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■ 'SIGN AND CONFESS OR SPEND MORE THAN THREE YEARS IN JAIL': BAMFORD

Bamford claim sparks outrage

■ Australian Government denies that consular officers in Thailand advised tourist Stevie Bamford to confess to lying about her rape claim

By **Mark Dee**

THE Australian Government has flatly rejected allegations by one of their own citizens, Stevie Bamford, who went on Australian national television and accused embassy officials of telling her to lie about her reported sexual assault ordeal on Phuket.

Ms Bamford, 21, alleged on the prime-time television show *Today Tonight* that Australian consular officials told her to confess to lying to police about being raped by three men in a tuk-tuk in Patong on June 10 – so that she would be able to “walk away” from the incident.

However, in an email to the *Gazette* on Wednesday, a spokesperson for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) stated that Australian consular officials at no time gave legal advice to Ms Bamford, or advised her to sign any statement.

Consular officials urged her repeatedly to engage a lawyer to advise her on legal proceedings, said the email.

“Consular officials from Canberra, Bangkok and Phuket provided extensive consular assistance to Ms Bamford, her boyfriend, and her mother (while in Phuket) and her father (who remained in Australia) during the entire period from the initial rape investigation, her arrest, the court hearing, the lead-up to detention, detention and deportation from Thailand.



Stevie Bamford, pictured here after her release from the Bang Jo correctional facility in Phuket, has sparked outrage among officials by claiming she was told to confess to lying about being raped in a Patong tuk-tuk. Photo: Gazette file

Continued on Page 3



**Tourists saved
after day tour
boat sinks**

Full story on page 3

Patong election forces weekend alcohol ban

THE sale and purchase of alcohol will be prohibited throughout Patong from 6pm Saturday, September 1, to midnight on Sunday, September 2, as local residents go to the polls to vote for a new Patong Mayor and town council.

Incumbent Mayor Pian Keesin, a central figure in Patong for at least the past three decades, will lead his blue-shirted Rak Patong (“Love Patong”) team in the polls against rival mayoral candidate Kittisan Kuru and his yellow-shirted Patong Gao Na (“Patong Progress”) team.

French expat may lose luxury villa in land raid

A FRENCH businessman may have to suffer his 100-million-baht luxury villa in Phuket being destroyed if a court rules that it is situated on national park land. The news comes as officials continue raids on properties suspected of encroaching on Sirinath National Park.

Full story on Page 2

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This Week



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Beer, wine and car imports threatened with heavier duty. **Page 12**



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Meeting the Phuket dinosaurs - the extinct ones. **Pages 16**



Explore

The road to Mandalay opens up the way to Myanmar. **Page 17**



Food

Monkeypod: A great place to just hang out and chill. **Page 21**



Property

CEO of Laguna, Ho Kwon Ping outlines the future. **Page 31**



Sports

Phuket students to go to Malaysia for Karate 2012. **Page 47**

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Sunday



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Monday



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Tuesday



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Wednesday



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Flood victims step forward

MORE than 100 families whose homes or businesses suffered damage in the flash floods last week have registered to receive assistance through Phuket City Municipality.

Peerapong Matra from the Social Welfare Department told the *Gazette* that Phuket City Municipality opened a flood-relief center on August 23, the day after Phuket Town flooded.

"We initially wanted to close the center on August 28, but people were still coming in, so we will continue to receive registrations to assistance until August 31," Mr Peerapong explained.

Details of those who have registered will be forwarded to the Phuket office of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM-Phuket), which will investigate the claims and provide compensation according to the damage suffered, he added.

The DDPM office in Rassada closed its office for flood-damage claims on Wednesday. "About 60 people have filed claims," confirmed DDPM-Rassada officer Siriporn Sasu.

Meanwhile, the Social Welfare Department at Patong Municipality confirmed that only nine people had applied to their office for assistance.



Flooding last week affected about 2,000 people. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

"We will continue to receive applications for claims until September 5, then we will provide assistance ourselves," he said.

Speaking at Patong Hospital on August 24, Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha announced that the government is spending 276 million baht on flood defense measures, including 200mn baht on elevating the road in front of Patong Hospital and a further 16mn baht on flood-prevention works at the hospital itself.

Other projects included 21mn baht on flood-prevention works along Klong Bang Yai in Phuket

Town; 19mn baht on flood prevention projects in Patong; and 20mn baht on flood-prevention works along Klong Bang Yai in Kathu.

"The five projects are underway as the funds have already been provided under the budget for the fiscal year 2012," Gov Tri said.

"However, we need a further 760mn baht to prevent flooding in Phuket Town, Wichit and Rassada. We presented this to the Cabinet meeting in Phuket [in March], and it was approved in principle.

— **Chutharat Plerin and Orawin Narabal**

Frenchman stands to lose B100mn mansion in national park land raid

A FRENCH businessman will have to suffer his 100-million-baht luxury villa being demolished if the property is ruled to be encroaching on national park land.

The new chief of Sirinath National Park, Cheewapap Cheewatham, filed a complaint with police after a surprise raid on the property last Sunday.

Suspecting that the home, sitting atop a hill, may be encroaching on the neighboring national park, Sermys Somman, director of the Chiang Mai office of the Royal Forest Department, led a small team of officers to investigate.

"The Thai staff informed me that the house belongs to a French businessman. He is currently away on a business trip to Hong Kong," said Mr Sermys.

"As we were unable to ask the



The two-storey house, complete with its own swimming pool and tennis court, offers a panoramic view of the ocean from its seven rai of land.

owner to provide the land title for the property, we asked the Land Office instead, who informed us that the current registered owner is a Mr Bernard Gautier," explained Mr Sermys.

"He bought the property for 100

million baht. However, as Mr Bernard is not the original builder of the house, which [allegedly] violates zoning laws by being on park land, Mr Bernard is not liable for prosecution," he said.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

Illegal taxis given a chance

ILLEGAL taxi drivers in key tourist areas in Phuket are being given the chance to become legal as part of the government's campaign to resolve the decades-old problem of illegal drivers plying Phuket's lucrative tourism trade.

The news was announced by Provincial Land Transport Office (PLTO) chief Teerayut Prasertpol at a meeting of provincial officials, police and representatives from Phuket taxi rank operators on Tuesday.

Drivers and taxi rank operators in Kata and Karon had from Wednesday to Friday, August 31, to register. Operators in Thalang have from September 4 to 6, while drivers and operators in Patong have from September 7 to 8.



Teerayut Prasertpol

"We need to know the exact number of taxis to be registered in each area. Currently there are more than 500 registered 'green plate' taxis and about another 3,600 taxi drivers requesting registration in Phuket," said chief Teerayut.

— **Atchaa Khamlo**



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CENTARA GRAND BEACH RESORT PHUKET

Stevie Bamford: 'I was told to lie'

From page 1

"Officials accompanied Ms Bamford to the police station during the initial investigation of her claims. A female Consul from the Embassy in Bangkok subsequently flew to Phuket to provide Ms Bamford additional assistance and to ensure that her rape allegations were taken seriously by police and that she received the appropriate medical attention.

"The Consul was present when Phuket police showed CCTV footage from the night of the alleged rape. During her subsequent arrest, consular officials provided extensive assistance."

Ms Bamford also accused Patong Hospital of not providing her the results of a rape test.

Both Ms Bamford and her boyfriend, Tim Michael, reiterated that Ms Bamford had no alternative other than to sign a confession saying that she had fabricated the whole rape story and lied to police.

It was either sign the confession or be jailed for more than three years for being found guilty of lying to police, Ms Bamford said.

Today Tonight interviewer Laura Sparkes asked directly: "So the Australian Embassy were telling you to lie?"

Ms Bamford replied: "Yes, basically. They said 'It's for your best interests.'"

Although the interview and footage shown seemed mostly to support Ms Bamford's version of events, and accuse the Australian authorities of encouraging a cover-up, it also questioned the veracity of those claims.

"Stevie Bamford is either a young woman denied justice in the most horrific way, or she's a very convincing liar," narrated interviewer Ms Sparkes.

Capsized speedboat legal, but left dozens in rough sea

By Atchaa Khamlo

THE Phuket Marine chief confirmed on Wednesday that the capsized speedboat that left 37 passengers and four crew members struggling in the rough sea waters five kilometers from Koh Phi Phi met industry standards.

"We are treating the incident as an accident, due to the heavy storm and big waves," Phuket Marine Office chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut told the *Gazette*.

Pongsak Pachantabut, the manager of Phuket New Generation Travel Company, has already vowed to cover all medical expenses for those injured in the incident and to offer compensation for the emotional stress suffered.

"Another speedboat was able to immediately rescue 13 tourists, including a child, and take them back to Koh Phi Phi," Mr Pongsak said.

However, that left 24 tourists and the crew members bobbing in the rough sea for more than an hour.

Porrared Eakjit, a tour guide from the vessel *V-Marine 1* assisted in the rescue of passengers in the water.

"Two of our boats were leaving Maya Bay with tourists heading back to Phuket after a trip to Krabi. We were about 5 nautical miles from Phi Phi when we came across the survivors in the water."

V-Marine 1 recovered the remaining 24 tourists and crew.

"Some were injured but all looked exhausted," Mr Porrared said.

At Chalong Pier, seven tourists from China, England and Indone-



After being fished from the rough seas seven of the tourist taken back to Chalong Pier were taken to hospital.

sia were transferred to ambulances and taken to Phuket International Hospital for treatment of a variety of minor injuries.

Mr Phuripat confirmed to the *Gazette* that the *Luk Pradu 26*, the boat that sank, was legal and both structurally and mechanically sound.

"The speedboat [was a composite] with some parts fabricated from wood. There were no problems with the vessel. It was insured, licensed and inspected annually. Furthermore, the boat was crewed on that day by an engineer and driver who are both

experienced boat handlers. The speedboat capsized due to the heavy storm," he said.

"In accordance with our safety regulations, the boat was carrying life jackets for all passengers," he added.

Mr Phuripat said the boat operator was not to face charges.

Given that storm weather caused the sinking, the *Gazette* asked Chief Phuripat for his views on how boat operators act on weather warnings issued by the Thailand Meteorological Department (TMD).

"The TMD is responsible for

issuing weather warnings. However, in some cases, tour operators have other factors to consider in their decision-making process; such as, their consumers have already booked the trip.

"Unfortunately, we cannot force the operators to cancel trips," Chief Phuripat said.

Phuket New Generation Travel manager Mr Pongsak said that they are still looking for the wreck of the *Luk Pradu 26*, which sank about half an hour after the accident. The salvage team does not know where the boat is lying, but they are still searching.

Families of victims in Tiger Disco fire accept B1mn compensation

FAMILIES of the two Thai victims killed in the Tiger Discotheque fire in Patong on August 17 each accepted compensation cheques of 1 million baht during a ceremony on August 24.

The handover ceremony at the Tiger Live Band venue in Patong, not far down Bangla Road from the gutted disco, was shown live on Thai TV Channel 7 as part of a boxing match broadcast.

Booncherd Budkror, father of the late Duangporn Budkror, told the *Gazette*, "Duangporn was the eldest of my four children. I am still mourning the loss of my daughter, but I have to accept it.

"Crying won't change anything. I am thankful for all the support we have received and I would like to say thank you to the Tiger Group for not abandoning the families of



Booncherd Budkror, father of the late Duangporn Budkror.

the victims," he said.

The other recipient was Mrs Somboon Sudtasorn, mother of the late Nipaphat Sudtasorn. She accepted the cheque and left quietly with her relatives, declining to comment to the media.

— Chutharat Plerin

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Gaining ground

Officials make push for new road to Patong through protected forest

By Atchaa Khamlo

OFFICIALS are hoping to have enough public support by October to start the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) for a 100-million-baht road through protected Phuket forest connecting Patong and Chalong.

The EIA will be a critical hurdle for the project as the proposed route will cut through at least one kilometer of protected national forest in the Nakkerd Hills.

In order for the project to pass its EIA, it must garner majority support from the local residents surveyed during the assessment process.

At the meeting in the Merlin Hotel on August 24, representatives from the three companies hired to conduct the EIA – Transconsult, Phisut Technology and Panya Consultants – presented four potential designs for the road.

Banpote Jaroensathayatham, executive director of Transconsult, explained, “One of the four plans is our top choice because it will pass through only one kilometer of the protected forest.”

The proposed 3.1km, two-lane road will

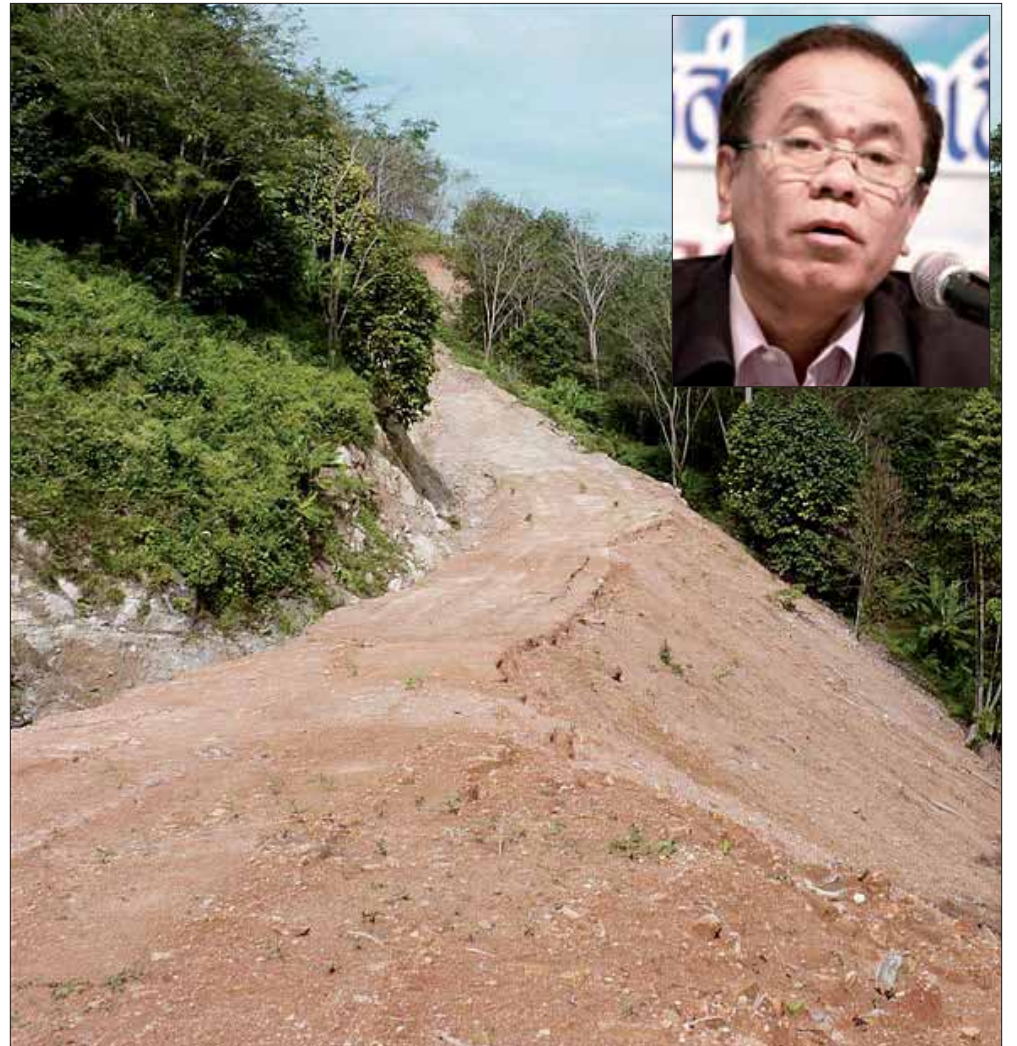
connect Chao Fa West Road, near the entrance to Wat Srilasupharam (Wat Luang Pu Supha) in Chalong, to 50 Pi Road in Patong.

Wongsakorn Noonchukhan, chief of the Public Works and Town and Country Planning Phuket office, explained that the new road was aimed at reducing the volume of traffic using existing roads between Chalong, where thousands of expats live, and Phuket’s busiest tourist town, Patong.

During the meeting, it was also explained that Cabinet approved the study for the new road on February 9, 2010. The approval was given on the basis that the project would help develop Phuket’s transportation infrastructure and hence help resolve the island’s ever-increasing traffic problems.

“The road joining Chalong and Patong has been there for at least 20 years, but it’s a rural road. It’s rough and uneven with large rocks used only by farmers transporting agricultural products,” Mr Wongsakorn said.

The meeting last week, attended by about 70 residents from Chalong and Patong, was the second public hearing held to gain feedback from local residents about building a new road along the proposed routes. The first was held on May 10 this year.



Work on the new road leading up into the hills was well underway in 2009. The final proposed route will cut through at least one kilometer of protected national forest. Inset: Phuket Public Works and Town and Country Planning chief Wongsakorn Noonchukha.

Recount costs Khon Baan Rao clear majority

A RECOUNT of votes cast in a single electorate in the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) council election on Sunday has cost the Khon Baan Rao Party its clear majority on the council.

The news came Tuesday as PPAO Chief Administrative Officer Manop Leelasuthanon explained to the *Gazette*, “There was an error when officers entered the number of votes tallied for Electorate No 14.

“Information supplied by a polling station was provided based on the number of votes a candidate received, but the computer system required that the information be entered according to the ballot number for the candidate.

“Hence, the number of votes entered into the computer system for candidates in that area were wrong,” he added.

It now looks as if the Khon Baan Rao Party will be awarded only 12 of 24 seats.

Khon Baan Rao, meaning “People from Our House” and led by PPAO President Paiboon Upatising, lost seven of the 19 seats the party contested. The remainder were won by independents, who had a healthy showing with 37 independent candidates contesting the 24 seats available.

Heavy rains on Sunday may



Opart Chobdee asked for the recount after the number of votes he officially won did not match the tally his supporters came up with.

have played a part in fewer voters than expected turning out at polling stations to cast votes, said Mr Manop.

“A total of 97,816 voters showed up at the polls across the island, which is 41.75 per cent of the total number of 234,265 eligible voters.

“Of those, 2,859 selected the “No Vote” option, and there were 9,992 spoiled ballots,” he added.

In accordance with the Election Act, the results have been sent to the Election Commission in Bangkok for confirmation. The commission has 30 days to confirm or reject the results.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Police brutality complaint filed against five

By Atchaa Khamlo

A MAN who claims his nephew was severely beaten by five Thalang police officers trying to extract more information after they had arrested him for drug possession has filed a complaint at the Phuket Damrongtham Center (ombudsman's office).

Prapakorn Waharak, a 20-year-old Thalang resident, was accompanied to the Damrongtham Center at Provincial Hall on Monday by his uncle Prapan Waharak, 40, who filed the complaint against the Drug Suppression officers of Thalang Police Station.

Mr Prapan told Prapan Kanprasang, head of the Damrongtham Center, how his nephew Mr Prapakorn came to be badly beaten allegedly by the five officers.

"The incident occurred at about 3pm on August 22, when my nephew was arrested near an Ao Por Seafood Restaurant in Pa Klok for possession of *ya ice* [crystal methamphetamine]," he explained.

"The police officers said they had been informed of drug dealing in the area. They said they found my nephew with two teen-



Mr Prapakorn shows the abrasions allegedly caused by police handcuffs. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

agers, all of them with *ya ice* in their pockets. They arrested all of them," he explained.

The officers searched Mr Prapakorn and found 2.47 grams

of *ya ice* in his trouser pocket. They handcuffed him and took him to Bangrong Police Box for questioning, Mr Prapan said.

"Once we arrived at the police

box, they asked where I bought the drugs from. Then they just started beating me. I was pushed to the floor on my stomach and kicked and stomped upon. I felt a

kick to the right side of my face and being stomped on my back. I was even hit with a club. One policeman took a plastic bag and covered my face," Mr Prapakorn alleged.

"In the end I told them that I got the drugs from a man known as 'Bang Plu'. He had told me to meet him near a seafood restaurant.

"They released me only after my uncle said he wanted to take me to hospital. The right side of my face was swollen and I could only open my mouth a little. I had pain in my chest and on the right side of my body.

"I was so badly hurt that I was hospitalized for two days," he said.

Mr Prapan and Mr Prapakorn went to file a complaint at Thalang Police Station on August 23.

On August 24, Mr Prapan returned to Thalang Police Station to post bail for his nephew with 300,000 baht, as well as the title deeds to several properties.

"They said they would investigate the incident. However, I still haven't heard anything from them so I decided to file the complaint here at the Damrongtham Center," said Mr Prapan.

Teenager, 15, confesses to killing stepfather with axe



Rescue workers wrap Mr Prayooni's body. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

A BOY who confessed to murdering his stepfather with an axe told police that the attack was motivated by the man's abusive behavior to his mother.

The murder was reported to Chalong Police at 9:30pm on August 21.

Arriving at the scene, a modest home near the Baan Maneekram housing estate on Kwang Road, police found the body of 42-year-old Prayoon Potthi under a mosquito net next to his bed.

His 32-year-old wife Panta Kamwong was crying next to the body of her late husband, who sustained two deep gashes to the head.

Lt Col Boonlert Onklang of the Chalong Police told the *Gazette* that a friend became suspicious when Mr Prayoon failed to answer a phone call earlier that day.

The friend tried to call Mrs Panta, but her phone was switched off. Worried that something was amiss he went to the family's home.

When he discovered that his friend had been killed, he immediately contacted police, Col Boonlert said.

After Forensic Police collected evidence, Phuket Ruamjai Kupai workers transported the body to Vachira Phuket Hospital for examination and storage until funeral arrangements could be made.

The following day, Col Wanchai Palawan, who heads the Phuket Provincial Police investigations division, questioned Mrs Panta's 15-year-old son, who then reportedly confessed to the killing.

"He told us that he didn't like that Mr Prayoon, his stepfather, was constantly beating his mother. He said he made the decision to kill him in his sleep," Col Wanchai said.

The boy, who cannot be named because he is a minor, has been charged with premeditated murder. His case will be prosecuted in the Phuket Family and Juvenile Court, he said.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



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Flood takes steam out of Tiger Discotheque 'extension' inquiry

THE investigation into whether or not the alleged "extension" to the ill-fated Tiger Discotheque in Patong was legal fell flat this week after Patong Municipality admitted that it had lost the original plan to the building in a flood nearly a decade ago.

The investigation was launched after four people died in the lethal blaze at the club, located on Patong's tourist-busy Soi Bangla, on August 17. The bodies of all four victims were found in the "upper area" of the club at the rear of the building, just a couple meters from a fire escape.

Phunsak Naksena, Patong Municipality's Chief Administrative Officer, told the *Gazette* on Tuesday that all the documents related to the Tiger Discotheque had "disappeared" after the municipality's offices were hit by floods in 2003.

"We have not seen any application from Tiger Discotheque for permission to build an extension to the original building, but it is hard to tell because we cannot compare the remains of the building with the original plan since we lost it in the flood years ago," Mr Phunsak explained.

He added that municipal officers had inspected the building since the fire, but found no evidence that the original structure had been built upon. "If there had been an extension, there would have been obvious marks on the building, such as changes



Patong Municipality lost the original plan to the building in a flood nearly a decade ago. INSET: Thamrongsak Boonrak, legal counsel for the Tiger Group. Photo: Gazette file and Atchaa Khamlo

to its structure or its overall layout," he said.

Thamrongsak Boonrak, legal counsel for the Tiger Group, found the news ironic, while maintaining that no extension had ever been built.

"In 2009, after the Santika club fire [in Bangkok on New Year's Eve, killing 66 people], government officers... inspected the building.

"They asked us to add two more fire exits. We added four," Mr Thamrongsak said.

"Since then, the only addition has been a metal structure at the front of the club to provide people cover from the rain, and even that was incomplete," he added.

Mr Thamrongsak maintained that the only changes made inside the building were to the iconic decorations depicting tigers and

a jungle theme. "Any other changes were just maintenance; fixing or replacing things that were old or not working properly," he said.

Regarding the lost plans to the building, Mr Thamrongsak said, "If Patong Municipality says they lost the original blueprint in a flood in 2003, so be it. We rented the building from its owner more than 10 years ago. We do not have the original plans for the building. We only have an interior floor plan."

With the expected opening of the syndicated club Tiger Live Band, also located on Soi Bangla, in the next two weeks, Mr Thamrongsak assured that the decorations at the new venue were not made from highly-flammable materials, which investigators have alleged contributed to the Tiger Disco inferno.

"There are no highly-flammable materials in the Tiger Live Band complex. They are all built from 100 per cent cement," he said.

"About nine years ago, the decorations throughout Tiger Discotheque were made from about 90 per cent foam, which was highly flammable. But [the foam] deteriorated very quickly, so we replaced the foam decorations with cement ones until only about 20 per cent of the remaining decorations were made from foam.

"If the Tiger Discotheque caught fire nine years ago, there would have been many more victims," he added.

Police nab young, serial snatch bandit at work

POLICE on August 22 arrested a serial snatch-and-run thief who allegedly committed at least 12 robberies in Phuket Town over the past month.

The suspect was identified as 20-year-old Wuttipong Uonpong, listed as a resident of Ayutthaya.

Lt Col Prawit Engchuan of the Phuket City Police told the *Gazette* that his office had received numer-

ous theft reports from the Samkong area of Phuket Town in recent weeks.

Numerous descriptions of the snatch bandit and other evidence led police to suspect that a young man living in Kathu was responsible, but they lacked the evidence to make an arrest.

On August 22, officers followed him, said Col Prawit.

"At around 4pm, he left home on his black-and-red Honda Click... he snatched a shoulder bag that a woman... then quickly sped off. We followed him and arrested him the moment he arrived home," he said.

Mr Wuttipong told the *Gazette* that he tended to target women carrying shoulder bags or handbags.

"I used to work as a security guard for a company in Phuket. Around a month ago, they laid off some employees and I was jobless, so I started snatching," he added.

Mr Wuttipong faces multiple charges of snatch theft crimes,



Two people were 'injured' from

each of which is punishable by up to three years in prison, a 6,000-baht fine, or both.

— *Orawin Narabal*

Village uproar over pub noise

VILLAGERS in Baan Tha Rua in Srisoonthorn, just north of Heroines' Monument, on Tuesday filed a group complaint against one entertainment venue in the area for noise pollution and closing after the regulated trading hours.

Village chief Chalermopol Gerdsud handed the complaint, addressed to The Phuket Governor, to Prapan Kanprasang, chief of the Damrongtham Center at Phuket Provincial Hall.

"A new pub opened in Srisoonthorn about eight months ago. It is located in a residential area about 150 meters north of the Heroines' Monument. Since it opened, there has been noise pollution and the people who go there double-park their cars and block the street," Mr Chalermopol said.

"It is disturbing people's lives. The pub is open until 5am every night. People who live in the area have to sleep at friends' and relatives' houses because they can't sleep with all the noise.

"The area around [the pub] smells, because people urinate along the street," he said.

Mr Chalermopol explained that a complaint had already been filed with Srisoonthorn Municipality.

"I came here to file the same complaint to Governor Tri because we would like him to check on the pub," he said.

Chief Prapan said he would forward the complaint to the Thalang District Office.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*

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Tsunami drill 'freaks' tourists

By Chutharat Plerin

TWO tourists on holiday from Vietnam panicked after witnessing the full-scale tsunami rescue drill that was being conducted off the east coast of Phuket on August 23.

"Oh my God! My friend and I thought it was some kind of terrorist attack or that a really big accident had happened. We had no clue it was a drill," said Ms Julie as she attempted to calm down after learning that the emergency unfolding before her eyes was just an exercise.

While talking to the *Gazette*, Ms Julie was confronted with bloody victims with simulated head wounds being carried on stretchers and the wailing sirens of ambulances whizzing by.

"We were on the other side and we saw so many ambulances coming to the pier. We were freaking out and we rode our motorbike here to see what was happening," she said.

Julie, who declined to give her full name, explained to the *Gazette* that she and her boyfriend had recently arrived on the island on holiday from Vietnam.

'We were freaking out and we rode our motorbike here to see what was happening.'

— Ms Julie

"Thank God it was a drill. Now, we feel so much better," she said.

"This is our first time in Phuket. As we saw, you have all this prepared. We feel safe and we will come back in the future for sure," she added.

The exercise was the annual full-scale coordinated emergency service sea rescue drill held off Ao Por.

Silapachai Suwan, the officer from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) Pa Khlok office who organized the drill, told the *Gazette*, "The drill today was impressive. The agencies that took part were well coordinated, as planned."

Mr Silapachai said that the exercise began with the sounding of the tsunami warning siren and the evacuation of people in the area to a designated safe zone.

"After this, we started the second part of the exercise, during which we rescued people trapped on board a boat that had an engine fire because the skipper tried leaving Phuket too quickly after hearing the tsunami siren," explained Mr Silapachai.

In the simulation, longtail



'Victims' in the full-scale tsunami rescue drill were dressed in bandages and makeup. INSET: Ms Julie

boats in the area tried to assist in extinguishing the blaze. After they failed to put out the fire, emergency service agencies on the island responded to a call for help.

"Taking part were officers from the DDPM-Phuket, Vachira Hospital, Phuket Provincial Administration Organization,

Marine Police, Third Naval Area Command and other local administrations," Mr Silapachai said.

"I would like to thank all the emergency services. The exercise was held in driving rain, but everyone played their part as planned. In a real situation, we would not stop our mission just because of rain," he said.

Asked what had been done to warn the public that the exercise was going to be held, Mr Silapachai responded, "We had messages broadcast on community radio and send letters to relevant government departments."

"We did not put up any signs to inform tourists about the drill," he said.

Officers 'defuse car bomb' in emergency response exercise



Two people were 'injured' from the blast in the simulation.

OFFICERS from a variety of police stations across the island Monday took part in a multi-agency exercise to counter the threat of a car bomb being detected or a bomb detonating at Phuket International Airport.

At the airport's multipurpose building, beside the main passenger terminal, Deputy Director of Phuket International Airport Suthep Sansiripan officially opened PEMEX 2012: Phuket International Airport Emergency Plan Exercise.

Mr Suthep explained that to meet International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, all provincial level airports must conduct emergency contingency plan drills. A partial emergency exercise, consisting of one or two scenarios,

must take place every year. A full-scale emergency exercise must be held every two years.

"This is a partial emergency exercise in which participants work together to deal with two scenarios involving bomb threats at the airport," explained Mr Suthep.

In the first scenario, an airport security officer discovers a suspicious object in a car and requests that Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) officers examine the object. The investigation reveals the object to be a possible Remote Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (RCIED).

"In the second scenario, a criminal places a bomb at the front of the building and it explodes," said Mr Suthep.

— Orawin Narabal

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QUEER news

Nude schoolgirl 'game' lands man in hot pot

AN ACADEMIC at an agricultural education center in Phatthalung is in serious trouble for allegedly forcing a group of schoolgirls on a study trip to play a game that involved taking their clothes off in exchange for "points".

More than a hundred girls in Matthayom 1 to 5 and nine female teachers from a school in the Southern province attended a two-day course on "sufficiency economy" agriculture at the center on August 14 and 15.

One of the Matthayom 5 level students said the girls had a great time on the first day, as they learned about growing household vegetables and visited organic vegetable patches and model farms.

But the next day, things took a strange turn.

In the afternoon, "Mr A", the academic in charge of the course, announced the girls were to play a "special game".

They were divided into groups and told they had to score 1,000,000 "points" or they would "fail" the course.

They were told they got 10,000 points for taking their shirts off, 10,000 for taking their trousers off, 500,000 for taking their panties off and 500,000 for removing their bras.

The girls were apparently told to first cover themselves with black trash bags before being encouraged to "score points".

They were then told to throw their underwear in piles, which Mr A counted to work out their scores.

While this was going on, Mr A allegedly took pictures of the girls with both a camera and his phone.

When the girls' teachers realized what was going on, they protested to Mr A that what was happening was deeply inappropriate – but he apparently wouldn't listen.

A few days later, one of the girls was shocked when she saw a picture of herself playing "the game" on Facebook. She and her parents went straight to the police.

– *The Daily News*

Thailand's coral reefs going, going and gone

By Atchaa Khamlo

WITH coral reef systems in Thai coastal waters at a "crisis" level, the director of the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) has vowed to step up his department's efforts to mitigate the damage caused by the fishing industry and other human factors.

"Currently, our natural coral reefs are not half of what they used to be – we are in a crisis," said PMBC director Pinsak Suraswadi on August 21.

"The areas that have been most seriously affected are those that are regularly exposed to human activity, such as off tourist destinations along the coast," he added.

Though the entire region is in trouble, the Gulf of Thailand is at greater risk than the Andaman coast, he said.

"Abundant and beautiful coral reefs are now only found in national parks, such as the Surin Island and Similan Island reserves. In these places the coral is still world class."

"Closing national parks has definitely been helpful in giving the corals time to recover from the pressure humans exert on the eco-



Hard corals, like this one off Koh Lanta, are at greatest risk. Photo: Quinet

system," he said, in reference to the annual closure from May through November.

The PMBC is attempting to prevent damage to coral reefs caused by the fishing industry through a

variety of programs. One such program, established in Songkhla, involves the purchase of used fishing equipment in order to discourage fisherman from throwing rubbish, such as old netting,

into the sea, he explained.

"Everyone can get involved in preserving our marine environment; it's not just the responsibility of the government. Changes made in our daily lives, such as using less soap and fewer plastic bags, can really make a difference," he said.

Mr Pinsak also made a push for the establishment of more artificial reefs in order to reduce the pressure on natural reef systems.

"It will reduce the effect the diving tourism industry has on the natural reefs. Artificial reefs, such as scuttled ships, will provide new diving destinations," he said.

Mr Pinsak pointed out that the PMBC had recently become involved with the "Green Fins Project", which encourages tourists to wear life jackets and keep their feet away from corals when snorkeling.

"Also, we ask tourists not to chase turtles in order to photograph them or feed marine animals," he added.

Mr Pinsak made it clear that coordination and cooperation between all those concerned was necessary to prevent further degradation.

Turtle tangled in fishing net rescued

AN ADULT Ridley sea turtle, tangled up in a discarded fishing net, washed onto Karon Beach alive, but injured on the afternoon of August 26.

The female turtle, weighing about 40 kilograms, was spotted by a tourist on the beach. A lifeguard, alerted to the situation, contacted the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) Endangered Species Unit.

"The turtle was washed ashore with a big heap of fishing net," said Karon Beach lifeguard Chatree Promnoon.

"Both of the turtle's front flippers were cut and stuck in the fishing net. After the turtle was washed ashore, we helped her by

cutting them free," he said.

While waiting for the PMBC officers to arrive, the lifeguards and tourists did their best to make the injured turtle comfortable by digging a hole in the sand and filling it with seawater.

"At this time of year, turtles stay close to shore to mate. Afterward, they will come up onto the beach to lay their eggs," Dr Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong, who heads the PMBC's Endangered Species Unit, explained to the *Gazette*.

"Luckily, the cuts from the fishing net were not too deep. I'm confident she will have a full recovery," he added.

– *Kritsada Mueanhawong*



Marine biologists are confident the adult female sea turtle entangled in the fishing net will make a full recovery. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Loan shark bagman shot in Phang Nga

A DEBT collector for a local loan shark survived a bullet wound to his back, inflicted by a teenage gang in Phang Nga on August 24.

The victim, Somchai Chaonalai, arrived by motorbike to Thung Kha Ngok District Police Station after the shooting to ask police there for assistance in getting to the local hospital.

Lt Prajuab Wongthong, who was on duty at the station at the time of Mr Somchai's arrival, escorted him to Phang Nga Hospital with two other officers.

"He is now safe. The bullet did

not penetrate very deep into his back," Lt Prajuab said.

"He told police during questioning that he worked collecting debts for a local loan shark in neighboring Thai Muang District. Before he was shot, he was collecting daily interest payments in Lumphee Subdistrict," said Lt Prajuab.

Mr Somchai is listed as a resident of Uthai Thani province, he said.

"As he was making his rounds, two teenagers riding a motorbike began trailing him.

After they had got themselves into the best ambush position, the passenger, wearing a camouflage shirt and no crash helmet, fired a shot hitting him in the back," Lt Prajuab explained.

Local residents are quite familiar with Mr Somchai and his associates, who are known locally as the "Helmet Gang".

They offer people high-interest loans, then threaten violence against those who fail to pay off their debts or keep up with the interest payments.

– *Siangtai Daily*

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Country braces for floods, drought

WHILE parts of Thailand have already experienced flooding this year and the capital is bracing for Northern run-off, experts say the country faces another threat: drought.

Flooding has already ravaged 10,000 rai of farmland in Uttaradit's Laplae District and left hundreds of families struggling.

Uttaradit resident Renu Prathapthong said her home was still swamped by the waters that had washed 20,000 fish out of her breeding pond.

In Lampang, Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Chief Sanlek Kamjai said he had warned locals to watch out for possible flash floods.

Meanwhile, Bangkok Governor Sukhumbhand Paribatra on Monday said the capital was bracing for floods.

Bangkok Metropolitan Administration workers have been dredging canals in 18 flood-prone districts in and around the city. The dredging process, announced as 97% complete, was scheduled to be fully finished by the end of last month.

City Hall is also working to raise

AROUND THE nation

and reinforce the 77-kilometer-long flood walls along the Chao Phraya River.

But according to some experts, Thailand also faces the opposite problem this year.

"I'm quite worried the country will face droughts starting in October," Meteorological Department Deputy Director-General Somchai Bai-muang said. "The drought will likely drag on throughout the dry season next year, too. In that case, we won't have adequate water supplies for farmlands in the Central region."

He said rain might have been pouring down earlier this year, but it was mostly in areas downstream of the large reservoirs in the north, such as Bhumibol and Sirikit Reservoirs.

"If there are not enough storms... in the next two months,



Heavy dredging has been in progress in northern and central Thailand to prevent any similar floods to those witnessed last year, which displaced thousands and caused about 1.2 trillion baht in damage. Photo: The Nation

most areas across the country will face shortages of water," Mr Somchai said.

A drought during the 2010 growing season caused 13 billion baht in crop damage.

Then in 2011, massive flooding caused 1.2 trillion baht in damage

felt across all sectors of the economy.

Science Minister Plodprasop Suraswadi said Cabinet was informed by officials that the country would not face flooding this year. Thus, starting next week, water from some of the

large reservoirs in the north would be released, leaving waters at optimum levels to prevent a drought.

Cabinet earlier issued orders to have water in large reservoirs released at 50 per cent of their capacity to prevent a repeat of last year's record floods.

Thai women among world's least faithful lovers: survey

THAI women are among the most unfaithful in the world, according to a new survey conducted by condom producer Durex.

According to Durex, which carried out the survey of 29,000 women in 36 countries, women from Ghana are the most unfaithful, with 62% reporting that they often cheat on their mates.

In second place, with 59%, was Thailand, while Malaysian women came in third with 39%.

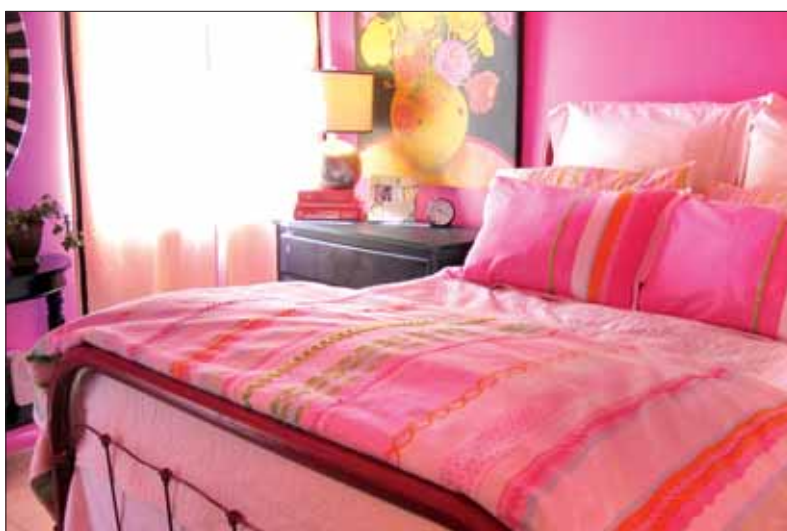
Meanwhile, Thailand topped the chart for reporting couples that were cheating on each other.

In 2007, a survey by Assumption University showed similar results.

Of 1,480 adults in relationships polled, about 40% said they had one or more romantic relationships with people other than their spouse or committed partner.

In Thailand, partners in such extramarital relationships are known as *gik*.

"We are concerned that having a *gik* will become something common," said Noppadon Kannika, head of Assumption University's Social Innovation in Management and Business Analysis Research Center.



Only woman from Ghana were ranked as more unfaithful partners than Thai woman in a survey conducted by Durex. Photo: Nolaclutterbusters

However, some, such as Supensri Puengkoksung of the Women and Men Progressive Movement Foundation, believe the poll does not reflect the real situation in Thailand.

It just reflected the opinion of people who were approached and ready to answer the survey, she said.

Dr Tawee Tangseri of the Mental Health Department said cheating behavior among couples

was caused by misunderstandings between each other, adding that they should communicate better.

"When you have problems as a couple, you should talk to your partner. No one wins, no one loses. Just take one step backward and the problem will end," he said.

The Durex survey also showed that men from Singapore and Hong Kong were the most promiscuous in Asia, with an average of 16 bed partners in their lifetime.

The King pardons lese majeste convicts

HM KING Bhumibol Adulyadej has issued royal pardons to two Thai men convicted of lese majeste.

Pro-democracy activist Warawut Thanungkorn and shoe

repairman Suriyan Kokpeuay were released from Bangkok Remand Prison last Friday, Associated Press reported.

Mr Warawut was convicted for comments made during a speech

in 2010, while Mr Suriyan threatened to bomb Siriraj Hospital, where HM the King has been convalescing since 2009.

Both were sentenced last year to three-year jail terms.

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Home is where the heart is

THE low turnout for last weekend's Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) council election highlighted yet again the problems the island faces due to the fact that so many migrant workers who live here continue to maintain house registrations in their "home" provinces, in some cases despite having lived and worked on the island for over a decade.

According to official figures, turnout for the August 26 poll was 41.8% of just over 234,000 eligible voters. This means that fewer than 100,000 of those eligible were sufficiently motivated to make it to the polls to vote for the person who would represent their interests in the PPAO. As a point of reference, the figure is probably on par with the number of illegal workers from Myanmar living on the island.

The source of apathy among voters is somewhat hard to fathom, apart from the fact that the almost complete lack of policy debate among the candidates left many voters in the dark as to what differentiated would-be representatives, apart from a number.

The small percentage of island residents who enjoy voting rights should be more than happy to exercise them; the PPAO not only enjoys an annual budget close to one billion baht, but also a level of autonomy over how it is spent that is the envy of the bureaucrats at the Phuket Provincial Office. To get some grasp of the numbers involved, the budget works out to over 9,000 baht for each voter who took part in the balloting last weekend.

Efforts to produce a reliable count of how many people actually live in Phuket continue to stymie officialdom. Preliminary figures produced by the national census conducted in 2010 showed 525,018 people living in Phuket: 409,137 Thai (77.9%) and 115,881 foreigners (21.1%), but despite efforts to include foreign residents for the first time this figure is almost certainly on the low side.

Former governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop said during his tenure that the island probably had an actual population of more than a million people during high season.

Whatever the actual figure, there is little dispute that the number of Thai migrant workers living in Phuket long-term probably numbers around 200,000. That they fail to appear on local registrations costs the island millions in budget allocations annually.

Perhaps one strategy to redress the imbalance might be incorporated into the new initiative to legally register the many black plate taxis operating on the island. The drivers often complain that "as local people" they have the right to make a living.

Perhaps the drivers should be required to submit a copy of their local house registration as a part of the application process. Such a move might be a small step forward in getting the island's true minority, born-and-bred Phuket natives, to have more actual say over what is happening on their island.



Too much fishing 'after hours'

Re: Gazette online, Thailand's coral reefs 50% gone: Phuket marine biologist, August 25

I love that the Marine Department is concerned. However, the biggest threat to the reefs in Thailand are the fishermen!

After six months of closing the marine parks in Similan and Surin, we can always see [evidence that] they have been there. Not many fish are left, but later in the "open season" there are more.

It's sad, because they are not allowed to fish inside the marine parks at any time.

Preventing fishermen [from entering the parks] would help more than anything.

Tom
Gazette forum

Stop crying fish sticks

Re: Gazette online, Thailand's coral reefs 50% gone: Phuket marine biologist, August 26

We either make a living or feed ourselves from the sea. We all need to do our bit to save what is left in the sea and quit with the finger pointing.

If it troubles you enough to cause you to write on here [Gazette forum], then it should also trouble you enough to act on what has been said in the article: Say 'No to Plastic Bags', limit seafood intake and, most importantly, educate yourself and those around you.

Sarah
Gazette forum

New to island, but same old woes

I recently moved to the beautiful island of Phuket after staying in Bangkok for many years.

I am writing to address the issue of the safety of motorcyclists and car drivers, particularly dur-

Letters to the Editor

ing the rainy season and at night in the hilly areas. This is especially a factor on the main roads on either side of Kamala Town.

The lack of evenly placed street lights on the roads in these mountainous areas is a serious concern.

Furthermore, the sharp and narrow curves pose a danger to drivers who are unable to see the edge of the road, due to the lack of reflective lines, as well as the absence of guardrails in many places.

I urge you to please confirm with relevant authorities that something is urgently being done to address this matter for the safety of Phuket's citizens, as well as tourists, who hope to have a good and safe holiday, but may end up in critical condition.

Concerned Resident (PMJ)
Phuket

West-coast guard: jet-skis not enough

I grew up on the west coast of Australia; all my life I have surfed and been involved in lifesaving.

After reading the article about Chinese tourists having drowned, I feel compelled to give my observations of Karon Beach on August 17.

There was a 1.5 meter swell, strong onshore winds and a high tide, an absolute disaster for anyone too inexperienced to deal with those conditions.

As I left the beach, I said to the lifeguards, "Why don't you stop playing volleyball and observe the swimmers."

The reply I got back was, "We have jet-ski."

Fair enough, but without vigilance it isn't worth a cracker.

I observed the tourists and it

was obvious to me that most had no experience in adverse [sea] conditions.

The Phuket government needs to get serious about such a real threat to tourists, who are inexperienced with the dangers of the ocean. When the conditions are right, the Phuket beaches are treacherous – I think statistics say it all. You need qualified, experienced life savers.

Look what tourism gives to Thailand; how about giving a little back? Isn't a life worth a few bucks?

Phil Coughlan
Phuket

Fight for your right to party

Re: Gazette online, Poll: Should Phuket be exempted from election-day alcohol bans?, August 25

Tourists come to Phuket to have fun, which also includes drinking alcohol. For some, a great meal without a glass wine is not a perfect evening or vacation.

So let them have an enjoyable time while in Phuket, so they will come back again. It doesn't make sense to ban [the sale of] alcohol to tourists also.

Having a good time on vacation
Gazette forum

Praying for sincerity

Re: Gazette online, Families of Phuket disco fire accept Bt1mn compensation, August 25

I really want to believe Mr Piya is being sincere with these payments – there's little doubt that the Thai families are happy receiving it, but something tells me otherwise.

I hope nobody has signed anything excluding them from any award a court case might bring.

Agogohome
Gazette forum

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Playing ignorant gains us nothing

WE DON'T make excuses for the bad things that happen in Phuket. Instead, we face the problems and search for solutions. When anything bad happens here, it gets publicized around the world, which makes it harder for us to compete with other tourism destinations.

In order to combat the myriad issues that the Phuket tourism industry faces, we must see different government organizations successfully cooperate and set regulations that protect the safety of everyone on the island.

The Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (PPAO) and the municipalities and other local authorities need to coordinate their efforts to develop Phuket to meet international standards, both in the quality of the services available and in preserving the island.

We have three years before the Asean Economic Community (AEC) starts and we will have to directly compete with neighboring countries. So we must have a high-quality standard of tourism already established to make an easy transition into the AEC tourism market.

If the environment of tourism destinations are continuously degraded and the safety of a person's life and property cannot be guaranteed, we will face issues marketing ourselves abroad, especially to the high-end market.

However, we must be aware of how changing our tourism image might affect the lives of locals. We



Chanchai Doungjit, 56, has worked for the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) for more than 30 years. In that time, he has worked at the TAT office in Los Angeles, where he also served as a TAT representative to Brazil, Mexico and Peru, and other countries.

Last month, Mr Chanchai was installed as director of the TAT Phuket office. Here he talks about the need for government cooperation in order to restore tourists' confidence in their safety while visiting the island.

need to get their cooperation in order to find the best compromise between what they need and what needs to be done for Phuket's tourism image.

Our tourism market includes tourists from other Asian countries, as well as US, Russia, Europe and South America. For example, about 600,000 Americans visit Thailand a year, and 70,000 of them come to Phuket, which is quite a lot.

Tourists like Thai people, the beaches and Thai food, especially the seafood. Phuket has all of that; we have the complete package. There is already so much potential on this island that we don't need to work too hard to make the tourism industry grow.

Next year, our office plans to

hold road shows both in Thailand and abroad. We are especially looking at breaking into newer markets that still have strong economies, such as Brazil and Argentina, as well as Indonesia.

We need to find new markets, both short and long term, to make up the difference from older markets such as Europe that are currently suffering from economic difficulties.

Though the problem most tourists worry about is the possibility of political conflicts in Thailand, they often ask about whether or not a tsunami will happen again. I always assure them that we have established a reliable warning system to make sure they would be safe if such a catastrophe were to happen again.

The art of sharing, learn it Bangkok

IT HAS been announced that "an astonishing array of Thai art since 1946 awaits appraisal all in one place" at a grand exhibition titled "Thai Trends from Localism to Internationalism".

The exhibition will showcase more than 300 paintings, sculptures, installations, mixed-media works, photography and videos by 200 Thai artists and a dozen foreigners based in Thailand.

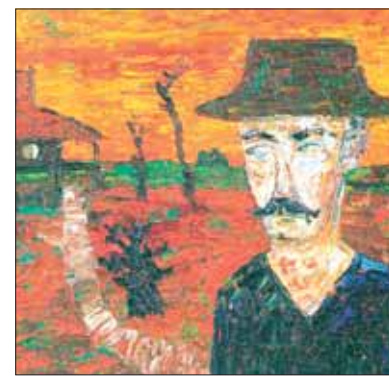
The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration has financed the 40-million-baht show, with pieces loaned by the Bank of Thailand, and borrowed from many Thai collectors and galleries abroad, said Prof Apinan Poshyananda, chief curator of the show. Plaudits to all should be given.

It is indeed unfortunate, though, that such cultural extravaganzas seem to be held exclusively in the capital, and never travel to the regions where many of these seminal works would be appreciated just as much.

It is understood that the provinces, such as Phuket, do not have the same facilities as Bangkok, though do on a reduced level and a selected elements of the show could be exhibited here.

When the efforts of so many individuals and organizations bring together a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition to see such a rich tapestry of Thai art, it would be a travesty of artistic justice not to share it with as many people as possible.

As Prof Apinan said, "The exhibition includes rarely seen works and among these are *Season*, painted in 1975 by the late Suchao Sisganee, Thawan Duchanee's



'Season', a 1975 work by the late Suchao Sisganee is among the highlights of the 'Thai Trends' exhibition. Image: The Nation

Island View

By Dean Noble

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

huge surreal painting *Untitled*, and Angkhan Kalayanapong's Buddhist-themed *Right Views*."

The show will cover the different facets of Thai art's development and history during the past seven decades under the reign of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Phuket has a vibrant community of artists and this is something the local authorities have been keen to develop. It would seem that support from Bangkok in the form of bringing these artworks to the island would be a major boon in its efforts.

We also have to appreciate that for most people it is just infeasible to make the trip to Bangkok, due to cost and time constraints, purely for cultural appreciation.

Come on Bangkok, be nice and share.

Issues & Answers...

...asking the questions that affect you...

What happens if you don't vote?

I have a Thai wife, and due to the heavy rains she decided not to vote in the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (PPAO) elections last weekend.

Will she be able to vote in the next election?

What consequences might she face for not voting?

Michael Coons
Patong

Preeyaporn Saetun, an officer at the Phuket provincial office of the Election Commission, replies:

No, she will not lose her right to vote in the next election. However, she does lose some of her rights to participate in local politics.

It is best to contact the nearest district office within seven days of the election day in order for your wife to file the correct form explaining why she was unable to vote in the election.

The Election Commission recognizes the following five reasons

allowing a person to not vote:

- Being in an emergency situation and having to travel far away from the district
- Being too ill to vote
- Being elderly and/or handicapped to a capacity that you cannot go out to vote
- Being more than 100km away from the district
- Dealing with an unexpected disaster, such as floods, storms or heavy rainfall

If a person's reason for not voting falls into one of these categories, the officer will approve the form and the person will not lose any rights to participate in local politics.

If she doesn't inform the district office within seven days after the election day or if her reason for not voting is not approved, she will lose the following rights:

- The right to object to the appointment or election of a sub-district headman, village headman, local administration council mem-



Some voted in the local election, but many who were eligible didn't.

ber, MP or Senator.

- The right to register as a candidate for the position of a subdistrict headman, village headman, local administration council member, MP or Senator.

However, these rights can be regained by participating in the next local election or national election.

For more information call our office at 076-354692 or 076-215714.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Are there any good football clubs for teenagers to train?

Our son is 15 years old and loves football. Are there any local teams or clubs in Phuket for teenagers to join and train with coaches?

It would be ideal if were one somewhere in southern Phuket, such as Chalong or Phuket Town.

Martin Hill, Head Coach for Phuket Soccer Schools, replies: Phuket Soccer Schools runs a

year-round academy program with coaches at various locations around Phuket.

The program is open to boys and girls between four and 16 years old who are interested in participating.

The program is also designed to accommodate participants of all abilities and skill levels.

Please contact us by email at info@phuketsoccerschools.com or by phone on 085-3310295 for our latest master schedule, and we can discuss what opportunities there are for your son.

Prakit Kabkeaw of the Phuket Municipal Youth Center at Saphan Hin replies:

Any children interested in participating in a variety of sports can call the Phuket Municipal Youth Center at 076-250163 or come visit us at our office in Saphan Hin, opposite the Saphan Hin swimming pool.

They can either look at the bulletin board here, or they can speak to one of our staff members about joining a team.

Beer, wine and automobile excises poised for revision

IN LIGHT of cabinet's approval last week of tax hikes for cigarettes and liquor, the Excise Department is now looking to increase revenue shares from the trade of beer, wine and automobiles.

Quoted in a report by the Nation last week, Benja Louichareon, director-general of the Excise Department, said, "The department is also looking at whether it should increase tax on beer and wine."

Since the rates levied on beer and wine have already reached the ceiling of 60% of the value, or 100 baht per liter, the department would need to propose a law amendment to the government in order to do this, she said.

The aim was to create equality in the liquor market, as well as to reduce consumption, she claimed.

Following the cabinet decision, the retail price of liquor increased by an average of 10-20 baht per bottle.

White spirit, which accounts for a large portion of the Thai liquor market, was unlikely to be significantly affected. ThaiBev enjoys the biggest share of this product, which is popular in the Northeast.

Benja said she did not believe there would be much smuggling of imported liquor and cigarettes as a result of the new tax rates.

Moreover, consumers were unlikely to shift from liquor to either wine or beer, as they were different markets, the department chief noted.

Following Cabinet's approval of excise hikes on liquor and cigarettes, the duty levied on white

spirits rose from 120 to 150 baht per liter, while that on blended spirits increased from 300 to 350 baht per liter, and that on brandy from 45 to 48% of sales value.

Meanwhile, the duty on cigarettes rose from 85 to 87% of sales value.

Benja also clarified that as a result of the tax hikes, the cost of a packet of cigarettes would be 3 to 14 baht higher, while white spirits would increase by 5-7 baht a bottle; blended spirits 8-12 baht more per bottle, and a bottle of brandy would be 3-12 baht more expensive.

Some activists have warmly welcomed the government's decision to raise the tax on cigarettes and liquor, describing it as a move that would reduce the damage on the country as a whole.

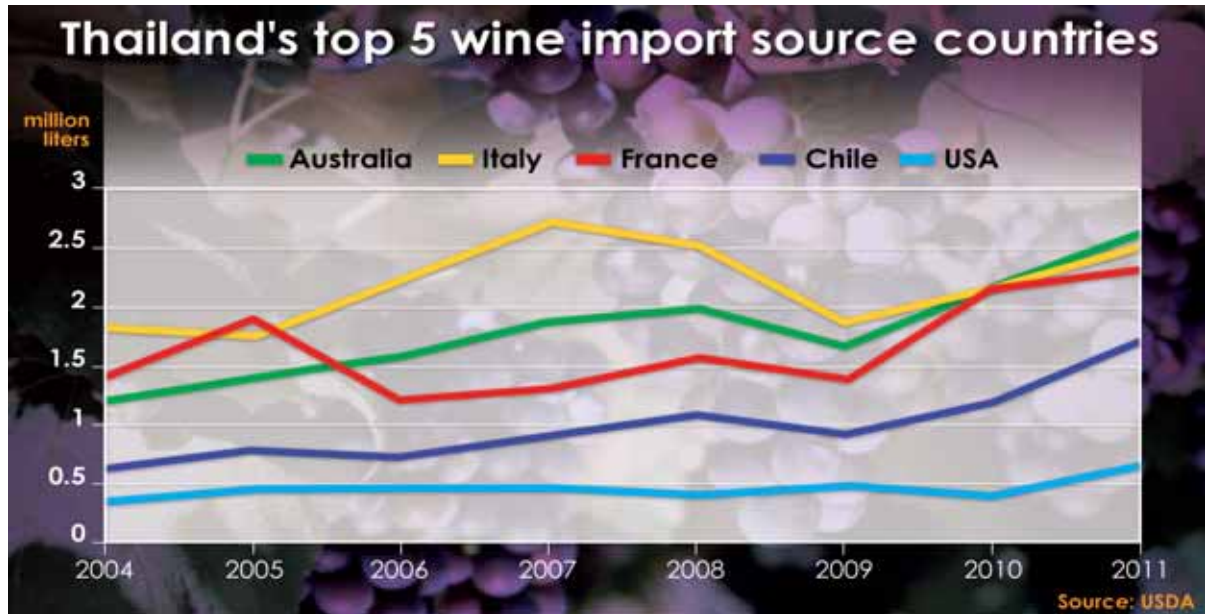
"More than half of all [crime] offenses committed are related to alcohol consumption," Thirapat Kahawong, the head of an anti-alcohol network, said.

He was among 30 activists who showed up at the Excise Department last week to express support for the government's decision.

Jadet Chaowilai, an adviser to the Network of Alcohol Victims, said the move would reduce the number of injuries, disabilities and deaths caused by alcoholic beverages.

"The move is for the good health and well-being of people," he said.

A study commissioned by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation suggests higher cigarette prices will reduce the number of Thai smokers by about 0.5 %.



LIFE'S FINER THINGS: Wine imports to Thailand have been on an upward trend for the last decade. However, some think that a new excise on such imports may negatively impact incoming trade volume. Image: Gazette Graphics

"The number of smokers should drop by between 60,000 and 70,000," said the foundation's deputy manager, Supreeda Adulyanon.

"We will have to introduce other measures too, such as limiting the availability of cigarettes."

Thailand is currently home to about 13 million smokers.

Beyond cigarettes and booze, Ms Benja revealed that the government is also considering raising the bar for automobiles.

The Excise's Department's director-general said a new car tax would aim to limit the emission of carbon dioxide, instead of promoting power efficiency, which is a key priority under the government's current eco-car tax scheme.

Under the proposed new tax

structure, the lowest rates would be applied to passenger cars that discharge no more than 100 grams of carbon dioxide per kilometer. The next lowest rate would be applied to cars not exceeding 150g/km, and the next rate to those emitting no more than 200g/km. A punitive rate would be applied to those releasing more than 200g/km.

She said the existing tax incentives did not work as envisaged by the department. For example, those who drive passenger cars that could run on E85 (fuel that is 85 per cent ethanol) or E20 tend to use E10 instead, anyway.

Currently, the tax rates for cars powered by E85 vary from 22 to 32%, depending on the

level of engine power.

Hybrid-electric vehicles with no more than 3,000 cubic centimeters of cylinder capacity currently enjoy the lowest tax rate of 10%. Cars retrofitted for natural gas for vehicles, or NVG, also enjoy tax incentives.

Benja views these different tax rates as complicated and not achieving the intended goal.

In any case, the director-general said that more consultation with auto manufacturers was needed before changes could be made, adding that she understood the industry had invested a lot of money to meet the current tax-incentive criteria. Some car makers have asked for an adjustment period of three to five years.

Accident victims to get due diligence

FINANCE Minister Kittiratt Naranong recently announced that the Office of the Insurance Commission (OIC), along with insurance firms, have launched a new program to ensure that all accident victims can get necessary treatment with minimal delays.

Dubbed E-Claim, the program is an emergency payment plan designed to administer and manage medical bills of the victims of road accidents, regardless of their insurance coverage.

The Road Accident Victims Protection Co (RAVPC) will settle the medical bills, said Pravej Ongartsittigul, secretary-general of the OIC. Then later, the insurance company involved will collect medical expenses from those who violated traffic laws. The service is a result of collaboration among the OIC, the Insurance Association and RAVPC.

Rangsan Srivorasat, director-general of the Comptroller General's Department, said the



Phuket roads can be dangerous.

new service would ensure that insurance companies pay claims quickly, which has not always been the case.

In a related development, Pravej said the OIC expected large numbers of households to buy insurance from the state-owned natural-catastrophe fund as many will have to renew their policies as they expire in the next few months.

Private firms still demand high premiums from customers who live in high-risk areas. As a result, the office needs to seek reinsurance from international insurance houses.

The state insurance fund collects premiums of only 0.5% of insured value from households, 1% from

small or medium-sized enterprises, and 1.25% from large companies.

Pravej said about 50% of households with private insurance policies would come to the state fund, while 10% of companies might do so. Currently, the total insured amount is 600 billion baht, of which households represent a small fraction, he said.

Expecting new customers, the OIC will start conducting a roadshow on the disaster-insurance fund and will buy reinsurance from international firms to diversify its risk, he said.

Reinsurers may be cautious, as many countries have experienced natural disasters. For example, China has also bought reinsurance from international insurers, which may leave them little room to offer coverage to other government schemes, Pravej said, adding that he was confident that the 50bn baht government fund supporting the scheme would exceed future claims.

— The Nation

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Hospitality panel affirms commitment to saving energy, the environment

By Andrew Scott

LAST Friday, the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) Greater Phuket Chapter assembled at Holiday Inn Patong for its third meeting of the year.

Organized in conjunction with environmental organization, SEEK, the evening's discussions focused on ways that hospitality and tourism stakeholders can implement "Green Tourism" practices while reducing operational overheads and thus increasing profit margins. The meeting followed an all-day, free seminar held by SEEK, called "SEEKING a Sustainable Phuket".

Moderated by Arnfinn Oines from the Soneva Resorts, the panel comprised three distinguished property heads: Anthony Lark of Trisara, Ty Collins of JW Marriott Khao Lak and Morgan Layberry of Holiday Inn Patong – who were given the floor to talk about the initiatives they are trying to, or have already put in place to make their hotels more environmentally friendly and cost efficient. Following are highlights of the discussions.

Morgan Layberry from the Holiday Inn emphasized that sustainability can't be achieved overnight and that hotels have to be in it for the long run. He mentioned that the Holiday Inn is aligned with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) to help the hotel achieve its optimum green performance.

Aside from this, Morgan highlighted the importance of extending green initiatives across all links in the operational chain. One example he gave was in regards to his efforts to reduce the amount of unnecessary wastes. By working with suppliers to cut out unnecessary 'packaging' steps such as boxing and wrapping, he argued that you not only reduce rubbish

(cellophane, bags, and boxes), but you can also save the time wasted for staff to have to separate the packaging. Instead, Morgan provides reusable containers for suppliers to deliver produce, which ends up saving money for his suppliers, likewise.

Saving the environment can also help a company to reduce its overheads. Ty Collins understands this incentive, noting that the hotel's energy bill had an annual spike of 43% during low season and 93% during peak season.

To counter this, Ty has been committed to optimizing operational efficiency, by aligning with strategic partners such as Ecolab, which provides water, hygiene and energy technologies and treatment to the hotel. They also use Entech to monitor electricity consumption. Moreover, the Marriott has made extensive efforts to educate its staff about environmental issues and conservation practices.

Anthony Lark highlighted Trisara's self-sufficient water management system. The hotel has found a way to reuse water and manufacture their own water. Its clever rain catchment system helps the property meet most of its landscaping needs, which comprise 80% of all its water use. However, Anthony noted that since potable water was still coming to the hotel in trucks, and distributed in plastic bottles, the hotel was going through a quarter of a million plastic bottles of water per year.

To curb this negative impact, the property decided that it was in its best interest to build a reverse osmosis water treatment plant on site, and design their own glass bottles to replace the plastic bottles. Costing only one million baht, the initiative will see a return on investment in only nine months, he claimed.



Arnfinn Oines of the Soneva Resorts was the moderator of the AMCHAM meeting.



STEWARDS: L2R: Bill Barnett, Anthony Lark, Arnfinn Oines, Ty Collins and Morgan Layberry. Photo: Dan Miles Media

Phuket pineapples please

A PINEAPPLE trading center was opened in Phuket last week in a move aimed at centralizing provincial supply of the fruit, and thus increasing its market penetration potential across Southeast Asia.

Vinai Kwankaew of the Phuket Agriculture Office said that pineapples have become the province's most significant revenue-generating fruit. Phuket's pineapples are known for their sweet flavor, tasty and yellow pulp, delicious aroma and crispy core.

About 40 farmers have been planting Phuket pineapples across a combined area of 1,800 rai, or about 4,500 acres, mainly



Officials pose at a recent pineapple fair in Phuket. Photo: K Mueanhawong

in Thalang district as well as part of Kathu district.

The average yield is about five tonnes from almost three acres of land, while the annual yield from the entire cultivation area is 8,000-9,000 tonnes. The pineapples are divided into five sizes with an average price of 12 baht per fruit. The prominent fruit has generated

a total annual revenue of 80 million baht (US\$ 2.7 million).

Phuket Deputy Governor Somkiat Sungkaosuthirak said the opening of the trading center was yet another move to help penetrate neighboring markets, given the commercial advantages anticipated in 2015 under the ASEAN Economic Community platform.

The development and promotion of Phuket pineapples must be strategically done with cooperation from all parties concerned, said Mr Somkiat.

He was confident that having the pineapple trading center would ensure consumers of the quality of the fruit.

– MCOT

Toyota hybrid car exhibition

CONSUMERS attending last week's "Toyota Hybrid Expo 2012" in Phuket got a peak at some of the latest hybrid automobile technology available on the market.

Organized by Toyota Motors Thailand Co Ltd on August 18 and 19 at Central Festival Phuket, the event showcased Toyota's hybrid technology, showing why the firm is a leading motor company in the area of environmental friendly technology.

So far, Toyota has seen sales of more than 4 millions of its hybrid cars worldwide.



The Prius is a popular hybrid.

Titled "Hybrid Expo 2012...The Intelligent Drive for Tomorrow", the exhibition gave visitors the chance to better understand about the environmentally friendly hybrid technology,

which is seen by many as the future of automotive industry.

Toyota's hybrid vehicles are not only fuel efficient, but are also designed with power and performance in mind. Toyota's latest generation of hybrid vehicles offer both a gasoline engine and an electric motor system.

The event also showed hybrid technology via interactive media in a theme of "Future Forest", and included an activity zone and mini concert from popular Thai singers Stamp Apiwat and Pod Moderdog.

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Wait until Christmas

LAST week I talked about the direction the computer industry is headed as we barrel along towards the Christmas season.

If you're thinking about buying any new electronics – computer, tablet, phone, maybe even a TV – it would be worthwhile to stay on top of developments between now and Christmas.

Some of the stuff coming down the pipe is quite impressive – and we should be able to get at least some of it here in Thailand.

In last week's Live Wire, I talked about Windows 8 and how I don't expect it to do particularly well. Sure, Microsoft's going to say it's the best-selling Windows ever, but Microsoft has legions of accountants who have figured out ways to make that claim even if Windows 8 falls over like a drunk on Bangla Road.

I also talked about Windows RT, which is a horse of a completely different color. Microsoft's going to get into the hardware manufacturing business, and the combination of Windows RT and a Microsoft Surface tablet may – just may – be enough to put a small dent in the iPad juggernaut. Microsoft has to push out some killer apps, and bring the price down, but if they can do both, I expect we'll see a few Windows RT tablets in Christmas stockings around the island.

Apple, of course, remains an enigma. Microsoft's been stealing a lot of things from Apple lately, mainly how to keep a new product under wraps. Apple has long been able to keep its new developments secret, right up until they're announced (which is usually just a few weeks before they ship). Microsoft's slowly learning how to keep the lid on and for people like me, who depend on leaks to keep the news flowing, it's tough.

So, with the firm belief that nobody knows what Apple's really going to do, let me make a few (relatively) safe bets.

First, the release of a new iPhone 5 before Christmas is almost a foregone conclusion. The iPhone 4s is a wonderful phone, but sales are lagging, and new

technology awaits – the only open questions about the iPhone 5 involve specs and price.

It wouldn't surprise me to see a bigger and better screen, longer battery life, and a whole host of app changes that'll be rippled onto the iPad and Mac. iCloud has proved its mettle, and I'll bet

we see more of it. Siri has been having version 1.0 problems, but it'll probably go in for an overhaul. The camera on

the iPhone 5 may well be better than the one on iPhone 4s – as amazing as that may sound.

Then there's the iPad 3. I personally expect two different next-generation iPads, one that follows in the iPad2-with-Retina line, and another that jumps down to the smaller 7-inch size, closer to a Kindle or Nook.

I expect the pricing on the Big Bro iPad 3 to be the same as the current iPad 2, but that Little Bro iPad 3 could go as low as US\$199 – which would absolutely

redefine the way Kindles and Nooks are sold. But more about that next week.

I expect the iPad 3 will have a much better camera, possibly as good as the iPhone 4s (although it'll be hard to fit into that slim case). I also expect to

see the Son of Siri on the iPad 3, with some significantly improved voice response capabilities. Other than that – I haven't any idea, but you can bet Apple will come up with several new features that will make the iPad 3 a must-have.

Many people expect Apple to roll over to the cable television business – first in the US, then slowly around the world. They might be able to pull it off. Heaven knows there's no love lost for cable and satellite TV companies all over the world.

Personally, I'd ditch my True \$attelite \$ystem in a New Yawk minute if I could get comparable programming over the internet. My guess is that iTV, when it happens, will not only have comparable programming, it'll soon become premier programming, at least in the US.

Rumor has it (and let me



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard



An apple under the tree and an apple for you and me. Photo: Marco Pakoeningrat



ON THE BOX: An Apple iTV will probably have some sort of view-on-demand system and may even be touch-screen. Photo: Brian E Ford

admonish you once again about how reliable Apple rumors can be – NOT) that Apple's new iTV will not only include a set-top box, it'll also include the screen. Instead of fumbling around with a jillion wires, you turn on your WiFi box, plug the TV into the wall, and everything works – just like that.

I, personally, don't watch much television. But if it was suddenly that easy to start watching the really good stuff on TV – and I hear there really is some good stuff – I'd not only pay for it, I'd carve time out of my schedule to actually watch some of the programs.

Likely, Apple will come up with some sort of view-on-demand system, so I can watch the latest episode of *Boardwalk Empire* whenever I'm ready.

If Apple can serve TV on demand, I could watch the first half of *The Newsroom* on my TV, and the second half on my iPad.

If Apple can pull that one off, they'll roll over another industry. They took out the mobile phone industry and basically created the tablet industry from scratch. Apple revolutionized the online music industry. Could they take over cable, too? My bet is yes, but it may take a few more years.

Microsoft and Apple aren't the only players this Christmas. In fact, they may not even be the dominant players in some specific parts of the computer industry. Android phones are outselling iPhones by a wide margin already. Android tablets, including the Kindle and Nook remain wild cards.

If you plan on spending real money on real electronics this Christmas, make sure you read part 3 of this series next week.

Apple, of course, remains an enigma. Microsoft's been stealing a lot of things from Apple lately, mainly how to keep a new product under wraps.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions on every-other Wednesday afternoon, from 1 to 3pm. 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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Government to auction 2.1GHz spectrum

THE National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) recently announced that bids in the long-awaited 2.1GHz spectrum auction would be called from October 15-20.

It made the announcement to show that the auction would go ahead despite concerns about the low level of competition and the possibility of collusion.

Eight of the NBTC's 11 members voted to approve the final revised draft of the 2.1-gigahertz spectrum licensing terms and conditions. Two commissioners,

Supinya Klangnarong and Prawit Leesata-pornwongsa, voted against, out of concern of that there could only be three bidders going for a combined availability of 45 megahertz of bandwidth.

It is expected that just Advanced Info Service (AIS), Total Access Communication and True Corp will take part in the auction. The draft lets each bidder grab a maximum 15MHz of bandwidth, down from 20MHz bandwidth in the original draft, with 45MHz available in the auction.

NBTC secretary-general

Takorn Tantasit said the agency would call for bidding any day between October 15 and 20. The draft is expected to be published in the *Royal Gazette* next week, and the bidder invitation process will start next month. NBTC committee chairman Settapong Malisuwan said the decision to allow up to 15MHz bandwidth per bid winner was aimed at ensuring that no bidder received too small an allocation, which would make it tough to compete with other successful bidders during the 15-year license period. – *The Nation*

Beware of the hammer and nail approach

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

THERE is a very famous quote that often comes to mind when speaking with many of my colleagues in the wealth management industry: "When the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail".

Unfortunately many advisors fall into this trap, and despite the fact that everyone's situation is different, they will recommend the same solution to every person that they come across.

This has become apparent, even within my own company in some instances since we will not "step on each other's toes". Often, after sitting down with the same person, two colleagues will come away with two radically different ideas on a solution.

This might seem surprising but this bias is wired into the way we think as humans. Since advisors can't be experts at everything, they tend to become better educated about either investments or products that they have had success with and these are often mismatched with the client's time horizon or risk tolerance. These are the two common mistakes I see being made on a regular basis.

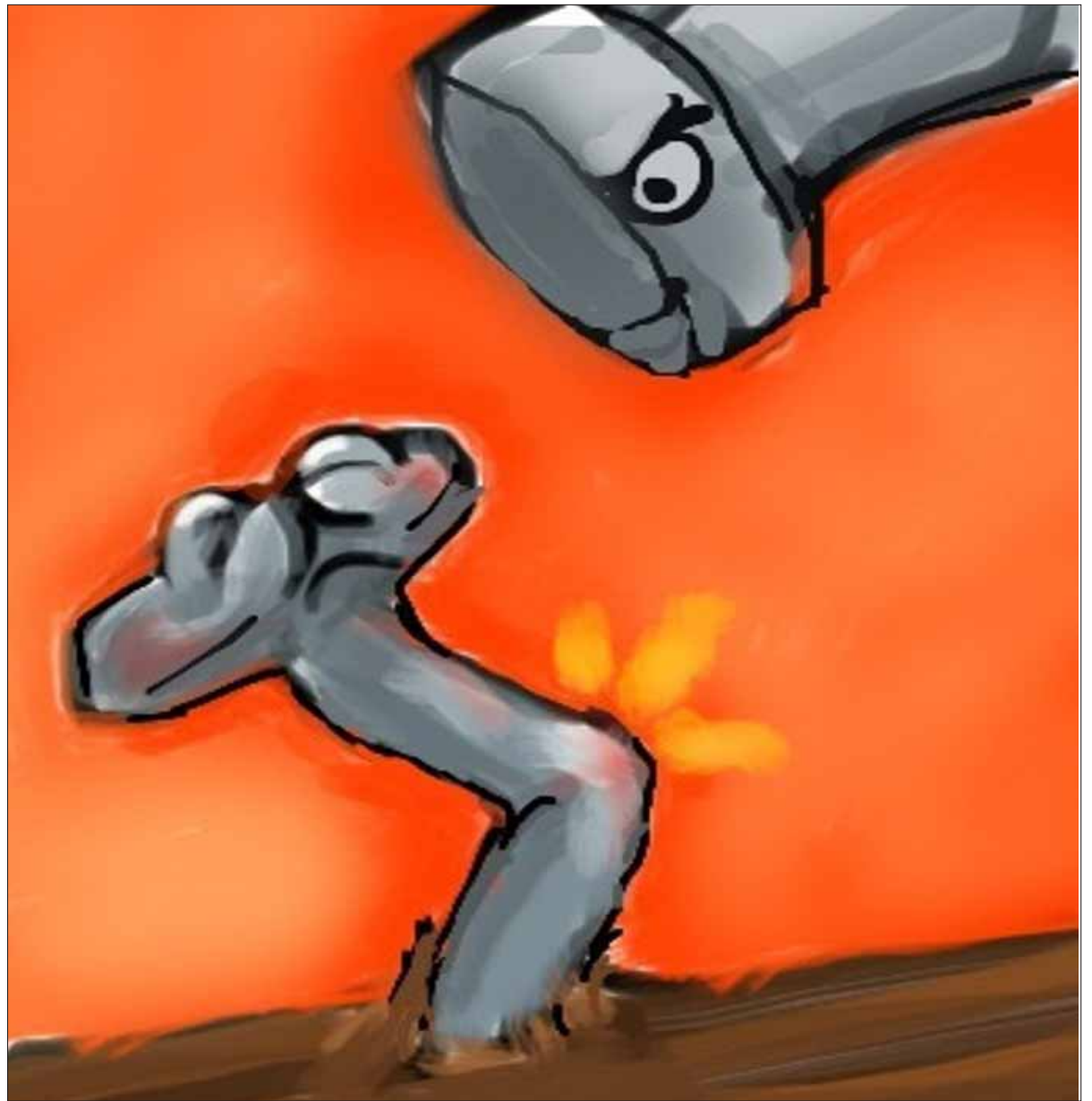
Since the most widely publicized financial or "paper" investments are stock market based, a vast majority of advisors will recommend these, even if the client has a time horizon of a few years on the money.

My opinion, which is echoed by the vast majority of academic institutions regarding this subject, is that, unless it is speculative money, you should have a 10-12 year time horizon to safely "invest" in the stock market.

If a client has a shorter time frame but an advisor is not familiar with the alternatives, they are often too afraid to stray from what they know and thus make the mistake of mismatching the time horizon of the investment.

Another area in which the off-shore industry often mismatches needs with the "easiest sell" is with savings plans. These can be great value if one 'dollar costs' averages over the life of the term by consistently paying premiums. Unfortunately many people I sit down with, who hold these policies, stop paying in or reduce payments when the markets are declining, which is exactly the wrong thing to do. By doing a few scenario exercises with the client beforehand an advisor might discover that a savings plan is not

Often, after sitting down with the same person, two colleagues will come away with two radically different ideas on a solution.



BENT OUT OF SHAPE: Hammers and nails have always had a love-hate relationship. Photo: Pete Simon

the right investment vehicle.

Personally, I prefer portfolio bonds since the investment options are enormously better. Of course these require even more discipline to continue contributing in bad times, which history has shown is always the best time to invest.

The hardest part about avoiding the above mistakes is that they are in fact honest mistakes. Many of you will have good gut instincts to avoid the unscrupulous advisors out there, but none of those red

flags will be waving if the advisor is simply giving less than perfect advice because of technical shortcomings.

Clients usually go with advisors they like and feel they can trust, which is generally a good thing. The best way to avoid one of the above mistakes is to take the time to understand the potential downsides of any recommendation given to yourself.

There is always a trade off somewhere and if you take the

time to think, it usually becomes evident.

Lazy thinking, or seeking to avoid thinking critically all together, is the root cause of many mistakes by clients and advisors alike.

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

APAC travel market is growing, mainly online

SWEEPING changes in the Asia Pacific (APAC) zone are transforming the region's travel marketplace, and at the same time fueling sustained rapid growth online.

According to a report from travel industry research authority PhoCusWright, "Asia Pacific Online Travel Overview Fifth Edition," the outlook for the APAC travel industry remains bullish, with fierce competition in the high-growth online leisure and business travel market.

"Asia Pacific continues to experience significant advancement in infrastructure, innovation and consumer appetite for travel," said Douglas Quinby, PhoCusWright's senior director of research.

"Despite concerns about slowing overall economic growth in China and India, travel in the region – and in particular online travel – continues to

experience rapid growth and change."

APAC continues to be the fastest-growing travel region globally. China is anticipated to overtake Japan by 2013 as the region's largest travel market.

PhoCusWright projects high single-digit growth for the overall APAC travel market through 2013, when it will reach a value of US\$357 billion.

This would equate to a 64% increase over 2009. To comprise 25% of the total market by 2013, online gross bookings in the region will grow twice as fast as the total travel market.

Meanwhile, online travel agencies will be the fastest-growing online distribution channel, but the region's local incumbents will face greater competition from global online agencies and supplier websites.

– Marketwire

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A place for old bones

DINOSAURS are taking a holiday in Phuket, along with all the other old bones on the island, in a travelling museum exhibition which opened on August 28.

The free-entry exhibition, about paleontological and geological discoveries in Thailand, will be open daily at the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) between 8:30am and 4:30pm until September 16.

“Our aim is to educate the public about the fossil history and geology of Thailand. In making this exhibition possible, we have worked in cooperation with the Sirindhorn Museum in Kalasin in order to promote the advancement of education in science,” said PMBC director Pinsak Suraswadi.

All of the life-sized bones on display are replicas of fossils that were found in Thailand, he added.

Mari Ikenara, a 27-year-old diving instructor living in Patong, originally from Tokyo, Japan said:

“The big dinosaur looks really awesome. I hadn’t seen the fossils, dinosaur eggs and footprints before. Unfortunately all the information is written in Thai so I cannot understand it. If the organizers provided it in English, I would enjoy it more.”

Among the displays, including life-sized replicas of the skeletons of three dinosaurs, is a

reconstructed *Siamotyrannus Isanensis*, a carnivorous ancestor of the notorious *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, standing three meters tall and 12 meters long from head to tail.

The other two dinosaur skeletons on display are the *Phuwiangosaurus Sirindhornae*, which stands 20 meters long and five meters tall, and the *Isanosaurus Attavipachi*, which is believed to be one of the oldest herbivorous dinosaurs in the world.

Mr Vanich Kaisilapa, Director of Phuket Thaihua Museum explained,

“We don’t have to travel up to the Northeast to see them; the exhibition provides us the opportunity to see these rare things.

It is useful. I would like to take this opportunity to invite everyone to come and experience it”

In addition to the dinosaurs, dinosaur eggs and footprints, other fossil evidence is on display.

Preewara Hanwongsa, a 23-year-old hotel cook told the *Gazette*: “After visiting this exhibition, I learned more about the different kinds of dinosaurs, the way they lived and their different characteristics. I would like to see other organizations set up this kind of mobile exhibition too. It is interesting. I just decided to visit the aquarium but I also had this chance to see the dinosaurs. This is really worth it.”

– *Phuket Gazette*

All of the life-sized bones on display are replicas of fossils that were found in Thailand



JURASSIC CLASSIC: *Siamotyrannus Isanensis* (above) vies for attention with two other skeletons (below) and dinosaur eggs (inset). Photos: Orawin Narabal



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Phuket Andaman Halal for Tourism 2012

THE organizers of the annual Phuket Halal Expo, have invited Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and Asean Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan to give speeches at the event, which will have special activities in Patong and Phuket Town from September 5 to 8.

Officially entitled “Phuket Andaman Halal for Tourism 2012”, the expo will showcase the island’s Muslim culture, history and cuisine.

Announcing the expo at a recent press conference, held at the Royal Paradise Hotel and Spa – the host venue for the Patong activities – were Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa; Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) Vice President Soratham Jinda; Phuket Chairman of Halal Affairs at the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT) Dr Ismae Alee and fellow member Samaan Adam.

Mr Soratham said that more than 300 representatives from various organizations around the world would fly in to attend special halal seminars to be held at the hotel.



Traditional Thai-Muslim attire on display the 2009 Phuket Halal Expo.

“The Expo will be divided into two parts, both intended to boost confidence, among both Thai and foreign Muslim tourists, that Phuket halal food is prepared in accordance with Islamic principals.”

The second activity will be a food fair on September 7 and 8 at Sanamchai, opposite Phuket Provincial Hall in Phuket Town, starting at 5pm both days.

The organizers hope that PM Yingluck will be available to use

the occasion to promote halal food as an important component of the government’s “Thai Kitchen to the World” initiative and that Dr Surin will speak on Muslim tourism after the terms of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) go into effect in 2015.

The PPAO hopes Muslims from across Phuket, as well as nearby provinces, will come to enjoy the expo and seminar, Mr Soratham said.

On the road to Mandalay

By Phoowadon Duangmee

THAILAND'S western neighbor is now one of the hottest destination for a holiday.

After decades of international boycotts and sanctions, the April elections in Myanmar brought not just hopes of democracy and investment, but also a surge in travellers once reluctant to journey to this amazing land.

If you want to see Myanmar at its best, don't put off your trip. Yes, it is the rainy season but you really don't want to wait until the international tourists start turning up in their droves.

Here are a few pointers and some background information to help.

Since June, a visa-on-arrival for business purposes became available for 27 nationalities including the 10 ASEAN members plus India, Japan, South Korea, China, Australia, France, Germany, UK and US.

The fee is US\$50 for a 70-day stay. A tourist visa for ASEAN members only is possible for a US\$40 fee.

The Myanmar Embassy on Bangkok's North Sathorn Road now offers a smooth, same-day visa service.

Simply deliver your visa application with two photos and 1,260 baht fee to the counter between 9am and noon and you can collect your passport between 3:30 and 4:30pm later that day. A tourist visa is good for a 28-day stay.

The country still needs more time to build up its tourism infrastructure to cope with this fast-growing demand, so if you've already planned a trip book your accommodation now as space is limited.

Also, be prepared to pay at least double what it says in the latest guidebook for accommodation, even for a backpacker place.

After years of decay, Yangon International Airport has a sparkling new terminal and welcomes flights from all over Asia from airlines including Myanmar Airways, Thai Airways, Bangkok Airways and Jetstar Asia, among others.

Korean Air, ANA and Qatar Airways are starting services soon and AirAsia is launching a Bangkok to Mandalay flight in October.

Myanmar is still very much a cash-only economy, even with the sanctions gradually being lifted there are still no ATMs and traveller cheques and credit cards are not generally accepted, even in Yangon.

The US dollar is widely used and often preferred to the kyat. While black market exchange rates were the norm two years ago, today everyone can access the standard exchange rate at official currency counters at airports and banks.

Most hotels or guesthouses in the capital also offer exchange services, though the rate is slightly lower.

Burmese don't like creased or dirty dollars bills and even the slightest tear, mark, fold or dirt can lead to a bill being refused or a poor exchange rate.

It is advisable to buy crisp US bills before your trip, telling the bank you need flawless notes only. The staff at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport's exchange booths know the situation and will prepare pristine bills in a long envelope for you to avoid damaging them.

The easiest way to get around is by taxi, though they tend to be old cars and have neither meters nor air conditioning.

Prices are negotiable, usually between 1,000-2,000 kyat (US\$1 = 873 kyat) a trip for travelling within the Yangon's city center, and about US\$7-10 from the airport to the center.



Pondering his changing world. Photo: The Nation



BEAT THE CROWD: Myanmar is experiencing huge growth in tourism. Photo: Gerd Eichmann

Away from the politics of Nay Pyi Taw, the Burmese are joyous, light-hearted and fun-loving people. Like the rest of us, they love a good time and celebrate their festivals with families and friends.

Here's what you can enjoy and when:

The next major festival is Phaung Daw, held near Inle Lake starting October 16.

Inle Lake, in the Shan State, is famous for leg-rowed boats, and the Shan row them in the highest of spirits during the festivities. The annual rite sees a colorful procession of boats tugging the golden barges of Buddha images.

Of course, no celebration is complete without the obligatory racing, which is held throughout the festival.

Marking the end of the Buddhist Lent, the Festival of Lights, known locally as the Thadingyut, is celebrated across Myanmar from October 29-31.

Pagodas, houses, public buildings, parks, and monuments are all illuminated with candles in jars, to stunning effect.

On November 28, the Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda ritual is observed. Perched over the cliff rock of Mt Kyaikhiyo is the boulder of the Golden Pagoda – a well-known Buddhist pilgrimage site.

The rock seems to defy gravity, as it perpetually appears to be on the verge of rolling

down the hill. Legend has it that it held by strand of hair of the Lord Buddha.

Devotees offer 9,999 candles, ceremoniously lit at midnight to celebrate the Pagoda.

Folk dances, music and puppets add color and rhythm to the spectacle.

As the year draws to a close, December 28 will bring the Mt Popa Nat Spirit Festival to life.

Like a mother hen guarding her children, Popa Taungkalat monastery sits atop the 1518-meter volcanic peak overlooking the farmland around the Irrawaddy River, southeast of Bagan.

This is the home of Nats, and joined by thousands of folks, they appease the demanding ghosts with entertainment.

The celebrations are light-hearted in nature, though previously thousands of animals were sacrificed.

To usher in the new year, the Naga will draw intrepid travelers to the high ranges in Myanmar's Northwest.

For three days, the Naga gather around Kham-Ti districts. Fierce warriors in their bright and exotic dress perform tribal sports and dances, as rice wine and roasted meat are accompanied by the beating of drums.

Whatever you choose, Myanmar promises experiences never to be forgotten.



Ramayana dance. Photo: Nguyen Thanh Long

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www.bangkokair.com/samui-island-marathon

The tree that bears fruit

Steven Layne speaks to the head of the local Honda dealer about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

AT THE helm of Anuphas Vividhkarn Co Ltd's CSR program is Montavee "Tommy" Hongsyok. The 35-year-old Assistant Managing Director of Phuket's exclusive Honda dealership follows in the footsteps of his father, Montri Hongsyok, an accomplished executive and respected community figure in Phuket. Following is a Q&A session that the *Gazette* recently had with Tommy.

Phuket Gazette: What is your philosophy on CSR?

Montavee Hongsyok: In my view, CSR is a form of integrated management; a necessary commitment that companies make to promote and develop their organization to be able to respond to economic, social and environmental issues, for the betterment of society.

In implementing CSR initiatives, whether inside or outside of the organization, you have to carefully consider the impacts and be prepared to adjust and adapt the program so that the optimal benefit is realized in the community. A good CSR program is like a fruiting tree.

You start off with a seed – the initiative – and plant it in the soil – the community. With regular sunlight, water and nutrients, that seed can grow into a plant.

With good care and attention, the plant becomes a tree that can branch

out into the community, yielding its good fruits for everyone to enjoy and benefit from. However, CSR is not just a one way street – we don't just do it to the community, but rather, together with the community.



LIFE DRIVE: Anuphas helps coordinate a blood drive every three months.

Can you give an overview of your CSR program?

We've been conducting CSR activities for quite some time. Previously, we didn't put much effort in formally publicizing our initiatives. Lately, we've noticed more and more new business ventures and start-up companies forming in Phuket, and feel that it's time to formally set a positive benchmark for the new business generation to strive towards. Our



The Green Way project makes roads safer and cleaner.

Way", a campaign aimed at increasing green spaces and promoting eco-friendly cars and driving, as to address global warming and preserve the environment; Other initiatives include the "Honorary Tree Planting

Project", as well as the collaborative establishment of the "Honda Foundation" under the slogan "Together for Tomorrow".

Implementing these initiatives has helped to raise awareness among our administrators and personnel. In addition to the programs through Honda, we also carry out a number of our own initiatives. For example, we collaborate with the Phuket Regional Blood Center in holding blood drives every three months. The most recent initiative includes, in collaboration with K-SME reps in Phuket, a charity drive to donate necessities to the SOS Foundation's Children Village. Another program worth mentioning is our waste and sustainable garbage disposal project, which is designed to teach our employees as well as people in the local community how to separate and dispose their waste properly.

What are some of the important values that you've learned and apply?

I've learned a lot from my dad. He has given so much to his employees and all the people around him. He leads with sincerity and compassion, while not seeking monetary return. This



Montavee Hongsyok, Assistant Managing Director of Anuphas Vividhkarn.

has inspired me to do good things and give back to the people around me, likewise. By creating CSR initiatives with all one's heart and ability, I can weave the good things of life into a quilt for the next generation.

The more you give, the more you receive; CSR activities bring returns that are more important than profit. These are satisfaction, a sense of sufficiency, fulfillment, merriment and love.

How do you measure the effectiveness of your CSR initiatives?

Feedback from our target groups, which includes our employees, customers and the local community at large, helps us know if what we are doing is working and worthwhile. Other than the satisfaction expressed directly to us, we can also look at data, such as CSI – the Customer Satisfaction Index. It is important to understand that money is not, and should not be a basis for determining how

successful a CSR program is. CSR is not like a business investment where you can expect an immediate, quantifiable return.

The returns in CSR are the fruits of that tree – they require time and care to develop and materialize into benefits that can be fully realized in the community. A key goal of CSR is for the values to be instilled in and by the people. You can't force someone to care and make a difference. They have to want to and do it on their own account.

What is your CSR budget?

This is not absolute. We try to keep our CSR budget flexible and open, based on the needs and merit for each of our programs. Another thing to consider is that many of our CSR initiatives and goals overlap with other programs in the organization, including our ISO certification, employee training and team building, as well as customer experience management (CEM).



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Book drive to deliver knowledge to novices

A BUDDHIST school for novice monks located in Thailand's far North is calling out nationwide for donations of all types of books.

Anybody in possession of educative and interesting books that are not being used, are welcome to create merit by donating their books to needy Buddhist novice monk students, ever-hungry for valuable worldly knowledge.

As part of the book drive, titled "Fill the classes with books, fill the novices with knowledge", all types of books and reading levels will be accepted. The book donations can be made to Phra Poriyatithamma Wat Phuket School, located in the Wora



The newly built school house in Nan is yearning for more books.

Nakorn sub district of Nan province's Pua district. The school falls under the Royal patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Donations for this drive are asked to be finalized by September 8, and can be made by post.

For more information, contact 054-688 191 and 085 037 3769.

Secret dinners that keep the guests guessing

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

PICTURE Phuket in 1785 (called Thalang then) when most of the island was still covered in virgin rain forest. Local people lived off the bounty of the nearby forests – roots, vines, leaves, barks, fruits, and seeds – and fresh seafood from the Andaman sea.

At the time, when synthetic medicine was unheard of, people believed in the healing power of plants. Local culinary wisdom abounded and food was prepared not only to nourish the body but also to cure ills.

This is the philosophy that forms the basis of the dinner we are about to sample. Dishes, we are told, are prepared by chef Premchit Prateep Na Thalang, following recipes handed down by generations of chefs and herbalists who had been suffusing and dispensing medicinal plants to the community for decades.

Only a few days before the dinner, guests were informed by email of the venue, which this time is the Sala Phuket Resorts and Spa on Mai Khao Beach, north of Phuket. The guest list and the menu were not revealed.

On the day, as welcomed guests gather on the beach front

bar, waiters file in bearing aperitifs and canapes. A tangy juice made from wild mafai (a kind of Thai plum) and passion fruit sets the tone for a series of canapes made up of herbs, fruits, and spices collected from the Phang Nga forest only a few days earlier.

Take the exotic Andaman Prawn with Lemon grass Curry and Cumin Leaf with turmeric, kaffir

Cuisine and our host tonight, explains: “The use of many strong medicinal herbs in one dish is not uncommon in southern cuisine. These herbs have a known cleansing effect on the body.”

Aperitifs come in a form of *ya dong*, a stiff liquor made from rice wine steeped with herbs and flowers (considered medicinal in their own right).

Ya Dong tinctures can take months to mature. As female guests sip hormone-balancing and anti-aging concoctions, the men enjoy a cocktail known for increasing virility and longevity.

Eventually, we leave the bar, a little light-headed thanks to the *ya dong*, and are led to a clearing under a canopy of two arching trees.

A long table, bedecked with leaves, vines and exotic fruits, awaits us. Small oil lamps illuminate the



SECRET INGREDIENTS: A fruit sorbet unlike any other.

lime leaf and fenugreek seed, for example. The long list of ingredients surprisingly results in a few bite-sized canapes with a mixture of pungent aromas vying for dominance. The brain racks furiously for a known catalog of scents but to no avail.

Norman Jones, co-founder of Na Thalang Ancestral Siamese

table.

What follows is a series (eight to be exact) of entrees, featuring the wildest of edible fruits, leaves and roots, concocted, cooked and combined to challenge the most jaded of taste buds, and touch the senses in many different ways.

Most dishes are fresh, light



EXOTIC INDEED: Entrees feature wild edible fruits, leaves and roots.

but also playful in textures and clever in the combination of flavors, as exemplified in the chef's signature dish 'Lobster with Fiddlehead Fern Salad with Wild Horse Mango Fruit, sprinkled with roast and grated coconut'.

Chef Premchit appears with the first entree. An attractive lady with large expressive eyes, she delights the guests with tales of her fondest childhood memories: days spent foraging wild plants with her herbalist father in Phang Nga's forests.

All entrees are paired with four wines, ranging from the very light and sweet Pinot Grigio, served with the herby lime soup in cucumber cup, to the fuller-bodied Merlot which beautifully compliments the aromatic 'Curry of Grey Bolete Mushrooms and Wild Jengkol Seed.'

The dinner comes to a delightful end with three beautifully presented desserts of wild fruits, fruit sorbet, and sticky rice in coconut cream.

To clean the palette and aid digestion we happily chew on slivers of pickled wild nutmeg fruits and let the lingering sweet, spicy, and sour tang dissolve in our mouth. Black Assam tea rounds up this delightful experience.

Due to the secret nature of the event, guests are asked to keep the information on the rest of menu to themselves.

I can reveal one thing though: there is a chance to sample the delicious batter-fried sand fleas (yes), from the nearby coast.

Book the next Secret Na Thalang Dinner at: 089 968 3363

Email: Premchit@NaThalang.com

Bartending competition

THE Kee Resort finished third in a creative cocktails contest put on by the Phuket Thai Chef's Association.

Judges applauded the team of chefs and mixologists in the Cocktail Display contest for their uniquely creative concoctions at the event held at Juncceylon in Patong last weekend.

If you want to see just how creative one can be when it comes to cocktails, drop in to Kee Drink or the Kee Sky Lounge at the Kee Resort in Patong to see what all the fuss is about and sample a totally unique way of relaxing.



WITH FLAIR: Chefs and mixologists hard at work during the contest.



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Interfering with the navigation systems

YOUR aircraft has just landed at Phuket International Airport and out comes the ubiquitous mobile phone, despite the flight crew asking you to keep it switched off until the plane arrives at the gate, because of concerns it may interfere with the aircraft's avionics, thus endangering all on board.

A familiar scene to everyone arriving on Phuket and particularly in Asia where the leap to connect to the outside world after an hour [such as Bangkok to Phuket], or several hours of enforced non-texting and conversation seems to be an overwhelming urge of life saving proportions.

Dozens of cell phones inevitably light up before the planes has finished taxiing to the gate at Phuket Airport.

Well you ain't seen nothing yet because the inevitable has arrived – not yet in Thailand – but it will come eventually because of competitive forces.

Mobile phone conversations in flight are feasible, legal and are being introduced by some airlines.

Virgin Atlantic announced in May it will allow inflight personal phone calls, following other airlines such as Malaysia, Emirates and Oman Air.

European airlines like British Airways and Lufthansa are already well down the track.

Thai Airways has not yet announced if it will follow suit, but with the imminent arrival into its fleet of the giant Airbus A380 and the expectations of first and business class passengers on the A380 and on other new aircraft on order, it seems inevitable that THAI will eventually allow inflight calls, if only to remain competitive.

Of course this "advance" in technology

and customer service will not be welcomed by all and sundry.

You can imagine some of the conversations: "Do they speak English in Thailand?", "Kim Kardashian is dating/marrying/divorcing who?", "This guy I am sitting next to is so creepy and gross. I think he's recording my conversation." And so on.

How is this now possible? In short the creation of shielded mini-networks, or picocells, installed in the cabin above the heads of passengers have mitigated concerns over mobile phone use in flight because the calls go over a protected network and do not go bounding off multiple phone towers on the ground.

The picocells act as tiny GPRS cell towers on the plane. Because they are so close to the passengers, mobile phones will only have to emit relatively modest signals because they won't have to work as hard to secure a network "handshake." This helps ease

concerns over interference with aircraft navigational equipment.

The European Union gave permission to do inflight mobile calls in 2008, but a combination of factors, such as objections from other passengers, the expense of incurring international roaming charges and lingering concerns about safety all held the airlines back, and still do in many cases.

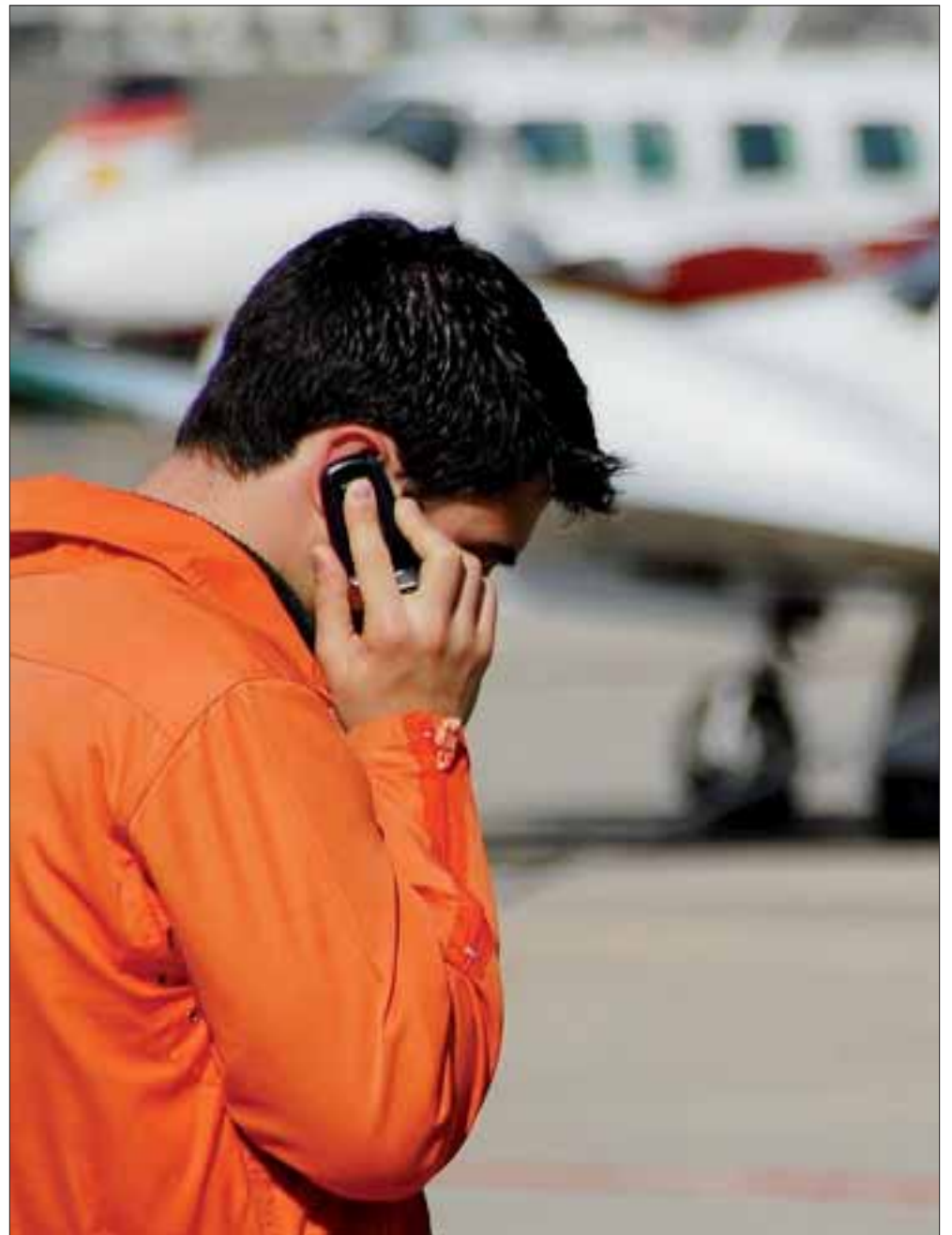
American authorities, for example, still ban such calls.

Theoretically, before the introduction of picocells, electromagnetic interference of the aircraft systems was the most common argument against using electronic devices on planes, such as mobile phones, small walkie-talkies or even radio



Aviation

By Alastair Carthew



MISSED CALL: "I can't hear you above the engines - call me back later".

controlled toys.

However, many aviation experts have long decried this theory. In fact Boeing, one of the two largest airline manufacturers, undertook a test in response to reports by flight crews that they detected "anomalies" caused by electronic devices. Boeing found there was no "definite correlation between electronic devices and the associated reported airplane anomalies."

Despite the availability of inflight mobile phone calls, use of them is not likely to be widespread, at least not in the short term until the high cost of making a call comes down.

As one commentator said: "The chances are slim you'll be stuck with someone blabbing away on your next flight. Unless, of course, you are sitting next to someone with a story to tell and money to burn."

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A Part of Your Perfect Living

Don Mueang relauches October 1

AIRPORTS of Thailand (AOT) announced last week that Don Mueang Airport is now 100 per cent ready to open for low-cost carriers on October 1.

The listed airport operator also insisted that Don Mueang would be used permanently, and that AOT would work on connectivity with Suvarnabhumi Airport for passengers.

It was the first time AOT had gone public on the issue of Don Mueang's rebirth as a hub for low-cost airlines after controversy over its readiness for the full relaunch. The long silence has undermined confidence, especially among foreign tourists.

Flying Officer Anirut Thanomkulbutra, president of the airport authority, confirmed that Don Mueang would be ready to serve low-cost carriers fully and on time.

Currently, only Nok Air, Orient Thai and charter flights use the facility. He said AOT was in talks with the other 14 budget airlines to set up operations at the airport.



EARLY BIRD: Currently, only Nok Air and Orient Thai use the facility.

Only Terminal 1 is to be in operation, which can accommodate 16.5 million passengers a year for both domestic and international flights.

However, what people have worried about most is not Don Mueang's capacity but connectivity between the two airports. Anirut said AOT had prepared transport services between the two, such as public and shuttle buses. In the future, the Bangkok mass transit system will

be extended to link the two airports as well.

AOT also held "Thailand Take Off", an operational workshop on preparing Don Mueang Airport for its new role. Transport Minister Jarupong Ruangsuan presided over the event.

About 200 people involved in the aviation industry attended.

Thai AirAsia, the biggest low-cost carrier, will relocate on October 1 from Suvarnabhumi.

– The Nation

Hanging out at the Monkeypod

Nanthapa Pengkasem and Bruce Stanley head out to the eastern jungles of Phuket to discover the charms of the Monkeypod Coffeehouse.

By Nanthapa Pengkasem and Bruce Stanley

WE'VE been hearing about an exciting new dining experience out in the newly fashionable eastern zone of the island, past the Heroine's Monument, but we were surprised to find such an elegant white designer restaurant as Monkeypod Coffeehouse sitting at the side of the road in Pa Klok.

Monkeypod is the creation of Chaiyos Pinpradab, a local Phuketian who studied architecture and who spends much of his time reading classic Western literature and thinking about design. He bought this property in Pa Klok twenty years ago and recently decided to invite his family to join him in creating a restaurant/coffeehouse where he could express his design and culinary ideas.

His son, Phai, who shares his father's interest in the wide world of ideas, works as the genial host and manager of Monkeypod and his sister, Ratchaneevadee, prepares the Thai menu currently offered only in the Thai language.

The clean white spaces of the bistro are set off with large, beautiful monkeypod wooden tables and chairs. The white walls are peacefully empty as Chaiyos says his customers are the art.

However, he has stenciled an Ernest Hemingway quote on a wall and I'm told that the literary references will change regularly.

For those wanting the best of Western coffeehouse cuisine, Monkeypod has it. From a classic hamburger to a sumptuous Chicken or Pork Cordon Bleu, Western Chef Chaiyawat Kumsuk has taken these traditional favorites and added his own interpretation. The Chicken

Cordon Bleu was served with coconut and rambutan flavors that elevated the creamy sauce.

"We want to celebrate the beauty of the monkey pod trees that surround our property," explains Phai. "They give inspiration to our menu. We grow as much of our own produce as possible and use what we have on the property to animate our menu."

In addition to excellent Western menu above, Monkeypod offers a variety of authentic Phuket dishes. Chaiyos' sister is responsible for the Thai menu. As with many great local chefs, Ratchaneevadee learned the craft and culinary skills from their mother and grandmother who ran a catering business in town.

Local food authority, Wanida Hongyok, has a way of determining the pedigree of a chef by ordering *Buer Tod*. This dish of batter-fried prawns on a fan of seaweed, says Wanida, is the ultimate test of a chef's credentials, and the crunchy *Buer Tod* at Monkeypod, accompanied by a tangy tamarind sauce, passes the test beautifully.

If you like prawns then try *goong assam* or prawns with tamarind sauce. For this dish, Ratchaneevadee only uses wild prawns whose soft shells turn crispy when deep fried. The succulent prawns are then lightly coated with a sweet and sour sauce made from tamarind and palm sugar. Thais usually eat the prawns whole, shell and all, but you may peel them if so wish.

Fish dishes are the usual staple in any local meal and the *pla tod krueng* or sliced fish with chilli and herb paste served here is both robust (read spicy) enough for the locals who are usually known for their penchant for spicy dishes.

One dish we highly recommend

is the exotic tofu soup (inset) with salted fish, pork and ginger. The combination is at once strange and exotic and will take some getting used to. The soup has a nice smoky flavor thanks to the salted fish. Delicious and satisfying.

Don't let the Monkeypod modern and minimalist setting fool you into thinking this is yet another nice café. The restaurant's Thai menu, with the flair for the local classics, is good enough to bring visiting friends and show off Phuket cuisine at its best.

Monkeypod Coffeehouse is on the corner of Lum Sai Road / Highway 4027 and is open 7 days a week from 9am to 9pm for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Monkeypod passes the *buer tod* (above) test with flying colors and the sliced fish, *pla tod krueng* (below) is the real deal.



AUTHENTIC: Khun Ratchaneevadee Pinpradab prepares the Thai menu.



NOSTALGIC: The Cordon Bleu will remind some people of home.



Don't let the Monkeypod modern and minimalist setting fool you into thinking this is yet another nice café.

Boathouse Wine & Grill

The legendary Boathouse Wine and Grill is a celebration of great French and Thai cuisine right on Kata beach, simply the best oceanfront dining on Phuket.

It is the perfect place for many special occasions such as friends gatherings, birthday celebrations, anniversaries, romantic dinners, weddings etc...or simply a cool cocktail at sunset.

The wine cellar houses over 800 bottles and has been awarded Best of Award of Excellence by Wine Spectator since 2006. It is the only such awarded restaurant in Phuket.

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

Boathouse Resort on the beach 182, Kottanode Road, Kata Beach, Phuket 83100

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A chronicle of Congo's horror

MOST people are familiar with the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Hutu fanatics killed 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

In the chaos, a long-running Tutsi insurgency seized control of the country, sending a million refugees into the Congo. Two years later, tiny Rwanda invaded the giant country – the size of western Europe.

Five million people, mostly civilians, have died in the subsequent wars. Hundreds of thousands of women have been raped. Eight neighboring countries ultimately became involved in the free-for-all and today 29 insurgencies still simmer in the backlands.

This is all chronicled in *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters* (Public Affairs, New York, 2011, 381pp).

Subtitled “The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa”, this is a magisterial analysis of the intricate, multi-layered conflict, leavened by the voices of politicians, generals, businessmen, child soldiers, refugees and massacre victims.

The author, Jason K Stearns, spent a decade in the benighted country, working for human rights and peacekeeping groups. He sets

Books

By James Eckardt

a high standard for shoe-leather reporting, racking up well over 100 in-depth interviews. His is the definitive history of an insane conflict.

The troubles go back to the colonial days of the Belgian Congo. Beyond the well-publicized atrocities of the rubber and ivory trades, the Congolese were systematically blocked by their white masters from higher education and positions of responsibility.

The military strongman who emerged after independence was a former typist with the rank of sergeant. Joseph Mobuto renamed the country Zaire and ruled for 32 years. Increasingly paranoid, he drew all money and power into his hands.

What happens when you don't pay soldiers, policemen, teachers and civil servants? Schools close, riverboats rot, roads revert to jungle, policemen live on bribes and soldiers turn feral. Mobuto sucked the life out of the country.

‘There were two hundred shabbily dressed soldiers with pots and pans on their heads. Goats were running around the airport. They asked me where they could set up camp.’ He moaned in dismay, holding his head in his hands. ‘Goats!’

“By 1996, Zaire was a teetering house of cards – as the Economist quipped, ‘They call it a country. In fact it is just a Zaire-shaped hole in the middle of Africa.’”

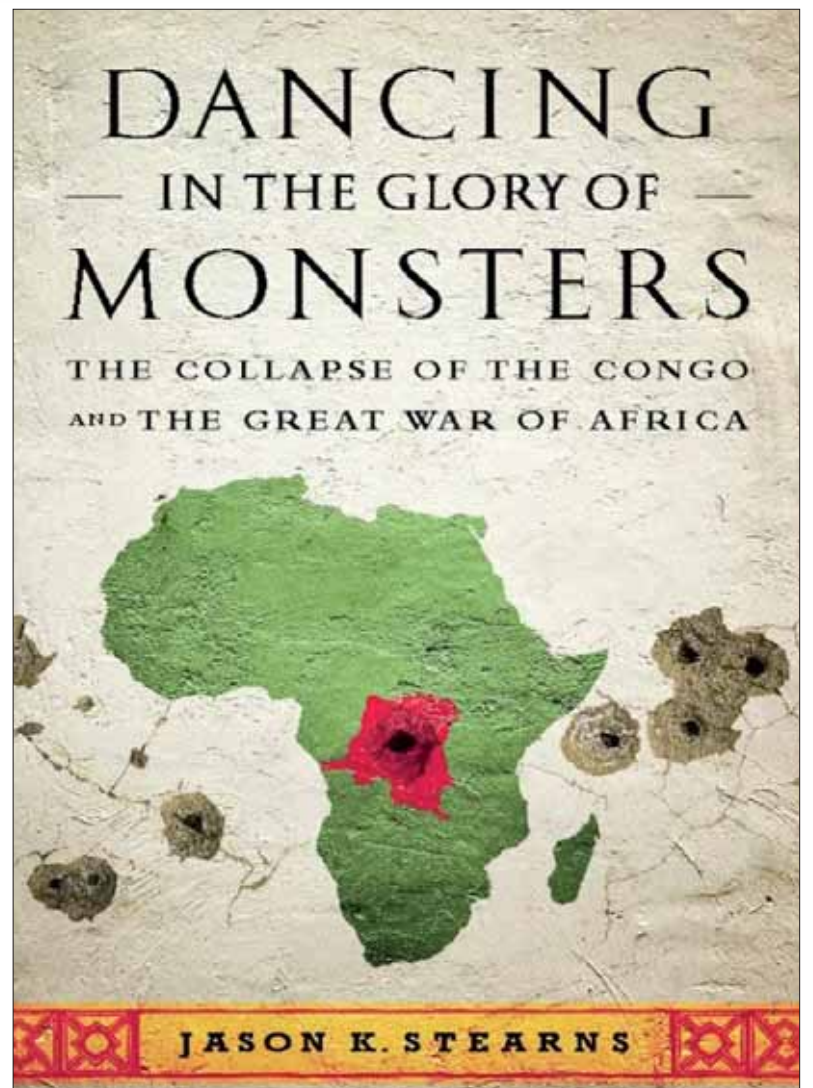
The reason for Rwanda's conquest of the Congo in 1996 was simple. Rwanda had an army: the Congo did not. The people who had massacred the Tutsi two years earlier were crammed into refugee camps along the Congolese border. The Rwandan army invaded and massacred them right back.

Mobuto had sent his officers to be trained in Europe and the US but then gave his army over to incompetent and corrupt loyalists from his region and tribe.

Lieutenant Colonel Prosper Nabyolwa was an experienced paratroop commander, who had trained in Belgium and Oklahoma. Most of his troops along with his commanding officer fled at the approach of the Rwandans. He pleaded fruitlessly with Kinshasa for reinforcements.

“Mabyolwa's mood was lifted briefly when he got word that a plane was arriving with promised reinforcements,” Stearns writes.

“He hurried to the airport to receive the troops, only to see a cargo plane landing with a company of *garde civile* troops disembarking with their wives, children, and belongings. ‘There were two hundred shabbily dressed soldiers with pots and pans on their heads. Goats were running around the airport. They asked me where they could set up camp.’ He moaned in dismay,



DEEP IN THE CONGO: Jason K Stearns spent a decade in the Congo, working for human rights and peacekeeping groups.

holding his head in his hands. ‘Goats!’”

Desperate hordes of refugees fled eastward into the jungle where they died of starvation and disease. Informal tribal militias rose up to defend their turf, only adding to the bloody chaos.

Laurent Kabila, a veteran insurgent, was the puppet the Rwandans installed upon Mobutu's vacated throne in Kinshasa. Only Kabila was no puppet and began plotting against his Rwandan overlords.

A second war broke out in 1998 and lasted till 2006, drawing in a

shifting mosaic of neighboring countries and local rebel groups.

Kabila was assassinated by a bodyguard in 2002, for many alleged reasons, and his son Joseph took over, ultimately holding fraudulent elections in 2011.

Both father and son ruled in the personal style of Mobuto, imprisoning and co-opting opponents, fostering a culture of nepotism, cronyism and kleptocracy.

Comparing it to Europe's Thirty Years War, Stearns sees life in the Congo as Hobbsian: “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.”

Saving the world slowly

Film

Resident Evil: Retribution
Director: Paul W. S. Anderson
Starring: Milla Jovovich, Michelle Rodriguez, Sienna Guillory, Kevin Durand
Phuket release: September 13

DID you know that the Thai name for the latest *Resident Evil* flick is *Pee-chee-wah har*. This roughly translates as *Living-Ghost 5*, and that's a pretty good description of the state of this cinematic series.

The English subtitle for this latest outing of zombies and corporation run riot is *Retribution*. Who might be taking revenge on whom, is a little fuzzy, because there are an awful lot of seriously peeved people in this movie. At least there will always be someone on screen looking for payback... in 3D no less.



PAYBACK: Milla Jovovich has stuck with the series since the beginning.

Could it be that director Paul W. S. Anderson believes 3D only looks cool in extra-slow motion? *Retribution* may be the slowest action movie since *300*.

Still, it is pretty cool that Milla Jovovich has stuck with the series and she has a strong cast backing her. The rest of the budget must have

gone on the effects. It seems that if you defy physics often enough then the huge holes in the increasingly silly story start to make sense.

But then the movie is called *Resident Evil: Retribution*. It wouldn't be half as much fun if it made too much sense.

– Alexander Maycock

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Laddawan Somniym

WITH a wealth of experience in the field of promotion and sales for some of Phuket's top hotels, Laddawan Somniym is now bringing her expertise to her new role as regional director of sales for Centara Hotels and Resorts Group.

The new job will require Laddawan to promote Centara's properties, including seven hotels in Phuket and two in Krabi.

Still, she refuses to label her new undertaking as a challenge.

"I don't like the word. In my position, nothing is a challenge anymore," she says with the confidence of a woman in charge of her destiny.

Instead, she revels in her new role because, "As an offshoot of Central Group, Centara is a well-respected brand trusted by generations of Thais.

The corporation is growing fast nationally and internationally, expanding its reaches as far afield as Bali and the Maldives, among others. I am excited to be part of it."

A graduate in marketing from St John's University in Bangkok, Laddawan was naturally drawn to public relations.

"I prefer sales to operational and management work. I am good with people and love talking to clients and developing a network of agents and connections."

During her 15-year career,



mostly with premier resorts including Novotel, Sheraton (now Angsana), the Hilton, and Indigo Pearl, among others, Laddawan has built a strong network of business contacts.

Some say that she knows the industry inside out and her ability to meet companies' targets and close business deals is legendary. During the course of her work with Sheraton Hotel she won a high achiever's award two years running.

For Centara, Laddawan will apply herself to fulfill the company's goal, which she defines as: "to meet the occupancy target for every one of its properties and to uphold the brand's excellence and popularity".

For outsiders at least, hotel work seems a glamorous career, the idea partly shared by Laddawan.

"It can be a high-flying job where you rub shoulders with the famous and get to admire superb architecture and sumptuous interiors. But there's also high-pressure work as this is a competitive field, and you always have to stay ahead of the game. It can

make for a stressful life."

To take the pressure off and unwind, Laddawan exercises at a gym and occasionally plays a game of golf or tennis. She is also an accomplished artist who loves painting landscapes and portraits. Her paintings grace the walls of her house in the north of the island.

"I love art and architecture. If I had my life to live over I would definitely study architecture," she says.

To make up for the lost opportunity, Laddawan often visits European cities renowned for grand old buildings. Her favorites are London and Paris whose classical architecture she admires.

"For me, old continental towns are full of charms and romances. You see I may personify a modern woman, but I am a traditionalist at heart. I like going to the temples and visiting historic towns like Sukhothai and Ayudhaya".

Commenting on the future of Phuket, Laddawan echoes an optimism shared by many top executives here.

"Phuket is unique in many ways. Head-to-head with Bali, for example, we are leaps and bounds ahead even if we have less to offer in terms of culture. Being a Buddhist country, we are permissive and flexible. That's one of our charms. And that's why tourists keep coming back."



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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ONLY AT LAGUNA: Laguna Resorts & Hotels Chief Executive Officer Ho Kwon Ping celebrated Laguna Phuket's 25th Anniversary surrounded by his family. Left to right: eldest son Ho Ren Hua, executive director & country head China, Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts with his fiancée Teh Su Ching; his wife Claire Chiang, senior vice president Banyan Tree Holdings; brother Ho Kwon Cjan, MD of Laguna Resorts & Hotels; Ho Kwon Ping; daughter Ho Ren Yung and younger son Ho Ren Chun. See pages 30-31 for more information.



BEACHCOMBERS: The new GM of the Swissôtel Resort Phuket, Kevin Furrer and his team recently cleaned the hotel surroundings including Kamala beach itself to improve the comfort of tourists staying at the Swissôtel and to support the local community.



EASTERN PROMISE: The Phuket Gazette was in Hong Kong earlier this week to discuss expansion of its partnership with the mass circulation China Daily Asia Weekly. Seen here (from left) are Gazette Publisher John Magee and Managing Director Oranee Hildebrand; along with the China Daily's Carrie Chan, Assistant Manager Marketing, and Kenrick Lee, Circulation Manager.



Inspiring New Menu at Patong's Best Restaurant

Discover Sala Bua, the Award winning restaurant's inspiring new Mediterranean cuisine menu with an Asian twist. Helmed by celebrity chef Dirk Schroeter, experience his signature dishes from heaven done in his inimitable trademark heartfelt style with dazzling views of the Andaman Sea. For an unforgettable experience blending first class cuisine, cozy atmosphere and impeccable service, visit Patong's Best Restaurant..Sala Bua. Open Daily from 06.00 am - 12 Midnight

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ONCE UPON A TIME: This 4-6 year old group were at the 'Little Mouse' children's story telling competition finals (southern region).

YOUR

Phuket



FLOODING IN: Tesco Lotus recently presented 250 house cleaning packs worth 125,000 baht to help victims of the recent Phuket floods.



UNITED WE STAND: His Excellency, Ambassador Manaspas Suto, President of the United Nations Association of Thailand (third from right) was joined by Benjapa Tubthong, Chief of Phuket Passport Office, delegates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with management and students from the Prince of Songkhla University (PSU) at a mobile seminar entitled "Thailand and The United Nations" held at PSU. Photo: Dan Miles Media



STRIKE A POSE: Mom Tri's VR Gallery recently held an opening reception for artist Gomez Bueno's exhibition. Left to right: Richard and Gabriela Zweng, Claudia Rathmayer, PR Manager Sylvie Yaffe, Yasuko Zweng and Think Design's Michael Earle representing the artist. Photo: Dan Miles Media



HANDS ACROSS THE WATER: SEEK (Society Environment Economy Knowledge) executives (from left) Anthony Lark, GM of Trisara Resort; Sean Panton, CEO SEEK Phuket; Dr Robert Mather, head of International Union Conservation Nature, South East Asia; Robert Steele, senior partner at Kisson Group and MD Systainability Asia; Dr Paul Chamniern, former senior director of Thailand Environment Institute and Antoine Melon, resort manager Trisara. Photo: Dan Miles Media



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Views of China and the World as seen through multi-national eyes*

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* The China Daily's mass-circulation newspapers employ more than **500** journalists, including **70** senior expatriate editors from the UK, the United States, Europe, India, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. In the *Asia Weekly*, they feature news and commentary from authoritative writers across the globe.

TOUCH OF FEEL-GOOD

Spa business is getting better in Asia, P12-15



BOLD STATEMENT

Singaporean entrepreneur offers beauty biz tips, P24



CHINADAILY

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ASIA
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September 1-2, 9am to 5pm: High Performance Running Workshop with coach Guy Ogden
Take your running to the next level. This two-day workshop with coach Guy Ogden can cut minutes off race times for Triathletes and mid or long distance runners. It's 10,200 baht per person, inclusive of service charge and taxes. For reservations, please contact our Activity Desk. Tel: +66 (0)76 336000, or Email: tsle@thanyapura.com.

September 1, 12 to 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 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 what you want from our free flow alternatives. Visit W: twochefs.com

September 1, 6 to 11:30pm: Salsa Night with BBQ Dinner Buffet
The Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Club is delighted to invite you to our Salsa evening with BBQ dinner 500 baht++. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba live with the sound of DJ Miscaro. For more information and reservations, please contact Anna or Didier on 084-306 2016, or Mr Murat on 081-797 3364.

September 1-6, 2 to 9pm: Wine & Cheese Pairing at Booster Bar

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

Time for a wine and cheese boost. Relax with a glass of wine from our extensive cellar and a cheese platter while being entertained by a wide variety of sports on our big screen. The cost is 380 baht per person. It is 650 baht for 2 persons. Prices subject to 10 per cent service charge and 7% per cent applicable government tax. For reservations, please contact DiVine restaurant. Tel: 076 336000.

September 1-6, 5 to 9pm: Pizza and Pasta Feast at DiVine Restaurant
Back again for your dining pleasure. All you can eat Pizza and Pasta served hot from the stove DiVine style. Enjoy á la minute cooked on order of Pizza, Pasta and Salad. The cost is 550 baht per person for food only. It is 650 baht per person with 1 glass of Italian wine. Food with free flow of Italian wine is 850 baht per person. Prices subject to 10 per cent service charge and 7 per cent applicable government tax. For reservations, please contact DiVine restaurant. Tel: 076 336000.

September 2, 1 to 3pm: Centara Grand Sunday Family Lunch
Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket is proud to present Phuket's most extensive "Sunday Family Lunch". Come and enjoy this spectacular lunch every first Sunday of the month. Savor a fabulous meal accompanied by our music band from 12pm to

3pm. Finished with lunch? Your whole family is invited to enjoy our swimming pool, kid's pool, 'lazy river', 'jumping cliff' and water slides! 1,290 baht net per person, including soft drinks, water, coffee and tea. Free for children under age 5 and half price for children ages 6-12. Valet parking services provided, limited booking for 80 people.

September 4, 6:30 to 9:30pm: Italian wine Dinner at DiVine Cellar
Enjoy dining with exclusive 5-course western set dinner created by Chef Moo with Italian wine pairing carefully selected by Bangkok Beer and Beverage Co Ltd (BB&B). DiVine invited guest speaker Ron Batori, President of BB&B, will be sharing his entertaining stories from 40 years of experience in the international wine business during this special evening. The cost is 1,500 baht per person (limited to 12 seats only). Prices subject to 10 per cent service charge and 7 per cent applicable government tax. For reservations, please contact DiVine restaurant. Tel: 076 336000.

September 6, 6 to 11:30pm: Martini Manicure Ladies Night @ RE KA TA
Free express manicure for ladies. Free martini for ladies on arrival, and 50 per cent off the drink list for everyone all night long. From 6pm to midnight – DJ tunes till late.

September 7, 21 7 to 11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket
We present Phuket Curry Fridays on every first and third



RUN AMOK: The High Performance Running Workshop. Photo: Paul David

Friday. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian curry buffet every Friday. "Chicken Tikka Masala", very hot "Mutton Vindaloo", succulent Kebabs, Goan fish curry and much more... all served with Nan bread and Basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett.

September 20, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch
The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch

will be held at Angsana in Laguna. Anyone who wishes to attend is welcome but prior registration is essential for participants. Entry for members is 500 baht, guests 650 baht. For more information or to register please send an email request to info@phuketiw.com. The club is a social network providing educational opportunities for needy children in Phuket. It promotes friendship among women of all nationalities – including welcome support and information to newcomers living in Phuket.

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

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

Free Computer Clinics at:

Sandwich Shoppe Patong - September 5, 1-3pm

Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - September 12, 1-3pm

Contact at 076-282403, Woody@KhunWoody.com or visit KhunWoody.com

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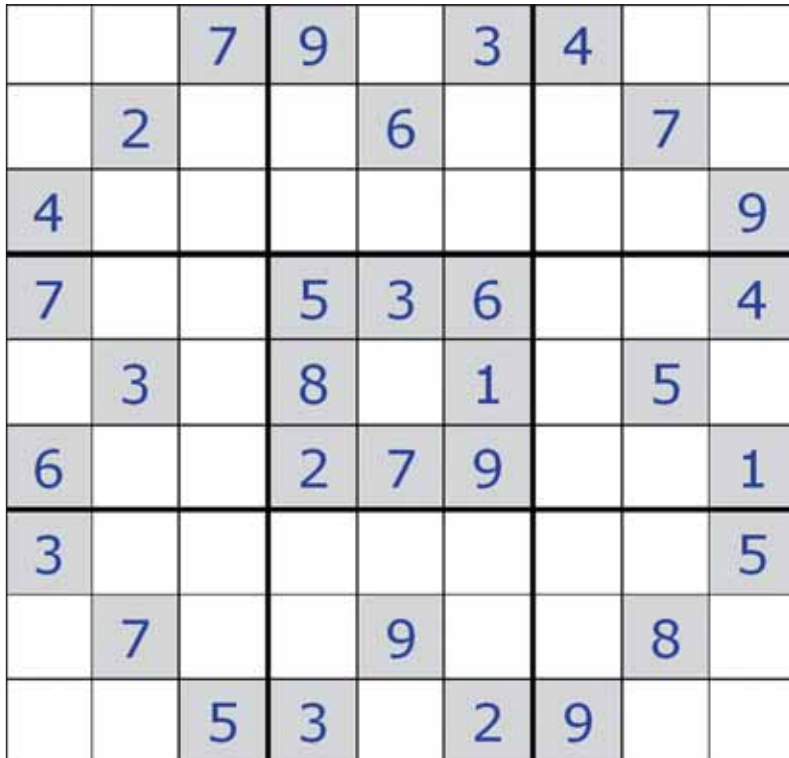
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SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

COFFEE break

Across

9. Make an objection about lion camp (8)
10. Bar quiet, socially acceptable bachelor (3)
11. Affairs in the morning associated with us (6)
12. Singular plain alignment of the backbone (6)
13. I lost, i.e., perhaps the most obsequious! (7)
14. Look at a new center in a place in Phuket (4)
15. Glibly need patter to have got through (10)
17. Leaping up to the ceiling, e.g. in church (9)
18. Very nearly similar to a dive site

North of Phuket (7)

19. Move quickly, back old-style jazz (4)

21. Part of the foot is in unison! (6)

24. As a diversion, giving more than expected (5,3,2,4,3)

27. Aid to meditation, dude, could be art (6)

29. Fixed diet, perhaps (4)

30. Ample cover for Oxford University drug holder (7)

33. Daughter's boy is a great child (8)

35. In a flood, am spreading out fodder (6,4)

36. One thousand, not in a cluster (4)

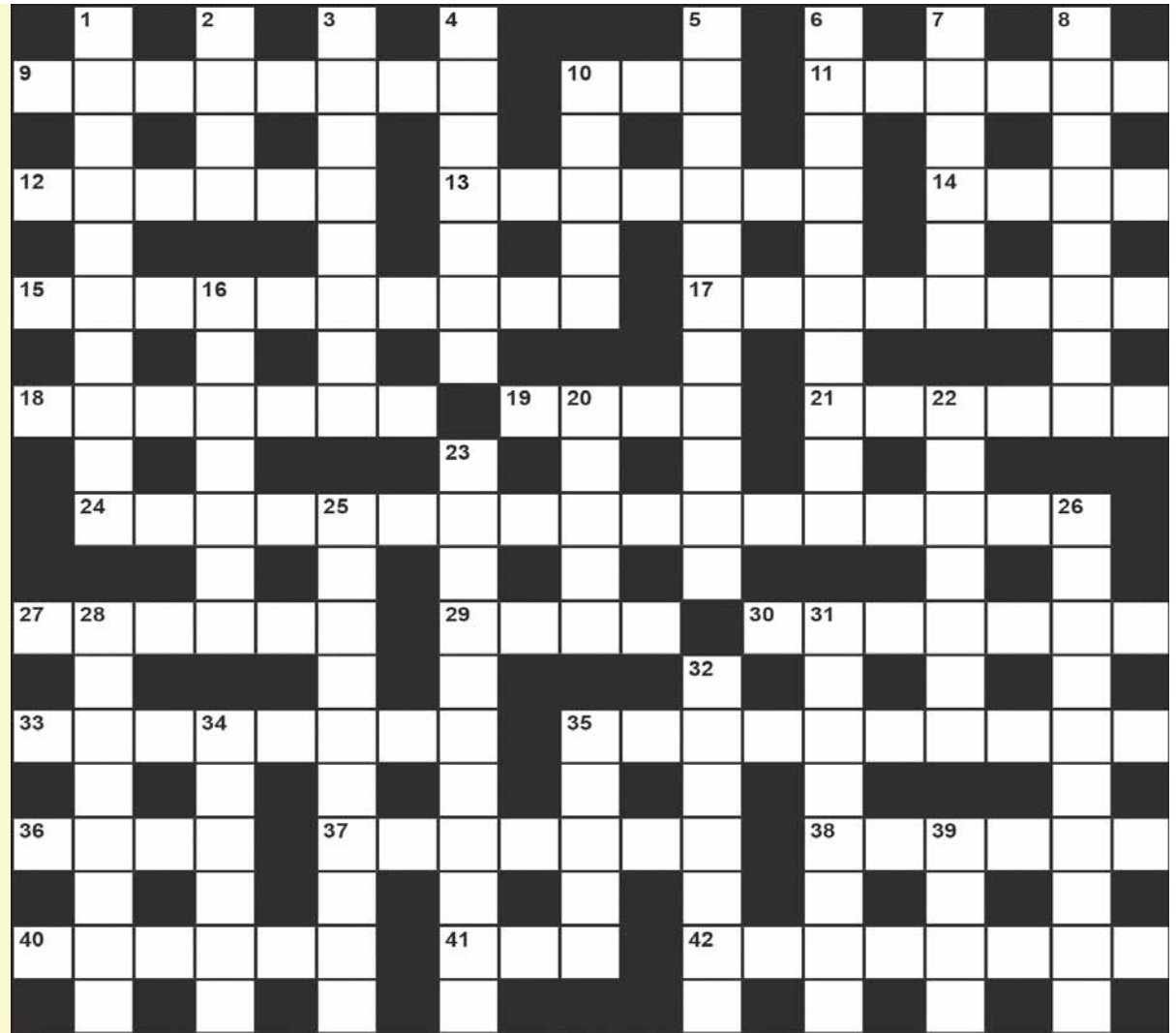
37. Against work, took a position! (7)

38. The New Church of England, from that time on (6)

40. Rummage around for a small animal (6)

41. Return ten, not including pack-aging (3)

42. Dream, Sir, about those attracted



to you (8)

Down

1. Finishing, left in taking part in competition outside (10)
2. Work points to allow access (4)
3. Mediterranean holiday isle a 'shopping destination', or approximately! (8)
4. In turn, maybe count hotel as unrefined (7)
5. Nor obviates different comment (11)
6. To sterilize pastie, sure, cook well (10)

7. Shoot up a missile (6)

8. In Physical Education, recent change is a pretext (8)

10. Personal Assistant went out first, became faint (5)

16. I let out, first, a believer in natural superiority (7)

20. By oneself, a solitary (5)

22. Observed no very loud sort of shotgun (4,3)

23. Looking for the best condition in which to follow hounds? (7,4)

25. Inform on origins of the ordinary people (5,5)

26. Cowardly joker gets a caution

when playing (6,4)

28. Set out for a river, uncovering danger (8)

31. Me, I'm late, possibly for lunch hour (4,4)

32. Not impressed with the tremendous bargain! (4,3)

34. Note a true change in character (6)

35. A son fixed a useful benefit (5)

39. Organs for each registered soprano (4)

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

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



September promises to be a productive month for those born under the sign of Virgo; this is an auspicious time to seek new employment. Those with a birthday during the week ahead should find that personal relationships are more rewarding during the coming year. Winning the heart of an air sign is forecast to work out when you learn more about this person. Your lucky number this week is nine.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



The atmosphere in your world of work can be stormy as September begins. An ability to keep a cool head should help you to avoid brewing conflicts. In the realm of romance, another air sign is likely to get the wrong idea about your efforts to be friendly. Librans who have no romantic interest in this person are advised to keep communication to practical subjects. Number four can open a lucky door this week.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Financial risks are not well starred during September. The stars recommend that you start the month with a reasonable spending plan and stick to it. An earth sign sows seeds for a money-making scheme, but it

would not be advisable to jump on board too quickly. Show how much you care this weekend to get back into a romantic partner's good books. Number two shines for Scorpios this week.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



The stars advise listening carefully to your inner voice as September commences. There are signs that decisions made on the spur of the moment will result in regret, particularly where working relationships are concerned. Friendships fall under the spotlight this weekend; lending an ear to a water sign is fine, but money is another matter. Hot days for romance are Wednesday and Thursday. The number six can bring good fortune this week.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



A hard to fathom situation at work may get September off to a tricky start. The stars show that this fog should lift towards the end of the week – keeping a low profile in the meantime is recommended. Progress will be made more smoothly during the second half of the month. Auspicious days for finances are Monday and Tuesday, with unexpected gain forecast. Number five comes alive for Capricorns this week.

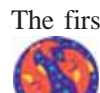
YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



Your reluctance to offer an olive branch could compromise progress in the world of work during September. The stars advise that putting this relationship back onto firmer footing is the only way forward and a fire sign colleague is ready to lend their support. Life becomes more exciting when a water sign friend invites you to join their social scene this weekend. Aquarians' lucky number this week is eight.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):



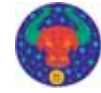
The first week of September is a promising time for communication. Pisceans who have been putting off work related discussions are advised to take advantage of this auspicious astral atmosphere – the stars suggest that talks with earth and fire signs will go particularly well. In the realm of romance, an air sign appreciates you taking the initiative this weekend. Number one stands out for those born under the sign of Pisces this week.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):



At the start of September, the stars remind you that endings can mean new beginnings. An unproductive situation in the world of work that has been lingering on is forecast to suddenly dissolve, leaving you free to concentrate on more rewarding projects. Where romance is concerned, it would be unwise to start something out of boredom. Fortunate days for finances are Sunday and Monday. Arians' lucky number this week is four.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



This is an ideal time to sort through the flotsam and jetsam of your life. Discarding unused items at home this weekend to freshen up your living space will encourage a clearer outlook. The stars are ready to support your efforts to streamline your thoughts too; those who have been focusing on negative issues will benefit from quiet introspection – wear the color cream to promote harmony. Number three can be important this week.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



Those born under the sign of Gemini should be able to see the lighter side of life as September commences. Other air signs can help you to let

go of emotional baggage that has been weighing you down. During the first half of the month, there should be ample opportunity to solve work related problems, with focus on your natural leadership qualities becoming better rewarded. Your lucky number this week is seven.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



The stars indicate that the key to success will be within your grasp during September. Your determination to overcome obstacles is strong enough to ensure that this will happen and satisfactory agreements can be reached. Certain Cancerians will be ready to disembark from a romantic roller-coaster ride, while others have chance to get closer to a fire sign who has sparked their interest. Number six can be fortunate this week.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



A more relaxed mood should make a difference to those Leos who have been finding it hard to slow down. During the first half of September, the cosmic climate will encourage you to realize that stopping to smell the jasmine brings a more peaceful state of mind. This is an auspicious time to reach out to those you have lost touch with. Number two can bring good luck for Leos this week.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

The future expansion of Central

THE Central Group have engaged in dialogue about the prospects of expanding Central Festival Phuket to include the land situated on its south side across Wichit Songkram Road.

The leasing rights to develop the 30-rai (48,000 square meters) plot, currently occupied by the iconic Thai Naan restaurant, were recently acquired by Central, the *Gazette* has learned.

The dialogue commenced at a recent meeting of stakeholders and community leaders which was held at Centara Grand

Resort.

The Central management team, consisting of Chart Chirathivat, managing director of Central Embassy of Central's retail corporation and Wilaiporn Pitimanaaree, general manager of Phuket's Central Festival, invited former and current presidents of the Thai Hotel Association Southern Chapter along with Dr Prasit Koysiripong, MD of Phuket Butterfly Garden and other local entrepreneurs to voice their opinions as to what Phuket needs from a major shopping center.



PLANNING THE FUTURE: The dinner was attended by (from left): Dr Prasit Koysiripong; Chart Chirathivat, managing director of Central Embassy; Wipa Tanmanatrakul, former president of Phuket International Women's Club; Karan Phanitphichetwong; Wilaiporn, GM and Marketing Director of Central Festival Phuket and Methee Tanmanatrakul, advisor to the Southern Thai Hotel Association.

Opinions were mixed, with some on the panel supporting a convention center and hotel despite controversy surrounding the government's indecision to develop such a project, which has been in the pipeline for years.

An art and cultural center was also proposed, as well as extensive recreation facilities for the benefit of families.

The Central development team provided an impressive display of options they have considered, including an iconic high-rise

tower which they hoped would become a symbol for the island.

Discussions also included the value of high-end shopping labels such as Chanel or Louis Vuitton versus shopping that focused on Thai and local products.

The Central team plan to invite a number of local leaders to future focus group meetings in order to ensure that they get complete input from the Phuket hospitality industry.

Issues such as transportation links, parking and access to the

expanded site are also under consideration.

The Thai Naan restaurant is the largest teak restaurant in Southern Thailand and has been a popular venue for weddings, concerts and large tour groups who enjoy buffet lunches while shopping in Phuket Town.

Local tour operators are hopeful that the Central Festival expansion will provide similar facilities for the community if and when the expansion plan becomes a reality.

— *Bruce Stanley*

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Laguna set to rewrite the map



OVER the years, leading destination resort Laguna Phuket has been an increasingly familiar brand name on the island. Famous for a series of international resorts, golf course, property offerings and world-class events.

Located front and center on Bangtao Bay within the boundaries of Cherno Talay, for both locals and visitors it is an epicenter of activity in a vast area now known simply as 'Laguna'.

Coming into its 25th anniversary Chief Executive Ho Kwon Ping has turned heads as he unveiled expansion plans for a new hotel, luxury condominium, themed water park and large-scale retail component.

Strategically placed near the Dusit Thani Resort, and what will soon be the Outrigger Laguna Beach Resort, highlights include west-facing lagoon views, a close proximity to the beach and boat access through canals.

Part of the project will include the redevelopment of the long time tourist shopping area, Canal Village. It is envisaged to become a community shopping experience both for tourists and an expanding base of local, full and part time residents.

I was able to meet 'KP' Ho to talk about his plans for property development, the Banyan Tree group and his views on investment. At the anniversary party imagery of the expansion was shown and the talk was of an

evolving, more urban track forward for Laguna.

Perhaps it's a sign of the times, while the destination resort had pushed development into the master-planned residential estate Laguna Village with an emphasis on larger more specious homes, there is now a decided change of pace.

Talking about this Mr Ho said that a new surge will be made toward land located closer to the ocean, smaller units which tap into the Asian demographic. Condominium units will likely be downsized to the 40 square meter range with pricing targeting the four to six million baht sweet pricing spot. Building blocks will be able to be massed into large groups utilizing a 7-storey-height allowance, which will result in favorable views.

It's simply Laguna recognizing the increasing affluence of a rising middle-class buyer demographic while locating widespread retail opportunities amidst the residential and hotel units in order to create customer complexity. Certainly the group's China experience and view on growing numbers coming to Phuket play into this.

Meanwhile a planned water park will fit into the new community, aimed at a surging family market, multi-generation groups and a developing critical mass of local residents looking for leisure activities.

For Mr Ho a key priority is to unlock the value of a large land bank. Speculation exists that two prime land plots which could house international-standard



LAGUNA PART TWO: What the new Laguna development around the lagoon is expected to look like.

resorts could eventually come onto the market. There remains a considerable amount of prime undeveloped land in Laguna and the group is making noises about partnering on new projects instead of going it alone.

Over the past 18 months the listed company disposed of two key assets – the Dusit Thani Resort and its 50 per cent shareholding in Laguna Beach Resort. This has aided in liquidity and now Mr Ho says is time to replenish assets and carry the brand into the future.

Currently Laguna has a vacant position for the coveted Managing Director's position which Michael

Ayling and James Batt held in the past. Mr Ho would not speculate on the appointment but simply said they expect to announce a new MD sometime this year.

As for the new hotel, he was quick to point out that this would not be branded as either a Banyan Tree or an Angsana. But at the same time alluded that the hotel management group may expand its brand family going forward in a new segment.

Closing out our talk, of which much was about Phuket and also the new master planned Laguna destination resort in central Vietnam, I was interested to know Mr

Ho's view on where the future for tourism and property was. Not surprising the name Indonesia came up, with its vast domestic potential now coming into its own.

For Laguna Phuket, after 25 years the good news is that fresh plans have been made public, which are set to propel the group forward in what is shaping up as Asia's golden age. It is said that money never sleeps but at Laguna a revolving world means that is prime land bank is set to awake a giant.

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



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Bonds help developers with debt

LISTED property firms have been managing their costs and balancing their financial portfolios between short-and-long-term debt by issuing debentures and increasing net gearing to an average of 1.03:1 this year, more than double the average 0.4:1 seen in 2010.

Net gearing is total debt calculated as a ratio of the total of shareholders' funds and debt funds.

According to a survey by The Nation, the top 10 listed property firms issued debentures with terms ranging from three to five years between early this year and mid-August, worth a total of 23.9 billion baht.

That is 19.2 per cent of the total new debentures of the same term range issued in the period, amounting to 124.23 billion baht, as reported by the Bank of Thailand.

Land & Houses plans to issue

total debentures worth 6.5 billion baht this year, 4 billion baht of which were issued in the first half, with the rest to follow in the current second half.

Pruksa Real Estate will issue debentures worth five billion baht next month.

Asia Property Development issued debentures worth 2.2 billion baht in the first half.

Asia Plus Securities senior executive vice president Terdsak Tawee-thiratham said debenture issues were a way to manage cash flow as a balance to borrowing from the commercial banks.

However, debentures are often a better alternative to project loans from banks because they allow property firms to manage their long-term debt to match the sales periods of their projects.

This is especially so for

condominiums, which take about two or three years from project launch to transfer to the customer.

According to research by Asia Plus Securities, the debt-gearing ratio, based on interest-bearing loans to equity, of listed property firms doubled from 0.4:1 in 2010 to 1.03:1 in the middle of this year.

When property firms expand their investment in condominium projects, they need more funding flexibility.

Most of the property firms surveyed plan to transfer condominium projects launched two years ago in the current half of this year.

This will maintain or reduce their debt-gearing ratio lower than 1.03:1 by the end of the year. This will ensure low risk for this sector, Terdsak said.

– The Nation

Mixed development planned for Phuket

By Andrew Scott

LAGUNA Phuket celebrated 25 years of achievement last weekend and unveiled a new design concept for an integrated development on a parcel of land between the Laguna Beach Resort and Dusit Thani. The mixed use development will feature a hotel, condominiums, water park and space for 1,000 shops and restaurants, all spanning a series of waterways.

Chief Executive of Laguna Resorts & Hotels Ho Kwon Ping (better known as KP Ho) unveiled the plan at celebrations to mark 25 years since the opening of Laguna Phuket's first resort, the Dusit Laguna Phuket in 1987.

The *Phuket Gazette's* Andrew Scott met with KP Ho at the Banyan Tree resort in Laguna to find out more about this new development.

Phuket Gazette: How do you envision "Laguna City"?

KP Ho: It was just known as Laguna Phuket. I used the term 'city' because in my mind I wanted to get away from the concept of a resort. It is not so much density issues, I just wanted to get away from the concept of a resort.

In a resort, in my view, there is only two communities that never really touch: transient community of guests and the permanent population of workers who service the guest.

What defines a city, in my view, is not high rise towers or millions of people but a community of people who live, work, and play there. A permanent population and that's what we are trying to create with "Laguna City" – a community mall in the heart of Phuket (Laguna City) to service the residents of the city and to service the area outside of the city.

People now refer to Bang Tao and Cherng Talay as Laguna. The term city is a permanent community of people living in that part of the island.

What markets are you aiming for?

As it is a 'city' we are targeting permanent residents who want to buy a home, not travellers. Home buyers who don't stay in their homes 365 days of the year can rent their property out and we will help to facilitate that.

I wouldn't say we are aiming at high-end or low-end but the younger Asian middle class. Historically, we [Laguna] have had buyers from the high-end network in Europe, Russia and expats in Hong Kong. We have never sold successfully to the Asian younger middle class.

There is a huge base of people in their 30s with one or two children below the age of 10. These people are not wealthy but are well-off and looking for a second home. People who are looking for something affordable with the

facilities for children – a water park, for instance – who like the beautiful view of the sea, a beach club...we'll have everything here.

We will be targeting people in Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok, China, and young Koreans. People who want to own a small condo unit in Phuket and enjoy the rest of Laguna Phuket.

We are still selling a dream. The basic buy-entry principles will remain, and that's not luxury or whatever you want to call it, but these people do buy into the brand – the company. Laguna has always emphasized innovation, design and authenticity.

What we intend to do is receiving a lot of attention from our top designers. We intend to be innovative...it won't be a slap-dash, put-it-together cheap condo in a back lane, but on the other hand it will not be your Andara style 3000sqm luxury property. It is based on enticing a rising Asian middle class.

How will the project change the brand perception of Laguna?

I think it will make it more popular because I don't think Laguna has ever wanted to say it is an exclusive, luxury place. We have always wanted to be a quality place. I have always believed that price and quality are not mutually exclusive. I am a great admirer of Ikea. What they have done to bring design orientated, affordable furniture to millions of young people is laudable, and I would have no problem being associated with that kind of thing.

Laguna has been known as a place of quality. This defines the core of what we do. In my view there are two kinds of luxury: luxury based on exclusivity and luxury based on inclusivity.

Exclusive luxury would be Prada. You pay a big chunk of the Prada price because you know you got it and he hasn't got it, the minute you many people have Prada, the price will go down many won't buy it. It is what is known as the snob appeal.

Inclusive luxury is shown by the fact that 10 million people buy Apple products and this doesn't make the 11th million person not buy an iPod or iPad because 10 million people have it. The people who buy Apple products are proud that they belong to the Apple crowd, Apple's quality and cool factor. Apple does not trade on the basis of exclusivity or luxury. To that same extent we are not Prada and never have been. We are closer to Apple...we want everybody to come.

If we made a slap-dash attempt and put the Laguna badge on it, that would affect the brand, but if we do something, where for example, a guest who is staying at a double pool villa at Banyan Tree, goes to look at a one-bedroom unit condo in "Laguna City" and says, "Hey this is pretty cool, you guys have done

a good job. I might not stay here but my son would," that would be our test.

How will the project affect the name Laguna has for conservation and nature with the building of such a big project?

The density of Laguna today is incredible. Doing these projects has to be traded off with other things.

For example, the whole lagoon between Laguna Beach Resort and Dusit Laguna is really nothing right now. We have done a study of the maximum density we could put in and we have also done a study of the optimal density.

Anyone who has been with Laguna for the last 25 years knows that we have done things sensibly... We aren't going to be so stupid as to go and ruin the brand in the next 25 years.

If we had sold the whole of Laguna to some private equity fund they would try to maximize the land... but we haven't sold a thing, we are just talking about



FORWARD LOOKING: Ho Kwon Ping, CEO of Laguna Resorts & Hotels.

developing our land bank.

It is fundamental to our DNA to do projects that are beautiful, sensitive and responsible. My biggest fear is that I might be totally wrong about the market. I don't have a fear about what I am going to do... I'm responsible to

myself, and that I can decide.

What I can't decide is how the market out there will respond.

Anything can happen, but when I started at Laguna 25 years ago I didn't know what would happen and just take a look at how successful Laguna has turned out.



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A holy trinity of jasmines



HEAVEN SCENT: (L to R) "Grand Duke of Tuscany" *jasminum sambac*; *jasminum rex* and yellow winter jasmine during a typical British summer. Photos: Candiru, Tanaka Juuyoh, L'eau Bleue



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

WHAT do the following tropical plants have in common? *Jasminum*, *buddleia paniculata*, gardenia, murraya, plumeria, wrightia, fiddlewood, alstonia, michelia alba, *cestrum nocturnum*.

Well, actually they have two points of similarity. One, they are all white flowering shrubs or trees; two, they are all sweet-smelling.

I have placed the jasmine first in the above list because, along with the lotus, it is the most revered flower in Southeast Asia. The national flower of both the Philippines and Indonesia, in Thailand jasmine is an essential accompaniment to most religious ceremonies, festivals and celebrations.

A symbol of motherhood, its

Jasmine is an essential accompaniment to most celebrations.

price rockets skywards on Mother's Day, when a kilo of flower buds will fetch 1000 baht instead of the usual 200. Perhaps it is significant that these jasmine buds form the top-most section of our floral garland. For this purpose, they have to be picked at night or in the early morning before they open and start to

lose their heady aroma.

The genus is large, with some 200 species, and surprisingly, true jasmines are a member of the olive or oleaceae brigade. However, there are not only many sub-species, but an increasing number of cultivars. To complicate things still further, jasmines have been re-classified botanically, and some, previously allotted to the *jasminum* family, have been sent elsewhere.

But make no mistake, the one we are talking about, *jasminum*

sambac or Arabian jasmine, is the real deal. Ask any Thai what *dok mali* is, and they will know – instantly. It features in most Thai gardens and hails not from Arabia but from right here.

The shrub's appearance is not that spectacular, with smallish white blooms and oval evergreen foliage.

It grows six or eight feet tall, and will tolerate a range of conditions including semi-shade, though it is averse to drought. It is propagated from seed or better, from cuttings. Currently, I am trying a couple out as house-plants, but I expect to give them the occasional outdoor reprieve.

Most hybrids, like the species, bear single blooms at the branch tips and leaf axils. "Maid of Orleans" has widely flared flowers, "Belle of India" significantly longer petals. "Grand Duke of Tuscany" has

double flowers which give a rose or gardenia-like appearance. There is, however, some loss of scent.

Jasminum sambac will not only fill your evening garden with delicious aromas, it will pervade your house. The essential oil from the flowers, made from soaking the buds on cotton sheets with

olive oil, provides one of the classic fragrances in soaps and perfumes. And the flowers, blended with green tea

leaves, give us jasmine tea.

What a star!

Jasminum officinale is not quite in the same league. But in fairness, its popular name of common jasmine is, I suspect, a reference to the fact that it is cultivated worldwide.

It was one of two jasmine varieties I was able to grow in London (the other was yellow winter jasmine or *nudiflorum*). It is a

sprawling and somewhat twining deciduous shrub which can attain a considerable size. The flowers are often pink-tinged and the leaves are pinnate, consisting of a number of slender leaflets.

But the jasmine smell is unmistakably present, and in temperate climates can provide an exotic aroma during the summer months.

Last but not least in this trinity of jasmines is the *jasminum rex*. Royally named, the *paan yii* is also a climber with large ovate leaves, and two or three slender, star-shaped flowers with a deep center at the end of each vine.

Pure white, of course, it has the largest flowers of any jasmine – usually eight petals. Given moist conditions, it will bloom prolifically.

Sadly, the flowers possess little or no scent. Pulchritude or perfume? Up to you...

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

Tip of the week

Fortification through thornication



ARMORED shrubs are totally unsuitable for play areas, but they are great as deterrents.

Hawthorn hedges are still used in Britain to stop livestock invading adjacent fields of crops. The London police even issued a list of thorny plants to help protect homes from would-be burglars.

In Phuket, the home guard list is longer – no hawthorn, *pyracantha* (left), *thunbergia*, blackberry or brambles, but many others. The crown of thorns (*euphorbia milii*) won't make a decent hedge, but

rows of pots will form an effective barrier.

The bougainvillea (right) can be used in the same way, but is such a vigorous and dense shrub that it will rapidly form a hedge capable of being clipped. And the vicious spines, unlike the *euphorbia*'s, are mostly hidden beneath the foliage.

Azima tetraacantha (needle bush) is very thorny, as is the Chinese jujube (*zizyphus sativa*). Both pigeon berry and kaffir limes sometimes have spiny stems. Photos: Andrew Fogg, A National Acrobat

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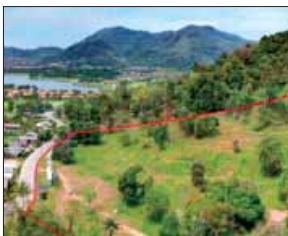
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At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

2 LAND 180 D SEAVIEW

At Yamu hills 2 lands +/- 1 rai each, seaview 180D, freehold, chanote, villa, security gated com, electricity, road. Price: 5.5 million baht/land. Tel: 084-625 5090. Email: phuket.turquoise@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at http://phuketseaviewsunrise.com

KAMALA HOUSE FOR SALE



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

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CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE



Condo at Royal Place Project, Bypass Road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2 floor, 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.

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.

RAWAI SEAVIEW

Freehold, 120sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Price: 7.8 million baht. Tel: 090-802 0249. Email: adrian_troy@yahoo.com

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Properties For Rent

FULLY FURNISHED HOUSE



2-storey house 3 bed, 3 bath near Ao Makham. Tel: 081-892 4311. 20,000 baht/month. For further details, please see our website at <http://panwa.green.weebly.com>

CHAOFA GARDEN HOME, 2 BEDS

Fully furnished, 2 beds, 2 baths, 2 aircons, living room, kitchen, fridge, dining and washing machine. Long-term rent: 16,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-048 6906 (English & Thai). Email: j7chin@gmail.com

LUXURY POOL VILLA FOR RENT

Located just outside Laguna, this large 5 bedroom, 5 bathroom- pool villa is available for long & short term rent. Tel: 081-892 0534 (English), 081-597 6911 (Thai). Email: barrett.damian@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

At Boat Lagoon Residence, 2 bedrooms with balcony and furniture. Tel: 081-958 7684 (English & Thai), 084-629 3244 (English & Thai). Email: fon-daki@hotmail.com

LONG-TERM RENT

1-2 bedroom, furnished houses, beautiful garden, Chalong area 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311.

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).

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.

LUXURY APARTMENT, PATONG

1+2 beds, seaview, pool, wifi. Rent: 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-279 0837. Email: bricothailand@hotmail.com

CONDO IN PATONG

Located at Phuket Palace. 1 bedroom, 54sqm with pool, parking, wifi. Rent in long term now and get good rate. Tel: 081-892 1621.

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



Near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

THE POINT CONDO

2-storey loft in Phuket town opposite Big C, fully furnished, free swimming pool, fitness, internet and cable. Special discount. From 35,000 baht to only 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-795 6363. Email: vicky_grc@hotmail.com

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT, PATONG

1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, living room with full western kitchenette. All extras. Aircon, internet, LCD, IBC. Modern furnished, quiet setting near Nanai. Rent: 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-185 8536.

LUXURY APARTMENT

At Kata Beach. Stunning sea view, pool, gym, restaurant. Contact James. Tel: 090-864 4519.

APARTMENT THALANG

1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, living room, kitchen, near Tesco Lotus. Rent: 4,500 baht per month. Tel: 081-826 7287.

URGENT SALE/ RENT



House in Patong. Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

NICE HOUSE IN CHALONG



Single house (74sq.wah) with lovely garden for long term rent in Soi Parichart, Land & houses Park. It has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, 24 hrs security + clubhouse facilities. Price: 25,000 baht per month or special price of 20,000 baht per month without furniture. Contact the owner. Tel: 081-867 6466 (English & Thai). Email: bow.jariya@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Near Tesco shopping center, international school. Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach, Phuket International Airport, Ao Por Marina. Tel: 089-724 2787 (English & Thai), +61-43-035 8567. Email: sar_seal@yahoo.com

KATHU HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 aircons, fully furnished, kitchen. Tel: 087-966 7191.

KATHU GOLF VIEW

Large house, 7 aircon bedrooms, swimming pools, golf view. Quiet area. 5 minutes to Tesco Lotus, QSI. 10 minutes to Central, Head Start International School. Please email or call for more info. Tel: 081-271 3228. Email: info@procarpen.com

NATURAL LAND & HOUSE



400sqm or more. Rent: 30,000 baht per month. Suitable for living, business or warehouse. Tel: 083-052 6696, 086-689 3289.

2-BEDROOM HOUSE, BANG TAO



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

ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)

Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms, each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

KATA APARTMENTS FOR RENT

1 bedroom, WiFi, aircon, cable TV, kitchen, Jacuzzi. 500 baht a day. Tel: 086-595 8512. Email: nalumana20000@yahoo.com

WOW! CHEAP, KAMALA

2 or 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, fully furnished, aircon, free internet and cable. Rent: 13,000 baht per month for 1 year at least. Tel: 081-826 7287.

MAI KHAO VILLA 4 BEDS RENT/SALE

15 minutes to airport, 5 minutes to beach. Modern style. 60,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-470 8926, 085-471 6662. Email: jyfienvet@gmail.com

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

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.

PATONG SEA VIEW



Pool villa for rent. Long term only. Tel: 083-656 3784. Email: peterantala@gmail.com

SINO-PORTUGUESE BUILDING



In Phuket old town, Ratsada Road. 2.5 storeys, 850sqm. Rent: 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 083-052 6696, 086-689 3289.

NAI HARN POOL VILLA

3 bedrooms, big pool and garden, 4 aircons, 9 fans. All new, luxury furniture, high-speed internet, HD TV. Tel: 089-052 8970, 089-052 3534 (English). Email: ordersofte@gmail.com

LARGE KAMALA HOUSE

Furnished, 300sqm, 2 bedrooms, office, 3 bathrooms, aircon, carport, sundeck. Rent: 32,000 baht per month, minimum 6 months-- or buy for 3.65 million baht. Includes use of pool near beach. Tel: 084-716 0502.

LERSUANG HOUSE, SURIN BEACH

3 beds, 5 baths, pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, fully furnished, land of 700sqm. Tel: 081-737 1678 (English & Thai). Email: supotpac@phuket.ksc.co.th

ORCHID KATHU HEIGHTS

Stylish serviced apartments. Studio, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Rooftop pool, Free WiFi. Also beachfront condo. Tel: 081-892 0038. For further details, please see our website at www.orchidkathuheights-phuket.com

KATA SEA VIEW



1 and 2 bedroom available for long term rent only, 100sqm or larger inside with huge terraces, great seaview, great location, parking. Very quiet. Rent: 20,000 baht per month. Won't last! Tel: 084-840 1262. Email: north8east98@yahoo.com

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Wanted for the Ao Chalong Yacht Club.

- An English speaking chef. Must be Thai national.

- Would prefer a young person experienced in Thai cooking and willing to learn Western style.

- Great opportunity for right person to learn from award winning Australian chef.

- Salary negotiable.

Please contact Kim Mitchell. Tel: 090-705 9466, or email resume to kim_a_mitchell@hotmail.com

SENIOR TEACHER

Phuket Has Been Good To us require a senior teacher for the English education program. Leading a small, dynamic team of ESL teachers in 2 Thai schools in Phuket, you will be an experienced educator with strong leadership and ESL skills. Experience in the Thai educational system and the ability to communicate in Thai is advantageous. Salary 65,000-70,000 baht/month. Full position descriptions at www.phuket has been good tous.org. Please submit a 1 page letter of application, CV and a recent photograph by August 31st to info@phuket hasbeengoodtous.org

TEACHERS WANTED

Chalermprakiat School is looking for native English speakers to teach English. A degree & TEFL is required. Tel: 084-446 3049. Please email your cover letter and CV to swpk_mlp@yahoo.com For more information please contact Clarke.

WANTED SECRETARY

At Patong. Searching for qualified secretary. Speaking and writing English and Thai (French if possible). Interesting salary. Tel: 080-712 1699.

ACCOUNTING (1)

Tax compliance, WHT, VAT, Financial statement, Rev. & Exp. (Excel), Update receivables, WHT (1,3,53), SSO, Payroll. Tel: 076-314 345, 080-147 2468 (English & Thai). Email: manager@phuketadventureminigolf.com

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED

We are looking for a native English kindergarten teacher to join our team to teach 10 -12 children aged 3-6 years. Must have a minimum Bachelor's Degree or equivalent. Tel: 076-383150, 084-520 4978. Fax: 076-383150. Email: info@cra vensnurseryphuket.com

MAID FOR APARTMENT NEEDED

Maid needed for apartment in Karon. Full day. Salary 14,000 baht. Age 20-37 years. Tel: 083-640 0616 (English), 084-734 0122 (English). Email: likhovro man@mail.ru

HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

We are looking for a Thai female with teaching skills to four English teachers English to our Security Guards. Tel: 076-336 084, 081-607 6637, Fax: 076-336 085. Email: pornthip@sgsphuket.com

EXPATRIATE MARINE MECHANICS

Looking for the experienced expatriate marine mechanics. Duties include general and preventive maintenance of corporate and yachts positioned within the SEA region. Attractive remuneration package for those with the necessary qualifications and experience. Tel: 080-078 3731. Please contact Mark Jones and send resume to mark.jones288@gmail.com

THAI STAFF MANAGER

With good spoken and written English. Salary from 20,000 baht. Tel: 080-879 6058.

BARTENDER REQUIRED

Full-time position. Good salary and great fun. Accommodation if needed. Thai national only. Please call Russell: 089-587 9112. Email: sunsetbarphuket@yahoo.com

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Irish Pub at Jungceylon: Wanted female /Thai, fluent in speaking and writing English, good computer skills, accounting, preferably at least 2 years experience. Tel: 076-366 085, 081-788 4078.

RUSSIAN RESTAURANT MANAGER

Looking for Russian speaking manager with good English knowledge and experienced in restaurant. Kathu waterfall wake park opened 12.00-5.00 pm. Tel: 082-415 4546.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Group of companies operating in the property and F&B market, is looking for a Human Resources Manager with experiences in recruitment and evaluation to support the organization's business goals. The ideal candidate is Thai nationality, organized, and confident. Tel: 076-383 435. Email: info@obietivothailandia.com

ACCOUNTANTS AND BOOKKEEPERS

Office located in Phuket requires the services of several experienced accountants/bookkeepers.

Duties include but are not limited to:

- Cashflow
- Payroll & Superannuation
- Monthly IAS & Quarterly BAS
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Bank Reconciliation
- Monthly Reporting

The successful candidates will have:

- Tertiary qualification in accounting & finance preferred
- Strong background in a similar role with proven experience managing several accounts simultaneously.
- Advance working knowledge of Excel
- Intermediate to advance knowledge of MYOB preferred
- Excellent English, written & verbal, skills are essential
- High level attention to detail
- Ability to meet strict deadlines
- Strong work ethic
- Willingness to be part of a team environment

Remuneration will be based on experience and qualifications with salary ranging between 260 THB – 456 THB per annum. Only short listed applicants will be notified and must be available for a Skype interview on or around 31st July. Start date will be on Wednesday. Please email CV and references to Email: hr@nomadsworld.com

WEB DEVELOPER WANTED

Siam Real Estate require a web design and developer competent with PHP, MySQL, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, XML. Must be capable of quality work and be able to meet deadlines. Can be company or individual. Tel: 076-288 908. Apply to jobs@siamrealestate.com. For further details, Please see our website at www.siamvillarentals.com

SENIOR ARCHITECT

Phuket-based architectural practice urgently requires a senior architect to oversee design of luxury villa and hospitality projects. Proficiency in written and spoken English required. Please send CV and expected salary to: info@imededgeconcepts.com

NEW ESTATE OFFICE PHUKET

Require 2 persons: 1 experienced and 1 keen to learn. Tel: 081-958 3830.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Group of companies operating in the property and F&B market, is looking for a Human Resources Manager with experiences in recruitment and evaluation to support the organization's business goals. The ideal candidate is Thai nationality, organized, and confident. Tel: 076-383 435. Email: info@obietivothailandia.com

MALE WEDDING STAFF

- Hair and makeup.
- Flower arrangement.
- Dress maintenance and customer service.

Thai male with multiple skills more than two of above required. Driver's license, good command of English and computer are also needed. Email: info@sa-mer.com. For further details, please see our website at www.samerwedding-thailand.com

WORK CS @ HOLYCLOTHING!

Customer service agents needed for expanding internet fashion retailer. Are you CS experienced, Thai, hard working, computer savvy and fluent in English? Salary of 17-27,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-289 472. Email: graham@holyclothing.com. For full details click here: www.holy clothing.com/htmlx/work.html



Horizon Resorts & Hotels operate two 4-star resorts at Patong Beach and at Karon Beach with 160 guest rooms each. The hotels offer a friendly & relaxed atmosphere and a wide range of facilities and are very popular among Australian & European travelers.

We are currently looking for enthusiastic candidates to join our team:

1. (Assistant) Guest Relations Manager at Horizon Karon

■ Thai or foreign, 25-35 years old, outgoing & friendly personality, excellent English skills, knowledge of Swedish or another Scandinavian language is an advantage. A pleasant personality, creative and service-minded are essential.

2. Guest Relations Officer at Horizon Karon

■ Thai national, female, 22-28 years old, friendly & outgoing personality, active, service-minded, fast learner and good English skills. No prior experience required but candidate should have the right attitude and excellent communication skills.

We are offering attractive benefits to the right candidate: Competitive Salary, Service Charge, Annual Bonus, Life Insurance, Training & Career Development, Uniforms, Duty Meals, Accommodation at Kathu, Transportation Interested candidates can apply by submitting their application letter, resume with a recent photograph and expected salary by email to: hotelmanager@horizonbeach.com

Horizon Karon Beach Resort & Spa
3 Soi Karon, Soi 2, Karon Beach, 83100 Phuket Tel: 076-284 555
www.horizonbeach.com

CAD DRAFTER

Required for new Company Setting up an office in Phuket.

Multi-discipline drafting using Autocad and Microstation. MUST SPEAK ENGLISH WELL

Contact Trevor via email: enquiries@australiancad.com.au

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- KL Mart (Patak Rd, Chalong Circle) Tel: 076-280400
- Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe (Fisherman's Way Business Center, Chaofa East Rd) Tel: 076-282403

PATONG

- Taurus Travel (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-344521-2
- Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-290468
- Deli Supermarket (Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd) Tel: 076-342275

PHUKET CITY

- Earth Language Training Centre School (Phang Nga Rd) Tel: 076-232398
- Sin & Lee (Thalang Rd) Tel: 076-258369
- iTree complete printing service (Tesco Lotus Phuket Town) bank zone Tel: 076-255425

CHERNG TALAY

- Chaba Supermarket (at the Laguna gateway) Tel: 076-325586

RAWAI

- The Network property office (Saiyuan Rd) Tel: 076-613173

KARON

- EuroStyle Tailors (Luang Por Chuan Rd) Tel: 076-396911

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Looking for a better candidate?
Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PhuketGazette.Net/!

RECEPTIONIST KATA

Reliable female staff is required. 2 days off per week. Tel: 081-892 1621.

SHOP STAFF NEEDED

Need more staff for our shops in Kamala and Patong. Rent out motorbikes. English talking Thai. Tel: 085-158 7638 (English). Email: pierre_hammar@yahoo.se

BARTENDER

A bartender with experience to a new nice bar in Kamala. Tel: 083-634 5772 (English & Thai). Email: pierre_hammar@yahoo.se

ASSISTANT HOTEL MANAGER

To assist GM in maintaining a successful and profitable hotel - 42room boutique hotel in Karon

- Bachelor's degree in Sales or Hotel Management or at least 2 years management experience

- Managing 32 staffs

- Thai national, fluent in English

- Knowledgeable in MS Word, Excel, Photo Shop

- Salary 18,000 baht per month plus service charge

- Tel: 086-604 1333 (English). Email CV to sales@ccbloomshotel.com

SALES EXECUTIVE

Jagota Brothers Trading Co., Ltd. Long time well established food importer and supplier to hotels and restaurants welcomes applications from experienced sales people. Must be fluent in written & spoken English. Background in food industry preferred. Must have own car to visit customers. Tel: 082-790 5143. Please forward resumes and references to George. Email: george_d@jagota.com

SALES ADMIN INTERIOR DESIGN

We are hiring a motivated person with a passion for sales/admin to join the team at our furniture showroom in Bang Tao. We offer an attractive salary and benefits. Tel: 076-325 419, 081-400 4678. Email: orientalsamui@gmail.com

2 NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Required for Rainbow Land, Fisherman's Way, Chalong to teach a mixed group of 2-5+ year olds. Call, text or email for more information. Tel: 082-812 3610. Email: turnery5@gmail.com

ACCOUNTING BOOKKEEPING

Thai CPA knowledge of English. Dive knowledge a plus. Pay 20k working Mon-Fri. Send CV Email: phuket@sssnetwork.com

Mechanical/Structural Engineer

Thai National required for Phuket office.

For an interview please contact:

thamersley@australiancad.com.au



KATATHANI
PHUKET BEACH RESORT

Katathani Collection of Resorts is looking for a talented Sales Manager for our Group and Corporate business.

This position will be based in Bangkok but will oversee all of the 4 resorts in the south.

Bangkok Sales Manager (Group and Corporate)**Qualification**

- Male or female
- Age 27 years or above
- Bachelor degree
- Very good speaking, reading and writing English Skills
- At least 3 years experience in sales and marketing field

Please contact Personnel Department

14 Katanoi Road, Karon, Muang, Phuket 83100

Tel: 076-330124-6 E-Mail: personnel@katathani.com



www.katathani.com www.thesandskhaolak.com www.theshore.katathani.com



PHUKET
KAMALA BAY

With 400 hotels and resorts in 60 countries, Novotel hotels are located in the heart of major international cities, both business and tourist destinations, providing customers with the same high level of comfort, relaxation, and well-being throughout the world.

Novotel Phuket Kamala Bay, a new 168 rooms/villas resort-style hotel situated in Kamala Bay, one of the four most popular bays in Phuket. With a 100 metre long beachfront, the hotel facilities include 1 restaurant and 3 bars, multi-function rooms, a swimming pool, fitness centre and spa. This hotel is within close proximity to Patong and Phuket town, the airport and golf courses.

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We are looking for proactive, self-motivated and confident people with excellent interpersonal skill, who have a can do attitude and are committed to delivering great customer service. We are proud to provide a competitive benefit package for the right individuals.

If this sounds like you, please submit your CV and expected salary to:
tassaneeya.visupakarn@accor.com

www.accorjobs.com

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Thai nationality, can speak English. Please send CV to Email: info@techworx-project.com

TOUR GUIDES NEEDED

For popular speedboat charter and events company. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-383125. Email: info@coralseekers.com

COOK NEEDED (FEMALE)

Cook (f) needed urgently for only morning shift (Breakfast/Thai/Europe). Tel: 082-270 6385 (English). Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE WANTED

For very busy handyman company. Thai or farang. Good salary. Contact www.farang-handyman.com

EXPERIENCED YACHT CAPTAINS

Applicants must hold valid license or permit. Duties include repositioning of corporate & private yachts within the SEA region. Attractive salary package for those with the necessary qualifications & experience. Tel: 080-078 3731. Please send your resume to blackwall88@gmail.com or contact Shaun for further information.

Golden Buddha BEACH RESORT

We are seeking an adventurous, motivated and experienced person to join us working on the beautiful remote Island.

Position: Assistant Resort Manager

Responsibilities:
Assisting Resort Manager in daily resort operation but mainly responsible for all administrative functions such as handling daily bills of the resort, correspondence, maintaining accurate records of reservation.

Requirements:

1. Female or Male, Thai Nationality.
2. B.A Degree.
3. Good command of spoken and written English.
4. Good literacy on Microsoft Office, Internet.
5. Pleasant personality, Service oriented & Problem -Solving skills.
6. Preferable Hotel/Travel or Customer service related experience.
7. Experience in billing system is an advantage.

Company provides free accommodation, 3 meals per day, and service charge.

Interested candidate please send resume, a recent photo and expected salary to Khun Pissa Tipsombut
Tel. 081 892 2208 or 081 895 2242. Email address: pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com
Learn about resort www.goldenbuddhaharesort.com

PRINCESS

PRINCESS YACHTS THAILAND

We are an expanding key player in the luxury yacht market in SE Asia and we have more luxury yachts arriving in the region in the coming months.

CURRENT VACANCIES

EXPERIENCED THAI CAPTAINS AND CREW

Must have experience of working on luxury yachts. Applicants need to be team players, pro-active, outgoing, and have a good command of the English language.
Please apply with CV's/Resumes to david@boatlagoonyachting.co.th

EXPERIENCED THAI YACHT HOSTESSES

The correct candidates need to be able to speak reasonable English and have experience in the following- Customer service, drinks and food service, cleaning to very high standards, simple food/drinks preparation, proactivity and the ability to work on a team.
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EXPERIENCED THAI MARINE ENGINEER

Applicants must have at least 5 years in marine Engineering and be experienced in the following- AC systems: electrical systems, water systems, Engines, possible joinery and GRP experience, fault diagnostics, and all round Luxury the yachts systems. The right candidate needs to have a reasonable command of the English language, be a good team player and welcome the chance to partake in Princess yachts engineering training.
Please apply with CV's/Resumes to robin@princessyachtsthailand.com

TRAINEE THAI MARINE ENGINEER

We are looking for a trainee engineer with a base knowledge of engineering who is ready to take the next step in their career. The correct applicant needs to be methodical and professional in their outlook on all aspects of their work.
Please apply with CV's/Resumes to robin@princessyachtsthailand.com

The positions are based in Phuket and candidates should be located there or happy to relocate to Phuket. There will be a number of times that traveling is involved with these roles and applicants need to be flexible on this. All the correct candidates will be rewarded with a competitive salary, good benefits, real career growth in the luxury yachts market and the chance to be involved with one of the biggest fleet of yachts in SE Asia working alongside Industry professionals.

www.boatlagoonyachting.co.th

THAI STAFF MANAGER

With good spoken and written English. Salary from 20,000 baht. Tel: 080-879 6058.

ENGLISH BLOGGER WANTED

Write in brief about travelling. Tel: 087-705 3662 (English). Email: happygecko.thai@gmail.com

VARIOUS SALES & MARKETING

Sales and marketing roles. Native English speakers or other nationals with fluent English-speaking skills. A proven track record in sales is a must. Send CV & recent photo to email: careers@pp-intl.com

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High salary + service charge + bonus and all benefits. Tel: 089-908 7486.

OAKMEADOW INT'L SCHOOL

We are looking for a qualified Thai female teacher. Tel: 076-521 550, 084-847 0732 (English). Email: info@oakmeadowphuket.com

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3 models. Price: 46,000 - 69,000 baht.

Safeway - Main Highway Thalang (next to Shell gas station). Tel: 081-125 1873, 081-892 4804.

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SELL COMPANY

Sell freelance diver company, 30,000 baht. Tel: 086-280 9282.

FOR RENT

In Ao Nang - Krabi. 12room hotel with restaurant and bar with pool table. Includes separate owner's suite - plus work permit. Great opportunity. Tel: 075-695413, 080-693 4362 (English), 083-551 8146 (English & Thai). Fax: 075-695413. Email: richie.trop@hotmail.com

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Khun Wichai does not want to sell the plane, but would welcome a partner who can help to get it flying again. This could be a very good opportunity for someone to get a share in a nice airplane for a very good price. All negotiable.

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International Sport

Football season in its infancy

By Andrew Scott

LAST weekend was the second week of the new football season and even though it is still early, a familiar pattern seems to be emerging.

Manchester City and Liverpool played out a thrilling 2-2 draw with Martin Skrtel the hero and villain of the game.

The Slovakian international defender opened the scoring for Liverpool, but all his good work was undone with a sloppy back pass that Tevez pounced on in the 80th minute.

Liverpool looked more like the passing team their manager Brendan Rodgers wants them to be. It will be a difficult season for Rodgers and it will take time for him to implement his footballing footprint on the team, but the signs against Manchester City looked positive.

Michael Laudrup continued his dream start as Swansea manager with a 3-0 win over West Ham,



GOAL:Luis Suarez scores a freekick against Manchester city. Photo: AFP

which puts his team top of the league with eight goals in two games.

Wayne Rooney suffered an injury in Manchester United's 3-2 victory over Fulham. The England striker was caught accidentally by Hugo Rodellaga on the thigh as he tried to block a freekick. The gash is so deep that he could be ruled out for up to two months. Van Persie scored his first Manchester United goal.

Fernando Torres and Eden Hazard terrorised Newcastle's defence

to ease the London team to a 2-0 victory. Newcastle headed back to the Sports Direct Arena hoping that Ibrahim Ba and Pappis Cisse start to click as a forward pairing sooner rather than later.

Other results from last weekend. Norwich and QPR 1-1, Tottenham and West Brom 1-1, Arsenal and Stoke 0-0, Southampton lost to Wigan 2-0 and Aston Villa capitulated against an impressive Everton side 3-1

The pick of this weekend's games see Liverpool play Arsenal

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES			
SATURDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2012 18:45			
West Ham	VS	Fulham	
SATURDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2012 21:00			
Swansea	VS	Sunderland	
Tottenham	VS	Norwich	
West Brom	VS	Everton	
Wigan	VS	Stoke	
SATURDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2012 23:30			
Man City	VS	QPR	
SUNDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2012 19:30			
Liverpool	VS	Arsenal	
SUNDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2012 22:00			
Newcastle	VS	Aston Villa	
Southampton	VS	Man Utd	

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE			
TEAM	P	GD	PTS
1 Chelsea	3	6	9
2 Swansea	2	8	6
3 Everton	2	3	6
4 West Bromwich	2	3	4
5 Man City	2	1	4
6 Fulham	2	4	3
7 Man Utd	2	0	3
8 Wigan	2	0	3
9 Newcastle	2	-1	3
10 West Ham	2	-2	3
11 Stoke	2	0	2
12 Arsenal	2	0	2
13 Sunderland	1	0	1
14 Tottenham	2	-1	1
15 Reading	2	-2	1
16 Liverpool	2	-3	1
17 Norwich City	2	-5	1
18 QPR	2	-5	1
19 Southampton	2	-3	0
20 Aston Villa	2	-3	0

on Sunday. Arsenal are yet to score in the league since they sold Van Persie and Liverpool will want to push on from their impressive draw against Manchester City.

Aston Villa travel to Newcastle hoping to secure a victory that will move them off the bottom of the table.



Formula 1

By The Digby

THIS weekend Formula 1 is back from an agonisingly long half-term break. And it's Spa - one of my favourite tracks in F1 as it tests drivers more than any other in the world.

Along with Monza it is the fastest circuit of year because the corners need to be taken flat out.

The drivers will corner Eau Rouge and Blanchimont at over 330 kilometers an hour to get a fast run onto the straights after them.

Traction is vital at places such as La Source hairpin, where tyre grip is key to a clean exit. In Eau Rouge, each front tyre is subjected to a peak vertical load exceeding 1000kg. The tyres take a beating.

Having negotiated the La Source hairpin, drivers race down a straight to where the track crosses the Eau Rouge stream before being launched steeply uphill into a sweeping left-right-left set of corners culminating in a blind summit, where drivers cannot be quite sure where they will land.

Raidillon demands enormous skill to negotiate well. It is critical too, because the Kemmel Straight that follows produces excellent overtaking opportunities for the best drivers at the Les Combes corner.

A less than perfect job tends to result in a

Spa favors the brave

very heavy shunt as the rear of the car takes over. Jacques Villeneuve describes as "My best-ever crash" his spectacular 1999 exit in qualifying, swiftly followed by his team-mate's copycat accident.

The left-hander at Blanchimont is one of the most fearsome turns in F1. This is the final sweeping corner of the track before the Bus Stop Chicane, which leads to the pit straight. This turn is unforgiving, and has seen many big accidents.

The run-off area is narrower than in comparable turns on other circuits, and just to focus the mind, behind the barriers lurks an 8 meter drop.

Despite the straight-line speeds in Spa, the cars run a medium downforce set-up to optimise grip through the fast corners.

The cars are at full throttle 75 per cent of the time, which quickly builds tyre temperature, particularly if an aggressive camber set-up is used to maximise grip.

Pirelli has opted to provide the hardest

tyres of the season. Pirelli motorsport director Paul Hembery said "The nomination of hard and medium tyres will allow drivers to push hard from start to finish, which is what Spa was designed for."

With all the compressions, getting the ride height and suspension travel correct is vital as otherwise the cars could bottom out at some parts of the circuit.

Tyre deformation under load comprises nearly half a car's total suspension travel.

The Ardennes Forest has very unpredictable weather and in the old longer circuit there were often areas where it was raining, and other parts where the sun was shining and the track was completely dry.

In those days it was the most dangerous race track in the world. It is somewhat tamed now. But it still has a wet and dry side, and is still very special and exciting.

Every driver would like to win at Spa; it



SPARKS: Hamilton at Spa. Photo:PCW

is the drivers' circuit. But who will take the big points? I shall chance my arm and say that I think Hamilton will be a very strong contender, as will Raikkonen and they both need the points to claw their way to the front of the Drivers' Championship. Rosberg, Schumacher, Grosjean and Button could be there too. It looks hard for Ferrari and Red Bull to shine here, but who knows?

The race is on Sunday at 7 pm, and the practice is at the same time on Saturday. It is shown live on the Big Screen at The Green Man.

Paralympics hoping to inspire

THE Paralympics started this week in London and the athletes competing will be hoping the British public bring the same enthusiasm to the venues that they showed during the London Olympics.

The Beijing Paralympics were a major success in 2008 and Sir Philip Craven MBE, President, International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is hoping for much the same



Pistorius. Photo: Stuart Grout

this time round.

"I am looking for the British public and people from abroad to continue to fill up the Olympic and Paralympic Park and the venues. I want the same wonderful experiences that were present in the first part of August to continue into the middle of September" he told iSportconnect.

There are 20 sporting events contested over 11 days in what is

anticipated to be a sold-out Paralympic competition.

The events are: Athletics, Boccia, Cycling, Equestrian, Football 5-a-side, Archery, Goalball, Judo, Powerlifting, Rowing, Sailing, Shooting, Sitting Volleyball, Swimming, Table Tennis, Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Fencing, Wheelchair Rugby and Wheelchair Tennis.

The Paralympics started August 29 and finish September 9.

For more updates on the event, visit: W: phuketgazette.net/phuketsports/

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Islanders unable to tame Dragons

Football: Thai Div 1

By Steven Layne

A SINGLE goal in the final minutes of the first half was enough for Thai Yamaha 1 run-away league leaders, Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC to prevail over Phuket last Sunday night.

Played on a damp pitch under overcast skies at Surakul Stadium, the match was one of the first for Phuket FC this season to be broadcast live on national cable (True Visions).

Despite the threat, of rain the match still managed to attract 3,570 fans, a new home attendance record for Phuket FC this season.

The previous high of 3,200 was set on May 19 when Phuket hosted Airforce United, a turnout which was matched again on July 7 when Krabi FC were in town.

Standing out from the crowd was a vocal and reasonably-sized contingent of orange and blue shirted away fans who had bused it down from Ratchaburi – an hour west of Bangkok.

Enjoying strong support, even on their away games, the Dragons were promoted to Division 1 after being crowned Division 2 national champions last year.

The scoreline could have been wider with Ratchaburi dominating possession and having most of the opportunities on goal.

The first real shot came on 10 minutes when Ratchaburi's leading scorer, Brazilian striker Douglas Gordoza, took a free kick from the edge of the penalty box.

Though on target, the shot went straight through to Phuket's keeper, local kid, Kampon Phatomakkakul.

Ratchaburi continued to dominate play, but it was looking like a struggling Phuket defense would escape to half time with the scores level.

However, in the second and final minute of added time, Ratchaburi got one last chance before the break with a free kick.

Taken by midfielder Attapong Nooprom from the left side of the box, the shot bounced past Phuket's keeper and hit the far post.

Gordoza was positioned well to capitalize on the deflected ball, sending it into the back of the net, scoring his 13th of the season.

With the outcome looking hazy for the home team, a stroke of luck looked to work in favor of the Islanders when Ratchaburi midfielder Rattana Phectaporn was given his second yellow card and sent off.

But even with a man advantage, Phuket



ON FIRE: Brazilian striker Douglas Gordoza (center, kicking) scored his 13th goal of the season to ensure his side prevailed over Phuket last Sunday. Photo courtesy of Aot Surat, Ratchaburi FC.



failed to find an equalizer.

Their best attacking moment all night came on 74 minutes.

Midfielder Jongnok Wattana, who had a surprise start, finally shaking off a foot injury, took a free kick near the half-way line, finding the head of Nenebi.

The header hit the cross bar and Niran Panthong had a chance to cash in, but his shot sailed way over the cross-bar.

Phuket's Wutipong Sittitanyakit was given his second yellow late in the game after he mis-timed his slide tackle on Cameroonian, Bouba Abbo, who had broken through the defense in the final minutes of the game.

The victory strengthens Ratchaburi's prospects for promotion, putting them clear at the top, 9 points ahead of the next team.

With only 10 matches remaining in the season, the chances of Ratchaburi falling out of the three-team promotion zone look unlikely, but it is still too early to say with certainty who will seize the other two promotion spots.

Though it is still mathematically possible for all but two of the 18 teams in the division to climb into promotion zone – in the unlikely event that the top teams fail to win another match – only five teams are really still in the race. These include Suphanburi, Sri Racha,

YAMAHA ONE LEAGUE TABLE				
	TEAM	P	GD	PTS
1	Ratchaburi	24	40	58
2	Suphanburi	24	27	49
3	Sriracha	24	24	49
4	Bangkok Utd	24	13	49
5	PTT Rayong	24	27	46
6	Krabi	24	19	46
7	Royal Navy	24	8	36
8	Korat	24	-4	35
9	Air Force	24	1	33
10	Phuket	24	-7	29
11	Khon Kaen	24	-9	29
12	Pattalung	24	-10	27
13	Songkhla	24	-9	26
14	Bangkok FC	24	4	25
15	Saraburi	24	-8	24
16	JW Rangsit	24	-22	21
17	Rajpracha	24	-21	15
18	Chanthaburi	24	-73	2

Bangkok United, PTT Rayong and Krabi FC.

Meanwhile, despite their loss to Ratchaburi, Phuket maintained their 10th place standing.

The Islanders next game is on Saturday, at home again, against 8th placed Nakhon Ratchasima FC – the "Swat Cats".

In their first meeting back in March in Korat, Phuket prevailed 1-0 thanks to a 28th minute goal by Watcharapong Jun-ngam.

The Phuket leg, to be played at Surakul Stadium, is scheduled for a 6.30pm kickoff.

With a good chance for rain, fans are advised to arrive at the stadium up to an hour early to secure good, dry seats under the covered seating section.

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FUTSAL WORLD CUP GROUPS					
GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C	
Team		Team		Team	
Thailand		Spain		Brazil	
Costa Rica		Iran		Japan	
Ukraine		Panama		Libya	
Paraguay		Morocco		Portugal	
GROUP D		GROUP E		GROUP F	
Team		Team		Team	
Argentina		Egypt		Russia	
Mexico		Serbia		Solomon Islands	
Italy		Czech Republic		Guatemala	
Australia		Kuwait		Colombia	

The karate kids

Students from Phuket head to Malaysia for tournament

By Atchaa Khamlo

FIFTEEN students from Phuket aged 6 - 18 will compete in the International Karate Cup 2012 in Putrajaya, Malaysia from September 1 - 2.

Their teacher, Jitrapanu Kongthum, took the students to meet Phuket Vice Governor earlier this week when he told the gathered media.

"Some of the students are in youth national teams from Korea and Asia Pacific and all students have been

preparing for the competition for two months. We also expect 26 students from Bangkok to make the journey to Malaysia.

"The students are about 80 per cent ready and they will try to do their best" he said.

Half of the Thai students competing in the International Karate Cup have won various international competitions abroad.

Pimpakarn Kaney, 16, who goes to Satree Phuket School, won a bronze medal in Hong Kong five years ago, told the *Phuket Gazette*, "I'm really glad to represent Thailand and to join in the competition. I hope to get a gold medal as I will be trying to do my best. I'm 90 per

cent ready for the competition."

Lakthichai Matmit, 8, who is competing in an international competition at this level for the first time said, "I'm glad to participate in the competition. We are going to see Penang in Malaysia which is quite exciting for us."

A confident Tantikorn Janchaikaew, 8, said, "I will win the competition and try my best to get a gold medal for Thai people."

Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa told the students that this is a good chance for them to gain experience at an international level competition. She wished them good luck and hoped they enjoy their trip to Malaysia.



KARATE COACH: Jitrapanu Kongthum.



Some of the students. Photos: Atchaa Khamlo

Maneepong rules in Ho Chi Minh

THAI badminton players were on cloud nine earlier this week after capturing two titles at the Vietnam Open Grand Prix in Ho Chi Minh City.

The men's doubles pairing of Bodin Issara and Maneepong Jongjit defeated Indonesia's Yohanes Rendy Sugiarto and Afiat Yuris Wirawan 19-21 21-14 21-11. It was their second title of the year after enjoying success at the Indian Open.

The tournament victory comes weeks after their valiant attempt at the London Olympics, where they reached the quarterfinals.

Bodin and Maneepong told *The Nation* that they were desperate to win the title. "In the first game we put ourselves under pressure because we wanted to win so badly. So we calmed down and played our game in the second and wrapped it up pretty comfortably. In the decider we took complete control of the match. Overall we tried to move them around and create smashing opportunities."

Top female seed and world No 17 Porntip Buranaprasertsuk claimed the women's singles title with an easy 21-10 21-18 win over Indonesia's Lindaweni Fanetri.

Three Thai players entered the semifinals of the women's singles competition but only Porntip survived. Lindaweni stunned fourth-seed Sapsiree Taerattanachai 15-21 21-16 21-16 while Porntip powered past fellow Thai Busanan Ongbumrungpan 21-13 18-21 21-16.



ANGUISH: Title makes up for defeat at the Olympics. Photo: SiamSport

Porntip is undefeated against the world Number 74 Lindaweni. The Thai, who beat the Indonesian in the Uber Cup preliminaries this year, scored her best result of the year by winning the Vietnam Grand Prix and her first title on the international circuit.

Thailand fielded more than 20 players, many of them youngsters, in the tournament with the hope of giving them international exposure. The Thai badminton squad, which left Vietnam last night, will have a two-week training period before entering the next tournament in China.

- *The Nation*

Futsal World Cup draw



FINAL NOT FINAL: Organizers had to revise the draw. Photo: The Nation

THE organisers of the FIFA Futsal World Cup were left red-faced after the draw for the tournament, which will kick off in November in Thailand, was marred by confusion over rules, forcing the officials to make a revised draw.

Four-time champions Brazil were originally drawn in Group C alongside Asian champions Japan, Portugal and Colombia, but the rules state that two teams from the same continent cannot be in the same group, with the exception of Europe, which have seven participating teams in the 24-team event.

The officials only became aware of the mistake after the initial draw was completed. After a 10 minute delay, the official who conducted the draw, returned to the stage and explained the error.

African champions Libya were then assigned to Group C in place of Colombia in what was widely regarded as the most difficult-looking section, while the Colombians moved to Group F with Russia, Solomon Islands and Guatemala.

Hosts Thailand are in Group A which also features Ukraine, Costa Rica and Paraguay. Group B consists of two-time champions Spain as well as Iran, Panama and Morocco. Argentina were slotted in Group D alongside Mexico, Italy and Australia, while Egypt, Serbia, Czech and Kuwait are in Group E.

Thirachai Wuthitham, the chairman of the National Futsal Development committee believes Thailand are in a difficult group, given that Costa Rica are the Concacaf champions, while Ukraine and Paraguay stand at the eighth and ninth spots respectively in the world ranking, both above the Thai side in 11th place.

- *The Nation*

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Phuket futsal soon 'United'

By Steven Layne

PHUKET United, the island's professional futsal (five-a-side indoor football) team, is set to begin preseason training for the Thailand Futsal League (TFL) 2012-2013 season, scheduled to kick-off unofficially by next month.

Speaking on the phone from Bangkok on Wednesday, the team's secretary, Samak Rattanatilok na Phuket, informed the *Gazette* that the team has finally received confirmation from the TFL about the season's unofficial start in October.

Mr Samak was in the capital to attend a meeting with TFL team representatives and league organizers.

"We will start to finalize contracts with our Thai players on August 31, so that we can start to prepare for at least two friendly matches next month.

Asked about the status of the team's star striker, Rogerio Moreira, Mr Samak was adamant that the Brazilian, who helped Phuket win the CAT national championship last year, would return to Thailand to play for the team.

"Rogerio will begin his contract in November, when the season officially starts. Meanwhile, we will finalize our Thai line-up," he said.

Though Moreira had recently signed a contract with the "Andaman Pearl" for the 2012-2013 season, an indefinite season delay had cast a shadow of uncertainty over the status of many of the league's high-profile, foreign talent, including Moreira.

"After our [Phuket United's] successful qualification campaign at the end of last year, my wife and I had a conversation with the team president to negotiate my contract for the 2012-2013 season.

"I explained to him that I am not willing to leave my wife behind in Brazil [to play the season in Phuket], and I took it that he understood and accepted. But after returning to Brazil during the break, I didn't get any clear, concrete confirmation about my contract," he told the *Gazette*.

Following that conversation, the *Gazette* contacted the club's acting president, Preechawat Keesin, who said: "Due to the league start delay, we could not confirm anything for sure... now that we have official confirmation about the season,

Moreira celebrates after scoring

Photos: Phuket United



UP IN THE AIR: Despite initial uncertainty about the 2012-2013 season, Phuket United executives are adamant that Rogerio Moreira will return to play for the team by November.

we're ready to start finalizing our squad.

"I can't give any specific details about negotiations with Rogerio right now, but can say that he is one of the key players that we look to secure on our team.

Mr Preechawat added that the team will soon open an office across the street from Surakul Stadium, near the recently-opened Phuket FC office.

The team's home matches will be held

in the recently-built, air-conditioned 4,000-capacity gymnasium in Saphan Hin, which was completed ahead of the National Youth Games, held in Phuket back in May-June.

Phuket United are among 16 teams nationwide who will compete in the league.

Also, see the results for the 2012 FIFA Futsal World Cup draw inside on page 46-47.



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