash. He was scheduled to appear in court on February 14, but that court date was deferred until June 19. After Mr Muhumadyukee did not appear in court on June 19, an officer confirmed that the sentencing had been deferred again until July 26.

The Phang Nga Public Prosecutor involved in the case said he had been informed of the postponement, but declined to give details.



All four Swedish tourists plus the Thai driver of the Toyota Altis died instantly in the collision. INSET: Muhumadyukee Jehyusoh

When called on June 21, an officer at the Phang Nga Court said a representative of the insurance company that insured the truck told the court his firm had agreed to pay out 1 million baht to the families of each of the deceased Swedish tourists.

As he failed to produce any documentation to back up this

claim, the court ordered him to produce proof of payment on July 26, the official said.

The insurance company had reached a settlement Mr Wichit's family, but the amount paid was unknown because the case file had been transferred to another department, the officer said.

– Orawin Narabal

Kata-Karon set for July 15 polls

REGISTRATION for candidates to enter the Karon Municipality mayoral and council election, to be held on July 15, closed on June 21 with only two candidates in the race to become Karon Mayor.

Tawee Thongcham, who has served as Karon Mayor for the past eight years, is running for re-election to his third term in office.

His only contender in the poll is Narong Natang.

Both men, accompanied by their prospective council teams, turned up at the Karon Municipality Office early on June 18, the first day of registrations, to enroll as mayoral and council candidates.

Having officially opened the election enrollment, Phuket Election Commission (PEC) Director Kittipong Thiengkunagrit told the hopeful candidates that they would have to draw lots to determine who would get candidate numbers one and two, as both parties had arrived before the application period officially began at 8:30am.

Mr Narong, leading his Pracha



HAND IN HAND: Tawee Thongcham (left), running for re-election as Karon Mayor, and contender Narong Natang shake hands ahead of campaigning for the July 15 election. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Ruam Jai party, drew ballot number one, leaving Mr Tawee, leader of the Thong Thin Gao Na party, with ballot number two.

The result also meant that Pracha Ruam Jai council-member candidates received ballot numbers one to six for both electorates, while Thong Thin Gao Na candidates received numbers seven to 12 for both electorates,

which include Kata and Karon.

The only independent running for election, Prathum Yodkaew, who is contesting a councilor's seat in Kata-Karon Voting District 1, was assigned ballot number 13.

Weerasak Anakewongsawad, Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) of Karon Municipality, expects many voters to turn out for the election.

"I believe 60 per cent (4,500) of the electorate will come to cast their votes," said Mr Weerasak.

Both main parties announced similar themes for their campaigns, focusing on health, education, security and the environment.

Pracha Ruam Jai leader Mr Narong said he wants to improve the quality of people's lives, while his competitor Mr Tawee wants to make Karon more liveable.

In line with existing Thai electoral law, an alcohol ban will be in effect for both Kata and Karon from 6pm Saturday, July 14, until midnight on Sunday 15.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

11 injured taken to hospital after Phuket-bound tour bus crashes

A TOUR bus bound for Phang Nga and Phuket crashed in Prachuap Khiri Khan province late Tuesday night, injuring 11 people.

The state-run MCOT news agency reported that the coach was carrying 35 passengers when it crashed into the median strip drainage gully on the Petchkasem Highway in Thong Mongkol sub-district, Bangsaphan District.

At the time this report went to press, the exact time of the accident was not reported. The bus was known to have set off from Bangkok with stops in Phang Nga and then Phuket.

According to initial reports, the accident occurred when the bus tried to overtake a 10-wheeled



The location of the crash of the Phuket-bound bus in Prachuap Khiri Khan province.

truck and was hit on the left when that truck changed lanes to overtake another truck in front of it.

The bus came to rest tilted against the side of the ditch.

Rescue workers rushed the injured to the nearby Bangsaphan Hospital.

– Phuket Gazette

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CENTARA GRAND BEACH RESORT PHUKET

Aussie slaying shakes Phuket

From page 1

After walking off-screen, Mrs Smith collapsed and died in the arms of her companion.

Ms Lynn has since returned to Australia.

"I just wanted to steal the money," Surasak told the press at the re-enactment of the crime on Tuesday.

"I didn't even want to stab the woman, I just wanted to cut the bag strap. I didn't know she was going to die. I saw her walking away," he said.

Surasak told the press that at the time of his arrest his conscience was already playing on him.

"I saw on the news that the woman died. I am sorry for what happened. When the police arrested me I was already considering handing myself in," he said.

Surin remained silent throughout most of press conference on Tuesday morning.

Dressed in a fake Billabong t-shirt, the former employee of a local tyre repair shop broke his silence only once to say "I'm sorry."



POLICE staved off scenes of chaos on Tuesday as residents shouted out insults at the two suspects who were required by police to carry out a public re-enactment of the botched bag-snatch that led to the fatal stabbing of Michelle Smith. Police intervened and kept the angry crowd members at bay, though at least one man attempted to punch the suspects. Mr Surasak and Mr Surin attempted to re-enact the crime as some members of the 100-strong crowd closed in. "You are such a rubbish... You are a citizen of this country, but you are such an embarrassment for this world," yelled one woman. Some villagers held signs up saying, "We are local residents, we will not ruin Phuket" and "We are Karon residents, we don't welcome people from other provinces who cause trouble".

"The two men confessed that after stabbing Mrs Smith, they left their motorbike at the 'Phuket Bypass Garn Yang' [car tyre dealership] on the morning of June 21," said one officer, who declined to give further details. Little information has been

given about how investigators tracked down the two men, and no public announcements have been made about whether or not the 300,000-baht reward offered for information in the case has been paid out.

Despite earlier police reports claiming the two men would face charges of attempted robbery with the use of motorbike and using a knife as a deadly weapon, resulting in injury and death, no charges had been formally pressed as of Wednesday evening.

Both men were denied bail and set to be presented in court as the *Gazette* was going to press.

"This case is a sensitive case. I want to be fair to everyone. However, we are not going to allow the police bail for the two men," said Phuket Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul on Wednesday morning.

"We will collect the evidence and investigate the case as quick as possible. Hopefully, we can complete everything within 15 days, then we can submit everything to the court to prosecute them," he added.



Fighting back

FOOTAGE taken by CCTV cameras outside the Katathani resort shows Michelle Smith and her companion Tammee Lee Lynn attempting to fight off Surasak Suwannachote as he tried to steal her bag. The fight turned an attempted snatch-theft into a slaying.

The video, posted on YouTube, shows the motorbike pulling alongside the two women as they are walking back to their hotel. Mr Surasak leans out and tries to snatch the purse from Mrs Smith's shoulder. However, when the snatch becomes a struggle, he leaves the motorbike and starts attacking both women with a large hunting knife.

"The two bag-snatch killers may have wandered the Kata area searching for a victim. They would then use a knife to cut the bag away from the target," said Police Region 8 Commissioner Santi Pensute, who was responsible for offering one third of the reward to find the killer.

"Unfortunately, the two Australian tourists tried to fight back - so the attackers turned the knife on them," he explained.

Mrs Smith's husband, Geoff, confirmed to the *Herald Sun* that his wife would have done her utmost to defend herself and maintain possession of her personal belongings.

"She would have put up a fight, for sure," he said. "But it doesn't seem worth it now."

Attack prompts B2bn plea for CCTV

A TOP-LEVEL meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall Tuesday heard that the island needs 10,000 CCTV cameras to help protect tourists and residents from criminals.

"We want the government to provide a budget of about 2 billion baht to install CCTV throughout Phuket," Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (*OrBorJor*) President Paiboon Upatising said after the meeting.

Once installed, the units would also require a maintenance budget, he pointed out.

"Currently, the *OrBorJor* has about 250 CCTV cameras, whereas local government departments have more than 1,000 CCTV cameras in Phuket. However, Phuket needs about 10,000 CCTV cameras to cover the entire province," Mr Paiboon said.

Phuket Tourist Association President Somboon Jirayut pointed out that the fatal stabbing of Australian tourist Michelle Smith has had "a very detrimental effect" on Phuket's

tourism industry.

"Association hotel members always warn tourists about the problems that can occur and always cooperate with projects to solve these issues or improve Phuket. Many hotels have cameras, both inside their buildings and facing the road, to detect and identify suspicious characters and record incidents," he said.

In a meeting held on June 23 it was revealed that Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra was paying special attention to the issue of tourist safety measures for Phuket.

"She is going to consider a special budget for Phuket to install more, better-quality CCTV cameras in tourist areas," Police Region 8 Commissioner Santi Pensute said on Tuesday.

"Deputy Prime Minister Chalerm Yubamrung has just called a meeting regarding improved safety measures and installation of CCTV camera for Thailand's top tourist destination. I think Phuket will be the first province to get such a



Mr Paiboon called for 10,000 CCTV cameras.

budget," Gen Santi explained.

Bhuritt Maswongsa, a vice president of the Phuket Tourism Association on Tuesday pointed out that a recent report by Singapore's Asia News Network listed Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand as the least safe countries in Asia.

"That image ruins tourism enormously," Mr Bhuritt said.

Phuket steps up security

THE slaying of Michelle Smith has prompted officials to beef up security for tourists throughout Thailand and has Phuket looking for long-term solutions.

On June 23, Region 8 Commissioner Lt Gen Santi Pensute named Phuket as the premier tourist destination in Thailand, and made it clear safety must always be the province's top priority. However, he was worried that the ongoing rise in population and number of tourists, was too much for the current number of police on the island.

Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada said he had instructed police to increase the number of security checkpoints and asked for amateur radio operators to keep an eye on "high-risk zones" around Phuket.

"Phuket has about five to six

million visitors a year. All those people are protected by a police force of about 1,200 officers," Phuket Tourist Association president Somboon Jirayut pointed out.

"We want the authorities to increase police manpower to better reflect to the number of people in Phuket," he said.

Blue curry shops offer a hot deal

THREE curry shops in Phuket have been issued "Blue Flag" signs confirming them as cheap, high-quality and hygienic by the head of the Department of Internal Trade office in Phuket.

The shops were the first to receive the Blue Flag signs on June 14 as part of the ministry's initiative to keep rising prices in check.

One shop to be presented with a certificate was the self-branded Blue Flag Rice and Curry Shop, on Yaowarat Road in Samkong.

Owner Somjit Laowisetkul said her curry dishes remained in the 25 baht to 30 baht range.

"I haven't raised my prices because I understand how customers feel when prices go up," she said.

— *Orawin Narabal*



Some like it hot. V/Gov Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak gives the thumbs up to reasonably priced curry.

Villagers plead for new road

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

TIRED of plowing through the mud every time it rains in order to reach their homes, residents at Baan Nai Thon on Phuket's west coast on June 25, filed a complaint at Phuket Provincial Hall to finally get the ball rolling on a road project that has stalled.

About 20 villagers arrived at the Damrongtham Center (provincial Ombudsman's Office) to file a complaint against their local authority, the Sakoo Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*).

The complaint, addressed to Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha, requested provincial officials to investigate why the road has not been built, especially since a sign erected by the Sakoo *OrBorTor* said that a road, 420 meters long and costing 1.8 million baht, would be built.

The sign says the money to build the road would be derived from the Sakoo *OrBorTor*'s approved budget for Fiscal Year 2012. All budgets for the year were approved in October last year.

But the road has yet to arrive.



The residents hold up photos showing the sign of 'false promises' and the condition of the only road to their village. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Baan Nai Thon resident Wiroj Boonnakaew told Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak, who received the complaint on behalf of the Governor, that the village has about 16 houses and that the only way to reach it is by travelling along an unpaved road that connects to the beachfront road at Nai Thon.

"When it rains, no vehicles can get through. Those who drive cars

and motorbikes have to park their vehicles outside [the village] and walk home. It is not safe and it is not convenient for any of us," Mr Wiroj said.

"We explained this to Sakoo *OrBorTor* many times, but no one has ever come to solve the problem," he added.

Other villagers explained that children going to school had to take off their shoes and socks, and

the boys even had to remove their school trousers, so they could walk through the mud without getting dirty.

"We really need that road," said Mr Wiroj.

The residents held up photos showing the sign erected by the local *OrBorTor*, emphasizing that it clearly says that construction of the new road was to start as the result of a public hearing held on June 21 last year.

The concrete road was to be 15 centimeters thick, four meters wide and have drains along both sides to prevent the road from flooding.

However, *OrBorTor* Chief Administrative Officer (*Palad*) Sumeth Suwannarath told the *Gazette* that the sign was causing a misunderstanding.

"It shows what we were trying to achieve, not actually what has happened. We applied for the budget of 1.8 million baht to build the road, but the budget has not been approved yet.

"People can still use the road to access the village. But, for now, we can't do anything to improve the road because we don't have any budget to spend on it," he said.

Pungent piggery prompts petition

RESIDENTS of a housing estate in Thalang have filed a letter of complaint to Phuket Provincial Hall, charging that filth from a nearby pig farm is contaminating the local water supply and casting a putrid pall over their community.

Representatives of The Valley 2 housing estate in Srisoonthorn said they decided to file a formal complaint at the Damrongtham Center after efforts to get local government agencies to act yielded no response.

The complaint was filed by Baan Manik residents led by Yuwathida Waewwanjit, marketing director of The Valley 2 housing estate, west of the Heroines' Monument on Srisoonthorn Road.

The group charged that a large pig farm in the area with the name "Thawee Farm Phan" [sic], was poisoning the local water supply and making malodorous miseries of their lives.

"We have suffered from the odor and polluted water problems for a long time. We talked with the farm owner and asked him to solve the problems, but he didn't take any action. We also filed a complaint with the Thalang Public Health Office and Srisoonthorn Municipality, but we have yet to receive any reply," she said.

Monsoon rains offered little respite to the problem.

"In the rainy season, polluted water from the farm flows down to the canals and spreads the filth across the whole area, then strong



Residents of Valley 2 estate hope Gov Tri Augkaradacha will end their misery. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

winds blow the odors up into the sky. We want related agencies to solve this urgently," she said.

Officials at the Damrongtham Center, which serves as the provincial ombudsman's office, accepted the complaint and promised to pass it along to Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha and relevant organizations.

Foul smells are a common source of complaint received by the Damrongtham staff.

In April, a group of dockside residents in Rassada complained of fous fumes from the smoke-stack of a decades-old fish-meal factory.

In December last year the management of the Silver Hotel in Phuket Town claimed that the stench from a nearby seafood processing plant was costing them 400,000 baht a month in lost income.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

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Silence questioned in Phi Phi deaths

By Gazette reporters

THE lack of forthcoming information coupled with conflicting reports has prompted the father of Canadian tourists Noemi and Audrey Belanger to publicly accuse the Royal Thai Police of a coverup.

Sisters Noemi, 26, and Audrey, 20, were found dead in their hotel room on Phi Phi Island on June 15. Officials says they died of apparent poisoning.

Following huge international media attention focusing on the women's deaths, Krabi Governor Prasit Osathanon last week named Krabi Provincial Police Commander Jamroon Ruenrom as the only person authorized to release information to the media concerning the tragedy.

However, the move to allow only Maj Gen Jamroon to release information about the investigation was soon followed by the sisters' father, Carl Belanger, accusing the Thai authorities of covering up the true circumstances of their deaths, reported the *Toronto Sun*.

Mr Belanger made the accusation during an emotional interview with QMI Agency on Tuesday, said the report.

Thai officials speculated the women likely died of food poison-

ing, but Mr Belanger says the Thai autopsy and the actions of hotel staff were suspicious.

He told QMI that it took too long to discover the bodies and to examine them, and he said police didn't keep him informed about their progress.

"The authorities say they found the bodies 12 hours after their death. According to our calculations it was 48 hours," he said in French.

Recently-released media reports have revealed that the hotel's CCTV system captured images of an unidentified man assisting the sisters back to their room at the Phi Phi Palms Residence resort in the early hours of June 13.

The man, believed to be a foreigner, was seen at 1:10am with one sister; then again at 1.14am helping the other, according to the time stamp in the surveillance footage.

These were the last times the two sisters were seen alive.

Reporters attempting to gather information about the unidentified man contacted Krabi Provincial Police Headquarters, where sources said Maj Gen Jamroon was the only point of contact concerning the case.

He was unavailable for comment, they said.



Noemi and Audrey Belanger. Photo: Facebook



Rescue workers in Krabi prepare the bodies of the late Noemi and Audrey Belanger for transport off Phi Phi Island. The sisters will be buried in their hometown in Quebec on Saturday, June 30. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Assisting with the forensic investigation, Dr Jakkarat Pittayawong-anon, a specialist from the Bureau of Epidemiology, Department of Disease Control, arrived with his team on Phi Phi Island on June 20 to collect more evidence needed to discern the exact cause of the sisters' deaths.

"I've come to inspect the scene at the Phi Phi Palm Residence Hotel, where the two sisters died. I will also be examining stores and restaurants in the area.

"We will collect samples for further examination in the hope that it will provide answers, allowing us to determine the cause of death. Once we have compared our findings against the postmortem examination results, we will submit a report to the Krabi Provincial Office and Krabi Public Health Office," he added.

Mr Belanger, despite his grief and frustration, praised the Canadian Embassy officials involved, who he said repatriated his daughters' bodies quickly.

The bodies were examined at a laboratory in Montreal and have since been returned to the family.

Results from the autopsies carried out in Montreal have yet to be released, reported the *Toronto Sun*.

The Belanger family will bury Noemi and Audrey on Saturday, June 30.

Additional reporting by Kritsada Mueanhawong.

Debate pushes for Phuket to be 'Special Admin Zone'

EXPERTS speaking at a public forum held in Phuket Town last week have voiced their strong support for Phuket to be designated a "Special Administrative Zone", saying the move would pave the way to resolving many of Phuket's long-standing problems.

Dr Chantinee Boonchai, who works as assistant to the President for Organization and Collaboration Development at the Prince of Songkla University (Phuket Campus), addressed the crowd of more than 200 attendees at the Phuket Merlin Hotel on June 24.

Phuket becoming a "Special Admin Zone" would go a long way toward helping the island's administrators draw up and implement a long-term plan for sustainable development, she said.

The move would allow Phuket - like Pattaya and Bangkok - to elect its own governor and would give local authorities more power in devising and enforcing regulations for local benefit, and allow them greater self-determination in sourcing much-needed funding for public projects.

"Phuket has grown so quickly, and many of us have heard about plans for sustainable development



More than 200 people, including high-ranking officials, voiced their support for the move.

for a long time. Also, Phuket has many long-term problems that should be solved, and I would like to boost awareness among local people of the need for sustainable development," Dr Chantinee said.

She identified the degradation of natural resources, trash, water pollution and diminishing watershed areas as the top problems to be addressed.

Experts examine disaster communication flaws

THE 5th National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) public forum was held at The Metropole hotel in Phuket Town on June 22.

Chaired by NBTC's Suphinya Klangnarong, the agenda focused on that organizations' role in disaster management communications.

During the meeting delegates had outlined the principal problems that affect communications between public and private sector organizations during disasters, such as tsunamis, earthquakes and floods.

Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (OrBorJor) President Paiboon Upatising, who at-

tended the meeting, explained that the NTBC was responsible for maintaining Thailand's national-level communication system.

"The meeting was essentially to resolve those issues," said President Paiboon.

"What we have learned today will help us apply international communication procedures to our emergency and contingency plans.

"It will allow the various emergency and rescue organizations to send and receive information more accurately and promptly," he added.

- Orawin Narabal

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Teen hangs himself after break up with girlfriend



Rescue workers recover the body of Mr Danupong from his house. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

POLICE are treating the death of a 19-year-old construction worker in Phuket Town on June 20 as suicide.

Phuket City Police received a report at 1:15pm of man found hanged in a room on Soi Hatchanavinet on Srisena Road, Talad Yai.

Police and Kusoldharm Foundation rescue workers went to the scene and recovered the body of the teenager, Danupong Detchbumrong.

"Mr Danupong hanged himself using a long-sleeved white shirt attached to a hook in the restroom of the house. We believe he had not been dead for more than two hours," explained Phuket City Police Sub Lt Chaiyut Chiangsorn.

"There is no evidence of violence at the scene. We were told that he had just broken up with his girlfriend," he added.

A witness at the scene said that before his death Mr Danupong did not appear to have any problems. However, noted that for the past three days Mr Danupong had not gone to work.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

Danish expat, 72, identified as latest Nai Harn rip victim

OFFICIAL sources on Tuesday confirmed the identity of the foreign man who died after being rescued from the waters off Nai Harn Beach on June 19, as 72-year-old Danish national Rasmus Beyemann.

Mr Beyemann entered the surf in front of the Phuket Yacht Club Hotel where red warning flags mark the location of a known fixed rip current.

Two men, believed to be Chinese tourists, were already in the water where Mr Beyemann went for a swim.

Jula Nontree, chief lifeguard for Kata, Karon, Nai Harn and Patong Beaches, told the *Gazette* that at about 3pm all three swimmers were caught in the rip current and had to be assisted to shore, still conscious, by lifeguards.

The two Chinese tourists recovered while still on the beach. Mr Beyemann, however, lost consciousness and had to be given



Friends identified Mr Beyemann, who since retiring had lived in Phuket for the past five years. Photos: Beach; Jim Welsh, inset; Facebook

first aid until an ambulance arrived to take him to hospital in Phuket Town.

"He probably panicked and tried to swim back to the shore [against

the rip current]. He possibly could have walked back to shore because the water in the area is not that deep," said Mr Jula.

Mr Jula, who at the time was

unaware of Mr Beyemann's identity said, "The man still had a pulse, but remained unconscious when the ambulance arrived."

"I don't know if he will survive; he was not doing well when we last saw him."

Tragically, Mr Beyemann did not survive and was pronounced dead on arrival at Vachira Phuket Hospital by medical staff.

Authorities were initially unable to identify his body as he carried no identification on his person. Eventually, an informal identification was made by friends responding to a media appeal, an official source told the *Gazette*.

Mr Beyemann's relatives, traveling from Sønderborg, Denmark, will arrive in Phuket this weekend to officially identify his remains.

No funeral details have been released. However, his friends in Phuket believe that Mr Beyemann will be cremated on the island.

- Chutharat Plerin

Poll result for best beach safety measures

WHILE there is a broad consensus that more needs to be done to warn visiting tourists of the dangers of monsoon-season surf conditions, *Phuket Gazette* readers are divided over what method would be the most practical and effective at getting the message out.

In our last online poll, the *Phuket Gazette* asked readers:

The monsoon season is here and once again hardly a week goes by without a tourist drowning in the surf off Phuket's west coast beaches. Which of the following approaches do you think would be most practical and effective to minimize the death toll?

Readers were almost evenly divided on the issue, with about one-sixth of all taking

part voting for each of the six choices, as follows:

- Assign more lifeguards to beaches: 16.7%
 - Provide lifeguards with jet-skis, better safety equipment: 16.8%
 - Have inbound flight captains issue safety warnings about surf conditions: 16.6%
 - Give lifeguards police support to remove from the beach swimmers who refuse to obey lifeguard warnings against swimming in red-flagged danger areas: 16.3%
 - Install more warning signs in more languages: 16.7%
 - Encourage hotel staff to do more to warn of the dangers: 16.8%
- Voters identifying themselves as Thais (29%) and tourists (24%) were more likely to choose



Unusual results indicated readers are evenly split between the five options. Photo: Gazette file

the "Have inbound flight captains issue safety warnings about surf conditions" than expats (9%).

There were few other notable demographic trends in the polling, in which 1,781 readers took part over a two-week period.

Driver dies as car crashes into school footbridge at high speed

A PHUKET man was killed instantly on the morning of Sunday, June 24, when his car slammed full force into a pedestrian overpass on Thepkrasattri Road in Thalang District.

Thalang Police were informed of the accident at 2:20am.

Duty officer Somchai Nuboon, police and Kusoldharm Foundation rescue workers raced to the scene, on Thepkrasattri northbound in front of the Muang Thalang School in Thepkrasattri subdistrict.

There they found the twisted wreckage of a white Toyota Vios against a concrete support pillar.

The driver, 34-year-old Somkid Saeleo, died instantly of massive head trauma and other injuries, including multiple compound fractures to his left leg.

A friend of Mr Somkid told police at the scene that the deceased was an employee of Pakco International Company, a water



Rescue workers survey the wreckage. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

treatment firm with offices near Phuket International Airport.

He had attended a friend's wedding in Baan Lipon earlier that evening, leaving at about 10pm for an unspecified destination.

The accident occurred as he was returning to his home in Thalang about four hours later.

Based on the damage to the vehicle, police presume the late Mr Somkid fell asleep at the wheel while driving at very high speed.

- Thawit Bilabdullar



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Parents of baby with rare birth defect appeal for help

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

DESPERATE parents of an 11-month-old girl suffering from a rare birth defect appealed to the Phuket public on June 19 for financial help to cover the medical costs of caring for their child.

About three hours after Rawiwan "Nong Prim" Tanwiwatjinda was born, doctors realized that she had the rare birth defect "vaginal and anal atresia" – she was born without a vaginal or anal orifice.

After being transferred from Tai Muang Hospital in Phang Nga to Vachira Phuket Hospital, doctors performed emergency surgery to create a hole in her stomach through which stool and urine could be excreted.

Siriwan Kanya and Wanchai Tanwiwatjinda, Nong Prim's parents, explained that the girl is now suffering from a rash in the area around the hole, which she constantly scratches.

Unable to pay for the ongoing treatment their daughter needs, the couple held a press conference at Tai Muang Municipality offices to try and raise funds to cover the mounting medical costs.

"I continued to take Nong Prim to see the doctor at Vachira Hospital, but it has been very difficult as we don't have enough money to rent a car to go to Phuket," Ms Siriwan told the press.

Unable to afford a car, Ms Siriwan has been forced to take her daughter to the hospital by bus. Nong Prim occasionally defecates while on the bus, producing a smell that disturbs other passengers and causes the family



Born with an extremely rare condition, baby Nong Prim will require constant monitoring and ultimately precision surgery at a well-equipped hospital. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

embarrassment.

"Sometimes it's so bad that we have to get off the bus before we are able to make it to the hospital," she explained.

"The parents brought their daughter to see me at my office," explained Tai Muang Municipality Mayor Jirawit Puangjit.

"Both parents want to help their daughter, but they can't keep up with the medical expenses accrued from Nong Prim's doctor visits.

"Initially, I offered them some of my own money to help pay for the medical bills. After, I asked Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Watcharin Jettananon to

follow up on the case," said Mayor Jirawit.

Mayor Jirawit reiterated the importance of finding financial support for Nong Prim's family to ensure she is able to be transferred to "a good hospital in Bangkok" as soon as possible.

"Nong Prim deserves to live a normal life, just like any other child," he said.

Phang Nga Red Cross President Sukhon Jaroenkul together with Tai Muang Chaipat Hospital Director Pladthana Tunlayatanit went to visit Nong Prim on June 21 to offer financial contributions to help the family with some of their daily expenses.

Those interested in helping Nong Prim's family can contact Sgt Maj Jirawit (086-271-2819; 076-571-519) or can transfer money directly into Nong Prim's account:

**Name: Rawiwan Tanwiwatjinda
Bank: Bangkok Bank, Thai Muang Branch
Account #: 402-0-233257-5**

Business steps in with aid for battered Aussie

AN INTERNATIONAL medical company has made a pledge to find the "best treatment" for an Australian muay thai fighter whose father fears was not in a motor-bike accident, as Phuket police believe, but was beaten and left for dead.

Daniel Ketley, 22, was rushed to hospital in the early hours of June 8 after he was found in Nai Harn with several serious injuries.

The last thing he remembers that night was seeing a petrol vending station in the Soi Sai Yuan area. He believes he may have been attacked while stopping for fuel.

Mr Ketley has since been diagnosed as suffering a fractured skull, hemorrhaging and compression on the brain, a shattered eye socket, a broken jaw, missing teeth, fractured vertebra and nerve damage to his neck and shoulder, leaving his right arm immobile.

Lotus Medical International, a UK and Thailand-based medical company, on June 21 said in a Facebook post that the immediate concern was getting Mr Ketley into a "high-quality private hospital in this critical phase."



Mr Ketley has lived in Phuket with his parents for the past three years and is a full-time muay thai boxer with the Sumalee Boxing Gym in Thalung. Photo: Facebook

Burmese fishermen electrocuted at sea

TWO Burmese fishermen working on a local fishing boat were brought to Rassada Pier on June 21, after apparently being electrocuted at sea.

Once notified, police and Kusoldharm Rescue Foundation workers rushed to the scene to find grieving relatives surrounding the two bodies.

"Mr Kham, 25, and Mr Wan, 27, were pulling a fishing net from the sea, when Mr Kham touched the [stainless-steel] handrail. Suddenly, he was writhing on the floor," explained the boat captain, whose name was not revealed by police.

Mr Wan tried to pull Kham's body away from the handrail with his bare hands. Then, the electricity from Mr Kham's body killed Mr Wan, he explained.

"By the time one of the workers shut off the power, it was too



A crowd gathers at Rassada Pier as the bodies of the fishermen are brought ashore.

late – both men were gone," the captain added.

Police believe that high-voltage electricity on the boat was grounded to the stainless-steel railing, and thus caused the deaths.

Police noted that there were no signs of violence. However, both bodies were sent to Vachira Phuket Hospital to confirm electrocution as the cause of death.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Who let the cow out? Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet joins the hundreds of people in making merit by making offerings to the cows. Photo: Kritsada Meuanhawong

Livestock spared the axe for merit-making

A TOTAL of 19 cows, along with birds and a variety of fish, were given new leases on life during a special ritual in Phuket Town on June 24 to mark Buddhajanti, the celebration of 2,600 years of the Buddha's enlightenment.

Hundreds of people joined the merit-making ceremony, put on by the Phuket Dharma Practice Center and held at the Jiu Tean Geng Shrine at Saphan Hin, starting at the auspicious time of 9:09am.

The cows were spared the blade at local slaughterhouses.

"This ritual is part of the Buddhist tradition that we want to continue. Lengthening the lives of animals is a great merit," said Audtaporn Hongyok, an adviser at the Phuket Dharma Practice Center.

Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak, who chaired the event, praised the activity, "be-



The ceremony celebrated 2,600 years of Buddha's enlightenment. Photo: Kritsada Meuanhawong

cause it brought people together to do something good for society".

"People who came here may expect good health, a long life and happiness as a result of the merit making.

"Immediately everyone feels wonderful, because they have done something right, something good. I think this is most important," V/Gov Somkiet said.

After the ceremony, which involved blessings from nine monks, the cows were given to farmers

to use for field work, explained Janthana Kittithornkul, another adviser of Phuket Dharma Practice Center.

"The cows have been tagged by the Phuket Livestock Office, so they cannot be sold back into the market," said Ms Janthana.

"Everyone is welcome to visit these cows at any time. They will still be living in Phuket," she added.

The Dharma Practice Center is located near the Weekend Market beside Naka Temple in Wichit and holds special activities year-round. Though some larger events such as the animal merit-making ceremony are held only twice a year, the center does have weekly programs open to the public.

"We hold free group meditation at our center every Sunday. Those who are interested can visit the center for more information," said Ms Janthana.

FAREWELL ROLLY

Yachting icon Rolly Tasker dies, age 86

AUSTRALIAN yachting icon and long-term Phuket resident Rolly Tasker has died.

Staff at the Rolly Tasker sail loft on Chao Fa West Road on June 22 confirmed that Mr Tasker passed away in Australia during the previous night (Phuket time) after a long battle with cancer.

The general manager of the loft, Michael Tasker (no relation), who had been working for Mr Tasker for the past 15 years, described the reaction of the floor staff when he broke the news: "I wasn't surprised by the outlet of emotion, but when you consider that the last time he was on the floor with them was September...[Well], I just called them together to tell them he passed away; and that was the reaction - tears.

"He had been an exceptional employer while he was here. And also he's called 'Papa'; that gives you an idea of how's he looked upon by people on the floor."

Michael Tasker told the *Gazette* that he, one of the workers on the floor, and another Thai member of staff would be flying to Australia to attend the funeral service.

"I want them to be able to tell the rest of the staff, when they come back, what happened and about the occasion," he explained.

Renowned as a gentlemen entrepreneur and adventurous yacht racer, Mr Tasker won Australia's first sailing medal at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne.

Among his many other accolades, he won his first world championship in 1958, dominated ocean racing off Western Australia for nearly two decades, and won many long-distance ocean



A younger Rolly Tasker having just won a silver medal in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. Photo: Sail World Team

races, including the 1979 Pamela Yacht Race from Plymouth, England, to Fremantle, Australia.

In total, he covered more than 340,000 nautical miles in ocean races.

Mr Tasker was inducted into Australia's Sports Hall of Fame in honor of his sailing achievements, and was just recently named as Western Australia's 'Best Ever Yachtsman'.

The Phuket Cruising Yacht Club honored his passing with the message on its website: "It goes without saying he will be missed by many clients and friends around the world... He was 86 when he died and going very strong until shortly before he died.

"He is going to be remembered as a great sailor, entrepreneur, businessman and sail-maker. Members of our club wish to send our condolences to his family."

The club also posted a link to a video highlighting Rolly Tasker's remarkable achievements.

Mr Tasker is survived by his wife, Kerry, and his two children Sophie and Bobby.

Fate or fraud: The fishy tale of young Rewat Nongwong

A 24-YEAR-OLD man who claims he spent three days underwater without dying was the subject of a miracle, according to some Ayutthaya residents who believe his tale.

To others, including rescue workers who spent three days looking for him in the filthy Chao Praya River, the man, Rewat Nongwong, is a liar - one who should face criminal charges.

Mr Rewat said that on June 20 around 8:30pm, he and two friends were walking along the river and passed under a bridge near Wat Bang Khian Wichian Chai.

Suddenly, he felt like he "wasn't himself" anymore and walked straight into the Chao Phraya River. As soon as the water reached his neck, he lost consciousness. Then he had the feeling that he was inside an underwater cave. While in the cave, women were sitting on top of him.

He said he could see lots of people searching for him in the water, but he couldn't call out to them. It was as if ghosts were stopping him from speaking.

He was trapped in the cave for three days, then one morning he was freed, he claimed.

Mr Rewat immediately went to tell relatives about what had happened. The people under the water told him they wanted to eat fresh chicken and fresh blood, he told

them. He asked his relatives to bring those items and make an offering at the river.

He had his relatives take him to temple as he was worried that the water people would come to take his life back.

Not all the villagers were convinced by Mr Rewat's story, however. Some of them claimed to have seen him walking near the bridge before his "miraculous" re-appearance.

Others believed the tale. They thought the spirits had decided to take Mr Rewat's life before realizing that his time had not yet come.

Most of the rescue workers who spent three days solid looking for Mr Rewat's body were unimpressed. He was a liar who had wasted their time, they said. They are considering contacting police and seeking his prosecution on fraud charges. - *Sanook.com*

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Angry bee swarm attacks, scores of monks in hospital

MORE than 70 monks in Chiang Mai were hospitalized on June 23 after a swarm of bees attacked them.

The monks were cleaning their temple, Wat Chedi Luang in Muang District, and reportedly making a loud noise when the insects attacked.

After the attack, 76 monks were taken to hospitals, with 19 of them seriously

injured, according medical staff.

Naren Chotirosnimitr, director of Maharaj Nakorn Hospital in Chiang Mai, told local press that 53 monks had been treated there.

Six of the monks had arrived at the hospital in a coma, suffering from low blood pressure.

The bees were reportedly making a bee-

hive at the temple's main pagoda tunnel when they attacked.

Bee stings are not generally fatal. However, people who are highly allergic can go into anaphylactic shock and die after being stung.

A bee sting releases pheromones, which can signal other bees to attack in a chain reaction.



The bees stung 76 monks. Photo: Paul Stein

Red-shirts fear 'judicial coup'

TENS of thousands of red-shirt protesters staged a mass rally in Bangkok last weekend, vowing to oppose a so-called "judicial coup" supposedly being planned by the Thai elite.

The protest, at Democracy Monument on June 24, was held to mark the 80th anniversary of the coup that ended the absolute monarchy in 1932.

"Today we mark the 80th anniversary and show our concern over threats to democracy. Let's prepare for an unfinished fight," red-shirt leader Kokaew Pikulthong told the crowd, as quoted by AFP.

Mr Kokaew pointed out that there had been about 20 attempted or successful coups since 1932.

"In recent years they have changed from military to judicial coups," he said.

So-called "judicial coups" have ended governments allied with former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra - whom most red shirts support - before, he alleged.

In September 2008, the Constitutional Court terminated the premiership of Samak Sundaravej for hosting a television cooking

show in his spare time.

About three months later, the court ruled to dissolve the ruling People's Power Party for electoral fraud, ending the government of Somchai Wongsawat.

The ruling paved the way for the Democrat Party, whose leaders were acquitted of similar charges, to assemble a coalition and take power under the leadership of Abhisit Vejjajiva.

The Constitution Court has further enraged red-shirt supporters by seeking to revoke the bail of core leader Jatuporn Promphan, who is facing terrorism charges.

Mr Jatuporn threatened to stage a hunger strike and march from the Democracy Monument to his appointed jail if his bail were revoked.

An estimated 30,000 people showed up to the protest, which was held on June 24, the date formerly celebrated as Thai National Day until dictator Sarit Thanarat made HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's birthday the date for national celebration.

However, according to *The Nation* columnist Pravit Rojanaphruk,

'... show our concern over threats to democracy. Let's prepare for an unfinished fight.'

- Kokaew Pikulthong



Red-shirt supporters gather at Democracy Monument to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1932 coup. Photo: The Nation

the day is seeing a steady revival in interest.

Chulalongkorn University historian Suthachai Yimprasert, himself a red shirt, said the revived

interest is relatively new and is related to the 2006 coup.

"After the coup, people recognized that democracy was under siege and they went back to search

for the meaning and origin of democracy. Events [commemorating] June 24 have grown bigger year by year [since the 2006 coup]," said Asst Prof Suthachai.

Alleged Surat Thani prison bombers found in hiding

POLICE have arrested a man and his 16-year-old accomplice for allegedly trying to bomb Surat Thani Prison.

Two suspects, 20-year-old Kittisak Kaewseekhong and a 16-year-old who cannot be named for legal reasons, were arrested while hiding out in a friend's home.

Officers believe the objective of the bombing was to blow a hole in the wall of the prison and free murder convict Natthaphol Yoosakul, 20, who is serving a 20-year term.

The device was not strong enough to penetrate the prison walls, however, leaving Mr Natthaphol incarcerated.

Police believe Mr Kittisak would have been paid 100,000 baht had the attack been successful.

Deputy Prime Minister Chalerm Yoobamrung said the attack was related to drug dealing. He blamed the opposition Democrat Party, whose stronghold is in the South, for its ineffective narcotics sup-



Police suspect the man was trying to free inmates. Photo: The Nation

pression. In March, Mr Chalerm vowed to push for law amendments to allow the execution of drug convicts 15 days after they lost their court appeal.

This was needed so that they would not deal drugs from behind bars and mingle with other criminals, he said.

"I won't listen to the National Human Right Commission... because I answer to the country and the public," Mr Chalerm said.



RE KATA BEACHFRONT RESTAURANT

An enchanted evening with 5 young piano stars
Friday 6th July, 2012



Five of the most talented pianists in Thailand will perform some of the most loved masterpieces of piano literature.

Refreshments at 5.30pm followed by concert at 6pm. All ticket holders will be granted a 20% discount on food and beverage at Boathouse Wine & Grill on the night of the concert.

THB 900 net per person including wines and canapés during the cocktail reception and the intermission.

Daily Happy Hour from 5pm-7pm. (50% off).
Restaurant is open every day from 11am-11pm.



Sloganeering down a silly slope

DAYS after the brutal stabbing of an Australian travel agent on a “familiarization tour” of Phuket, and the mysterious poisoning deaths of two young Québécoise on Koh Phi Phi, comes an announcement by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) trumpeting the success of its latest promotional campaign slogan: “Discover the Other You”.

It’s all part of the TAT’s larger “Creative Tourism” campaign, which it claims “generated 24 million visitors” to a recent online competition.

This is “Amazing” stuff, but just the latest in a long string of slogans generated by the TAT during its “Miracle Year Of Amazing Thailand” campaign that will span all of 2012 – if we survive it.

For those who may be a bit confused by what actually constitutes “creative tourism”, there is actually a definition for it in the online encyclopedia Wikipedia: *tourism related to the active participation of travellers in the culture of the host community, through interactive workshops and informal learning experiences.*

The TAT release reads, “the top 3 Creative Tourism [sic] activities that potential tourists want to experience are Thai massage, Thai cooking and Thai boxing” – presumably not all at the same time.

Apparently there are more kinds of tourism than many of us might have imagined. The entry for Creative Tourism comes right before that for “Dark Tourism”, which is defined as “involving visits to ‘dark’ sites, such as battlegrounds, scenes of horrific crimes or acts of genocide, for example: concentration camps.”

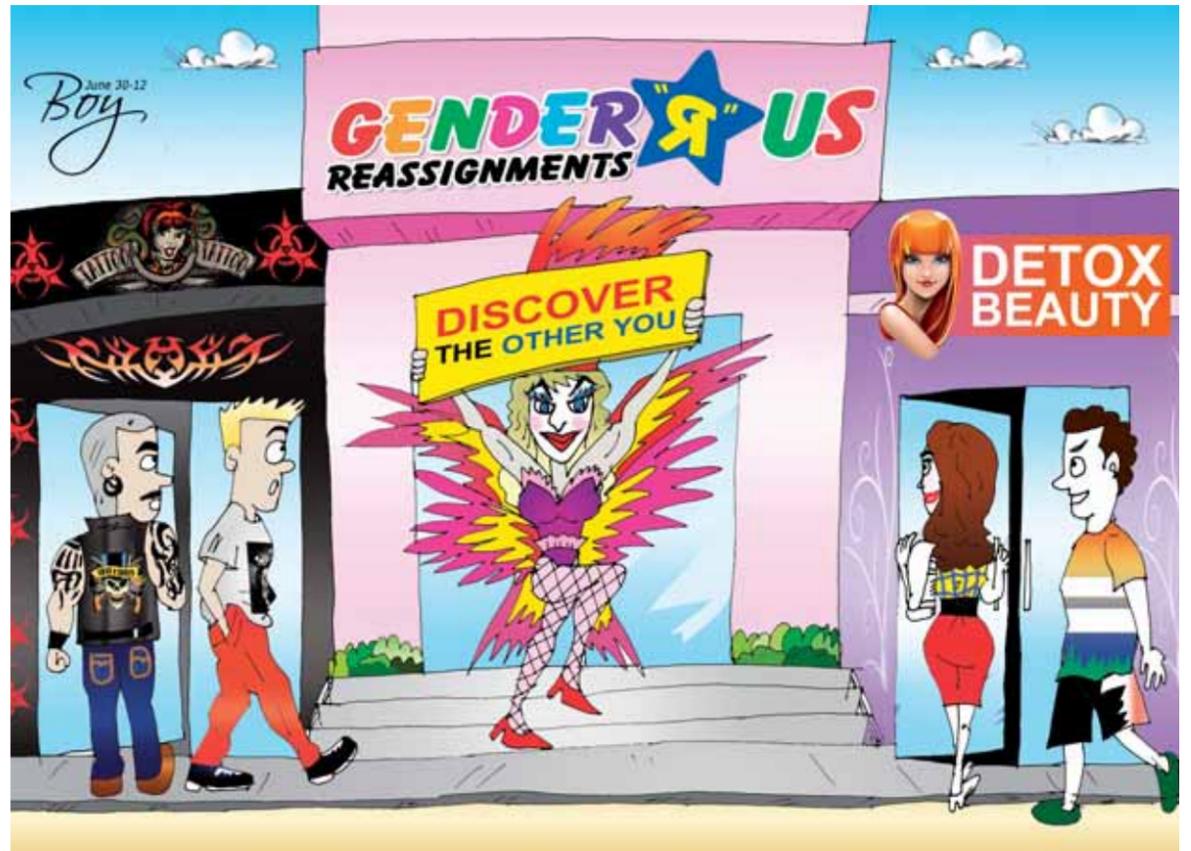
This is followed by “Doom Tourism”... and so on.

Hopefully, since we are a Land of Smiles, the TAT will pass on these last two themes in 2013.

But one can never be sure, given the TAT’s penchant to latch on to just about anything to keep tourism rolling with ever greater momentum. Let’s not forget that rescue teams were still pulling bodies out of mangrove forests after the 2004 tsunami disaster when the TAT brainstormed its “Tsunami Trail” idea to lure visitors to the region. The *Phuket Gazette* doesn’t remember anything becoming of it – maybe someone tipped them off with the message: “too soon, too soon”.

Following the equally-inscrutable “Unseen Thailand” campaign, the “Discover the Other You” initiative is likely to generate more wisecracks abroad than backpacks at Suvarnabhumi arrival hall.

We understand that every government agency needs to be seen to be doing something. All we ask is that they find some other way to justify their bloated budgets than coming up with a never-ending series of surreal slogans and brain-bending marketing babble. We don’t need it: Thailand is Amazing enough as it is.



Another visitor at a loss with the trash

I came to Phuket last month and found myself asking: why doesn’t anyone clean up the beach garbage?

I went walking and couldn’t believe all the bottles and garbage thrown to the side of the trees overlooking the water.

I wish the government would get some kids to go up and down beach road, all the way up the hill, and clean up.

As you go up the hill, there’s a lot of garbage and bottles all over the place.

I hope when I come back it’s cleaned up. It’s such a nice area.

Robert Mele
Phuket

A dump of an island

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket: Lord of the flies, June 21*

Khun Paiboon is right, the sheer volume of garbage on the island is terrifying. And it’s not only at the official dumping sites, but all over Phuket.

The island has become a dump, and obviously only flies like that. Will it get better? Definitely not.

Michael
Gazette forum

Monumental motion for moving the Heroines’ Monument

Re: *Gazette online, Pickup slams Heroines’ Monument in Phuket, one dead, June 18*

Sorry to hear about the loss of another life... The monument has deserved a more attractive place for a long time.

For a visitor now to cross the road, it’s not safe.

[If you] relocated it to the nearby museum, you could create a wonderful shrine to worship the sisters and create a true monument of the type found in many places upcountry.

Letters

to the Editor

Do you have an opinion to voice?
Email Editor@PhuketGazette.net

Besides that, a redesigned intersection would increase road safety.

Mike
Gazette forum

Phuket, invest in the leopard sharks

Thanks for the support of local diving. However, I have been diving here all year round for more than six years and there is a definitely a year-to-year decrease in sightings of the wonderful and now elusive leopard shark.

I wonder what the results would look like if you compared a few thousand baht in expenses to protect the shark to thousands of dollars in losses from potential diving revenue as disappointed tourists paying anything from 3,500 baht and up for a day trip to see one go home disappointed.

And let’s not forget the Similans, which is another total travesty of “protected” natural resources.

Simone Arnold
Phuket

Back-page drama

Re: *Phuket Gazette’s back page, Sport Asia Yachting Grand Prix to kick off in Phuket*

I fail to see how a press conference about a yacht race in July is worthy of back-page coverage, when quite plainly the article should have been under the banner of “advertisement”, or the business section at a push.

Having it masquerade as a serious sports article, while managing to mention every company and

business involved, is just insulting to sports fans and does the *Gazette’s* reputation no favors. Any one of the sports reports on the inside pages would have made great back-page reading, Phuket FC in particular.

I can understand why nobody put their name to it.

JM
Patong

Nipping at the heels

We have a big problem with dogs here on Bang Tao Beach. There is a huge number of stray dogs in the area, and it is really scary to walk on the beach.

Around dark the dogs come onto the hotels’ territory. I heard that they have bitten some tourists, and even some kids already. Because Bang Tao is a family beach there is a heightened risk of kids being bitten. Please do something about it.

Anna
Bang Tao

That pre-bacon smell

Passing by that area almost everyday, we all laughed at the housing development that was being built right next to a huge pig farm. Now that it is finished and getting more occupants, we laughed more at people renting or buying units – right next to a pig farm!

Now they complain that they are living right next to a pig farm? Errr, stinks to be them.

Realistically, if you buy a house next to an airport, don’t expect to be able to complain about noise, air traffic, flashing lights and so on.

Fight the pollution indeed, but the smell is the price of your own poor judgment.

I’m off for a bacon sandwich.

Jason
Cherng Talay

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Petal peddlers ask for middle ground

FIRST PERSON

IF THEY won't allow us to sell garlands on the streets, they should at least provide us with an area where we can work.

I and other flower peddlers understand that the government wants us to stop selling garlands on the street in order to improve the image of the province. However, they need to be aware that we still need to make a living.

None of us want to get out on the streets selling flowers; it's very hot and risky, but if we have no choice, no other place to sell them, what are we going to do?

I admit that selling garlands at street intersections could have a negative effect on the way tourists perceive Phuket. When I was selling garlands on the road, there were many times that I saw tourists staring at me through the car windows, as if they were annoyed with seeing me walking so close to the car or knocking on the windows in my attempt to sell the flowers. Because of this, I would understand if provincial officers decided to prevent us from selling the garlands in this way, and I would even be willing to obey the rules.

However, they must remember that we do need to make a living. Right now, I own a kiosk next to the road on the way to the airport [Thepkasattri Road northbound], but the land on which the shop was built belongs to the Phuket office of the Department of High-



Surarat Thamchoo, 23, has been selling flowers and garlands on Thepkasattri Road, at the intersection that leads to Nai Yang Beach, for the past three years. Here she explains what needs to be done to help keep flower peddlers off the streets, which was one of the concerns raised by Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongada in his recent directive for Phuket to clean up its act.

ways. I am able to make 700 to 2,000 baht a day there, which is considered good.

My mom and I had the idea of setting up the kiosk about three years ago after a man we knew went out to sell garlands on a rainy day and was hit by a car – they had to amputate his leg. Despite this, he still peddles flowers on the streets.

Because of our shop, we don't have to sell garlands on the streets as often as we use to – we earn enough money from selling flowers from the kiosk. However, when we are having a slow day, I do have to send some of my workers into the streets to sell flowers.

Most of the peddlers who sell garlands on the street have their own flower kiosk, or at least have a main area that they sell from, such as their house, if it is located next to the street. They really only sell flowers on the street when they have to make more money.

In some cases, it is more con-

venient to have the peddlers in the streets. Some customers are too lazy to park their cars on the roadside, and walk to the kiosk.

The only problem that I and other sellers in this area are facing right now is that we don't have our own land. As I pointed out earlier, the land our kiosks are on belongs to the Highways Department, so when their officers come, we have to tear down the shops and pay a fine.

I really hope that the Phuket office of the Highways Department will allow us to legally work in this area. I've discussed it with other kiosk owners and we would like to rent the area for our shops. In the past we have sent letters requesting this to the Highways Department, but they have not responded to us.

If they want to solve this problem permanently, they have to start fixing the cause of the problem, so that they won't have to waste their time chasing us.

Indoctrinated by team spirit

I BECAME elated with pride when my six-year-old son, who was born in Thailand, recently told me that his favorite sports teams were Krabi FC and Phuket FC.

We were having dinner at a restaurant in Phuket Town, and a few tables down from us there was a small group of young adult, Thai males who were glued to the restaurant's TV screen.

Being broadcast live was an English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Manchester City.

High-profile foreign matches like this have been broadcast regularly on Thai terrestrial TV channels for as long as I can remember.

In contrast, local sporting events are rarely broadcast, and they are usually carried only on paid-cable channels.

While I haven't indoctrinated my son with a passion for foreign sports, as is the norm here, I have made it a point to take him to watch live local sporting events whenever I can.

My efforts are paying off.

Back at the restaurant, I heard my son say, "I don't care about Manchester United or Manchester City, because I like Krabi and Phuket."

I vividly recall the blush and embarrassment on the men's faces when they overheard my son's matter-of-fact declaration.

Their passionate cheers for teams based in a place the men had probably never been to, became less and less enthusiastic as we finished our dinner.

Though having home-team spirit and loyalty are relatively new concepts in Phuket and Thailand in general, things have definitely come a long way in a short time.

When I first came to Thailand a decade ago, most Thai sports enthusiasts were die-hard supporters of teams such as "Liverpool",



Local supporters don green as Phuket FC takes on Songkhla FC.

Island View

By Steven Layne

Do you have an opinion to voice? Email Editor@PhuketGazette.net

"Man-U" and "Arsenal".

Back then, Thai fans were, and to some extent still are, heavily obsessed with sports abroad, and care little for local sports.

Nowadays, you'll notice more and more locals sporting jerseys branded by teams such as Muang Thong United, Chonburi FC, Buriram United and of course, Phuket FC.

This is largely a result of professional development initiatives that the Thai Premier League has taken in recent years, benchmarked in 2009 with the nationwide incorporation of locality-based clubs.

And though most locals are only starting to realize and embrace their home-team spirit, I reckon it won't be long before my son and I can enjoy our dinner watching a live Phuket match on the tube.

Meanwhile, my son and I will have to be content with just the live action, resuming on July 7 at Surakul Stadium, when Phuket FC is set to host Krabi FC. See you there.

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

Please place rubbish in bins

Why can't the province supply sufficient garbage bins around the foreshore of Nai Harn Beach and the lagoon?

One of the best locations in Phuket is being destroyed by rubbish strewn on the roads and paths simply because of the lack of garbage bins.

Where are the Bins?
Nai Harn Beach



The trash pile at Nai Harn beach.

Director Surachet Jitmet of the Public Health and Environment Division of Rawai Municipality replies:

The Municipality has provided four or five bins at the rear of the car parking area.

We haven't put the bins along the beach because the garbage truck cannot get down there. And it would be difficult for garbage collectors to empty any bins placed on the beaches, as well as they would run the risk of spillage while transporting it from the beach.

I would like to ask for your cooperation by dropping your garbage in the bins located in the back of the car park.

I thank you for informing us about this problem. Since there aren't any signs to tell people where the bins are located, I am going to make the signs and place them along the beach area next week.

For more information call the Rawai Municipality at 076-613801

'Tis the season of power cuts

I have tried to report power cuts to the Call Center 1129 ext 9 for English.

Regrettably, this puts me through to a recorded tape in Thai. Is there a direct line that foreigners can call to report power cuts?

D Kirk
Phuket

Somchai Krueapat, from the Phuket office of the Provincial Electricity Authority (Phuket-PEA) replies:

Call Center 1129 is the main number of Provincial Electricity Authority in Bangkok. So it is very possible that the officers on duty might be busy dealing with other callers.

Even if you did get through, they would just have to transfer your call to Phuket-PEA. Since that is not really a convenient way

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

for you to handle the situation, I suggest you call the Phuket PEA office directly at 076-211663 or call my mobile phone 081-3273761. I am willing to clarify all electrical issues our users face.

Who can fill this hole for me?

Our road in Moo 6 is in a terrible condition. The potholes are so huge and deep that they are dangerous.

With the recent rain it was near to impossible to negotiate around the potholes for fear of

damaging our car.

Who could we contact with regards to repairing this strip of very poor and dangerous road?

Elisabeth Smith
Cherng Talay Thalang

Somporn Junthanu Chief of Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor) Department of Civil Engineer replies:

There isn't enough information for us to tell you exactly who should be responsible. We have to know exactly where you live in Moo 6, because some of the area is not the responsibility of Cherng Talay OrBorTor.

Please contact me at 076-271 096 Monday to Friday, from 8:30am to 4:30pm, so I can find out exactly where the problem is. If it is in our area of responsibility, I will quickly arrange a team to fix the problem. If it is not within our area of responsibility, I will be able to suggest who to contact.

The changing landscape of Phuket's property sector

A number of new players has emerged in recent years to lay stake in the island's booming real estate market. While many question whether there is actually enough demand to meet such a seemingly flooded supply, the new order of market leaders have based their investments on the fundamental foundation of marketing research. Having taken a peak at some of this fresh and raw data, the Phuket Gazette's Steven Layne here outlines some of the current trends.

Market Share

PROPERTY demand on Phuket's vertical plane is skyrocketing, highlighted by strong annual growth in the island's condominium sector. This is contrasted with slumping sales of other housing types.

A survey conducted by the Research & Development Department of Plus Property Co Ltd found that 2,641 new condominium units were sold on the island from April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012 – an annual increase of over 20%.

Representing a combined value of 9.98bn baht, the mean Price Per Unit (PPU) value equates to 3.78 million baht.

This is compared to a mean PPU of just over 4mn baht in the previous year (April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011), when 2,193 units worth a total of 8.79bn baht were sold.

The annual increase in overall units sold, coupled with the drop in mean PPU, indicates that demand is up for more affordable homes in Phuket – at least in the condominium sector.

The survey also looked at the island's markets for Single Detached Houses (SDH) and Town Homes (TH), both of which showed a decline in demand, with their respective mean PPU values also rising.

According to the figures through March 31, this year, the SDH sector recorded 649 sales – down 25% from 867 units sold in the previous year.

Meanwhile, the mean PPU of such units surged by 57% to 13.2mn baht, up from 8.4mn baht previously.



HIGHER DENSITY ON THE WAY: Condominium demand has grown, and though the average price of Single Detached Houses and Town homes has increased, units are selling less.

Similarly, in the TH sector, the number of units sold in the latter period dropped by 55% (down to 200 from 451), while the mean PPU rose by 46% to 3.98mn baht, up from 2.72mn baht in the previous period. When comparing the two periods, demand across all three sectors, as measured by the number of sales contracts signed, dropped 0.5% to 3,490 from 3,511.

However, due to the strong performance in the condominium sector, overall demand, when measured by the combined value of all units sold, rose by 11.5% to 19.3bn baht from 17.3bn baht.

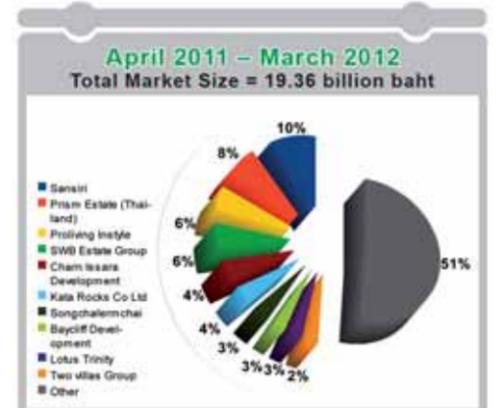
Much of this new demand was generated by market newcomers, Sansiri PCL, who in their first six months of expansion

into Phuket, became the island's uncontested market leader for both number of units sold (1,401 units or 40% of market) and total value of those units (2bn baht or 10% of market).

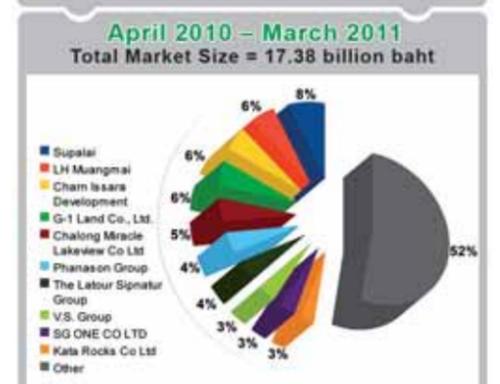
Now in the island's top seat, Sansiri replaces Supalai, another Bangkok-based developer, who led the market in the previous year when they sold 606 units (17% of market) valued at 1.3bn baht (7.8% of market).

Having sold only 86 units valued at 351mn baht in the last year, Supalai dropped out of the top-10, down into 13th place.

Though expected to reclaim some of the market in the coming year with at least one new condo project on the pipeline, Supalai, like Sansiri, will be looking to bank on their strong brand presence in order to continue to



Market share has changed over the last year (above) when compared to the previous year.



compete in an increasingly volatile market.

Indeed, a majority of the past year's top-10 market leaders are newcomers, with Charn Issara Development PLC (5th, previously 3rd) and Kata Rocks Co Ltd (6th, previously 10th) being the only two developers that remained in the top-10 throughout the two-year survey period.

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Low, high end demand up

DEMAND in Phuket for condominium units targeting the low and high income brackets spiked in the past year, while the middle section of the tier stagnated.

Marketing research (see above story) shows that 1,381 condos targeting the low-income segment (units priced less than 50,000 baht per square meter) were sold in Phuket in the past year.

This is compared to 973 sold in the previous year, representing an annual jump in demand of

41% in this segment.

Likewise, sales of units targeting the high-end (units priced between 100,000 to 199,999 baht per square meter) also jumped by an astounding 608%, marked by the sale of 255 units in the past year compared to only 36 sold in the previous year.

Measured by the total number of units sold, the proportion of demand in both segments has also jumped, with market share of low-income units rising to 52% from 44% the

previous year, and high-end units to 9.6% from 1.6%, respectively.

Meanwhile, share in the lower-middle bracket (units priced between 50,000 to 69,999 baht per sqm) dropped to 19.7% of the market, from 31% previously, with share in the upper-middle bracket (70,000 to 99,999 baht/sqm) falling to 18.3%, from 22.3%, previously.

Setting the benchmark this year, newcomers Sansiri PCL claimed 88% of condominium sales in the low-income segment.

"We are not stealing demand from others. We have generated demand based on the needs of the market. If we did not focus on development [of our offering] in this segment, such new demand and growth, as outlined in the research, would not have existed," Sansiri CEO Apichart Chutrakul told the Gazette.

- Steven Layne



Condo demand and supply across four segments, low to high end.

Migrant workers get extension

By Orawin Narabal

EMPLOYERS in Phuket have been allotted additional time, until December 14, to have their Burmese, Laos and Cambodian migrant workers complete the nationality-verification process so they can be legally registered to work in Thailand.

Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa explained the news to employers and their representatives at a meeting on June 20 organized by the Phuket Provincial Office and the Phuket Provincial Employment Office (PPEO).

V/Gov Sommai explained that the Thai Cabinet granted the extension, which succeeded the previous deadline of June 14, so that migrant workers would have three more months to complete the nationality verification process and employers would have three months after that to apply for the appropriate work permits.

"There are 7,867 business owners in Phuket who employ 69,978 legally regis-

tered migrant workers, which is considerably high when compared with the rest of Thailand," V/Gov Sommai said.

At the meeting, employment officials stressed that employers wanting to hire Lao or Cambodian workers must first obtain from the PPEO a permit for their employee to leave Thailand. The employer must then contact the Laos or Cambodian Embassy in Thailand to obtain the correct nationality-verification application form.

After the documents have been secured, the employee must go to the employment office in his or her home country to complete the process.

For Burmese workers, the employer can obtain the correct nationality-verification application form from the PPEO or download it from the Department of Employment website (W: doe.go.th).

Officials reiterated that only after an employee has successfully completed the nationality-verification process can an employer apply for the appropriate work permit.



GATE-KEEPERS: Among the officials at the meeting were V/Gov Sommai Prijasilpa (blue shirt) and Phuket Provincial Employment Office Chief Noppadol Ployudee (2nd from left).

AirAsia ready for shift to Don Mueang

Aviation

THAI AirAsia affirms its readiness to transfer all of its operations to Don Mueang International Airport (DMK), executives have announced.

The airline has scheduled October 1, three months from now, as the date when all of its services will be based at DMK.

The decision to shift its Thailand hub to DMK, from Suvarnabhumi International Airport, was made on the consideration that the older airport, located on Paholyothin Road in the north part of the Thai capital, will be able to better accommodate the airline's growing fleet, and thus provide its customers with the utmost satisfaction.

Tassapon Bijleveld, CEO of Thai AirAsia, said that AirAsia's decision to



An AirAsia Airbus A320-200 parked at Singapore's Changi Airport. Photo: Terence Ong

return to Don Mueang Airport was carefully assessed as he noted that the capabilities of DMK are in line with AirAsia's own growth plan.

Thorough consideration into transferring to DMK found that the airport's capabilities, coupled with assistance measures by the Airports of Thailand Company,

meant AirAsia could manage its costs more effectively and provide passengers with improved service.

"The un-congested Don Mueang Airport is sure to prove a benefit to us when we boost our fleet of Airbus A320s to a total of 48 and welcome more customers. The airport's location also makes it conducive

to further travel. Prospective travelers should have confidence in what Don Mueang has to offer," said Mr. Tassapon.

After the shift takes place, the airline's flights will retain their 'FD' code and original schedules.

Passengers who are affected by the switch can alter their plans by choosing another travel date on the same route, either 7 days before or after their original travel date – at no additional cost.

Passengers also have an option to convert the paid flight into credit towards another flight, which must be redeemed within 90 days. This option will only be available to affected passengers who purchased their tickets before June 26, 2012, whose travel dates are from October 1, 2012 and onwards.

For further information and developments visit W: airasia.com.

Prefab technology cuts labor, time

PREFABRICATION construction technology being implemented in Phuket by at least one major developer is slated to speed up product delivery windows while reducing dependency on labor – both by as much as 75%.

Suriya Wannabuit, Executive Vice President of the Project Management and Marketing Department of Sansiri Pcl, spoke with the *Phuket Gazette* about his firm's benchmarks with prefab.

Suriya pointed out that detached houses typically take between seven to 10 months to build, using conventional methods.

Times are changing, indeed. "With the fixed-mold, pre-cast method we are using with our Habitia and Habitown developments in Phuket, we can complete a house in two and a half to four months," he said.

Mr Suriya went on to add that the crew required to build a house using such methods is reduced to

Construction

only 10 to 15 laborers per house, compared to conventional crews that need up to 40 workers.

Another disadvantage of conventional construction methods is the instability of construction crews fluctuating throughout the prolonged process.

For example, lots of labor is required during the early structure and framing stages, but less so in the finishing stages, Suriya notes.

"With prefab, the same crew remains constant throughout the building cycle, and are mostly needed in the finishing stages.

Mr Suriya added that Sansiri's Phuket prefab yard, located behind the Habitia development in Koh Kao, employs about 200 workers.

Erected from an initial invest-



Sansiri's Habitia development in Koh Kao is one of the first on the island to be built entirely using modern prefab technology.

ment of about 25 million baht, Suriya estimated that the yard incurs monthly overheads of about 300,000 baht.

"Currently we can deliver

about 30 houses per month, but by Q1 next year, we aim to increase the capacity to 40 houses per month," he concludes.

– Steven Layne



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The real meaning of 'Do Not Track'



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

PROFESSIONALLY I live in a world that's just about equally divided between people who run around with tin foil hats on their heads, and people who don't particularly care about internet privacy.

In 1999, Scott McNealy, the former CEO of Sun Microsystems, famously said, "You have zero privacy anyway. Get over it." Steve Manes, the guy who wrote the original article quoting Scott, continued, "He's right on the facts, wrong on the attitude... Instead of 'getting over it,' citizens need to demand clear rules on privacy, security and confidentiality."

Times have changed a bit. Scott spent more than 20 years as head of Sun. He's not in the computer business any more; he's the commissioner of the Alternative Golf Association. Larry Ellison's Oracle bought Sun in 2010. Steve Manes ("man-iss")—who's a great guy, in addition to being a tremendous writer—realized a long-held dream and started writing kids' books, movie scripts and non-fiction.

So who's right? Scott or Steve? I'm inclined to agree with Steve, but Scott certainly does have a point.

One month ago today, Microsoft made a huge step in the direction of helping to protect consumer privacy. Yes, that Microsoft.

To explain exactly what Microsoft did, I have to dig a bit into the technology, so bear with me.

Whenever you go to a web site, your browser leaves certain fin-

gerprints: the name of your browser, your operating system, your IP address, time zone, screen size, whether cookies are enabled, the address of the last web site you visited, that kind of thing. I'm not talking about cookies. I'm talking about data that's inside the "header" at the beginning of the interaction with every web page.

Even if you go "incognito" (in Chrome), "private" (in Firefox), or "In Private" (in Internet Explorer), your browser still sends all of that information to every site, every time you visit.

The Do Not Track proposal—and it's only a proposal at this point—would assign one more bit in the header that says, "The person using this browser requests that you not track anything they are doing."

Do Not Track (DNT to its friends) was originally developed

implemented it.

Here's what Microsoft did that's so revolutionary: In the test version of the upcoming, new Internet Explorer 10 browser, Microsoft turned on the DNT bit by default. If you want to turn off DNT, you can, but if you don't do anything, IE 10 signals to every site that you visit that you don't want to be tracked.

As with everything internet related, DNT isn't cut-and-dried. There are lots and lots of nuances.

First and foremost, it's entirely voluntary: Web sites can ignore the DNT bit if they want to. Second, the precise definition of "track" can get a little squishy.

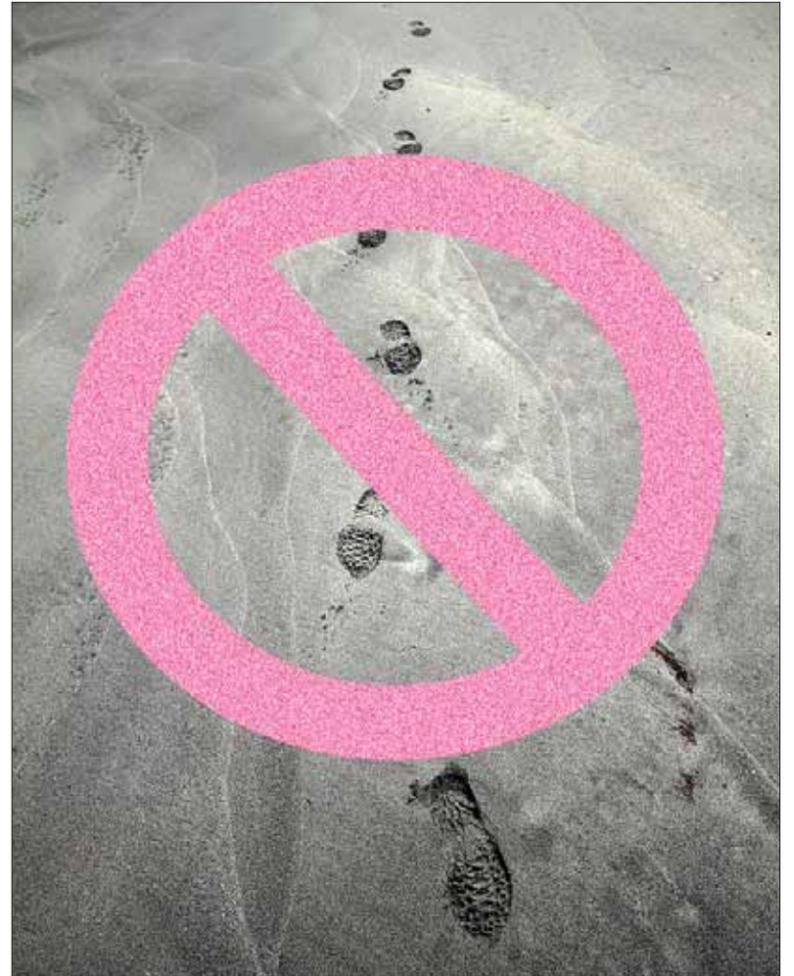
Third, there's no possible way to enforce the DNT settings—no way to tell which of the billions of web sites now readily accessible even claim to have a DNT policy, much less implement it.

Eighteen months ago, the US Federal Trade Commission published a report (W: 1.usa.gov/hUv6qF) that endorsed the idea, but didn't fill out the details.

Since then, the major tracking companies and browser manufacturers (Google happens to fall into both camps, as does Microsoft) have been negotiating and fleshing out the details of a possible DNT approach.

Eighteen months later, we still don't have anything definitive—no proposals, no regulations. While the rest of the world runs on internet time, the W3C—the internet standards body, which has representatives from both the tracking companies and the browser companies—runs in very slow motion.

The W3C came out in opposition to Microsoft's move. Their opinion is that users need to express their own preference, and the browser maker should not



DO NOT TRACK: You can ask, but there is no guarantee websites won't follow the footprints you leave across the internet. Photo: Martin Eklund



THE LAST JUDGEMENT - PART 8

by Firefox. You can turn on DNT in any recent version of Firefox by clicking the Firefox button, Options, Privacy, and checking the box that says "Tell web sites I do not want to be tracked."

At this point, Twitter and Yahoo state categorically that they support Do Not Track: if you have the DNT bit set in your browser, those sites promise that they won't track you at all. Google and AOL have also committed to supporting DNT although, as of this writing, I don't think either of them has actually

make the decision for them.

Some members of the W3C committee on DNT wanted the group to go on record as saying that websites should ignore IE 10's DNT setting because users had not been forced to make the decision themselves. Of course, the same group is quiet about Firefox's decision to make DNT a rather obscure option.

Microsoft certainly has ulterior motives in all of this, but that doesn't lessen the impact of their decision to enable DNT by default in their next browser. Suddenly, DNT is front and center on the political agenda—not just among geeks, and not just in the US—and with a bit of luck we're going to see some movement on the topic.

Will DNT spell the end of advertising as we know it? Of course not. But, it probably will lessen the tracking companies' ability to target ads.

Last week, the European Commission asked W3C to require browser makers to offer DNT as an option when the browser is installed or used for the first time. Microsoft's shot across the bow has brought some

action, at long last.

Of course, it doesn't really say anything about how DNT should be enforced on web sites, if at all. But it is a step in the right direction. Even for the folks who wear tin foil hats.

If you have a browser that supports DNT, you can check to see if it's working at my browser testing site, W:AskWoody.com/testdntflash.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions on every-other Wednesday afternoon, from 1:00 to 3:00. If you have a Windows problem that needs to be solved, 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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Garmin launches Thailand navigation app

GARMIN Corporation has launched its Thailand-specific StreetPilot Onboard navigation application for Apple's iOS platform.

The main features are voice prompting; turn-by-turn directions including street names and real-time traffic updates; three-dimensional building graphics to assist with situational awareness while navigating; lane assist featuring Garmin's photoReal junction views; integrated Facebook, foursquare and Wikipedia locations; and integrated Google Local Search.

The app is usable offline, but it also lets users access some features online, such as weather forecasts.

"It is possible that StreetPilot Onboard will [also] be on the Android platform," said Jay Shen, business development director for the Asia-Pacific region.

The company has joined with US-based map supplier Navteq to provide the navigation service for smart phones, he added.

Garmin's StreetPilot Onboard is already in North America, Europe and some markets in Asia

including Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia.

The standard price of the Thai version of StreetPilot Onboard is US\$29.99 (942 baht), but it is now available by download for the special price of \$19.99, until July 8.

"This price is a one-time purchase. Users will get updated versions of this app without paying anything extra. But this app is designed for each country, so if users go abroad, they have to download a different version of StreetPilot Onboard," Mr Shen said. — *The Nation*

Notice and redemption periods

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

ONE thing many investors don't understand when looking at a fund fact sheet, is how long it will take to get their cash back when they sell. There are generally two pieces of information you're looking for: one is the notice period and the other is the redemption period.

These two things, in addition to a third factor – the amount of time needed for the net asset value to be signed off on and finalized – determine how long it will take.

Most offshore bond providers will allow a "sell and buy" to be transacted simultaneously – running an overdraft if the sale takes longer to settle.

Of course, this in effect leverages the account. If the sales proceeds take six months or more to clear, it can be disastrous if both holdings decline while the account is effectively leveraged. And if redemptions happen to get suspended completely, a very bad situation could be created.

An easy way to reduce the chances of this happening is to wait until your sale proceeds have settled before issuing the buying order unless, of course, you are confident of your timing and do not want to wait. Just make sure you understand the risk of what

you are doing.

If it is a very steady, fixed return type of purchase, the risk is probably minimal since the volatility should be very low. Some aggressive funds, on the other hand, are time-bombs if you get stuck and are leveraged into a second declining one.

So, for practical purposes, if a fund has a 30 day notice period and a monthly dealing date of the 1st, let's see how this could work. If you put in a redemption order on the 30th, this would mean that the notice period would end on the 30th of the following month and you would get a dealing date about 31 days later.

However, if you put in an order on the 2nd, the notice period would put you just past the next dealing date. This would make your dealing date about 59 days after the order was submitted. This shows that even with the same fund, there can be a big difference simply because of the day you submitted the order, relative to the dealing date.

The third aspect is a bit trickier. I recently had one client wait about two months past the dealing date to receive his proceeds from a "fund of funds", where one of the underlying funds got into trouble and the accountants took forever to finalize the results. Needless to say he wasn't very happy about it as there was no official gate and it was an unexpected delay.

If you really like a fund, and it is a part of your portfolio that has a long time frame, notice and redemption periods really shouldn't pose a problem. Just make sure not to put money into a fund like this if you want it to be accessible within a few days. I generally advise a five-year-minimum time horizon on any risk investment.

Careful planning and a good emergency cash reserve, which you should always have prior to making any investment, will prevent you from worrying about redemption times.

David Mayes MBA lives in Phuket and provides wealth management services to expatriates around the world, specializing in UK pension transfers. He can be reached at 085-335-8573 or david.m@faramond.com



LOCKED IN: Some investors don't realize how long it will take to get cash back from a fund sale. Photo: Images of Money

Thailand's bank credit extension remains at a comfortable level

SONGTHAM Pinto, director of the macro-economy department, said that bank credit is one of seven areas that the Bank of Thailand is closely monitoring, to prevent spill-over risks from the Euro Zone crisis. Other at-risk areas include current accounts, household debt and external debt.

His comment followed the Bank for International Settlements' (BIS) warning that loose policy poses risks for developing nations, by fueling credit and asset-price booms, complicating efforts to stabilize the economy.

In its annual report, the BIS also noted that in emerging economies, interest rates have been raised only hesitantly, out of concerns about stoking further capital inflows. As a result, monetary policy in emerging-market economies may be systematically too loose. This creates risks of rising financial imbalances similar to those in advanced economies before the crisis.

"We are not ignoring the BIS's concern. However, our credit has grown from a consistently low base, since the Lehman Brothers crisis in 2008. So far, there has been no reason for concern," said Songtham.

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The mighty Mekong: "Mother of Water"

By Patrick Campbell

TOURISTS visiting Thailand for the first time might be forgiven for thinking that "Mekong" is nothing more than a cheap local whiskey.

But mention the word to almost any Thai national and you'll proudly be informed that it is a mighty river. He or she might go on to say that its name means "Mother of Water".

In a country where most rivers become stagnant or worse in the dry season, and on an island, which you can drive end to end without seeing anything grander than a stream, the mother of all Asian rivers is truly a marvel. Consider its size.

The Mekong is one of the 12 longest rivers in the world, at an estimated 4,350 kilometers (2,703 miles). It begins in far-off Tibet, and in its upper reaches alone, drop a colossal 14,800 feet.

The river drains an area consisting of over 300,000 square miles, and when it finally enters the South China Sea, it has passed through: Tibet, China, Burma, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Most importantly, for conservationists, it is second only to the Brazil's Amazon river as the most ecologically diverse river system in the world.

It is home to not one, but three of the largest freshwater fish in the world: the giant barb (*probarbus jullieni*, a variety of carp), the freshwater stingray (*himantura chaophraya*) and the giant catfish (*pangasianodon gigas*).

One catfish recently caught by net, weighed 646 pounds, and may well be the largest freshwater fish recorded in recent times. Even the Amazonian behemoth the arapaima, and the giant carp of the Nile, cannot match its sheer bulk.

The Mekong has its own species of freshwater dolphin (the Irrawaddy dolphin), and even an

indigenous crocodile (*crocodylus Siamensis*), which is found in the lower reaches of the river.

The aquatic biodiversity of the Mekong is staggering, taken hectare by hectare, it is the richest in the world. A veritable treasure-trove. It is conservatively estimated – and new species are being discovered every year – that there are 20,000 plant species, 430 mammals, 1,200 birds, 800 reptiles and amphibians, and 850 varieties of fish in the Upper and Lower Mekong basins.

Because the river has so many different aspects, it can support not only so-called "black fish" (such as catfish), which inhabit the slow-moving, shallow reaches where oxygen is in short supply, but also "whitefish", which are found mainly in the upper basin where the current flows quickly through rapids, gorges and waterfalls.

Sadly, like most treasure-troves, the river has been raided so often and so remorselessly that many of its riches have become seriously depleted – in some cases to the point of extinction.

Most of the aquatic creatures listed above are in serious decline: the Irrawaddy dolphin, once common everywhere, is now close to extirpation, and large specimens of giant Mekong fish are now rarely seen or landed.

The melancholy list of threatened species is endless, and is not just confined to fish. Cantors' soft-shell turtle is now found only in the waters of Cambodia, the Siamese crocodile in remote sections of the Laotian Mekong.

Hardly surprising, when one considers that the "Mother of Rivers" supports literally several million people, all dependent on the aquatic life of the river for their supply of protein. Greater concentrations of population, and the improved efficiency of modern



FRAGILE BEAUTY: The banks of the Mekong river at sunset in Vientienne Laos. Photo Arian Zwegers

fishing methods have led to overfishing along the length and breadth of the Mekong.

It isn't a problem peculiar to this habitat... it's worldwide. Think of the herring shoals that have vanished from the North Sea, of defunct cod fisheries off the coast of Newfoundland, of the declining Fraser River sockeye runs in British Columbia.

Many factors exacerbate problems in the Mekong, not just overfishing. The modern evil of pollution, especially toxic chemical pesticides, is one issue. Another is the buildup of sediment in the lower reaches of the river, a state of affairs caused by "slash and burn" deforestation and consequent soil erosion in the upper basin. This sediment has a damaging effect, especially in hot weather because water is shallower and more liable to overheat. Higher temperatures mean less oxygen.

It is estimated that 50 per cent of this silt is carried downstream from the Chinese section of the river where it passes through Yunnan Province. That stretch of the river is characterized by deep ravines, narrow gorges, and now arboreal depletion on a massive scale. Unfortunately, what happens to the river in one country affects everything else downstream. Rivers are not aware of political boundaries.

Globally, one cannot ignore the impacts of climate change. While opinions about its ramifications are divided, it is clear that there is a prevalence of extreme climatic conditions. In the Mekong region alone, there have been unprecedented floods and droughts.

But, the biggest villain is all too obviously – and visibly – man-made. Dam and be damned. It is already happening. The Mekong and its tributaries are traversed by major dams: four in China, nine in Laos, ten in Vietnam, seven in Thailand. 134 more are planned. Why?

Because the mother of rivers, once viewed as a larder of fresh food – constantly replenished – is now regarded as the battery of

Southeast Asia. It is a potent source of that most valuable of commodities – power. These dams generate enormous volumes of mega-watts. One dam alone, the Xayaburi Dam in Laos will be 820 meters long and 32 meters high. Regarded as a key source for the generation of electricity – and money, work on the project is currently suspended – a small and perhaps ephemeral victory for environmentalists.

Proponents argue that such hydropower is green and that its creation involves no fossil fuels or nuclear reactors. True. Furthermore, Thai politicians have argued that water channeled from such projects can provide a water grid; leading to a "greening of Isaan".

In any case, the cost to ecosystems is incalculable. Such projects are throttling and will continue to *garotte* (a weapon

used to strangle someone) the mother of rivers, destroying her unique biodiversity.

Dams provide barriers to riverine fish migration; they interrupt the natural sequence of water-level patterns to which fish are accustomed; they cause a hardening of the river bed downstream; they alter water temperatures, and wash away delicate plant systems.

The inevitable creation of more reservoirs is no solution. Few fish (nine species only) breed in reservoirs, and in any event, these static bodies of water can quickly become deoxygenated and algae prone.

Life at all levels of the food chain is slowly but surely ebbing away. Given time and man's insatiable greed, the Mekong will lose its real potency. Aging prematurely, the Mother of Rivers will become barren.



Fisherman stop to mend a broken net where the Mekong crosses into Thailand from Laos, in Nong Khai Province. Photo Mark E. Fischer

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The 'Dean' of Thai Silk

FASHION can seem like an enigma, its true meaning obscured by smoke and mirrors; a touch of sparkle here, a well established line there, and you've made the dress of the season – though no one quite knows how.

What is trendy today is later passé and might be the trend again someday – 30 years down the road.

But behind the curtain that hides this high-stakes industry is the hard work and effort required to produce quality clothing. This effort can be compounded when working in a country like Thailand. There are differing sizes amongst nations, perceptions of consumers, and standards to consider.

Enter Templeton Dean. Templeton, 39, lives in Rawai. He graduated with honors from the University of The Arts London, where he studied fashion. He has constructed garments for stars, royalty and the European elite.

"Before my degree in fashion promotion I took a full course in pattern cutting and garment construction, and that's where I learned my trade," recalls Templeton. "I went on to do many internships with fashion houses, mainly working with Vivienne Westwood. Through

those internships I learned a tremendous amount, and they took me all over Europe. Anybody can say they're a fashion designer – the second you wake up in the morning and you put something on you're a fashion designer. Designing is just making a choice.

But, those people who are true fashion designers are not just playing around with fabrics."

Templeton is what fashionistas call a "constructionist".

"Constructionists have a code of ethics, which is, we don't adorn garments," he says. "The seams, which are the essential cut, give the garment its shape. So, we won't be putting chintz on the garment. For us, it's all about using seams as subliminal psychology in order to trick the eye to move around the body."

Templeton has a passion for sewing and sewing machines and, in the past, has been a demonstrator to British and American television audiences on the QVC channel.

"After working with several sewing machine companies, I started thinking that we don't know enough about the limits of fabrics, the choices we have with

machines and what they can do," says Templeton.

Residing in Thailand for the past two years, Templeton has turned his attention towards Thai silk. He says he wants to repopularize the fabric – noting that Thai silk is unlike any other. Produced all year round, from a blend of two moth species and the use of natural dyes, Thai silk has a unique luster, as well as being stronger and lighter than other types.

"Thai Silk is woven to a very high standard, people just need to know what to do with it, and what it can do."

Templeton says that larger countries in Asia are making tremendous strides in cornering the women's apparel industry. He would like to help Thailand keep, and increase, its market share by starting a school to help better educate the Thai workforce in Western methods of manufacturing. After educating a workforce he hopes to open a factory to put his students to work.

Templeton is currently seeking serious investors in these endeavors.

Templeton's latest project is called "3 Days with Silk", which is a seminar on how to make a silk dress, to be held at his workshop in Rawai, July 6-8.

Each participant will take home a silk dress worth more than the cost of the class and a wealth of knowledge. Follow up classes in other aspects of dressmaking will also be available.

Check the 'What's On' page (p. 27) for more details, or call 0835-219-993.



SULTAN OF SILK: Templeton wants Thai silk to regain its former luster. Photos: Chris Hudon



A scoop neck semi-fitted shift dress in two-ply Thai Silk.



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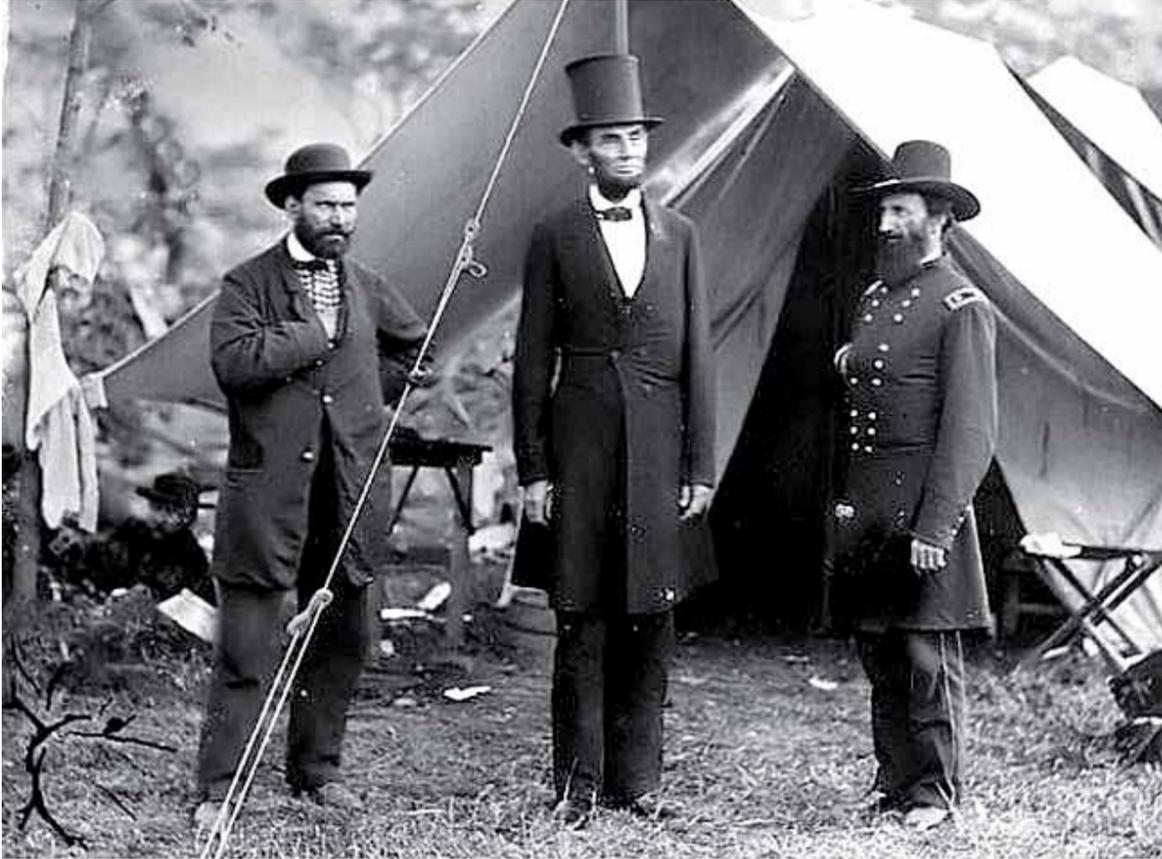
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Siamese twins, Abraham Lincoln and King Rama IV

A brief history of Thailand-USA relations



Abraham Lincoln (center) flanked by two other men in front of a tent: Allan Pinkerton and Major General John Alexander McClernand. Taken on October 3, 1863 during the American Civil War. Photo: Alexander Gardner



Monument of King Rama IV outside the Faculty of Science, Khon Kaen University. Photo: Xiangyod

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

DIPLOMATIC relations between Thailand and the United States date back to the early 19th century. The United States was founded only a few decades earlier, when thirteen of Great Britain's colonies in the Americas declared their independence on July 2, 1776.

The USA was a young nation, more concerned with preserving its new found freedom than becoming a great empire like Britain and France.

Less than fifty years after the

Declaration of Independence, the first American ship arrived in Bangkok in 1821. Ever since, the United States and Siam have maintained friendly diplomatic relationships towards each other, helped by the fact that the US never really had much ambition in South-east Asia during that period. More worrisome were the Europeans who had maintained colonies in the region for hundreds of years.

After the arrival of the first American ship in Bangkok, more American merchants came to Siam to trade. Not many years later, an American named Captain Abel Coffin came across Eng and Chang, two brothers with an incredible anomaly. Eng and

Chang (pronounced phonetically "in" and "jun") were twins. But, unlike most siblings, they were joined from the lower chest to the waist. Intrigued by what he saw, Capt. Coffin offered to take the boys back to America with him. In the year 1828, at only 17 years old, Eng and Chang set sail for the United States. They became the first Thais to ever set foot in America.

Capt. Coffin toured with the Siamese twins and displayed them around Europe and America. He made a large profit for himself. However, in 1831 the twins left his custody and began touring the country on their own. They made quite a lot of money, and after eight years were able to buy a large piece of land in North Carolina. Both of them got married to two different women and fathered more than 10 children each, adopting the surname 'Bunker'. In 1839 Eng and Chang received American citizenship. The twins died in 1874, having lived most of their lives in America.

The first formal treaty between the Kingdom of Siam and the USA was signed during the reign of King Rama III and the presidency of Andrew Jackson. Jackson sent Edmund Roberts as a US envoy to the court of King Rama III in the year 1833. Roberts carried a gift from the president, which he presented to the King in Bangkok. The gift was a beautiful gold sword that had an elephant and an eagle sculpted into the handle. The treaty that Roberts signed in 1833 became

known as the "Treaty of Amity and Commerce".

After Edmund Roberts, Townsend Harris was the next American envoy to travel to Siam. He arrived in Bangkok in 1856, during the reign of King Rama IV, and signed a second treaty with Siam in the name of President James Buchanan.

This revised treaty proclaimed that there would henceforth be "perpetual peace and friendship" between the two nations. The treaty also extended full royal protection to any American citizen that visited Siam. The treaty paved the way for the appointment of an American consul in Bangkok. In case any American citizen breached Siamese law, they would be handed over to the American consul to be dealt with. Americans were also extended the right to freely practice their religion and establish places of worship. They were also allowed to hire Siamese servants to serve their households. Furthermore, it laid out the rights of American traders, the protocols for ships entering the capital, and the tariffs on importing and exporting goods between American and Siamese merchants.

Abraham Lincoln succeeded James Buchanan as President of the United States in 1860. A year later, the American Civil War erupted and Lincoln was forced to enter into a long and bloody conflict against his fellow countrymen.

During the American Civil War, a letter arrived in Washington. Addressed to the US President, it was from King

Rama IV of Siam. The King offered to send the president a herd of elephants so that they could be bred in America.

Because it was during the Civil War, many interpreted that the king meant to give Lincoln the elephants for use in the Civil War against the confederates.

However, the letter was written a few months before the Civil War started. Also, it wasn't addressed to Lincoln, but to former president James Buchanan. It turned out that King Rama IV did offer to send a herd of elephants to the US president, but their purpose was not for war. It was to be used as beasts of burden and a means of transport.

When Lincoln received the letter, he was asked by an advisor what the elephants could be used for and in jest, he said he did not know, unless they could be used to stamp out the rebellion.

In his reply, President Lincoln politely declined the King's offer.

"Our political jurisdiction does not reach a latitude so low as to favor the multiplication of the elephant," Lincoln stated in his letter.

It meant that America was not as close to the equator as Siam and that the cold climate would not be suitable for elephants to thrive in.

"And steam on land, as well as on water, has been our best and most efficient agent of transportation in internal commerce," Lincoln added in his letter.

Anand Singh is an avid Phuket historian. If you have any comments or questions about Phuket history please email him at as.pkt@hotmail.com

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FISH OR FOUL: Succulent snapper (above) and delicious duck (below)



NAZDAROVYA: Wine Lovers' manager Khun Gumrai (right) enjoys a moment with some Russian guests.



DINING IN OR OUT: The atmosphere is bright and cheerful as are the staff (below left). Photos: Marc Mulloy

Wine Lovers: we're lovin' it

On the Menu

By Sam Wilko

THEY say that heaven is a great place but that there's nowhere like hell to meet old friends. Well, in that case Wine Lovers in Fisherman Way, Rawai, must be a hell of a good location as last Friday many old friends (in both senses of the word) came out of the woodwork for the weekly all-you-can-eat 499 baht buffet with no less than six glasses of happy juice thrown in for good measure.

Go on; admit it, Wine Lovers' buffet is a hell of a good deal. And we're not talking two-liter bottles of mixed Italian *vino da tavola* of dodgy provenance, either. Still, as much as we wanted to join in the bacchanalian festivities, we were there to check out the Thai, Mediterranean and 'fusion' cuisine of Chef Anurak, lately of Amari Coral Beach Resort.

Wine Lovers has been open for over a year now and seems to be heading the pack of the smaller wine vendors in the south of the island, many of whom have the rather disconcerting habit of placing merchandise in their display window, fully exposed to the rays of the afternoon sun. And that's surely not good.

For a restaurant with more than 200 labels on offer, it comes as a mild shock to this fossilized system to discover that there's no wine list. The protocol is that you simply get up from the table, waddle over to the shop section and grab a bottle from the richly stocked shelves.

To be frank, the marinated snapper tartar for starters is a tad heavy on the onions, but the accompanying home-made paprika, pesto and white-sesame breads are sensorially fresh; the red-green-and-white color scheme sadly reminiscent of the Irish squad that got stuffed in Gdansk recently by the rampant Italians, who continued their rampage against 'Engerland' later in the week.

We're sipping on a Cape Spring Merlot Cabernet that has better legs than Kylie and when the mains come – a duck à l'orange with spinach purée, mashed potatoes and asparagus (300 baht) and a pretty nifty grilled sea bass filet with asparagus, curried rice accompanied by a mini-ratatouille in a tomato shell (280 baht) – things definitely look up.

Maybe it's a tad over ambitious to liberally use the 'F' word in this article with regards to the food but certain dishes do use fusion to good effect. And, what with Thai curries

at 140 baht and fresh shakes going for 70 baht, you're not getting into Grecian-like financial straits over a meal at Wine Lovers.

Outside, the buffet's in full swing with live music and Ray V's nephew, resplendent in black high-heels, a bouffant hairdo and a beige blouse, is crooning along with the Filipina combo while diners are industriously shoveling what the menu imaginatively describes as 'chicken drumsticks' onto their plates. All in all it's a very happy Friday evening scene down at Wine Lovers.

And it's surely a measure of Chef Anurak's culinary abilities to be able to run a buffet and a free-ordering restaurant at the same time. This clean, 40-cover air-conditioned and al-fresco restaurant is not fine dining but outshines many other pretentious wannabes because of its 'can-do' service, friendly management, central location and a hell of a wine list. See you there...

Wine Lovers is open seven days a week at Fisherman Way on Viset Road in Rawai. T: 076384663 or visit W: wineloversphuket.com



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Aboard the Niña

By Chris Hudon

THE FIRST time you experience something can set the tone for all future feelings on the subject – be they good or bad. Well... my first sailing expedition is over and in the words of James Brown, “I feel good”. Now, on my deathbed, I won’t say, “If only I could’ve gone sailing once in my life”. In fact, I think I’m hooked.

I was invited aboard the *Niña* for the last race of the Irish Times series. Hosted by the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC), the race took place on Sunday, June 24.

This wasn’t just sailing. It was sailing on the famous Andaman Cabriolet *Niña*. On her inaugural outing, just five days after launch, she scored two firsts in a fleet of seven very competitive racing

multihulls – and went on to win first place overall.

So, needless to say, I wasn’t allowed to be a passive participant. The afternoon of the race our boat found itself short of experienced crewman. To use the words of our captain we had, “lots of bodies, but no sailors”.

The *Niña*’s rag-tag crew consisted of Captain Bob Mott (our fearless leader who painted his face for the occasion), Kirill Stash (a friendly and experienced Russian sailor; though communication was sometimes an issue), Grenville Fordham (our 2nd in command), and myself – to use the technical term, “a greenhorn”.

The *Niña* is a beautiful and surprisingly stable boat. She’s a catamaran (boat with two hulls) designed for a crew of up to six

persons. The hull is based on the design of a yacht that made the very first expedition to Antarctica by a catamaran – and went on to win countless prizes in antipodean yachting events. Local input polished the catamaran into a fast cruising yacht, made for Thai waters. Some local improvements include innovations in engine handling, accommodation, integration of the bridge and cockpit, deck and coach roof design, refrigeration, sewage treatment, furnishings, fittings and finish – as well as a unique retractable roof.

The four of us set out from the ACYC pier by dingy to reach our boat and prepare for the start of the race. The race was set to start at midday and it was hot.

Five boats competed on a course marked in the Chalong Bay by buoys and a longtail boat. Weather conditions were sunny (with a side of extra sunny), with minimal wind. The horn blew at noon and the race was underway.

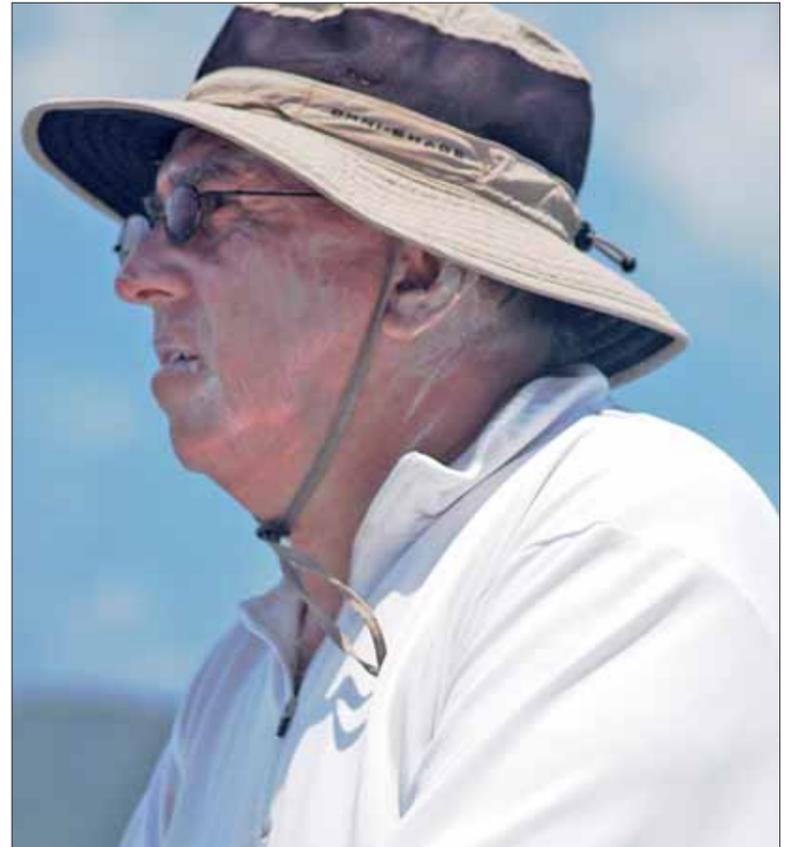
This being my first occasion on a true sailing boat our biggest hurdle to working as a team was technical language. Tacking, gybing, port, starboard, spinnaker, clew – these are just a few of the terms you should become familiar with before sailing.

Well, needless to say, at the time I wasn’t familiar with these terms and had to simply do my best. On top of the highly technical language involved, there was the issue of trying to communicate with our fellow Russian crewman, Kirril – the largest among us, who’s help was much needed while gybing.

Despite our weaknesses, and no doubt thanks to Captain Bob and his second in command Grenville Fordham, we were able to come together, persevere and



RIGHT HAND MAN: Grenville Fordham mans the helm as the rest of the crew readies the Spinnaker for the next leg of the race. Photos: Chris Hudon



THREE HOUR TOUR: Captain Bob Mott puts his game face on for the last event of the Irish Times race series.

even win the race.

What struck me most, having never sailed before, was how much there actually is to do on a sailboat. Although there is a lot of downtime, crucial moments come along throughout the race when everyone must be prepared to work together as a team in order to maneuver the vessel.

Also, specific rules governing right of way, penalty procedures and interaction between boats had to be observed. Shortly after the start of the race, we encountered a situation, wherein another boat that was obviously having some trouble

maintaining control came careening towards us. We narrowly avoided what could’ve otherwise been a dangerous situation thanks to the stewardship of our two most senior crew members.

With no hard feelings, we continued about our way – eyes on the prize. The race, consisting of two laps around the bay, ended sometime between 2-3pm, depending on the finishing time of each boat.

For more information or to charter *Niña* visit W: catamaransailingphuket.com/ charter

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Rhythm of the night

CRAB WALK: On solid ground an entirely new crowd puts its dancing shoes on when the sun goes down, so why should underwater be any different underwater? Photo: Serge Melki

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

WATCHING the sun set behind Koh Doc Mai from the top deck of Sea Bees Excalibur II, an adventurous thrill creeps through me – I’m going on a night dive, and it’s been ages.

When was the last time you went night diving? For most of us it was probably part of our advance diver training, and maybe we gave it a go one or two more times – then it was off the slate.

We don’t even notice that we’ve logged 20 dives, 40 dives, 150 plus dives and they all have been during the day. The essence of diving is exploration, whether exploring Kata Reef at eight meters, in hopes of finding the elusive mimic octopus that is rumored there, or searching the Krabi coastline for new underwater cave systems. But the vast majority of us halt our explorations at sunset, the very moment an entirely different world is exposed.

Many of us on the boat had already booked three dives for the day, as part of the Super Sunday package, so the plan for the night dive was to stay shallow, around 15 meters for about 45 minutes – I was stoked.

As we are suiting up my dive buddy continues to whistle the 1993 Corona classic, “This is the rhythm of the night”. An acoustic remake of the song had been playing on the top deck as we reviewed signals for night dives as part of our briefing.

Even without my buddy’s whistling, the song’s lyrics were looping in my head, “*This is the rhythm of the night, the night, oh yeah. The rhythm of the night. I know you wanna sing it: This is the rhythm of my life, my life...*”

It’s dusk, and everything deepens into a dark blue, as if we were already 30 meters down when we jump.

The light quickly fades as we drop down. Elusive critters that stay holed up during the day are heading out, on the hunt.

Night diving is all about one thing at a time. My torch spotlights

a single half meter off the massive wall. Directly around me everything is black, no distractions. Several meters in either direction the lights from other torches bob up and down the wall, the invisible figures behind them searching for sea life.

In front of me, the thick stubby groves of orange and green cup coral are in “bloom”, their tiny tentacles covered with nematocyst cells are outstretched, like the limbs of a Dr Seuss shrubbery. This spectacular and common coral species, vibrant at night, is usually only noticed during the day at the edge of underwater caves.

Even the feather stars, so often rolled up tight, hanging onto crinoids, or sea fans, were open and putting on a burlesque show.

Despite the beauty of the corals, which seem to have a radioactive glow to them under our lights, the crustacean crowd wasn’t to be out done. I examine a single small colony of corals – hiding within are four or five different species of shrimp, crab and lobster: striped and dubam hinge-beak shrimp, squat lobster and conical spider crab.

Just up current from me one of the divers in our group, having gotten my attention, is circling a spot on the wall with his torch. I fin back to him. There, in a tiny bed of sand piled into part of the wall is the tiniest scorpion fish – hardly bigger than my thumb nail.

After our safety stop, Andrea Filippozzi, our instructor, puts his light against his chest and we do the same with ours.

It goes dark. Then we move, and the water bursts into color, like a hundred microscopic fireflies have just jumped from our arms.

My smile is so big that a little water starts to leak into my mask. I remember the first time I played with phosphorescence – I felt like Peter Pan shaking Tinker Bell – and still do.

Arms crossed and thumbs up, we close a stunning dive, and I make a quick vow not to let so much time pass before I make another date with the dark side, and once again feel the rhythm of the night.



Porcelain crab (right); Crinoid Squat Lobster (top); Shrimp in bubble coral (bottom). Photos: Andrea Filippozzi

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BOND BOAT: Boarding the custom designed Excalibur II, 23 meters long, feels like you are getting on a boat from a James Bond film. Photo: Sea Bees

Impaling history

Film

Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter

Starring: Benjamin Walker, Dominic Cooper, Anthony Mackie, Mary Elizabeth Winstead

Director: Timur Bekmambetov
Genre: Action Adventure
Phuket Release: July 5

FILM-MAKERS love revising history to suit a story. Some, such as Oliver Stone, weave their fabrications so subtly into the weft and warp of historical accuracy that they can become instant conspiracy theories. Others, such as Quentin Tarantino, strip history down to its underpants and strap a silly hat on its head, before shooting it, blowing it up and, just for good measure, burning it to the ground.

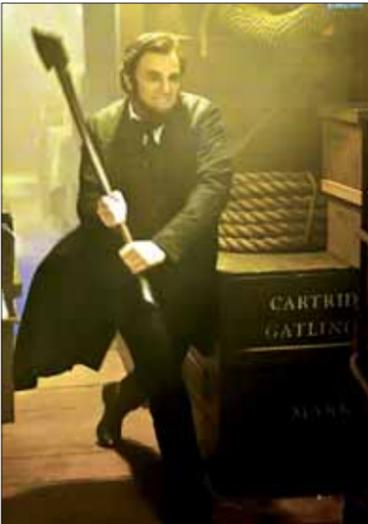
A problem that arises (for all except Mr Tarantino) is that not every cinemagoer flunked history at high school and, for every schmuck who leaves the theatre, cooing: "Wow, I had no idea JFK was abducted by aliens!" there are at least an equal number frothing at the mouth and already composing letters to the editor

about how JFK wasn't left handed.

World leaders have always been fine fodder for film fictionalization. In recent years we've had a rather toothless attempt at Bush Junior (W), learned that Maggie talked with Dennis's ghost (*The Iron Lady*) and had an almost indecent amount of Tony Blair (Michael Sheen made him look far more handsome than he really was in *The Queen* and *The Special Relationship*), then Roman Polanski cast Pierce Brosnan as a thinly veiled version of the former Labour leader in *The Ghost Writer*.

A film-maker's problem with modern world leaders is that their every move is obsessively catalogued and compulsively analyzed.

This is why director Phyllida Lloyd didn't have Dennis Thatcher's ghost terrorizing a royal tea party and Oliver Stone's imagination was only unleashed on a single *Dr Strangelove*-esque scene in *W* (with Richard Dreyfuss, as Dick Cheney, frothing rabidly about his plans



AXEMAN IN CHIEF: Benjamin Walker as President Lincoln.

for a new world order, is arguably the film's best scene).

No, if film-makers really want to give history a reboot they have to go back to a time about which we know some of the facts, but few of the details.

This is what director Timur Bekmambetov has done to the 16th President of the United States.



Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter tells the so-called secret history of one of history's best known and revered leaders. Having discovered that his mother was murdered by a vampire (and did not succumb to milk poisoning as history chronicles) young Abe wanders the wilderness with a silver-edged axe, hacking down any vampire he happens across.

Along the way he discovers that the vampires are using slaves as a food source and that launches him on a new crusade – to end slavery to starve the undead.

The whole thing comes to a head when the vampires attack the Union Army at Gettysburg and President Lincoln leaps into the fray with silver-sheathed bullets and bayonets.

Mr Bekmambetov is best known for his adrenalin-fuelled assassin flick, *Wanted*, but came to the note of Hollywood because of his two very well composed Russian vampire films, *Night Watch* and its sequel *Day Watch*. So you can be sure that his vampires are believable and the action is heart-pounding.

Lead actor, Benjamin Walker, works hard to give Honest Abe the tenor and demeanor for which he is renowned and the movie is beautifully lit and brilliantly choreographed.

But, the whole thing seems a shoddy shot at Mr Lincoln. As clever as the idea is, it somehow cheapens the sacrifice and real horror of the battle to end slavery and the American Civil War.

There are many, well-documented and supposed, reasons why the North fought the South, but none suggest that Lincoln dragged his country into its bloodiest conflict because of a personal grudge.

Perhaps it's unfair to judge a fantasy film on its lack of historical accuracy. After all, it's just a cinematic romp and, if history gets in the way, run it through with a silver bayonet and leave it to bleed at the back of the library.

Author, Seth Grahame-Smith (best known for introducing zombies into Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*) has knitted together an enjoyable enough tale and, for the historically savvy, there

are a few "Aha!" moments. Unfortunately, on screen the fantastical supersedes its historical framework to the point where, beyond that occasional "Aha!", the Lincoln element is almost redundant.

You cannot help but think it could have been done with a far more subtle stroke; that the vampire hunting should be an embellishment to Lincoln's career, not its overwhelming focus.

If you would like to see how blood-suckers and the Oval Office can be seamlessly rendered into a fictionalized history, watch the highly under-rated *Netherbeast Incorporated*, in which the ageless Robert Wagner plays an undead President James A Garfield.

Meanwhile, this reviewer will sit and wait for Hollywood's next big budget Michael Bay history-breaker – *Angela Merkel versus the Werewolves*.

Alexander Maycock regularly shouts out the next line of new movies just to prove Hollywood hasn't had an original idea since Casablanca.

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July's new books for the beach

Gold by Chris Cleave, Simon & Schuster



WITH the Summer Olympics just around the corner how better to ignore it all than by delving into a novel about two athletes going for gold at their last Olympics.

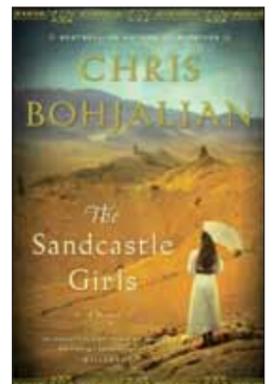
Book briefs

Shadow of Night by Deborah Harkness, Penguin.



THE second book in Deborah Harkness' All Souls Trilogy. The first book, *A Discovery of Witches*, was a bestseller in 2011.

The Sandcastle Girls by Chris Bohjalian, Doubleday



CHRIS Bohjalian's love story is set in Syria in 1915 and present-day New York and follows a woman's discovery of her family history and its connection to the Armenian genocide.

Patima Khunpromkessara

TROUBLES in the three southern provinces of Thailand – Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat – are real and constant. Political unrest results in a spate of bombings, taking the lives of many and the problems look set to continue.

Born and raised in Yala, Patima Khunpromkessara remembers just the opposite. “It was a neat little town. Do you know that we have a town plan similar to Singapore, with spaces sectioned into zones of living, leisure and working? Yala won all kinds of environment awards for being clean and organized and I couldn’t have imagined a more peaceful place.”

She continues, a little downcast this time: “I don’t quite understand how different beliefs can propel such horrible acts as killing. When I was young, my school friends were all from different backgrounds. Buddhists, Muslims and Chinese lived together in harmony.

Patima, 36, Assistant Managing Director of Blue D Zine, a software management company, came to Phuket in 1994 to study at the Prince of Songkhla University. She says she couldn’t help immediately noticing the different atmosphere generated by the strong commerce and thriving tourist industry here. For a ‘country girl’ like herself, it was exciting.

With this spirit, she went into life head on. After completing a degree in hotel and tourism management,

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

during which time she developed a liking for computer science, she worked briefly for the University’s IT department before joining phuket.com, one of Phuket’s first major online companies, as a senior web designer. The company and her colleagues there, she says, were inspirational for her future work.

Four years on she left the company after spotting an opportunity to ‘go it alone,’ and, together with a Japanese web programmer, Patima set up an online hotel booking business, Blue Sky, in 2002.

“Looking back, I was very bullish to want my own business at 25. It must be the kind of craziness that comes with such a young age. I simply thought: ‘Oh if it doesn’t work out I will just go back to working for phuket.com.’”

With only a few competitors around, the business grew from strength to strength. Now called Blue D Zine, the company offers online marketing consultancy, website design and management.

With Patima’s knowledge of the tourism business, the company rightly focuses on the needs of travel agents and even came up

with their own software brands – toursys and travelsys.

The packages, believed to be among the first of their kind, went on to win the National Innovation Agency award. But the highest accolade for Patima is the fact that they are now being used by many schools and universities as part of teaching materials used in tourism courses.

“I am proud that my products are part of our education system,” says Patima, who now teaches tourism IT at her *alma mater*, Prince of Songkhla University.

Patima, who was inspired by the Government’s as yet unfulfilled initiatives back in the 1990s for Phuket to become an ‘IT paradise’ of Southeast Asia, says she is still committed to working towards that very idea and believes that Phuket can and should become an IT hub producing its home-grown software.

Part of that commitment means that she is constantly working and her latest project includes developing mobile applications for the tourism industry.

Readers will be glad to learn that Patima does shut her computer off from time to time and indulges in her new-found passion – salsa dancing. Striving to achieve work-life balance, she also travels regularly to relax and unwind. Her favorite spot is Chiang Mai in the north.



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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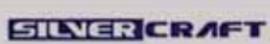
MAJESTY 56



MAJESTY 63



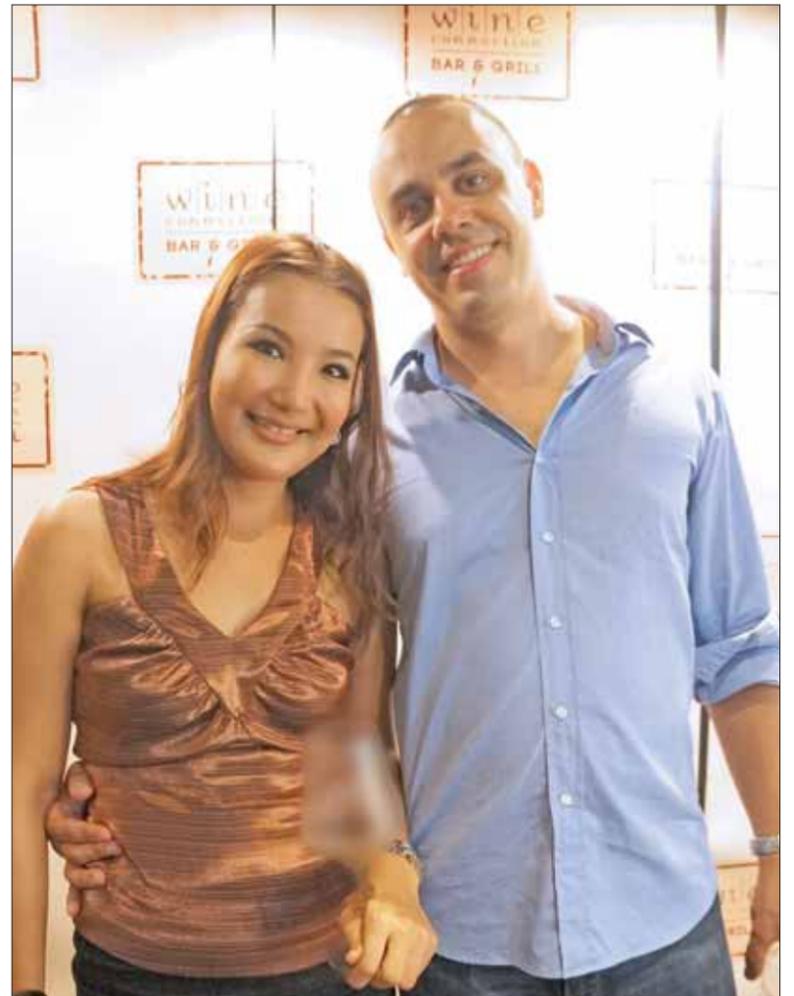
MAJESTY 125








MANY MINORS: On Minor Founder's Day the Anantara Phuket villas team selected to help "Phuket Panyanukul (Special Education) School" in Pa Klok. With the kids are (from left) Mr Andrew Turner, GM of Anantara Phuket Villas; a clown; Ms Jintana Mahattanapak, HR director and Mr Kevin Sands, director of marketing at Anantara Vacation Club.



GET CONNECTED: Owners Mr Michael Trocherie and his wife Ms Sirirat Labprakhon (above) celebrate the launch of the new Wine Connection under the concept Bar & Grill at Kata Center Night Plaza. Photos: Isaac Simonelli





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IN TRANSIT: Bangladeshi travel agents visit Kantary Beach Khao Lak led by TAT New Delhi Secretary Shangreiso Shimray (Front row, far right) and Bangkok Airways Sales Manager Konthi Asavaphanlert (Front row, 2nd right). They were warmly welcomed by Kantary Beach, Khao Lak GM Rak Chaikulserewath (Front row, 3rd left).

YOUR Phuket



SCHOOL'S OUT FOR EVER: It was a day of celebration for Quality Schools International (QSI) last week when thirteen seniors tossed their graduation caps in the air at the Phuket Orchid Resort in Kata. The *Phuket Gazette* would like to wish the seniors the very best for their future.



WE'RE BACK: Pablo and Bee at the recent re-opening of their DeDos restaurant in Cherng Talay.



CAR BOOT SALE: A new weekend market called 'Talaad Chai Naam', located at Boat Plaza, Samkong, is now open every Saturday and Sunday from 4 to 9pm.



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June 30, 6:30pm-9:30pm: Wine Tasting at Wine Lovers Rawai, Phuket
 Wine Tasting on Saturday, June 30, 2012. White wine, red wine, rose wine and sparkling wine. Free snack buffet and live music. Meet wine lovers, enter the lucky draw and more. Only 499 baht. Please reserve your ticket by calling: 66-76-384663.

June 30, 8:30pm-10:30pm: Salsa Night @ Royal Phuket Marina
 We are delighted to invite you to our Salsa Event at Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Club. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba live to the sounds of DJ Miscaro. Includes BBQ Buffet Dinner at 500 baht ++ per person. For reservations and enquiries, please contact Anna & Didier on 084-306 2016, or Mr Murat (Events & Group Manager) on 081-797 3364.

July 1, 11am-6pm: American Independence Day celebrations, hosted by the Headstart International School
 American Independence Day picnic. Hamburgers, hot dogs and American beer. Games for kids, fireworks. Free entry. Headstart International School of Phuket across from MAKRO. Sponsored by NavyLeaguePhuket.org. Contact David Rucker (087-266 7514) for more info.

July 4, American Independence Day
 Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring indepen-

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

dence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions, political speeches and ceremonies, in addition to various other public and private events celebrating the history, government and traditions of the United States. Independence Day is the national day of the United States.

July 4, 6pm-11:30pm: Fourth of July Party at Friendship Beach Waterfront Resort
 Traditional July 4th dinner with all the trimmings. Award Winning BBQ Ribs, Grilled Salmon Filet, Classic Fried Chicken, Corn on the Cob, Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Garden Salad, Rolls & Butter, Pastries & Pies. Vegetarian options available. Fireworks? Sure. Live band and much more. Contact Charlie at: 66-89-728 5304.

July 6, 7-11pm: Phuket Curry Fridays at the Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant, Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa
 We present Phuket Curry Fridays on the first and third Fridays of the month. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian Curry Buffet every Friday. All-time favourite "Chicken Tikka Masala", very hot "Mutton Vindaloo", succulent Kebabs, Goan Fish Curry and much more... served with Nan bread and Basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett!

Draught Beer by the glass: just 50 baht nett. Special discount on beverages. Venue: Navrang Mahal India Restaurant at Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa. Time: 7pm to 11pm. For reservations, please call: 076-286464, ext 4

July 6, 12-3pm: Saturday Brunch @ Two Chefs
 Saturday brunch at Two Chefs Kata Center! Every Saturday we are setting up our brunch buffet, filled to the limits with home made delights. In our smoke house, we smoke all of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht, and if you add an extra 300 baht you can choose to drink what you want from our free-flow alternatives. For more info, please visit W: katacenter@twochefs.com

July 6-8, 5-10pm: A three-day seminar on silk dress making
 This 3 day seminar will allow you to create your own classic shift dress in Thai Silk. Join European craftsman and designer Templeton Dean, and learn how to create your own silk garments. Machines, fabric and supplies are provided, so a basic knowledge of sewing and a passion for clothing are all that is required. Class costs 7,500baht. (The dress you make retails for more than the class costs.) For booking, call 083-521 9993 and do something a little BRIT different. For dates, times and locations contact Templeton at: templeton_dean@hotmail.com

July 13, 7-10pm:



For More Information : * CAMBODIA : Miss Sussie Ibrahim, Mobile : +855 15 88 33 16, E-mail : sussi@ibrahimnaga.com
 * THAILAND : Mr. Wittaya Singkalah, Mobile : 081-691-9346
 * MALAYSIA : Mr. Tongchai Wolf, Mobile : +601 926 02103, E-mail : wolftribalrider@gmail.com

Ride Thailand Magazine is arranging a 2 night 3 day bike rally from Thailand to Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia from July 6-8. The rally will start on July 5 at 6 pm. Every rider has to check in at Arun Mermaid Hotel in Aranyaprathet District, Sa Kaew Province and submit their documents to the bike rally staff.

SCHEDULE

July 6: Riding from Aranyaprathet District to Phnom Penh in Cambodia. Distance is 370km.
July 7: Riding around Phnom Penh City. Distance is 20km.
July 8: Riding back from Phnom Penh to Aranyaprathet District.

***Documents required to take to Cambodia are a hand book for the motorcycle (translated into English by the Provincial Land Transport Officer), a motorcycle license (translated into English by the Provincial Land Transport Officer) and your passport. For more information contact Ms Suphara at 081-5362158, 076-352069.

Indian Night at Les Angles, Royal Phuket Marina
 Phuket's best Indian buffet is back with a new chef and a new menu. Special promotion @ just 449 baht. From 5-9pm. Buy one get one free drinks! Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat on 081-797 3364.

July 20, 7-11:30pm: Think Design Magazine Art Dinner at Dedos Restaurant
 The Think Design Art Dinner will

feature local Thai artist Khun Watcharin, combining six pieces of Mr Watcharin's art with a specifically designed dish and wine responding to and influenced by the artwork itself. Each individual piece of artwork will be discussed and reviewed as the dish is devoured. The objective of these Art Dinners is to encourage artistic cross-pollination of art through different mediums. Help make Phuket a cultural destination. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

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*.

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 Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - July 11, 1-3pm

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SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

COFFEE break

- 9. Banal comment, it put deal off
- 10. One wanders unsteadily about river to find an early bird (4,5)
- 12. Measure of resistance unknown causes expression of surprise
- 13. Copier of documents produces second crib note
- 14. Disturbed me now, on start of lunar cycle (3,4)
- 15. Definite end of prayer time in heaven
- 17. Thirsty, he's disclosed right reverend yen for Manzanilla, for example (3,6)
- 18. Stop flow long time, inflicts harm to
- 19. A pig meal from minute mango crushed
- 20. Penalty is O.K.

- 23. So I'm sharp, making short, clever remarks
 - 25. Skilled craftsman caught partner wandering out East
 - 26. Drinks up in vessel
 - 27. Little Robert, diminutive for a confederate, back as a thief
 - 29. Record communist became more narrow
 - 32. Teetotal in degree, perhaps daughter felt sorrow
 - 34. Substance of beach treatise is abrasive material (4,5)
 - 35. Let this become the most supple
 - 36. Way-out editor left
 - 37. Public Relations do back a spur into action
 - 38. Take notice, worker is a helper
 - 39. Untidy, we tear our top-clothes
- Down**
- 1. Mollycoddled flirt given sustenance (5,3)
 - 2. Prompt meal he laid out in Phuket viewpoint (4,8)
 - 3. Follows and reaches the goal
 - 4. Stop in different side street

1		2			3		4		5		6		7		8
9									10						11
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- 5. Northern mad dude deranged outside, in addition
- 6. Went awry, possibly forty about turn a number of hours daily (6,4)
- 7. German throws out unwanted tissues
- 8. In end try out new rage, fashionable young clothes (6,4)
- 11. Second unsatisfactory track of an animal
- 16. Greatly displeases, rages wildly about point
- 19. Commonly liquid fuel in U.S., not so in U.K.
- 22. Maintain old tower to a higher level (4,2)
- 23. Southern one an individual from down-under
- 24. Proudly displays, mate, new group of players (6,4)
- 25. Personal transport almost a right
- 28. Unsettled owings for rotten five hundred bets laid out (3,5)
- 29. Beat fellows in lines, just touching the surface
- 30. Scoffers maybe desired to be about right
- 31. Ridicules, deems an upset
- 33. Obtain Information Technology, understand (3,2)
- 34. Leave the shore or be a mariner

This cryptic crossword was compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 43

CANCER (June 22-July 23):

 Cancerians who have been dragging their feet with regard to an important decision should see what they have to do this week. The astral atmosphere during the first half of July will encourage clarity and action and your luck in the world of work increases. Those with a birthday in the week ahead can expect romance to be more straightforward in the coming year. The number four is fortunate this weekend.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):

 Harmony is forecast to prevail on the home front for those born under the sign of Leo. This trend should continue until the middle of the month and the stars indicate that you will have opportunity to reach better understandings. In the realm of romance, Sunday is an auspicious day to make the first move where an air sign is concerned. Your lucky number this week is eight.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):

 July is predicted to be a gainful month, with emphasis on colleagues being ready to follow your lead. An air sign who has cramped your style at work is likely to

leave the scene, with the offer of more responsibility coming your way. Your creative energy is highlighted to flow more smoothly and this is a lucky time to get new projects off the ground. The number two shines for Virgoans this week.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):

 Playing it cool in the world of work can benefit those born under the sign of Libra during the first week of July. The stars show that others will be keen to throw caution to the wind, but your ability to maintain an objective point of view should yield positive results. Sizzling days for romance are Monday and Tuesday. The number six can bring good fortune this weekend.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):

 Taking a trip down memory lane is forecast to give food for thought at the start of July. There are signs that a previous work or business situation may be viewed through rose-tinted shades – it would be wise to weigh up all pros and cons before returning to the past. Romance with another water sign is affected by impatience this weekend. Scorpios' lucky number this week is nine.

YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):

 Sagittarians are forecast to have their heads in the clouds this week. However, the stars recommend a return to reality midweek as there are signs you could be caught off guard where finances are concerned. Your lighthearted mood has an uplifting effect on others; an earth sign friend who has been down in the dumps lately appreciates your company this weekend. The stars suggest that number five will come alive this week.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):

 New work colleagues are forecast to make life more interesting during July for Capricorns. Another earth sign should be a person you can relate to, but a fire sign's character may take some getting used to. In the realm of romance, a partner could confess that they feel taken advantage of this weekend. Auspicious days for finances are Sunday and Monday. Your lucky number this week is seven.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):

 July will be a month of mixed offerings, but the stars suggest you will mostly benefit from a helpful cosmic climate, especially with regard to your earning power. Innovative ideas will be well received, but you will need to follow up with decisive action. Romance could be a roller coaster ride – keeping emotions under control is recommended. Number four can open a lucky door for Aquarians this week.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):

 Pisceans should be able to connect to others more readily during the first half of July. The stars indicate that this open attitude will lead you towards people who can play a major role in your life. Another water sign can provide useful tips for those looking to diversify their work interests. Hooking up with an air sign can spice up your weekend. Number three can be fortunate this weekend.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):

 This is not an auspicious time to be forceful at work. The stars indicate that your determination to get to where you want to be may have the opposite result. Doubts about

an earth sign's romantic interest should fade away this weekend; those still seeking could be swept off their feet by another fire sign. Wearing the color amber can encourage more patience. Number one can be lucky this weekend.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):

 Your domestic environment falls under the spotlight during the first week of July. There are signs that although an opportunity to relocate may come at an inconvenient time, it should still be carefully considered. In the realm of romance, making a serious commitment to a water sign is well starred, but settling down with an air sign loses appeal when you learn more about this person's background. Taureans' lucky number this week is six.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):

 Good luck lies in store for those born under the sign of Gemini during the week ahead. Another air sign inspires you to branch out in the world of work and this is a benevolent time to embrace new projects. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, the wind of change is about to blow you in a direction that won't disappoint. Number three can be meaningful this weekend.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

Bricks and mortar won't hold back the water

The threat of disasters – man-made and natural – is cause for concern among property owners, particularly with regard to sub-standard construction methods and materials that prevail on the island. Despite this, assets across Greater Phuket may still have a lasting chance. Steven Layne reports:

SPEAKING exclusively with the *Gazette*, Goetz Diemel, Managing Director of Thai – Dien Co Ltd said demand for his company's products and services is on the up due to an increase of technically-demanding projects across the country.

Established in Phuket 17 years ago, Thai – Dien specializes in cutting-edge building repair and reinforcement solutions.

"We've done work for government facilities and institutions, private homes and all types of businesses, including hotels, restaurants and bars. Aside from Phuket, we also cover Phang Nga, Krabi and Ranong. We've even had inquiries from Bangkok," explained Goetz.

Some recent big-name clients include Central Festival, Phuket International Airport, Beyond Hotel & Resort, Krabi, and the Ritz Carleton's Phulay Bay in Krabi.

With a product and service range surpassing its competitors,

expertise in structural engineering and building technology is what makes the company stick out from the crowd.

"There's not really much competition for us in Phuket. Some companies might import and sell similar products to ours, but they lack expertise or experience.

"We can assess every kind of situation, accurately diagnose the problem and identify the most suitable product to apply," he said.

Sourcing premium grade sealants, proxies and other specialized construction materials and chemicals, Thai Dien is authorized to deal, install and service a wide range of shelf-brand products made by Fosroc, Cormix and Henkel.

Moreover, the company has its hands in some highly-specialized materials that you won't find elsewhere on the island.

For example, they use a double-sided, tear-free, aluminum-coated



Goetz Diemel, Managing Director of Thai – Dien Co Ltd.

polyurethane material that was designed by NASA for space and satellite applications.

"This product is one of the most advanced and effective materials on the planet for waterproofing and thermal insulation. There is another generic version we've seen in Phuket, but it's inferior in terms of waterproofing," he said.

Mr Diemel went on to share his observations about local tendencies.

"We do a lot of work for large companies and organizations because they're obligated to follow and meet international building codes



BUILT TO BREAK: The after-effects of a recent storm in Phuket serves as a reminder of how unfit conventional construction methods are.

and standards. We're one of the few companies here who can advise them accordingly.

"Many small companies don't want to spend the extra money on better products, hoping to save money by doing everything the conventional way. However, they end up wasting a lot of time and incurring more costs in the long run with repairs and maintenance," he said.

Goetz said that about 96% of the firm's work has been waterproofing, 3% structural repair and the remaining concrete floor treatment.

"Another major part of our company's scope is to support, service and educate our clients," he concluded.

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Crime and punishment in paradise



Property Watch
By Bill Barnett

LAST week's tragic murder of an Australian travel agent in Kata has created a hailstorm of calls for action from both public and private sectors.

There is little doubt that over the past few years a steady increase in crime and a straining government infrastructure has thrust the island headlong into a self-induced, perfect storm.

It's easy to jump on the bandwagon, roll out the doomsday trolley and join the cargo cult. But, and this is with a capital 'B', it would be equally reckless to put on a set of rose-colored shades and wax poetically that things in paradise are okay. Clearly they are not.

Taking a step back rather than forward often gives perspective and it's vital to understand that Phuket is not the only Asian resort destination at a critical intersection of development. Take a look at Bali and Pattaya. Both are racking up skyrocketing year-on-year numbers in visitor arrivals.

What was once the promise of tropical paradise with endless

beaches and swaying palms has shifted gear into mass tourism. The journey now is not about simple growth, but a dramatic shift, to the world of urban resort destinations.

Urban, by definition, can best be summed up as "relating to, or located in a city". The bad news for both tourists and locals is that, whether they like it or not, though these destinations may be located next to the ocean they are steadily growing into sprawling cities. Perhaps the best hybrid merge would be in between urban and suburban.

There are iconic beach locations that trade in the shadows of city skyscrapers – Honolulu's Waikiki, Rio de Janeiro, or Miami Beach. Is this where we are headed? Probably not to that extent, but there are other smaller locations that face similar issues from the paving over paradise standpoint. Spain's Majorca and Marbella are poster children of what path not to follow, while – from a law and order aspect – Jamaica and the Bahamas remain challenged.

In the past I've written a great deal about how Phuket's logical pathway should be a form of self-governance or designated as a Special Administrative Region. Both Pattaya and Bangkok work



THE DREAM, THE REALITY: Branding paradise is easy with views like this (left) but increasingly tourists must battle their way through urban sprawl (right) to get to the views. Photos: Edwin11, Moaksey.

within this framework: the key is to have continuity in key posts and a certain amount of autonomy from the musical chairs of provincial government's rotating scene of players.

Critics point out that Phuket is not ready for this type of responsibility yet, due to concerns over widespread corruption and local politics. Arguably national politics also play into the equation, given that the southern stronghold for the opposition party is ensconced here.

It's unfortunate, but the truth remains that the loser in the equation is the country's premier, tourism resort destination – Phuket.

What is needed now is not simply a band-aid to fix what ails the patient, but an understanding that as we are now in a city-like mode, the administrative structure, which includes law enforcement, transportation, beach areas and governance, cannot cope with the strain of such a significant inflow

of tourism, a rise in development and an overflowing population.

It's not just a need for more police to address the concerns over spiraling criminal activity, but a framework of government that is more city-like versus that of a rural provincial outpost.

For residents, like it or not, the reality is that lifestyles and expectations need to be adjusted to what the island is. When you live in a city, you are more watchful, prudent and take more steps to protect yourself, family and property. The same unfortunately goes for travelers.

As for branding, yes, the hype of an absolute island paradise needs to be chucked into the bin but what the exercise has been attempting to do is go beneath the gloss and find what the destination's special DNA is. Certainly sports tourism and marine-based activities serve as benchmarks for successful growth industries.

As this year, visitor numbers are well online to eclipse 5 million, it shows you can't shut down the island's most important economic indicator – tourism.

There remains an urgent need to transparently talk about what's right and wrong about Phuket, and you can't go back to zero and turn back the clock. Nor can you stop promoting and reaching out to the world to attract tourists from Thailand and abroad.

Our island is changing, as are many other places around the world, and being pulled out from a laid-back lifestyle and thrown into a thriving city is going to take some getting used to. Perhaps at the heart of things is the need to find the balance and equilibrium that is sorely missing in today's state of affairs.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through W: C9hotelworks.com

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Sompop: condo bubble may burst soon

In brief...

A PROPERTY bubble is forming in Bangkok and other Thai cities, as well as in Vietnam and Myanmar. This is partly due to euphoria over the forthcoming Asean Economic Community (AEC), an economist has warned, while a senior banking executive has played down such fears.

"Given the debt crisis in Europe and the collapse of the property sector in Spain, there are signs of a property bubble in Bangkok, especially in the market for high-rise condominiums along Sukhumvit Road," said Sompop Manarungsan, president of the Panyapiwat Institute of Technology.

He pointed to the heavy advertising for condos in all media, particularly pamphlets and new media channels such as SMS, or text messaging.

The heavy advertising suggests that condominium developers are finding it hard to get buyers, he said, belying the conventional view that the market is not in a bubble.

"I live on Sukhumvit Road and

have over the past ten years witnessed many condos spring up. Those who have older condos are moving to new condos, leaving the old ones empty," Sompop said.

He suggested there might only be small groups of people buying condos for speculative purposes, hoping to rent to foreigners or certain groups of Thais.

Land developers may be overly optimistic that large numbers of people will move to condos along mass-transit routes, he warned.

"We should be aware that a burst of the property bubble would drag down banks that have lent to land developers and home-buyers,"

He added that authorities such as the Bank of Thailand had to put in place preventive measures before this small bubble grew out of control. Land and property prices are booming now in key, up-country provinces as businesses and individuals believe that Thailand will

benefit greatly from the Asean single market. Land prices in Yangon, the commercial centre of Myanmar, are soaring at a faster pace than economic fundamentals allow, and people in Myanmar believe that political reform will bring economic prosperity, causing them to speculate on land, he said.

He also warned of the threat of political conflict between the red and yellow shirts, which could result in an economic-policy vacuum at a time of high global economic volatility. The expense of populist policies will also strain the government's ability to make productive investments, he said.

Praphan Anupongongarch, executive vice president at Thanachart Bank, however, said his bank did not yet see clear signs of a condominium-market bubble.

"If demand is dropping because consumers are worried about the European crisis, there is little chance of a condominium bubble occurring," Praphan said.

– *The Nation*

Mövenpick Resort gets a new owner



The 338-key Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach is one of Phuket's most established resorts with eight food and beverage outlets, four swimming pools and over 1,350 square meters of dedicated meeting space.

JONES Lang LaSalle Hotels has confirmed the sale of the Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket, on behalf of its owner Kingdom Hotel Investments, to Crystal Caliber Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Malaysia based TA Global Bhd.

Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels (JLLH) brokered the transaction as exclusive advisor to Kingdom Hotel Investments and in a press release revealed that the total purchase consideration was US\$90.2 million or 2.8 billion baht

Commenting on the sale, Nihat Ercan, JLLH senior vice president of investment sales, said: "This transaction is a milestone

achievement as it represents the largest single asset sale to have taken place in Thailand in recent years." Mr Ercan added that the sale generated not only strong domestic interest, but also significant demand from across the Asia region, highlighting the strength of investor sentiment that exists for well-located, internationally-branded assets in Phuket.

Mr Ercan concluded: "The Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach offers excellent opportunities for future growth in a gateway resort market that is primed to benefit from continued growth in visitor arrivals and

healthy business fundamentals."

The 338-key Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach is one of Phuket's most established resorts featuring 30 two-bedroom residences, eight food and beverage outlets, four swimming pools and over 1,350 square meters of dedicated meeting space.

The sale of the Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach brings JLLH's total transacted hotel volume in Thailand over the last 24 months to more than 13.5 bn baht (US\$ 440 mn), comprising a total of five hotel sales in Phuket, one in Koh Samui, one in Koh PhiPhi and one in Bangkok.

...and a new face

AILIN Wong has been appointed as the new director of sales and marketing at Mövenpick Resort and Spa Karon Beach Phuket.

Malaysian born, Ailin has a strong hotel sales background and has worked at Starwood, IHG and Marriott International during her 18 year career. She was most recently the director of sales and

marketing for JW Marriott Hangzhou, China.

"I'm really pleased to be joining the team here at Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket because it is one of the island's leading resorts. I'm energized by the opportunity this gives me to help drive business further," said Ailin.



ENERGIZED: Ailin Wong



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Investing in off-plan property

Property Legal By International Law Office

IN TIGHT economic times, property buyers often look for safe investments; consequently choosing to buy completed properties, in order to see what they are buying before deciding to proceed.

However, those who prefer a speculative investment may also consider "off-plan" properties.

A buyer intending to purchase an off-plan property should understand what buying "off the plan" means. In general terms, buying a property off the plan can be described as the purchase of a property, which exists only on the drawing table at the time of signing the sales contract.

One of the reasons developers launch sales "off the plan", is because funds are needed immediately to finance the development of the project. This is true especially in difficult economic times, when financing by banks for property development is unavailable, or at least difficult to secure.

In this instance a developer may decide to sell properties off the plan for a reduced price in order to immediately receive funds sufficient to start or continue construction. In order to sweeten the deal, special payment plans may be offered to buyers who provide a reasonable initial instalment, with payment of the balance due upon completion or title transfer.

Alternatively, payment in accordance with construction progress may be agreed upon.

Traditionally, off plan properties are of interest to those who seek a competitive sales price,

speculating that the property value will appreciate while construction is in progress.

Some buyers do not even wish to wait for completion of their property, and market it for resale before it has been completed. In speculative markets, off-plan properties may change hands several times before completion and the title is transferred to its ultimate owner.

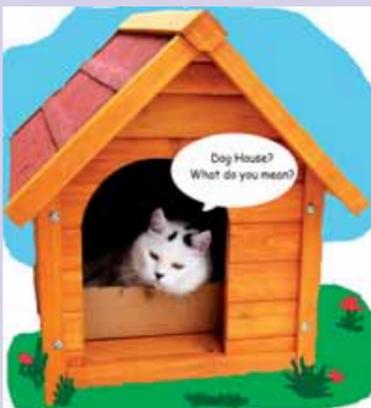
Additionally, buyers may find buying off-plan advantageous because it often allows them to choose a preferred unit and request that it will be tailored to certain specifications. This can be easily accommodated, since construction has not yet begun.

On the flipside, an off plan property investment may subject a buyer to significantly higher risk; the development may never be fully completed or the workmanship may not be what a buyer expected or hoped for.

Purchasing property off-plan can be a worthwhile undertaking, however, a buyer should understand that the risks involved are considerable.

Hence, a buyer should definitely go the extra mile in doing his homework before proceeding with any off-plan purchase. Thorough research and consultation with knowledgeable experts prior to any commitment should greatly increase the chances for success in this endeavour.

This article has been written by International Law Office Patong Beach Co., Ltd., a Phuket based law firm for informational purpose only. In case of inquiry, please contact Michael Greth, Consultant by phone: 076-222-191-5 or email: michael@ilo-phuket.com.



IN THE DOGHOUSE: Buyers can benefit significantly from buying "off-plan" but need to understand the risks Photo Cello Pics

Mellow yellow

FEW other yellow flowers can compete with the golden opulence of a sunflower, chalice vine or allamanda in full bloom. But that does not lessen the value of less spectacular garden inhabitants.

Take the *galphimia* or “shower of gold”, which is sometimes referred to as *thryallis* in books on gardening.

To give it a human epithet, this small, compact shrub is what horticulturalists like to describe as “busy”: it grows quickly and, given the right conditions, flowers abundantly. The yellow star-shaped blooms, which have small, spaced petals, are produced



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

in dense panicles which open at the same time, giving the shrub an almost luminous appearance.

The small glossy evergreen leaves are borne on masses of slender stems, which are reddish when young. There is another form – *glauca* – which has foliage that is bronzy above and grayish-green below.

This import from Mexico is a tolerant plant, able to withstand short periods of drought. It can,

moreover, be pruned with impunity. Given plenty of sun and adequate water, it should flower profusely. For those readers with terraces or patios, the shrub will do quite well in a large container.

More often, and in conventional garden settings, the shower of gold is found at the back of a perennial bed, or used, after the manner of ixoras, to make a vibrant and compact low hedge. It is, moreover, especially serviceable as a foundation shrub, since it can be planted immediately below a ground-floor window, and trimmed as soon as it reaches the sill. Not only a colorful bush, but a dense deterrent to anyone trying to break in to your house.

Also it can be valuable when planted on newly created slopes, where it will help to prevent soil erosion. Property developers please take note.

The golden shrimp plant (*pachystachys lutea*) is so called because it displays bright yellow, overlapping bracts that resemble the scales on a fish or crustacean. From these upright spikes which give rise to its two more colloquial names of “lollipop plant” and “golden candle”, which look a bit like the cones of a costus, emerge short-lived, white, and fairly insignificant tubular flowers. The golden spires are the thing; they are the reason why the plant is cultivated.

Unlike the *galphimia*, which is woody and may reach two meters in height, *pachystachys* is a soft-stemmed perennial, and rarely grows more than four feet tall. But it is a consistent bloomer, and viable as a potted plant, which will certainly turn heads on any patio. If you do decide to grow one in a container, note that it prefers slightly acidic soil – in common with most



CRUSTACEAN-ESQUE: Golden shrimp plants (*pachystachys lutea*) are also known as golden candles or lollipop plants. Photo: Tatiana Gerus

members of the *acanthus* family.

In the garden, it is mostly grown in clumps, to derive maximum benefit from the unusual bracts, which sit atop lots of large ovate evergreen leaves with prominent veining.

Although the golden shrimp plant hails from tropical America, it does not like full sun; so put it where it can enjoy some shade during the day. There is also a red variety – appropriately called *coccinea* – but I have not seen it in Thailand. Naturalized in parts of the West Indies, it would surely thrive

here, as most imports, floral or human, usually manage to do.

I am frequently asked where plants can be purchased. Sadly, neither the *galphimia* nor the golden shrimp plant is easily located in plant nurseries on the island. A pity, because both are worth a place in your place.

If you are hell-bent on tracking them down, the Thai names are, respectively, *phuang-thawng-ton* and *luang khiri-puun*. Not easy to remember, but they can both be propagated from cuttings.

Tip of the week

Small-scale self sufficiency



VENERABLE VEGETABLES: The Whitehouse garden. Photo Angela N.

JUDGING by the number of shophouses and condos sprouting up around Phuket, an increasing number of residents are surrounded by jungles made of concrete instead of trees.

That trend is certainly borne out by the number of emails I get from apartment dwellers. In any case, the garden trend is towards flowers rather than vegetables. The presence of “farangs” doesn’t help. Most of us never had our own kitchen gardens back home. One solution is to grow veggies – literally – in your own back (or front) yard. That means making the most of whatever space and light you have. If your terrace/patio gets less than four or five hours of sun a day, you can shelve any notions of small-scale self-sufficiency. If space is limited, opt for container plants that require relatively little room in which to grow.

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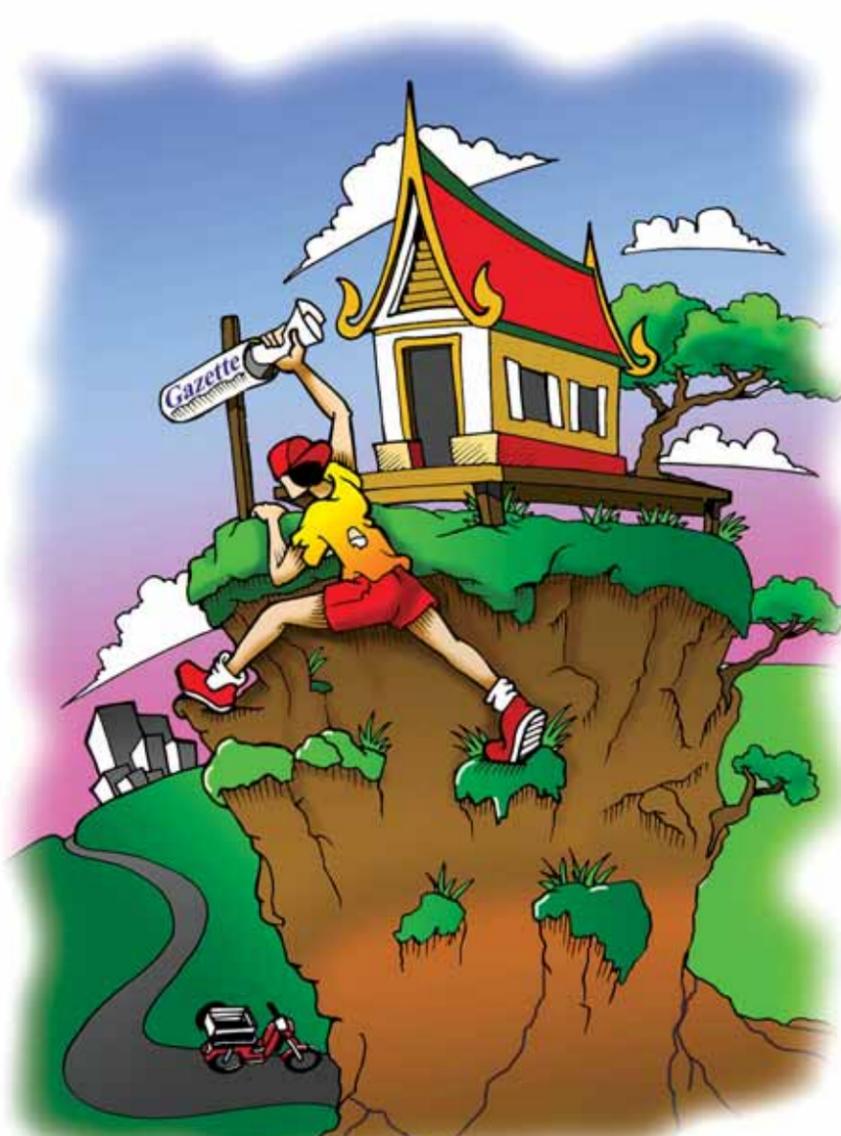
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LAND FOR SALE

Near the main road to Baan Don-Cherng Talay. 68sq wah. 1.1 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@yahoo.co.th

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.

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

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Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

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3-BED, 2-BATH HOUSE IN CHALONG

2 storey detached house with small garden, 3 beds, 2 baths. Tel: 076-282308, 089-655 7480. Email: suppamas@live.com

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

NEW CONDO: URGENT SALE



Normal price: 2 million baht. For sale at special price: 1.45 million baht. Modern style. 30sqm. 1 bedroom, 1 pantry, Kathu, 3km to Patong. Full set of built-in furniture. Ready to move in. Furnished. Contact Peter. Tel: 084-054 5807.

HOUSE FOR SALE OR RENT

Two floor, 3 bed, 3 bath, fully furnished. Located in Permsap Villa. Close to monument. Email: Pktthai1@gmail.com

KAMALA 3-BED POOL VILLA

Reduced from 9 to 7.5 million for quick sale. Seaview on hill behind Fantasea. Tel: 082-413 0034 (English). Email: imcconnac@aol.com For further details, please see our website at villakamala.com

SINGLE HOUSE SUPALAI HILL

For sale, 55sqm, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 storeys, furnished, nice garden. Tel: 083-649 1218.

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.

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Properties For Rent

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished with small garden, quiet area. Price: 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-607 8567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

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.

2-BEDROOM TOWNHOUSE

For rent, in Phuket Top Land, Rassada area, 13km to Patong Beach, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, dining area and family room, 3 TVs, cable TV, washing machine, garden area, very close to all amenities. Price: 20,000 baht per month. For inquiries please contact Tit. Tel: 087-280 4410.

RAWAI POOL VILLAS

For rent in quiet area. Long term and short term. 3 or 4-bed villas. Villas for sale at 7.2 million baht with 60% finance option. Super deals on rentals in June, July, August. Tel: 087-893 8747.

KHAO LAK HOUSE

For rent: 2 floors. Lovely all-round porch. 2/3 bedrooms. 2 bathrooms. Near beach, river, shops. Charming and quiet. Tel: 076-211 239.

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2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, 2 aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Cherng Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

KATHU GOLFVIEW

Villa and penthouse for rent, 330sqm, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, big pool, 4km to BIS, superb view of Loch Palm Golf & Valley. Quiet, secure on top of private hill, furnished, WiFi. Long-term rent: 65,000 baht. Available on 23 June 2012. Tel: 087-269 8492, 087-091 1552.

3BR HOME IN KAMALA

Gated community. Clubhouse with swimming pool & gym. 10 mins walking to Kamala Beach. Fully furnished with cable TV. Large garden. Email: vivian@viviangdesign.com

KATA APARTMENT

Rent from 15,000 baht, fully furnished, 10 minutes from beach. Tel: 081-949 0171. Email: kata_residence@hotmail.com

LUXURY POOL VILLA

Near Laguna, quality furnishings, spa, bar, security, BBQ. Rent: 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-594 4067.

KATA HOUSE ONE BEDROOM

Fully-furnished, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen terrace, air-con, internet and cable TV. Price: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827. Email: nij017@hotmail.com

CONDO PATONG

Studios and one-bedroom apartments for rent at Phuket Place and Patong Tower. Tel: 081-892 1621.

BEACH HOUSE FOR RENT



Kamala. 48,000 baht per month. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Western amenities. 2 storeys with decks looking out onto Kamala Beach. Minimum 3-month lease. Available now. Contact Jean. Tel: 088-447 7631 (English). Email: ayearlikenoneother@gmail.com

QUIET AREA HOUSE



1 aircon bedroom, near Ao Makham Bay, free WiFi, 3km from town, 1km to Panwa Beach. Rent: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311 (English & Thai).

LUXURY POOL VILLA

Simply as good as total comfort. Laguna. Rent: 32,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-594 4067 (English & Thai).

SEA VIEW BUNGALOW

Private cottage, pool set in established gardens, furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, only 15 mins to either PIA or BIS. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 082-420 3270.

GROUND FLOOR KAMALA HILLS

Superb, economic 3-bed ground floor apartment for rent in stunning setting in Kamala Hills. UBC, internet and parking space. Tel: 081-397 7598 (English & Thai). Email: kajoda1954@yahoo.co.uk

PRUKSA VILLE THALANG

Near Tesco Lotus, 3 bedrooms, fully furnished, internet, UBC. Rent: 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-7956 363 (English & Thai). Email: vicky_grc@hotmail.com

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.

KATA HOUSE ONE BEDROOM

Fully-furnished, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen terrace, air-con, internet and cable TV. Price: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827. Email: nij017@hotmail.com

DETACHED HOUSE IN THALANG

3 b/r, 2 baths, modern design. On Thepkrasattri Road, 15 minutes to Surin and Bangtao Beach. 20,000 baht per month. Minimum of 6 months. Tel: 081-958 3421 (English & Thai). Email: kjarrukirati@gmail.com

KAMALA HILLS APARTMENT

Kamala, highest room with lovely mountain view, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with study room including cleaning service 8 times per month. 24hr security guard. Undercover parking for one car. For rent 36,000 baht per month. Contact Sirinart. Tel: 086-478 0339.

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New houses, apartment for rent. 2 to 4 bedrooms, furnished, cable, WiFi, cleaning lady. All included 15,000-20,000 baht per month. Very quiet and safe. Tel: 084-716 0502.

SINGLE HOUSE THALANG

Private house, 1 bedroom, fully furnished. Near Tesco Lotus Thalang. Rent: 7,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-795 6363 (English & Thai). Email: vicky_grc@hotmail.com

PATONG NEW 2-BED CONDO

Best view. 80sqm. Parking. Security. Long lease. 25,000 baht/month, Elec+bond. Private. Tel: 087-372 6770.

HOUSE IN CHALONG

Near Palai Beach, for rent, 2-3 bedrooms, aircons, ADSL, fully furnished, cable TV, car park. Tel: 089-728 8311 (English & Thai).

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

GREAT LOCATION GREAT PRICE

Home secure estate with 4 bedrooms en-suite. Fully furnished with pool and sala. Located opposite golf course, 10 mins to most places (BIS, Central, etc). Available now! 55,000 baht per month, minimum of 6 months. Tel: +61-8-6161 2691, +61-43-592 2900 (English), +61-46-831 5377 (English & Thai). Fax: +61-8-6161 2691. Email: jenjira5@hotmail.com

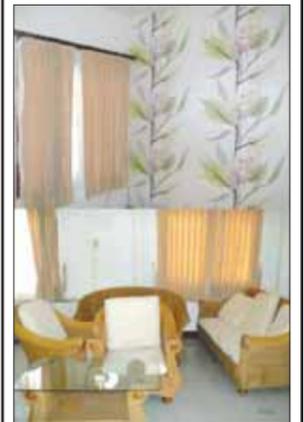
LUXURY POOL VILLAS

Private pool, located in Rawai, quiet area, near the beach, 3-4 bedrooms. For rent or sale. Tel: 087-893 8747.

CONDO PATONG

Studios and one-bedroom apartments for rent at Phuket Place and Patong Tower. Tel: 081-892 1621.

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For Sale. Price: 4.2 million baht. No agents!, not furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

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350 baht per night or 6,000 baht per month for a fan room. 500 baht per night or 10,000 baht per month with aircon. Quiet mountain location behind Nanai Road (Hasib Pee Road). Five minutes by bike to downtown Patong. Free Wi-Fi, cable TV, fridge. Fully furnished double rooms. Bar. Tel: 082-286 5171, 087-078 6379 (English), 084-625 2173 (English). Email: nanaisauna@yahoo.com
For further details, please see our website at sunsetspatong.com

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2 bedrooms, fully furnished, hot shower, aircon, satellite TV, internet, car park. For sale: furniture and car (Daihatsu Mira) & 2 motorbikes (Honda) 100,000 baht. Tel: 087-265 0652 (English). Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

DETACHED HOUSE IN THALANG
3 b/r, 2 baths, modern design. On Thepkrasatri Road, 15 minutes to Surin and Bangtao Beach. 20,000 baht per month. Minimum of 6 months. Tel: 081-958 3421 (English & Thai). Email: kjarrukirati@gmail.com

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Accommodation Wanted

LOOKING TO BUY
Looking to buy beachfront house with Chanote. Email: a.pueng@gmail.com

3-BED HOUSE WANTED CHALONG
Min 3-bedrooms, min 2 bathrooms, long term, garden, telephone line. Quiet location like Ban Prantong. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

LONG TERM RENTAL WANTED
Rawai-Chalong Area, 2-3 bedrooms, with enough storage and a big garage. Fenced property only. Including furniture! Tel: 087-823 7371 (English). Email: holgersaupe750@hotmail.com

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- Experience in accounting and budget management
- Experience in property systems, operations, maintenance and management
- Experience in leading a team of employees
- Excellent spoken and written English. Please send cover letter, CV, current and expected salary, and job references. Email: thesandsboard@gmail.com

THAI STAFF WANTED (COOK)
Cook needed, can make Thai and European food. Please contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5 9 6 3 . o r E m a i l : cc@bayshoreprojects.com

JOBS FOR HOTEL WORKERS
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PLAY GROUP
English-speaking Russian person wanted for playgroup. Must enjoy working with young kids. Tel: 084-442 3671.

MANAGER IN PATONG
Bali Hai Massage needs English-speaking Thai person to run day shift. Good command of English skills. Please contact for more information. Kathy: 086-745 7745 or Balihai: 084-441 7538.

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A Phuket Town gallery is looking to hire a Thai national with excellent spoken English and organizational skills. Good salary given. Tel: 086-509 7510 (English). Fax: 076-223 677. Email: simon@colonial-connection.com

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Advanced PHP programmer needed, firm in coding PHP, CSS, JS and DB. Design skills in PS not a must but preferred. Please contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963 (English). and send CV Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

PROJECT COORDINATOR
Work in Surathani
Qualifications:
- Male or female with Thai nationality (familiar with Surat Thani province)
- Can drive a car (must have driver's license)
- Able to speak and write English
- Enjoy working with foreigners
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- Good written and spoken English (German or French speaking is an advantage)
- Good computer skills (Word, Excel, Outlook)
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Only those with a genuine interest in joining a professional travel company for long-term commitment need apply.

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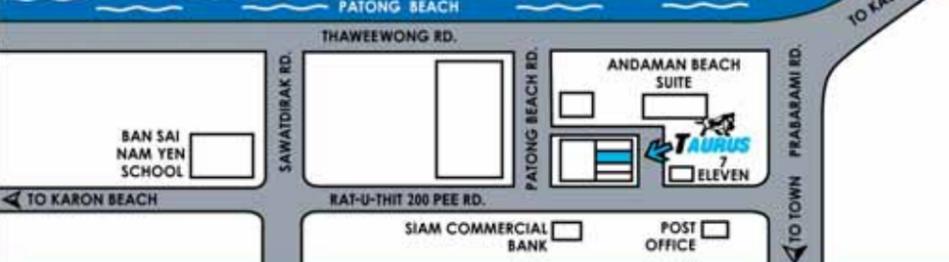
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A triumph of errors

Formula 1
By The Digby

VALENCIA GP, since its birth, has been F1's answer to Valium.

Suddenly it has hosted one of the greatest races any of us has seen. There were pre-race fans opting for the two-snooze strategy. Hah!

No-one has been able to overtake in Valencia. But this year there was overtaking a-plenty, there was the Pirelli Factor, and there were errors. And in the supercharged 2012 season the errors were fatal.

The race looked predictable. Sebastian Vettel was in pole position and he would run as fast as



TAKES THE FLAG: Fernando Alonso wins at home to the delight of the crowd. Photo: AFP

possible to be able to mitigate his inevitable early pit-stop, Lewis Hamilton would drive more steadily and take the lead when Vettel pitted, and Romain Grosjean would outwait them both and possibly win on a one-stopper.

Vettel certainly played his part, scorching away and gaining a second per lap over Hamilton who held back the rest of the field, although constantly tested by Grosjean who had already gained a place on the first corner. But a revolution was starting behind the leaders. Almost unseen, Fernando

Alonso was making ground from his grid start of eleventh. Pastor Maldonado who had started third, had many scrapes, and started to

slow with debris in his radiator. Fernando passed him, and with a great pit stop passed Kimi Räikkönen and Kamui Kobayashi on the exit, making him effectively fourth, allowing for those who had not yet pitted.

Then came 'the big one'. It started innocuously enough. Red Bull Junior Jean-Eric Vergne passing Heikki Kovalainen inexplicably clashed with the Caterham. The damage gave Kovalainen a puncture and damaged wheel. But Vergne's fatally injured Toro Rosso kept going, scattering debris over the track.

The safety car was summoned while the track was cleaned. Lapped cars were waved past before the restart, keeping the safety car on-track for an extra two laps.

Vettel managed to keep his lead despite pitting a lap after Grosjean, Hamilton and Alonso. But his hard earned 20 second lead was gone. Hamilton's pit stop was another tragedy and promoted Alonso to third. Daniel Ricciardo did not stop and took fourth ahead of Räikkönen,

DRIVER	POINT	DRIVER	POINT
1 FERNANDO ALONSO	111	6 KIMI RAIKKÖNEN	73
2 MARK WEBBER	91	7 ROMAIN GROSJEAN	53
3 LEWIS HAMILTON	88	8 JENSON BUTTON	49
4 SEBASTIAN VETTEL	85	9 SERGIO PEREZ	39
5 NICO ROSBERG	75	10 PASTOR MALDONADO	29

with Hamilton down to sixth. Grosjean was fighting Alonso, but it was still Vettel's race. Then Vettel's Red Bull simply died, with alternator problems; soon afterwards so did Grosjean's Lotus.

Alonso had a comfortable three-second margin over Hamilton and Räikkönen. And it was Hamilton's tyres that started to degrade. He slipped back in the order, until at turn 12 on the penultimate lap an overaggressive Maldonado swung back onto the track into the side of the McLaren, crushing Hamilton into the barrier.

Maldonado's wounded Williams briefly held third place behind Räikkönen's Lotus, but was

passed by a string of cars led, surprisingly, by Michael Schumacher followed by Mark Webber. Where did they come from? Schumie was as amazed as anyone to be there, but he held on to take his first podium since China in 2006.

It was Alonso's triumph. He stopped short of the Parc Fermé and he and a Spanish Flag had an emotional bonding with the stewards and grandstands.

So all in all, as the leaders fell like flies, those with the strength to endure inherited the race. For Alonso, to win a home GP particularly under such circumstances must be as close to magic as a human can hope for.

Wimbledon 2012

THE sensational summer of sport continues this week with the start of Wimbledon. One of the most coveted grand slams a player can win and seen by many as the most prestigious tennis tournament in the world, Wimbledon is played at the All England Club from June 25 to July 8.

Andy Murray once again started his quest to be the first British man since Fred Perry in 1936 to win a Grand Slam.

Murray started the tournament against Nikolay Davydenko on Center Court and cruised to victory 6-1 6-1 6-4 in 92 minutes.

Rafael Nadal, who regained the French Open prior to Wimbledon, was made to work hard for his 7-6 (7-0) 6-2 6-3 victory over Thomaz Belluci.

Roger Federer and defending champion



MAKE IT A DOUBLE: Maria Sharapova will look to add to her 2004 title. Photo: MariaFanClub

Novak Djokovic started with straight set wins. Fifth seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga defeated 2002 champion Lleyton Hewitt in straight sets which leaves Australia without a man in the second round.

Top seed Maria Sharapova eased her way into the second round with a straight sets win over Anastasia Rodionova.

Five-times Wimbledon champion Venus Williams was knocked out in the first round in what is the biggest shock of the tournament so far. Serena Williams made her way into the second round by defeating Barbora Zlahavova Strycova 6-2 6-4.

Defending champion Petra Kvitova is also in the second round after a straight sets victory over Akgul Amanmuradova.



MINT: Can Murray go one better this year? Photo: Carine



Who would you bet your Euro on?

THE quarter finals of the European Championships played out the way many football fans expected. The first quarter final saw Portugal take on the Czech Republic and it was clear to see Cristiano Ronaldo was out to prove a point.

Ronaldo hit the post in both halves though finally capped a magnificent display with the only goal of the game with 12 minutes remaining. The Czech Republic failed to muster a shot on target in the entire game.

Germany swept aside a poor Greece side who looked out of their depth in the quarters. Joachim Loew rested his first string strike force of Mario Gomez, Thomas Mueller and Lukas Podolski. The move was vindicated as the Germans won 4-2.

Spain easily knocked out a tired looking France side with a master class in possession

football. Spain started the game without a recognised forward choosing to replace Fernando Torres with Cesc Fabregas. Two Xabi Alonso goals ensured Spain's safe passage to the semi finals.

England and Italy played out a goalless draw which was decided on penalties, with Italy coming out on top 4-2. Italy controlled possession for 120 minutes thanks to Andrea Pirlo pulling the strings from midfield. A resilient performance from England's defenders and goalkeeper Joe Hart kept Italy at bay and forced the game into extra time and penalties. England's penalty record stands at six defeats and one win from their last seven penalty shoot-outs at major tournaments.

The final will be played at the Olympic Stadium in Kiev. Kick-off 1.45am Monday (Phuket time).

SPORTS briefs...

CRICKET: England named the same side that defeated the West Indies 2-0 for their upcoming one-day series against Australia.

The first game of the five-match series is at Lords this Friday and England will need to maintain their current run of good form to stand any chance against the world's top-ranked one-day international team.

England's 14 man squad: A Cook (capt), J Anderson, J Bairstow, I Bell, R Bopara, T Bresnan, S Broad, J Dernbach, S Finn, C Kieswetter, E Morgan, S Patel, G Swann, J Trott.

STRANGE SPORTS: The sumo suit athletics world championship are due to take place July 8 in London, with the motto of slower, lower, weaker!

The participants compete in five disciplines: high and long jump; shot put; 400 and 100 meters sprint.

The suits are foam-filled, not inflatable, which must be verified by the World Championship body, which states there are safety reasons why such a suit should be used, as it is far more robust for jumping in!

The current 100m sumo suit record, set by Ed Moyse, is an incredible 14.43 seconds.

OLYMPICS: Saudi Arabia has announced this week that it will allow its female nationals to participate in the Olympics for the first time.

Women in Saudi Arabia were banned from attending gyms in 2009. Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Brunei are the only three countries never to have sent female athletes to the Olympics.

Brunei and Qatar had already confirmed they will be sending female nationals to London 2012.

Equestrian Dalma Malhas is the only female Saudi athlete who could qualify for the Olympics.

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Islanders thrash hares



DOUBLING UP: Wacharakorn Klaithin scored two of Phuket's seven goals.

FALLING BEHIND: Poramut Krongborisut drives past Chanthaburi's defenses. Photos: Peerapat Rattana

Football: TY1

FOUR goals each side of half-time saw a rampaging Phuket FC rout the hapless Chanthaburi FC "Hares" 8-1 last night.

There was some concern that Phuket FC might be overconfident going into the match. The Islanders were coming off a big win against Bangkok FC, their first home win of the season, and taking on last place Chanthaburi.

Winless all year, the Hares' last two results were lopsided thrashings at home: 0-7 to Bangkok FC and 1-9 to Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC.

However, word that the Hares' foreign players had rejoined the team after resolution of a pay dispute led the Phuket FC coaching staff to warn the boys not to take the team lightly. Another cause

for concern was that Brazilian goalkeeper Alonso da Silva was among four Islanders serving a penalty suspension.

Concern turned to worry just two minutes into the match, when what seemed an innocuous cross by Chanthaburi forward Prawit Wasuntara created confusion between Phuket FC's reserve keeper and his defender, with the ball deflected into net at the near post.

Some 2,200 fans who turned up for the match, almost double last week's total, were initially stunned – including the small contingent of die-hard Chanthaburi supporters dressed in yellow who made the long-haul bus ride to the match.

However, fears that the open-

ing salvo marked the emergence of a new breed of "killer rabbit" turned out to be short lived. The Islanders took the wake-up call in stride, with Phuket's star de-

pair by lanky Ivorian import Ibrahim Kanoute just before the break signaled that the rout was on as the teams went into the locker rooms with the Islanders up 4-1.

The second half kicked off in the same manner as the first had ended, with Phuket playing the part of the Energizer Bunnies while the disorganized and underpowered Hares looked more like "The Other Brand".

With goals having come at a premium for Phuket all season, they responded as if on an Easter Egg Hunt, with goals by Thawin Butsombat (min 53) and Yseongwon Byeon (min 65) followed by a brace from Wacharakorn Klaithin (mins 75, 85).

After the match, Phuket's often dour-faced coach Milos Joksic could hardly contain a smile. He declined to name a

'man of the match', saying that the whole team played 'perfectly'.

The return to health of Thawin Butsombat, the forward who suffered a broken leg in May last year against Thai Honda FC, as well as the performance by Kanoute, were both very positive developments, he said.

Coach Milos promised an even better performance by the team in its showdown with Krabi FC on July 7, saying Alonso and other starters would again be available to play.

Asked about a comment attributed to new team president Pamuke Atchiriyachai that the team would be "trying to get a draw" against higher-ranked Krabi, he said that the players trained for and went into each and every match with a single objective: winning.

Also, see story to right.

– *Stephen Fein*



Phuket FC is quite popular among the ladies.

fender Nene Bi going on the offensive and blasting home a botched save right on the goal line in the sixteenth minute.

A subsequent goal by Poramut "Mut" Kronborisut and then a

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Irish Times race 8 closes series



HOSTED by the Ao Chalong Yach Club (ACYC), six boats competed in the eighth and final race of the Irish Times series on Sunday, June 24. The course consisted of two laps in the Chalong bay marked by buoys and a longtail boat. The event had three categories of vessel: racing, cruising and multi. Jensmink came in first of the racing boats with Moya Hin in second. In the cruising bracket Austreus clinched first, followed by Iruvai and Windstar in second and third respectively. The Nina came in first for the multi division. As the Irish Times series comes to a close yachtsman will be turning their focus towards the upcoming Phuket Raceweek.

Sport

Phuket FC draw Bulls, ready for derby match



PHUKET FC held their own against Thai Premiere League side Wuachon "Fighting Bulls" United, holding the Songkhla-based side to a 3-3 draw on Tuesday night at Surakul Stadium in Phuket Town.

Though only a friendly match, the Islanders came out gunning. They built up a 3-0 lead before the visitors from Songkhla realized that Phuket was not to be taken lightly, even if a league below.

Phuket's first goal was a penalty converted by Wacharakorn "Bird" Klaithin in the 6th minute following tryout Roland "Pato" Vargas-Aguilera being taken down by a Wuachon defender in the penalty box.

Bird doubled the home side's lead in the 17th minute with a strike from 30 yards out.

Phuket got their next and final goal 10 minutes later with a clean drive and finish by Pato, a Bolivian national that has played for several teams in US Major League Soccer (MLS).

Wuachon's Kirat Keawsombut and Ivorian Kone Seydou answered with goals in the final ten minutes of the first half.

Ball control in the second half was dominated by Songkhla, with several commendable counter-attack attempts by Phuket.

However, it was the visitors who would get the final cheer of the evening, equalizing in the 55th minute with a goal from Brazilian Aron Da Silva, taunting his comrade: Phuket goalkeeper Alonso Carvalho.

Aside from Carvalho, Ivorian defensive back Nenebi Tra Sylvestre and Brazilian midfielder Marcio Santos, the rest of Phuket was a reserve squad, with three new faces also seen on the pitch.

Phuket FC coach Milos Joksic explained to the *Gazette* after the match that the three players were trying out for the squad, hoping to be added to the payroll in the second half of the season.

"All of our current foreign players are really good, and the rules only allow us to have so many [foreign players on the pitch at a given time]. So we'll have to see if we sign any of these guys. Actually, what we need are more good Thai players," he said.

Particularly catching the eye of many fans was goal scorer Pato, a Bolivian national who also shares some Brazilian heritage with his friend and former Chiang Rai United teammate, Alonso.

Roland told the *Gazette* that he had played for several teams in the US, including the New England Revolution and Columbus Crew.

Initially planning to play in the Korean league, Pato said he instead decided to play in Thailand.

After last season with Chiang Rai United, he went on to play for PTT Rayong in the first division. He is currently a free agent.

Phuket will now break for the weekend, returning to action with a highly-anticipated Saturday night showdown against 3rd-place Krabi FC on July 7.

Asked about the match, Alonso told the *Gazette* that Phuket will need to work on their defensive coordination if they want to stop the high flying Andaman Eagles, currently perched in third place in the 18 team bracket and holding aspirations to joining Wuachon Utd as the second-ever southern team to work their way up to the TPL.

"Krabi is a good attacking team, and we need to work more on closing spaces to stop their offense. If we do this well, I think we can get them on the counter-attack," he said.

Coach Milos Joksic was also optimistic.

"Our goal is to win. Our friendly with Wuachon today was good experience for our players. The Thai Premiere League players tend to have better strength and endurance than players in Division One, but not by much.

"We need to be more aggressive in the midfield, challenging more for midfield possession to create more scoring chances," he concluded.

- Steven Layne

Thai ladies in top 6

THAI ladies continue to live up to their reputation as some of the world's best ball control artists, with the final round of the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) 2012 Grand Prix providing the latest stage for them to demonstrate their considerable skills.

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

Starting June 8, the Prix's 20th edition was contested by 16 qualifiers and co-hosted across 10 nations: Thailand, Macau, China, Chinese Taipei, Japan, South Korea, Serbia, Poland, Brazil and Dominican Republic.

At the time of going to press, the final round was being contested among six finalists in Ningbo, China.

As one of the six finalists, Thailand has already matched their best-ever finish of 6th place, which they achieved in last year's Prix, and have the opportunity to set a new benchmark as this goes to press.

Ranked 12th in the world - two spots up from last year - the Lady Elephants stood out among the world's best, early on in their 10th appearance, winning 7 of their 9 matches in the opening stages.



BALL BUSTERS: The Thai ladies volleyball team stands tall. Photo FIVB

Among Thailand's victims were Argentina (world 18th) and Puerto Rico (19th) - both losing to the Thais twice - as well as Japan (3rd), the Dominican Republic (9th) and Serbia (6th).

Thailand's two losses in pool play were meted out by Asian rivals China (5th) and the world's uncontested best, the USA.

An impressive sets won-lost ratio of 2.2 during the pool stage was third best behind USA (13.5) and China (3.0).

They also enjoyed a very respectable points-won-over-lost ratio of 1.120 (709/633). The fourth-place finish at the end of the pool stage sealed a spot for the Thais in the final round, for the second consecutive year.

At the time of going to press,

the finals round was taking place. Below is the schedule for the remaining matches.

June 29

12pm: Brazil vs Cuba
2:30pm: Turkey vs USA
6:30pm: China vs Thailand

June 30

12pm: Brazil vs Thailand
2:30pm: Cuba vs USA
6:30pm: China vs Turkey

July 1

12pm: Turkey vs Brazil
2:30pm: Thailand vs Cuba
6:30pm: China vs USA

For all the latest updates, scores and stats, see *W: fivb.org*
- Steven Layne

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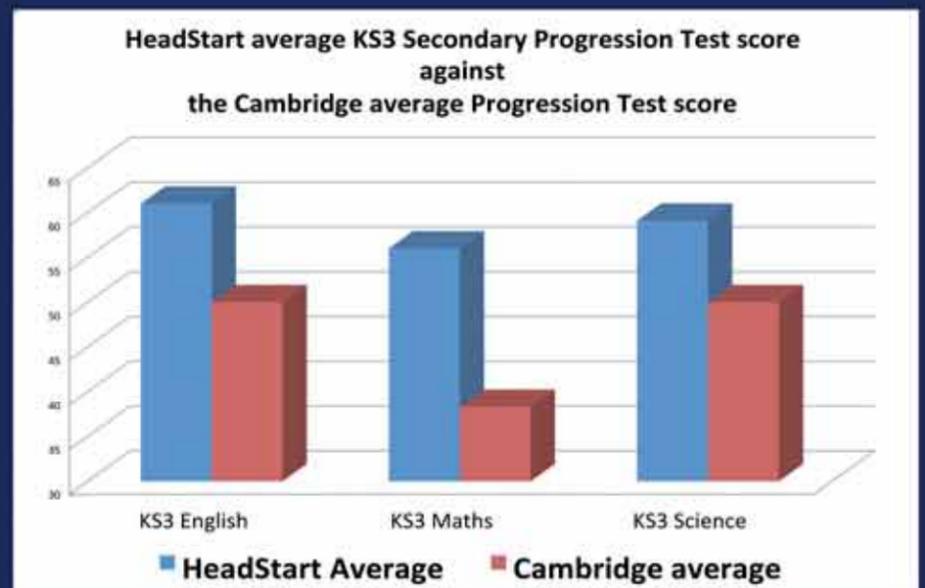
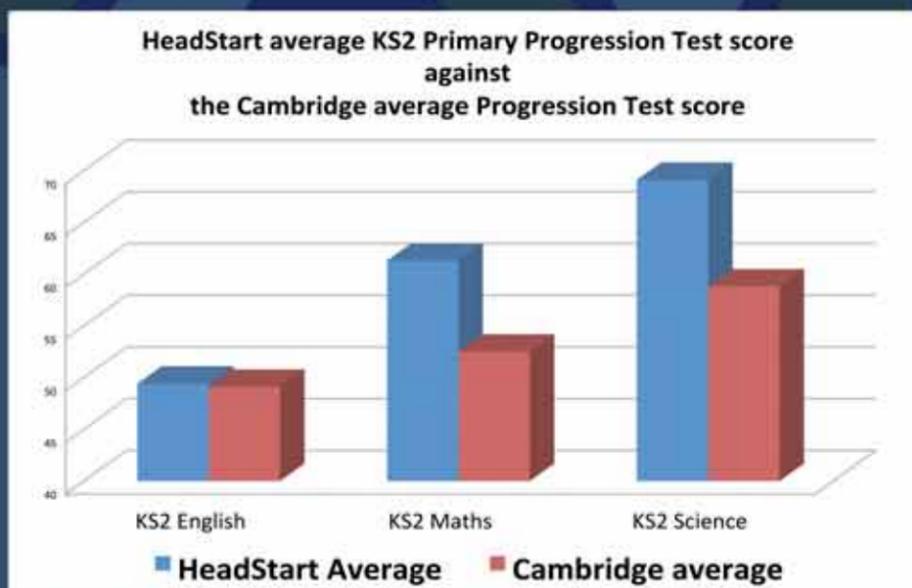
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