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INSIDE TODAY

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■ HUNDREDS OF OFFICIALS TO INVESTIGATE LAND ALONG WEST COAST

Damrong orders park land blitz

■ Officers to probe 3,000 rai, press charges and present their cases in court in a precursor to similar raids to be launched nationwide

By **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

DAMRONG Phidet, Director-General of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Conservation (DNP), has announced that he will assign hundreds officers to investigate 379 plots suspected of encroaching on more than 3,000 rai of land in Phuket's Sirinath Marine National Park.

Speaking during an inspection visit in Phuket on Tuesday, Mr Damrong said he would issue an order on Thursday for 366 DNP officers, split into teams of six, to investigate suspect plots along the border of the national park.

His officers will be tasked with investigating their assigned plots, coordinating with the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) investigation also currently ongoing in Phuket, filing complaints with police and presenting their cases in court.

"Any land document issued after 1964 will be considered illegal. Landowners will have to fight in court if they want to prove that they legally own the land in question," said Mr Damrong.

He added that the officers to be assigned the Phuket blitz will also be used in crackdowns elsewhere in Thailand.

"I will start with Sirinath National Park, which I believe we can start investigating by mid-October. However, I will have to train those officers about investigation procedures and educate them on the relevant aspects of the law," he said.

Directing his vision to after his impending retirement, Mr Damrong said, "I hope the new DNP Director General will continue my work, otherwise that person will have a lot of explaining to do to the public."



For the second time in two months, floodwaters on Wednesday inundated major roads, homes and businesses across the island. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

FLOODS TO FACE B100MN BARRIER

HEAVY rains doused Phuket on Wednesday, causing flooding in Phuket Town, Patong and many other residential areas on the island. Traffic ground to a standstill along many of the critical arteries feeding Phuket's main tourist and commercial centers. The Thai Meteorological Department issued a heavy rain warning on Wednesday, and forecast the wet weather to continue to until at least Monday.

The rains, and floods, came just days after Phuket City Council announced they will spend 100 million baht on flood-defense measures.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 8



Paiboon denies fatal cancer rumors

Full story on page 3

Patong police defer action in Tiger Disco case

PHUKET Police on Wednesday declined to commit to pressing any charges against the operators of the Tiger Discotheque over the fire that destroyed the venue and killed four people, including two tourists.

Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul chaired a meeting with Patong Police to review the forensics report into the cause of the fire and to "discuss" the results.

"The cause of the fire was from an electrical short under the ceiling at the front left of the building," said Maj Gen Chonasit...

Continued on Page 3

Sommai to take on top job as Gov Tri retires

VICE-Governor Sommai Prijasilpa will take on the mantle of Acting Governor of Phuket on Monday as current governor Tri Augkaradacha retires on Sunday, September 30, bringing to a close a career spanning 36 years in the civil service.

Full story on Page3

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Patong security guard arrested for terrorism

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

POLICE have arrested a security guard in Patong wanted on an outstanding warrant for charges related to terrorist activities in Thailand's restive Deep South.

The man had a bounty on his head of more than one million baht for his capture, said police.

Mahamasakree Mahamasuseng, 29, was arrested on September 21 at a rented house in the Soi Bang Thong area in Kathu at 10:45pm on Friday in a raid led by Phuket Provincial Police chief investigator Wanchai Palawan and Thung Thong Police chief investigator Teeradej Jiraraksa.

Mr Mahamasakree, who police said also went by the name of Arhamah Mah-useng, was arrested on a warrant issued on February 2, 2004, by the Yala Provincial Court.

The warrant named Mr Mahamasakree as wanted for "being involved with 10 or more persons assembled together to do or threaten to do an act of violence that would cause a breach



Mahamasakree Mahamasuseng (right), wanted on terrorism-related charges dating back to 2004, has denied all charges. Photo: Police handout

of the public peace."

"He was also wanted for possession of an illegal weapon and carrying a gun in a public place without a permit," said Col Wanchai.

Mr Mahamasakree denied all charges.

"He said he had been working for the same night entertainment

venue on Soi Bangla for more than five years and that he had never committed any crimes.

"He also specifically said that he had never shot a police officer or been involved in making bombs in the Deep South," said Col Wanchai.

Mr Mahamasakree has been handed over to Yala Provincial Police for further questioning.

Burmese decry gold shop bandits

A CROWD of onlookers at the reenactment of the robbery of Yong Chuan gold shop in Rassada shouted disparaging remarks and denounced the prime suspect last Saturday as he retraced his getaway from the Karn Keha Housing estate.

"You have shamed our community" and "We're glad you finally surrendered," were shouted at the suspect, named by police only as "Koson".

Phuket Police guarded Mr Koson from the angry crowd at the housing estate, just north of Rassada Pier.

Case investigator Lt Col Prawit Engchua of Phuket City Police confirmed to the *Gazette* that the gold stolen from the Yong Chuan shop was insured.

"They are still conducting a full inventory check to determine exactly which items are missing," Lt Col Prawit said.



The crowd shouted abuse at Mr Koson as showed police how he made his getaway from the low-income Karn Keha Housing Estate.

Mr Koson surrendered voluntarily to Phuket Police on September 21, saying that he wanted to see his wife again before she died from a heart condition.

Mr Koson has had two children with Ms Mooza, one is his 13-year-old daughter who is now staying with his sister who runs a

small curry shop in Rassada.

His other child is in Burma, as is Ms Mooza's third child, from a previous relationship.

Mr Koson faces charges of gang robbery and carrying a weapon in a public place, as does Mr Mek if he is captured.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Missing swimmer feared dead

THE search continued last Wednesday for a 17-year-old student who disappeared in strong waves at Nai Yang Beach late afternoon the previous day.

Royal Thai Navy officers from the Third Naval Area command in Phuket together with Kusoldharm Foundation rescue workers resumed their search for Nithipol Lorlaem at 8am Wednesday, after it was deemed unsafe to continue the search late the previous night.

Mr Nithipol's parents, Thanti and Nittaya Lorlaem, told rescue workers that their son had just arrived back home in Phuket from Chiang Mai, where he is a student at Attaqwa School.

One of the friends, Saimarn Manabutr raised the alarm after Mr



Rescue workers searched late into the night for Nithipol, 17.

Nithipol disappeared in strong waves in front of the police box near the beach.

Rescue workers in the area immediately launched a search, but have yet to find him.

Rescue teams continued the search in the hope that Mr Nithipol is still alive.

— Thawit Bilabdujar



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Phuket Vice Governor to take over on October 1

PHUKET Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa will take on the responsibility of Acting Governor on October 1 following the Thai Cabinet failing to name a successor to Tri Augkardacha, who will retire this Sunday, September 30.

The news follows a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday not including the annual reshuffle of provincial governors on its agenda as Deputy Prime Minister Yongyuth Wichaidit did not attend the meeting, an officer at the Secretariat of the Cabinet told the *Gazette*.

A date has yet to be set for Cabinet to decide on a list of 19 provincial governor positions that will be available come October 1. "Call us again on Tuesday," the officer at the Secretariat of the Cabinet told the *Gazette*.

Governor Tri and 16 others will be retiring from their gubernatorial positions on September 30, while two positions will become available due to transfers.

Mr Yongyuth vowed to chair the weekly Cabinet meeting as assigned by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, reported in *The Nation*.

However, the Mr Yongyuth skipped the meeting and assigned Deputy PM Chalerm Yoobamrung to chair the Cabinet session instead.

The meeting lasted only 45 minutes and did not consider the annual reshuffle of provincial governors as Mr Yongyuth had planned.

"I don't think it will affect our work because the senior vice governor, Sommai Prijasilpa, will be acting governor until we receive official assignment from the Cabinet," Manat Nurak, who is the Secretary to Phuket Provincial Governor said.

'Ghost' land titles owned on Phuket

PUBLIC Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) Secretary-General Col Dusadee Arayawuth encountered an unusual experience during his inspection of four plots in Phuket on Monday.

The named landowner, for two plots along the coastal road north of Patong, denied any knowledge of owning the land under investigation and expressed no intention of even wanting to claim ownership of the plots in question.

The scenario introduced the possibility of corrupt government officials illegally using one land title in order to create a new title for land elsewhere, without the owner of the original legal plot knowing, so that the second plot could be acquired and sold later.

Col Dusadee explained that his office had discovered a mysterious application for the Phuket Land Office to issue a "new" Sor Kor 1 title for land in Patong to replace an "old and damaged" Sor Kor 1 title.

However, the "old and damaged" Sor Kor 1 title was for more than two rai of land in the Patong Village 1 area, but the application asked for the Sor Kor 1 title to be issued for a plot of the same size on the hill road at the north end of Kalim, in the Patong Village 5 area.

"We also found that the land [at the north end of Kalim] is located in the 180-rai Kuan Hin wildlife preserve, which was created in 1937. By law, no land in this whole area can be owned by anyone for any private or commercial use," said Col Dusadee.

However, Weerachai Thonghom, 53, denied any knowledge of his family owning the land.



The land investigation discovered a six-story building already under construction at one of the sites. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong



Lt Col Dusadee (center) inspects seafront land north of Patong. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Mr Weerachai presented himself as the representative of Gaew Thonghom, who is the named landowner on the Sor Kor 1 title in question.

"The land that my family owns is located in Patong Village 1, in Soi Khon Yang. I can tell you that it is not in Patong Village 5, Kuan Hin, for sure," said Mr Weerachai.

Col Dusadee joined Mr Weerachai in inspecting another plot further north along the same coastal road for which the same apparent "ghosting" of land titles had been used.

"The Sor Kor 1 for a four-rai plot of land [elsewhere] was used as the basis for issuing a Sor Kor 1 title for a plot covering 25 rai here at Baan Nakalay," Col Dusadee explained.

Again, the named landowner was Gaew Thonghom.

Again, Mr Weerachai denied any knowledge of his family ever owning 25 rai at Baan Nakalay.

"I have already asked the Phuket governor to investigate this," said Col Dusadee.

"I have also issued a letter requesting that the Kamala OrBorTor [Tambon Administration Organization] check it out," he added.



Paiboon Upatising said he'll be back in Phuket on October 3. Photo: PPAO

Paiboon denies cancer rumors

PAIBOON Upatising, the president of the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (PPAO), replied personally to the *Gazette* to deny rumors that he has last stage cancer.

"Don't listen to all the rumors. I do not have final stage cancer, and thank you to everybody for your concern," he wrote by email.

Mr Paiboon said that he went to Bangkok Hospital in Bangkok last month for his annual checkup.

"That's when I found out that I had a blocked intestine. My doctor recommended that I undergo surgery to have the blocked intestine removed, which I did," he said.

"I have no problem working, but the doctor said that I have to be very careful for the next six months," Mr Paiboon added.

Dubbed Phuket's "Pink Panther" for his use of pink to brand his public projects and his ability to turn up nearly everywhere, Mr Paiboon laid out his plans for the coming year.

"This year we plan to continue our parks improvement campaign so people can have a place to exercise. We will add more 'green space' to communities and provide people more space to play sport.

"We will also push many more projects, including projects to support tourism and environment conservation and public health care," he added.

— Orawin Narabal

Police dalley over Tiger Disco blaze

From page 1

"The spark set alight the ceiling and the wall, both of which were coated with highly flammable expanded polystyrene (EPS) foam," he added.

The foam used throughout the venue was previously identified by expert investigators as one of the main causes for the rapid spread of the fire throughout the nightclub, which had hundreds of revellers inside it when the fire broke out at about 4am on August 17.

Despite an official inquest by expert building inspectors citing the nightclub had breached numerous fire-safety regulations, thus contributing to the calamity, Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Kittipong Klaikaew on Tuesday told the *Gazette*, "We



Provincial Police Commander Chonasit, who will be transferred to Bangkok on Sunday, chaired the meeting. Photo: Gazette file

need to collect more evidence and question more witnesses. After we get the information [we need], we will hold a meeting to summarize all the details we have and make a conclusion as to the genuine cause of fire and decide what action we will take against the Tiger disco [operators]."

— Phuket Gazette

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Jet ski rental terms and conditions

JET-SKIS are required by the Marine Department to have "first class" insurance coverage. Currently, there are two policies available to operators, who often choose to take out both policies on a single jet-ski. One to cover the mandatory requirement to insure riders and passengers, and a second covering damage to property while also providing a "reserve" should medical bills out-strip the limit of the first policy.

The Thai United Insurance Co Ltd's policy covers the jet-ski driver and one passenger for personal injury or death. Each contract will not pay more than 300,000 baht per jet-ski insurance policy annually.

Death or permanent disability of rider or passenger - 100,000 baht.

Medical costs of rider or passenger - up to 15,000 baht per person.

Ayudhya General Insurance Public Co Ltd's insurance policy covers the same range of upsets at a lower payout, but also covers third person liability and damage including damage to the jet-ski. Each contract will not pay more than 200,000 baht per jet ski policy in total.

Death or permanent disability of rider or passenger - 50,000 baht.

Death or permanent disability of a third party - 50,000 baht.

Medical costs of rider or passenger - up to 20,000 baht per person.

Damage to third party property - up to 25,000 baht.

Damage to the jet ski - up to 50,000 baht.

In addition to the insurance, jet-ski operators



Hurried phone calls to the office to get the paperwork together for the Marine Department inspection. Photo: Marine Department

often insist that the a renter sign a contract with them. Rental contracts are in either English and Thai or Russian and Thai. The salient parts of which are:

The lessee must pay the first 1,000 baht for damage.

The lessee must pay any costs not covered by the insurance.

If the lessee causes the jet-ski to sink or capsize, the lessee must pay 3,000 baht to the lessor for flushing the engine.

Where the jet-ski needs repair due to a collision or accident, the lessee must pay 3,000 baht per day for loss of income to the lessor up to a total of 15,000 baht.

The insurance is invalidated if passengers or drivers are drug positive or have a blood alcohol level of over 150 milligrams.

Jet ski wars:

By Atchaa Khamlo

WITH high-season just around the corner and the expectations of millions of tourist descending onto the island, the ongoing issue of jet-ski insurance resurfaced at the honorary consuls' meeting on September 17.

At the meeting, it was British Honorary Consul Martin Carpenter who requested the Marine Department chief to provide tourists with clear information and warnings about the potential quagmire they may find themselves in if they encounter any issues while renting jet-skis in Phuket.

As requested, Phuripat Theerakulpisut, Director of the Marine Department Phuket Branch, put together a presentation clearly outlining the current situation.

There are now two companies selling jet-ski rental insurance policies [see top left panel]: The Thai United Insurance Co Ltd (TUI) and Sri Ayudhya General Insurance Public Co Ltd (SAGI), he explained.

This was not always the case. In April 2011, there was a near collapse of the only jet-ski policy available to Phuket operators brokered by Ayudhya Insurance PCL. The collapse came just two years after the launch of the specialized policy. The constant high claims submitted by jet-ski operator for damage by tourists to their rented machines was cited as the cause of the near failure of the policy.

However, the history of jet-ski problems in Phuket date as far back as February 1998, when it was reported that there were about 250 rental jet-skis operating around Phuket, of which only 22 were registered.

In March 2000, routinely faced with a barrage of complaints, the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) implemented a "jet-ski management program" covering the five beaches of Kata, Karon, Patong, Kamala and Bang Tao.

As part of the management program, Marine officers examined and registered another 197 jet-skis. That figure was then capped by the PPAO for seven years, effectively banning more rental jet-skis from being stationed

on Phuket until the beginning of March 2004.

Then in 2004, Phuket Governor at the time, Udomsak Usawarangkura, told the *Gazette* that the jet-ski operators would be phased out as there "are many jobs available for them [jet-ski operators] in Phuket's tourism industry, so there is no reason for them to rely solely on jet-ski rental".

However, over the past few years the number of jet-skis has increased. A recent investigation counted at least an additional 67 jet-skis on Phuket's beaches.

The current numbers of jet-skis on the island's beaches are: Patong 170; Kamala 26; Kata and Karon 38; Bang Tao 40; and Koh Naka 12.

"To control the growing number of jet-skis, the Marine Department will not register more than the

286 already in operation. Those companies registering jet-skis are to follow the regulations or risk losing their franchise," Marine Phuket Director Phuripat Theerakulpisut recently stated.

Regulations applying to the use of jet-skis date back to before their invention with the 1913 Navigation Act, which requires all vessels, which now includes jet-skis, to be registered with the Harbor Department. Furthermore, the person driving a jet-ski must hold at least a Helmsman Level 2

license, a qualification that requires two years' documented proof of experience aboard a Thai-flagged ship, which would preclude most tourists from riding a jet-ski.

Another law, the Public Health

and Safety Act 1992, also included regulations for the use of jet-skis. The law barred jet-ski operators from several practices: riding in swimming zones; using jet-skis for commercial purposes [which might be construed to include the rental business]; allowing participants to ride without a life-vest.

By July of last year, with complaints from tourists increasing and foreign officials becoming more vocal about jet-ski scams, not to mention a local "turf war" threatening to erupt on Bang Tao Beach, Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha stepped in to demanded the enforcement of provincial policies.



An example of the sticker showing the jet ski's unique number that will be displayed on all legal jet skis. Image: Marine Department



First Aid is among one of topics the Marine Department runs for jet ski workers. Photo: Marine Department

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Return of the Marine Department



Jet-skis are popular with many of the visitors to Phuket's beaches. However, many do not appreciate the damage that can occur not only to the jet-ski but also to themselves and others in the water. Photo: Gazette file

He instigated zoning of six beaches where jet-ski operators could ply their trade: Kata, Karon, Patong, Kamala, Bang Tao and a new addition Koh Naka. The local authorities of the zones were required to separate swimmers from jet-skis by clearly marking swimming areas with buoys.

In anticipation of the upcoming high-season traffic, Mr Phuripat has ordered all jet-skis operators to re-register their craft with the Marine Department, which includes proving that the machines are covered by a "first class" insurance policy.

Once registered, jet-skis must display orange stickers that clearly identifying the jet-ski number, the owner and the beach it is registered to work on.

"Actually, 281 jet-skis have been registered, five were not presented for registration. If the owners attempt to rent them out, they will be caught," Mr Phuripat said confidently, after the mass registration.

"Jet-skis can still be registered with the Marine Department, but not for renting to the public. If caught illegally renting a jet-ski, the operator risks being fined up to 10,000 baht," he added.

The current agreement between the PPAO and the jet-ski operators is for two years and will end next July, said Mr Phuripat.

"Closer to that time, we will have a meeting with the PPAO and see what the current situation is. However, all jet-ski operators have already agreed to the current regulations."

Looking to the future, Mr Phuripat said it depended very much on the next Governor of Phuket to continue with the measures already put in place, and to work with the jet-ski operators to improve the system further.



Marine Phuket Director Phuripat Theerakulpisut said his department will not register any more jet-skis under the current deal. Photo: Gazette file



And when an accident does happen, without adequate insurance the bills for both the medical and material can be costly. Photo: Gazette file

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Krabi tour guide denies rape of Dutch tourist

By Chutharat Plerin

A 26-year-old Thai tour guide on trial for the alleged rape of a Dutch model on holiday in Krabi in July has denied the charge, claiming that it was consensual sex.

The trial began at Krabi Provincial Court on September 24, Krabi City Police Chief Thaksin Phochakorn confirmed to the Gazette.

An arrest warrant for the man was issued following the filing of criminal charges, but the man chose to voluntarily present himself to police, Lt Col Thaksin explained.

"He said he could not take the pressure anymore. He admitted that he did have sex with the woman, but claimed that she had consented to it," Col Thaksin said. "I cannot comment much further, as the case is now being heard in court," he said.

However, Col Thaksin did confirm that at the time the complaint was made, the woman had deep bruising to the right side



A Thai tour guide has denied charges of raping and assaulting a young Dutch model on holiday in Ao Nang (pictured), in Krabi. Photo: Gazette file

of her face and a split lip.

"We were first notified of the woman's condition after she was taken to Krabi Hospital by a team of rescue foundation workers. They said that she had been in a

motorbike accident.

"However, she was later examined by a doctor who confirmed that there were signs of rape," Col Thaksin explained.

"The woman filed a complaint

with police and gave her statement against the suspect on the morning after the incident. Once we had enough evidence against the suspect, police applied for an arrest warrant for charges of assault and rape," he added.

Col Thaksin said the recurring issue of rape and sexual assault was starting to take its toll on his officers.

"We are heavy-hearted over this issue because it is consistently recurring in Krabi and, according to Krabi Police records, in many cases the victim is a tourist.

"Almost 100 per cent of sexual assault victims in Krabi knew their attacker beforehand. The encounter usually begins with the victims being friendly [with the attackers] and being willing to drink and hang out with men they do not know well," he said.

"I would like to take this opportunity to warn tourists to please be aware that once you start drinking, a situation can become more dangerous due to the effects of alcohol," he added.

American aircraft carrier to arrive in Phuket

THE American aircraft carrier USS John C Stennis (CVN-74), dispatched four months ahead of schedule back in August, will arrive in Phuket early next month along with two US warships and 3,500 sailors.

The Washington-state-based aircraft carrier's current mission is to ensure security and stability in the "vital Asia-Pacific region", stated the ship's Facebook page.

The departure of the ship comes on the heels of rising tension between Japan and China over the sovereignty of the disputed islands known as Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan.

However, Matt Plouche and Charles E Stehwen from the US Embassy in Bangkok met Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha last week to formally confirm that the US Navy ships will be anchored in Ao Makham Port from October 7 to 10.



The crew of the USS John C Stennis are ready for Phuket. Photo: US Navy

"All 3,500 sailors will be rotating off the ship to spend time in Phuket, especially Patong," said Phuket Tourist Association Marketing Vice President Bhuritt Maswongsa.

Heading back to the Arabian

Gulf, the ship will spend time in the US 7th Fleet area of operations "engaging with some of our country's important allies and to experience [other] unique cultures that can only be found in this part of the world," said RDML Chuck

Gaouette, Commander of the John C Stennis Strike Group 86.

According to the USS John C Stennis' Admiral video blog, the sailors are looking forward to the break in routine.

"Getting off the ship and, you know, seeing new sights, places I've never been," said one sailor in the blog who plans to relax, put his feet up and catch some sun while in Phuket.

"It just gives us something to look forward to," said another crew member.

Due to the strict rules given to sailors on shore leave, there should not be too many problems involving them while they are on Phuket, said Mr Bhuritt.

"It's good that the ships are coming to Phuket as it supports our tourism. We expect each sailor to spend about 10,000 baht a day," Mr Bhuritt added.

— **Atchaa Khamlo**

In brief...

Patong Hospital to get new wing

CONSTRUCTION of a 69-million-baht wing at Patong Hospital, that will double the facility's inpatient capacity, is well underway and scheduled for completion by August next year.

The new building will provide room for 60 more inpatient beds and another 13 private rooms, said Hospital Director Phumin Silapunt on September 24.

"This is needed because the number of patients keeps growing due to the town's increasing population," said Dr Phumin.

The director said the new wing would offer welcome relief to the burden on the existing 60 inpatient beds and 12 private rooms.

"We will have more specialists, such as orthopedists, ear, eye, nose and throat specialists, internists and pediatricians. Within a couple of years, we will have a gynecologist," he added.

Buffalo beauties

TO HIGHLIGHT the diminishing number of buffalo still grazing on the island, Phuket Democrat MP Raywat Areerob joined local farmers on September 18 at a small country fair that included a bovine beauty contest.

The event, organized by the National Farmers Council (NFC) Phuket office and Srisoonthorn Municipality, with support from the Phuket Agricultural Office, was held at the field near the Heroines Monument in Thalang.

"This is the first Thai buffalo contest we've held in Phuket," explained NFC Phuket chief Somchai Sakulchit.

The beauty pageant was won by "Pae", whose owner received 4,000 baht as first prize.

Vegetable and drug delivery

POLICE on September 19 seized 54kg of kratom leaves in Cherng Talay.

On arrival at a house off the Baan Don-Cherng Talay Road, police were spotted by the suspect, who tried to run.

Police identified the quickly captured suspect as Chainarong Sawastawee, 25, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat.

A search of the house revealed a fertilizer bag containing 17kg of kratom leaves and a large blue plastic box containing 37kg of the mild narcotic.

During questioning Mr Chainarong revealed to the police that he ordered the kratom from a "Mr Lik", who works at a market in Nakhon Sri Thammarat.

To disguise the consignment, Mr Lik placed the kratom leaves on trucks used to deliver fresh vegetables to markets in Thalang and Muang Districts in Phuket.

Police are to investigate further, but have charged Mr Chainarong with possession of a category five drug with intent to sell.

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Jellyfish attack not near Phuket

By Orawin Narabal

FOLLOWING the confusing report by the UK newspaper *The Daily Mail* on September 22 of a 37-year-old British mum on holiday suffering severe injuries in a jellyfish attack “somewhere near Phuket”, the *Gazette* has since discovered that the woman was first treated at a hospital near Hua Hin, on the Gulf of Thailand, about 600 kilometers away from Phuket.

Bangkok Hospital Phuket staff on Tuesday confirmed they treated Sam Webster, admitting her in April.

“She was brought to the emergency room on April 10 at around 2pm and was discharged from the hospital on April 15,” a hospital official said.

However, Mrs Webster had arrived after receiving treatment at Takuapa Hospital in Phang Nga province, the official added.

Staff at Takuapa Hospital on Tuesday told the *Gazette* that before Mrs Webster arrived in their care, she had received treatment for the jellyfish stings at a hospital in Prachuap Khiri Khan province, about 160 kilometers south of Bangkok.

“She was transferred to us on April 9 from Pran Buri Hospital in Prachuap Khiri Khan. She brought with her the medication she had received at Pran Buri Hospital when she was admitted to our care,” medical



Ms Webster was probably stung while swimming in the Gulf of Thailand. Photo: Gazette file staff at Takuapa Hospital confirmed.

Allaying fears of jellyfish swarming around Phuket's beaches, PMBC Director Ukkrit Satapoomin told the *Gazette*, “We have not been informed of any serious jellyfish stings. The PMBC is usually informed when marine animals, including jellyfish, wash ashore, but we are not usually informed of people being stung.

“Of course, we will be informed if it is an important case and there is something

we may be able to help with,” he added.

Mr Ukkrit explained that box jellyfish may be found along the Andaman coast, including Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga, but only on rare occasions.

However, he did warn that other forms of less dangerous jellyfish, that could still inflict serious burns, are found all along the Andaman coast.

“I cannot specify in which areas jellyfish can be found because they travel

with the current, so they can be found anywhere in coastal waters. They can easily be found in areas where brackish water meets seawater, but they tend to be seen near the shore only during the rainy season [May to October],” he said.

Mr Ukkrit explained that tourists were more frequently encountering jellyfish because more tourists were now swimming in Phuket during the rainy season, when jellyfish numbers are higher.

“We are working together with Department of Disease Control, under the Ministry of Public Health, to post signs warning people that jellyfish can be found in the waters around Phuket, and to explain how to provide initial treatment if stung by a jellyfish. We will post the signs in tourist areas around Phuket ‘soon’,” said Mr Ukkrit.

“We will also attach baskets with a bottle of vinegar to the sign, so that when anyone does get stung, they can pour the vinegar onto the affected area. This prevents any undischarged stinging cells on the tentacles from firing more venom into the victim. However, this is only an immediate first aid measure, as the person will need to be taken to hospital for proper treatment,” he added.

Mr Ukkrit suggested that anyone wanting to swim off Phuket during the rainy season and stay safe from jellyfish stings should wear clothing while in the water, as many local Thais do.

Phuket Immigration quietly introduce booking system

PHUKET Immigration currently has no plans of launching an online queue system for re-entry permits similar to the one recently launched by Immigration Division 1 on Cheng Wattana Road in Bangkok, the busiest Immigration office in Thailand.

However, Phuket Immigration has quietly launched a queue system for people applying for one-year permits-to-stay.

“Even though we don't have an online queue service for re-entry permits like in Bangkok, we do have our one-year ‘visa’ online queue service,” Phuket Immigration Superintendent Lt Col Napat Nusen said on Monday.

Using the online queue system, foreigners who have already obtained visas such as business visas, education or “study” visas, or visas issued on the basis of marriage to a Thai national, can obtain a queue number without going to the Phuket Immigration Office in person.

“Those interested in the service can go on line and book their queue numbers, but the date of their appointments must be at least two days later. At this stage, we are able to accept advance appointments for up to six people per day,” Col Napat explained.

“We have no plans to extend

any other services at the moment. We launched the one-year visa online queue service only a few months ago. So far, not many people have used it. We will wait for feedback for this service first; then we can decide whether or not we should extend other services.”

Col Napat had more good news for expats living in Patong. He expects the Patong Immigration information center to be re-opened by November.

Following rumors in January that the Patong Immigration Office had closed, former Phuket Immigration chief P a n u w a t Ruamrak explained that the office was closed only temporarily for renovations.

“The building needed some improvements and they decided to close it so the work could be carried out properly,” he said.



Nine months later, Col Napat told the *Gazette* that, “We are hoping to have the office open in time for the peak tourism season so we can help the many tourists who will be in Phuket at that time.

“When it re-opens, officers stationed there will be allowed to issue re-entry permits and confirm 90-day reports for people already staying on ‘one-year visas’,” he added.

— *Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai*




Phuket Immigration chief Col Napat Nusen.

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Call for safety at Vegetarian Festival

WITH 70 people injured and one person dying from complications brought on by smoke inhalation during the Vegetarian Festival last year, the Phuket Health Office is calling for more stringent measures to protect celebrants from harm this year.

Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO) chief Dr Sak Tanchaikul called the heads of Chinese shrines taking part in the this year's festival together on Tuesday to urge them to get the message across to their devotees and spirit medium (*mah song*) carers to step up safety efforts during their festivities this year.

"This year the festival will be on October 15-23 and a lot of tourists will come to the island to see the various spirit mediums in the festival. During these activities, the *mah song* walk barefoot over hot coals, climb swords and bladed ladders, and during the street processions people light firecrackers," Dr Sak said.

"Last year, many people were injured during the festival: 29 people were injured from performing with weapons and 41 people were injured from firecrackers, smoke and noise, of which 14 suffered injuries to the eyes and 25 people hurt their arms and legs.

"Two people suffocated from smoke inhalation; one of those two people later died," he added.

Dr Sak pointed out that noise was becoming a major concern, with the average firecrackers celebration at the shrines reaching 122.6 decibels. "Jui Tui Shrine was the loudest, reaching 135dB," he explained.

"About 3,000 firecrackers were used in about 15 seconds," he added.

"We held this meeting to ensure we all have the same understanding of preserving the safety of everyone who attends this year's festival," Dr Sak added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

B100mn to be splashed out on city flood prevention

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

AHEAD of the minor flooding in Phuket Town on Wednesday, and in the wake of floodwaters inundating the town center in August, Phuket City Municipality is looking to spend 100 million baht on flood defense measures, starting with a 10-million-baht study conducted by a private consultant.

The news was delivered at a public meeting chaired by Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupana at the Phuket Merlin Hotel in Phuket Town last week.

Songkrit Sappakit, executive director of Phisut Technology Co Ltd and head of the project, explained to the gathering that the Phuket City Council had requested 10 million baht from the Phuket Provincial Office.

The money is to fund a study of flood-prevention measures for Phuket Town and its borders with the neighboring areas of Wichit and Rassada.

"The study framework is defined in three phases: 1) To create a plan for the medium and long term; 2) To study the appropriateness of the approach that will be used to fix flood problems; and 3) To design the construction projects that will be used to fix and prevent flood



Will the 100mn baht cash injection solve the recurring flood problem?

problems," said Mr Songkrit.

"The budget that will be spent on the construction project is about 100 million baht. The study is already underway and scheduled to be completed by April 25, 2013," he added.

The flood-prone areas to gain immediate attention were noted as:

Zone 1: Samkong, along Soi Panieng

Zone 2: Samkong, at the base

of Khao Rang (Rang Hill)

Zone 3: Surakul Stadium on Wichit Songkhram Road

Zone 4: Around Suan Luang park, including Wirat-Hongyok Road to Bangkok Road and along Sakdidee Road bordering Phuket Town and Wichit

Zone 5: Phuket Town, Surin Road to Anuphas Phuket Karn Road

Zone 6: Phuket Town, all areas alongside canals and ponds.

Mr Songkrit blamed the clearing and redeveloping of landscapes for new housing estates, among other construction projects, on the outskirts of Phuket Town as the main cause of flooding further toward the heart of the city.

"The run-off from cleared plots enters the canals, making them more shallow. When there's heavy rain and high tide at the same time, the water cannot flow out fast enough. That's why flooding has become a major problem in Phuket Town," Mr Songkrit explained.

"The way to fix the problem is to improve the ability of the canals throughout Phuket Town to have run-off water flow out quickly, and to make sure that the ponds are able to handle large volumes of water. To be able to do this, we need to dredge the canals and the ponds," he added.

"How we manage the ponds is important. The best way to do it is to use Gam Ling ("Monkey Cheek" detention basins) to hold the extra volumes of water until it can flow out through the canals.

"Man-made canals should also be dug to help the existing natural canals cope with extra run-off. I believe this will help relieve the flood problem," Mr Songkrit said.

Police on lookout for snatch artists in Kata

POLICE are searching for two men who conducted a drive-by purse snatch in Kata last Sunday.

Russian tourist Irana Yazvenko, 29, told Chalong Police that she and her friend were riding a motorbike near the Club Med resort at about 9pm when two men pulled up on a motorbike alongside them, snatched her bag and sped off.

Capt Teanchai Dungsuwan of the Chalong Police explained that Ms Yazvenko was riding pillion when the attack occurred.

"The thieves rode up close to the pair and snatched the purse right off her shoulder. The women were afraid of being attacked, so they did not follow the two men," he added.

Reported as stolen were two mobile phones, US\$100 in cash and a digital camera.

"We don't have many details to follow up on since Ms Yazvenko cannot remember much about the two men, but we are searching for them.

"We will check CCTV footage from cameras in the area and see if we can identify the suspects," said Capt Teanchai.

The attack on Ms Yazvenko and her friend follows the bungled bag snatch in June that ended with the fatal stabbing of 64-year-old Australian tourist and travel agent Michelle Smith.

The two men arrested for that attack were sentenced to life in prison.

— Atchaa Khamlo



Police are hopeful that CCTV will provide a clue as to the identity of the thieves. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Phuket promised fewer scheduled blackouts

RESIDENTS and businesses across the island are likely to be subjected to fewer scheduled blackouts in the coming years, the Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority (PPEA) has told the Gazette.

The blackouts, needed so PPEA crews can carry out maintenance on high-voltage power lines, install new lines and move power poles, have regularly seen entire areas of the island rendered powerless.

However, with no blackouts scheduled until at least the end of the month, PPEA Operations Chief Yongyuth Podbutr said that his crews were carrying out less maintenance work than ever before.

"We used to have to cut the power off [for scheduled blackouts] five to six times a month, but lately it has been only



An electricity worker leans out of a cherry picker to carry out maintenance.

about once or twice a month," Mr Yongyuth said.

"There are not as many problems as before. Now we only have to install new cables and replace old ones," he said.

The schedule for organized electrical blackouts for the month of October had yet to be finalized, but will be announced on

October 1, Mr Yongyuth added.

"We announce scheduled blackouts on every local cable TV channel and on local radio stations. People who are worried that a scheduled blackout will affect their area can call the PPEA Operations Department at 076-224029," he said.

— Orawin Narabal

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West Side Story, Gangnam Style



Gangnam's infectious dance style has sparked a global craze.

IN A bizarre incident resembling a scene from a modern-day *West Side Story* set in Thailand, two gangs of youths reportedly held a dance off to Korean rapper PSY's massive K-Pop hit "Gangnam Style" in Bangkok last week.

But the competition got out of hand – eventually leading one of the groups to firing more than 50 bullets at their rivals. Miraculously, they failed to injure anyone, reported Thai news website INN.

According to the news website the two gangs had a history of fighting.

On the evening of September 20, both groups were dining and drinking at the same restaurant in the Huai Khwang District.

An argument was sparked after younger members of both groups danced provocatively at each other in the manner associated with chart topper "Gangnam Style".

However, the argument cooled and one of the gangs relocating to the Ekamai neighborhood to continue drinking.

Around 8:30am, their dance rivals showed up on motorbikes, firing a hail of bullets at them.

They missed the teenagers – but hit a number of cars and motorbikes lining the street, leading the owners to file complaints with the local police.

Anti-Corruption Commission takes on television personality

AROUND THE nation

THE NATIONAL Anti-Corruption Commission plans to take criminal action against Sorrayuth Suthassana-chinda, one of Thailand's most famous TV personalities, over his alleged involvement in a 140-million-baht embezzlement scam.

The NACC believes it has found proof that Mr Sorrayuth conspired to defraud millions of baht in advertising revenue from state TV broadcaster MCOT.

Mr Sorrayuth, whose news program on Channel 3 is one of the nation's most popular shows, claims he is innocent. He used the show last Friday to read a six-minute statement defending himself.

The journalist is one of several people who were allegedly involved in the scam. The participants reportedly defrauded MCOT out of money it was owed as part of an ad-revenue-sharing scheme with Mr Sorrayuth's company, Raisom.

Last Thursday, the NACC resolved to take action against the presenter, as well as another Raisom executive and two MCOT employees.

The firm previously produced news programs for MCOT until its contract was cancelled over suspicions that it failed to fairly share advertising revenue with the state agency as required by the contract.

NACC commissioner



The National Anti-Corruption Commission plans to take criminal action against Thai TV personality Sorrayuth Suthassana-chinda (left) over his alleged involvement in a 140-million-baht embezzlement scam. Photo: The Nation

Klanarong Chanthik said MCOT customer-service officer Pitchapha Iamsa-ard was in charge of noting down all the advertising slots bought when Mr Sorrayuth's programs were aired, so MCOT could collect the correct amount from Raisom.

The NACC chief said Mr Sorrayuth had given Mrs Pitchapha six cheques worth a total of 739,700 baht, allegedly as payment for her silence over the

correct advertising slots sold.

Mrs Pitchapha later admitted the show had been granted longer airtime than what was agreed with the MCOT, Mr Klanarong said.

She also claimed she had erased details of advertisements from the logbook to cover up the actual revenue earned, as allegedly suggested by Mr Sorrayuth and Montha Thiradet, a Raisom executive.

Mr Klanarong said MCOT had later demanded that Raisom pay

advertising revenue, plus value-added tax and interest, for 152.969 million baht and Mr Sorrayuth agreed to do so in 2006.

Later, MCOT filed a complaint with the Huai Khwang Police Station against Mrs Pitchapha and her supervisor Anya Uthai for violating state employee's code of ethics. MCOT also filed a complaint against Raisom, accusing it of causing damages worth 138.79mn baht.

Insurgent bombings kill six, injure scores in Deep South

DEADLY violence has once again shaken the Deep South after a car bomb killed six people and injured 50 in Pattani on September 21.

The bombing killed three men and three women, including one defense volunteer.

Insurgents lured security officials to the scene by spraying bullets into a gold shop around noon that Friday.

Some 15 minutes later a 50-kilogram bomb hidden in a pickup truck nearby was detonated after security officials and local residents came to observe the aftermath of the shooting, said Sai Buri district chief Kraisor Wisitwong.

The attack was clearly planned to inflict maximum harm on officials and local people, given the way they were lured to the scene, said Mr Kraisor.

Nineteen of the injured were in



Army recruits assist in clearing up the devastation after the car bomb killed six people and injured 50 in Pattani on September 21. Photo: AFP

serious condition, said a public health official.

Days later another bomb was detonated at a pavilion in neighboring Narathiwat, injuring two school directors and two soldiers.

The four hurt were: Korde Laemaenae, director of Ban Batu

School where the attack took place; Ma Dueramae, director of Ban Buenaepiyae School; and two privates.

Schools are often targeted by insurgents, who seek to reduce the Thai state's ability to teach Muslim students about Thai culture.

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Setting standards for everything

THE mantra of government officials regurgitating their need to preserve “Phuket’s tourism image” and to “restore tourist confidence” in what is promoted as a world-class international tourism destination, took an interesting twist this week.

One would think that local officials – and any business related to Phuket tourism – would have leapt at the chance to debunk a vacuous report by a British tabloid claiming that an English woman on holiday suffered serious injuries in a jellyfish attack “somewhere near Phuket”. After all, who would want to take their family half way around the world for a holiday where they would run the risk of suffering a toxic and potentially fatal injection while swimming?

But neither the government nor the private sector here stepped up to challenge the facts, or absence of them, in the tabloid’s curious piece of journalism. Even the local hospitals were economical in their response to the damaging report.

So the *Phuket Gazette* reporting team had to go to great lengths to take down the myth that the woman was stung anywhere near Phuket, when she had most likely suffered the attack much closer to where she was first treated for her injuries: in Hua Hin on the Gulf of Thailand, about 600 kilometers away from our island.

And how good was Phuket’s response in protecting our “tourism [and investment quality] image” in the face of the ongoing raids and so-called ‘investigations’ into corruption by local government officials and encroachment on protected national forest lands? With each passing day, the raids increasingly resembled nothing more than public relations stunts, possibly to boost Thailand’s political image among neighboring countries ahead of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) coming into effect in 2015.

If the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Conservation, and the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) have been genuine in their efforts to eliminate corruption, they certainly deserve the media spotlight. For men in such positions taking such risks, there could little place safer than in plain view of the public. Yet the revelation this week of a landowner denying outright any knowledge that the legitimate title to his family’s land had been used in an attempt to illegally acquire state land, threw new light on an age-old axiom: corrupt officers need go no further than their own filing cabinets to instigate and cash in on lucrative business opportunities.

Now, who among the world’s major investors would pour funds into Phuket or elsewhere in Thailand if the rug could be jerked out from underneath their feet so easily by the nation’s bureaucrats?

Perhaps Thai officials should consider that if they really have to involve corruption, they should at least standardize it, so people know what they’re paying for.



Only trash arrives by yacht

Re: *Phuket Gazette*, Radar GPS tracking to net foreign charter yacht tax dodgers, September 25

The marine office chief states that all Thailand gets is the foreign yachts’ trash.

Perhaps he doesn’t understand tourism revenue generated by the guests on the yachts.

I do agree that yachts should, however, comply with local laws so that the marine industry does not get a negative name.

But the “tracking stations” will simply cost more money and do little to help the problem unless maritime on-the-water patrols are increased.

Is it worth it?

Captain of Private Yacht
Gazette forum

Letters to the Editor

people swim in the rainy season with clothes on.

Are you aware that rainy season is also when Phuket beaches are most dangerous? The undercurrent is deadly and we have many rips.

By recommending that people swim clothed you are just adding to an already very high death toll from drowning in Phuket.

Life Guard
Gazette forum

flyover as an option at these junctions?

These can still be built with negligible impact on traffic. Tour customers going from the north of the island to the south and being picked up at their hotel at 9am can now arrive in Chalong or Rawai in about 30 to 45 minutes.

Once the construction starts on this new project, the trip could take three hours, which is unacceptable.

Simon
Gazette forum

Actions speak louder than words

Re: *Gazette online*, Phuket Burmese deny gold shop bandits, September 23

I would make a guess that it [crime re-enactment] is [done] because of the very good evidential value should there be a court case.

It’s very easy for a suspect to claim that his or her confession was made under duress, but a lot more difficult to deny the offence after a re-enactment.

It probably results in a lot more guilty pleas and saves a great deal of money in court cases.

Maybe I’m wrong and they just do it for something to do.

Keefers Kathu
Gazette forum

Go, go gadget coral reef cleaner

I’m expecting this Go Eco Phuket event to be stunning!

I’m so proud of the scuba diving community and government for coming together at the same time. Best of luck!

Dive Deep
Patong

Unsurprising results

Re: *Gazette online*, Official probe finds Tiger Disco failed to meet fire-safety regulations, September 21

One suspects that this will not come as any great surprise to most readers.

This now begs the question as to the routine fire checks and why such life threatening problems were not identified and the premises closed until rectified?

Finally, will the owners and fire inspectors be brought to account?

Let’s hope there is not another “Flood” and that relevant reports are not “lost”.

Bjam
Gazette forum

It is not too late to change plans, is it?

Re: *Gazette online*, Phuket Roads: Pay now, please, for the failure of planning, September 23

So we are getting underground tunnels in areas that are known to flood. Does anyone else think it’s strange why they don’t offer a

Americans behaving themselves

Re: *Gazette online*, American aircraft carrier to arrive in Phuket, September 23

Actually, it’s quite amazing. I’ve been watching these US Navy shore leaves in Phuket for years.

It seems they are uncannily well behaved and almost never get into trouble.

Not only that, they often do good deeds like painting schools, etc.

Let us hope that this visit goes as well as all the others, and that they do drop lots of money – especially in my restaurant.

Derek Penfold
Gazette forum

Don’t swim with clothes on

Re: *Gazette online*, Phuket ‘jellyfish attack’ report eludes hospitals, confounds experts, September 23

Please don’t recommend that

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Being negative can positively save lives

SOMETIMES our bank does not have adequate stores of Rhesus Negative (Rh-) blood when it is urgently needed. Rh- blood is rare among Thais; only 0.03 per cent have it, so we mostly need it for foreign tourists who have accidents while visiting Phuket. People with rare blood types, like Rh- blood, need to get involved and help us save lives.

We established the Rh- Club of Phuket. The club members are Thais and foreigners who have Rh- blood. The club members actively support the "Donate Blood Public Relations Campaign" and every three months arrange a donation session, often bringing along non-club members. In addition to this, they are able to make emergency donations when it is necessary.

Many of the Rh- Club members first registered with us at Phuket Immigration office. We have a presence at the Immigration office and our officers invite foreigners visiting the office to register as blood donors. They explain to them how important their blood is to the Phuket Blood Bank. If they register, we can contact them directly whenever we urgently need Rh- blood.

Some people don't know they have Rh- blood. They only find out when they come to donate blood at one of our mobile units. When we identify someone with Rh- blood, we tell them that their blood is rare and always in demand. We tell them that we would be very glad for them to join the Rh- Club, or at least provide their contact details, so that we can



Pornthip Rattajak, 35, is now the acting director at the Phuket Regional Blood Center. She graduated with a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Medical Technology from Mahidol University. She first started her work in the field as medical laboratory technician at the National Blood Center of the Thai Red Cross Society in Bangkok before joining the Phuket Regional Blood Center in August 2009.

reach them whenever we need their blood type.

Although we receive excellent cooperation from foreigners in Phuket, the demand for Rh- blood is so high that we aren't able to keep much in the bank. There are many foreigners in Phuket and when one of them is involved in a serious accident they usually need around five units of blood.

We also get requests from hospitals in other provinces for Rh- blood. They know we have a lot of foreigners here and therefore a better supply than most for rare blood types. Usually, there is just enough Rh- in the bank to be able to help them.

Since our Phuket blood center was set up, we have always had great support from Phuket residents. We do not have to request blood from Bangkok; I consider this our greatest success.

On average, our blood center receives about 2,000 units [900

liters] of blood every month. That's enough to supply the monthly requirement for blood in the six Andaman coastal provinces, which is about 1,500 to 1,800 units.

I find the idea that foreigners could donate blood instead of making visa runs interesting. I really appreciate anything that encourages people to donate blood. However, potential donors have to be screened, as not everyone is allowed to make donations. What would the Immigration office do for those not meeting blood-donor standards? I do not know, but if there is a practical solution, that would be great.

I would like to invite people to come and donate blood. You will feel genuine gratitude and appreciation. You may even switch to a healthier lifestyle, just because of the responsibility of being a donor.



Miami lessons laid out for Kata Beach vices

I LOVE and hate that Thailand has less enforced regulation than America.

Being from the east coast of Florida in the US, an area highly dependent on tourism, my family has lived in a place similar to Phuket for several generations.

In the interest of making beaches safe for millions of tourists that visit annually, Miami has strict laws when it comes to the ocean. These regulations govern the coastal environment so that whatever activity you like, you have a place to do it safely.

My home on Phuket is without a doubt Kata Beach. I love the people, the atmosphere and the fact that it is the surfing capital of the island.

Like Miami, a variety of activities abound at Kata Beach. Among these, are: snorkelling, jet-skiing, swimming, boating, surfing, diving, kayaking, fishing and parasailing.

However, intrinsically, some activities are at odds with one another.

For example, swimmers and fisherman cannot be in the same area, and jet-skis and surfers have trouble getting along. Though not at Kata Beach, it is worth mentioning the death of a French snorkeller who was recently killed by a boat off Phi Phi island.

Who owns the beach? In Thailand all beaches are held by HM

Island View

By Chris Hudon

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

King Bhumibol Adulyadej in the name of the people. So, when there is a conflict of interest, who is right?

A person engaging in their favorite activity will feel entitled to it. However, the situation at Kata Beach is such that, without regulation, this creates dangerous situations.

Several steps could be taken to improve beach safety:

- Jet-skis and boats should have a section of the beach to themselves, where they don't risk hurting surfers and swimmers.

- Snorkellers, kayakers and divers should be made to carry a red dive flag at all times, to help boats identify their position in the water.

- There should be a specific portion of the beach for those who wish only to swim. This will reduce accidents and make the job of lifeguards (who are already overworked) significantly easier.

I know it would be hard to do all of this overnight, but everyone would be happier and safer.

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

Taxi! Taxi! Can you please move?

Can someone do something about the illegal taxis and tuk-tuks parking on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pee Road outside Serenity Tours in Soi La Diva opposite the Electricity Office?

I have a business in the soi and cannot get customers in or out of the soi because the drivers are always blocking it. They have no business parking along the red and white marked curb.

Steve
Patong

Chief of Patong Traffic Police Maj Sarawut Chuprasit replies:

As we all know, Patong is a very crowded area, so the traffic is always a mess. Although traffic police have tried to sort it out, the problem remains, simply because there are not enough officers to deal with the issue.

It is good for people to report things to us when they notice something is wrong – I appreciate your help in the matter.

My team and I will inspect the



Taxi drivers putting their vehicles on the line. Image: Google Earth

area you mentioned to see what the situation is like in regards to tuk-tuks and taxi drivers parking in the wrong area.

If they are, we will charge them for illegally parking in a no-parking zone and blocking the entrance to a public soi.

We can be contacted directly at the Patong Police Station at 076 3427 1920.

Are verbal contracts legally binding?

I did a business deal with a person regarding real estate. Unfortunately, at the time, the person was a friend and promised that the commission would be paid over a one-year period.

He continued to promise me the money, but he has failed to pay me.

I was talking with another friend of mine who is a policeman here and he informed me that in Thailand a verbal contract is just as binding as a written one.

I would like to know if this is true and what I can do to get the money promised to me?

BM
Phuket

Boonthop Lanthong, of the Phuket Provincial Office of Peoples' Rights Protection and Legal Aid, replies:

First of all, you are able sue the person according to your verbal contract, but there must be at least one witness to support the verbal

promise made.

The important thing is, however, as a foreigner you are not allowed to work as a "broker" – even in a real estate deal – unless it involves "international business".

Working as a "broker" or in "agency work" is an occupation reserved for Thais only under the Alien Occupation Act 1973 [updated by the Working of Aliens Act, 1978, and as amended by subsequent Royal Decrees up to 1979].

It is vital that you are very clear in what role you performed in the "business deal", as it might be deemed illegal and therefore you would be unable to make a legal claim to be compensated for your efforts.

Also, as you say that you have made a contract – a verbal contract – and that this issue is about you receiving money in return for a service performed, you must have a work permit in order for you to make any legal claim for this money. Otherwise, again, you would be breaking the law by making a living illegally. For this, you cannot make a legal claim for compensation.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Marine head: GPS, radar to net yacht tax dodgers

By Atchaa Khamlo

THE chief of the Phuket office of the Marine Department says he is drawing up plans to launch a campaign targeting "hundreds" of visiting foreign yachts that avoid paying tax to Thai officials despite conducting "business" in Thai territorial waters.

Named among the visiting yachts to be targeted were charter tour boats for tourist activities, such as snorkeling, diving and sea tours.

"Foreign charter yachts entering Thai waters has been a problem for more than 10 years," said Phuket Marine office chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut.

Of the hundreds of foreign charter yachts that enter Thai waters each year, some high-end businesses charter one yacht at a cost of 100,000 to 300,000 baht a day, he said. "They make huge amounts of money from this business. By law, they must pay 20% trading tax [on income earned in Thai waters] to the

government, but we get nothing.

"Thailand gets nothing more than their trash and they keep all the money back in their own countries," he said.

The Cabinet last year approved a budget of 15.1 million baht to tackle the problem.

The budget includes installing radar stations fitted with GPS satellite vehicle tracking management systems to monitor yachts arriving in Thai territorial waters and the islands around Phuket.

"Three radar stations are likely

to be located at Chalong Pier and the other two places have yet to be decided, but the aim is to cover the whole island region [around Phuket]," explained Mr Phuripat.

Currently, the only way the Marine Department knows of vessels arriving in the area is if a random patrol encounters them on the high seas or if the captain presents himself and his vessel to the authorities to declare that he has arrived in Thailand, he added.

"I'd really like to come up with a long-term solution to this



Chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut.

problem because we don't want it to continue. Every organization [government and private] is affected by this, so we will need an integrated effort if we want the project to succeed," Mr Phuripat said.

Once the details have been finalized, the plan will be presented to Cabinet for approval, he added.

However, Mr Phuripat stressed that the crackdown will not affect Thai-registered vessels.

Automotive sales up in August

AUTO-MAKERS are bullish on domestic new-vehicle sales, which rose 63.9% in August over the same month last year, showing local demand is on track to hit 1.2 million units this year.

"All producers in the month increased their output to speed up deliveries," Vudhigorn Suriyachantanant, senior vice president of Toyota Motor Thailand Co, said recently.

"Still, there is a long wait for some models."

A total of 129,509 vehicles were sold in August, bringing the eight-month total to 867,703 units, an increase of 48.6%, according to data compiled by the company.

Passenger cars were up 46.6%, while commercial vehicles, including one-ton pickup trucks, were up 57.4% in the last eight months.

The growth momentum should continue this month, thanks to continued strong demand and deep inventory, he said.

According to the Automotive Industry Club of the Federation of Thai Industries, last month vehicle production soared 37.31% to 210,333 units, of which 85,279 units were exported, up 18%. In the first eight months, total production increased 33.02% to 1.48 million units.

The FTI also confirmed that Thailand is heading for a new

production record of 2.2 million units this year, up at least 51% from 1.46 million units last year. Of the total, 1.2 million would be for the domestic market and 1 million for overseas.

Surapong Paisitpatanapong, spokesman of the club, said on Wednesday that at this rate, Thailand would become a global top-10 car producer in five years, with target annual output of 3 million units.

China is now the world's largest, with 18.4 million units assembled in the first eight months. Next are the US, Japan, Germany, South Korea, India, Brazil, Mexico, Spain and France. Thailand is now ranked 15th. See table to right.

The Automotive Industry Club is prepared to celebrate the 2 million-unit milestone in November, which has taken the local industry five decades to achieve.

Also see story on page 15.

— The Nation

Rank	Country/Region	2011 [2][3]
—	World	80,092,840
01	China	18,418,876
02	United States	8,653,560
03	Japan	8,398,654
04	Germany ^[16]	6,311,318
05	South Korea	4,657,094
06	India	3,936,448
07	Brazil	3,406,150
08	Mexico	2,680,037
09	Spain	2,353,682
10	France	2,294,889
11	Canada	2,134,893
12	Russia ^[22]	1,988,036
13	Iran	1,648,505
14	United Kingdom	1,463,999
15	Thailand	1,457,798

Last year's top auto producers.
Source: OICA via Wikipedia

Commodity Trends January vs September 2012

Item	Current (baht)	Change (%)
Benzine 91	43.49	20.1
Diesel	30.43	2.01
Benzine 95 E10	38.07	8.99
Benzine 95 E20	34.62	7.58
23kt Gold (96.5%) [*]	1695.74	6.16
Thai pepper (hand brand) ^{**}	47	42.42
Raw block rubber ^{***}	84	-3.61
Raw liquid rubber ^{***}	85	8.97
Rubber export ^{****}	96.9	-8.76

^{*}per gram rate

^{**}per 60g rate

^{***}per kg, local market rate

^{****}per kg, FOB via Bangkok

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- lagoon view • leasehold
- fully furnished

3 Angsana Island Villa THB 18.5 M

- 2 beds 2 baths Condominium
- fully furnished • freehold
- pool & garden view

4 Laguna Village Townhome THB 21.3 M

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- lagoon view • leasehold
- private pool

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Cruise sector poised for boom

THE cruise industry in Southeast Asia is set to grow, with the region's countries committed to upgrading its cruise infrastructure as intra-regional demand for cruising rises.

Cruise lines are increasingly basing their ships in Southeast Asia which offers an ever more affluent market of 600 million people, heightened awareness and demand for cruising, greater intra-regional flight frequencies and streamlined airport-seaport connectivity.

"The wave of new and upcoming improvements in cruise infrastructure across ASEAN is a significant boost to the region's cruise industry," said Dr Liu Zinan, Managing Director, China and Asia, Royal Caribbean Cruises.

"This is shown by our company's unprecedented number and size of ships here this year. With more developed ports here, which are essential for growing cruise markets and attractive itin-

eraries, more international cruise operators like us will be drawn to ASEAN," he said.

Selang in Malaysia, Subic in the Philippines, Benoa in Bali, Indonesia and Singapore are all being developed or upgraded to accommodate more cruise lines.

This year, the main infrastructure developments have been the new 28,000 square meter Marina Bay Cruise Center Singapore, which began operations in May of this year. It can accommodate the world's largest cruise ships and handle 6,800 passengers at one time. It now operates in tandem with the Singapore Cruise Center which recently completed a US\$11 million rejuvenation program. In Indonesia, facilities at the port of Benoa in Bali are being expanded and upgraded. About 200 cruise ships will visit Indonesian ports this year, up from 100 a decade ago.

Major cruise lines have this year

increased their presence in Southeast Asia or have sent larger ships on maiden calls to Singapore. They include Costa Cruises' Costa Deliziosa and Royal Caribbean's 311-meter, 137,276-ton, 14-passenger deck Voyager of the Seas, the largest cruise ship ever to be based in Asia. Royal Caribbean's Celebrity Millennium will be based in Singapore this year. The company's Mariner of the Seas, which is similar in size to Voyager, will also berth there from 2013.

Additional cruise lines such as Star Cruises and Costa which are also based out of Singapore, offer sailings to Kuala Lumpur, ngkawi, Redang, Penang and Malacca; Thailand's Bangkok, Phuket and Koh Samui; Indonesia's Bali and Komodo Islands; and Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh, Danang and Ha Long Bay, among other ports in the ASEAN region.

— ASEAN tourism news

Signs of the island's time

An economic overview of the first six months of 2012

By Steven Layne

THE Phuket Provincial Government recently published its economic summary report for the first six months of the year (F6M12). The in-depth report highlights year-on-year (y-o-y) figures and trends in trade, consumerism, and in the island's tourism, property, investment and agricultural sectors. Here, the *Gazette* outlines some of these.

TOURISM

The total number of tourist arrivals in F6M12 remained steady with 1,336,068 arrivals counted by Phuket immigration – a y-o-y increase of only 0.44%. While the number has not changed much, the composition of that number has. Chinese and Russian tourist arrivals have jumped y-o-y by 63% and 35%, respectively, replacing traditional European groups as Phuket's top tourists. Malaysian tourists have also increased significantly (+24%), which was cited to unrest in the Deep South.

Of the total arrivals, 1,220,653 (91.3%) came on an airplane – a 4.29% increase y-o-y. More airplane passengers complements an 11.42% increase in the number of incoming flights, with 7,609 flights coming to Phuket in F6M-2012 over 6,829 flights during the same period last year.

Meanwhile, only 115,415 tourists arrived by boat, down 27.74% y-o-y. This stagnant growth was cited to the world economic crises which has particularly affected Phuket's traditional tourist source markets of Sweden, Germany, Finland, Australia and USA. The report also cites the series of small earthquakes in April having an affect on arrivals, but only in the short run.

BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT

In the F6M12, the Board Of Investment (BOI) approved three projects in Phuket with a combined worth of 60mn baht. This value is 98.34% less than projects approved during the same period last year, when more high-worth hotel related investments were approved. The BOI approved projects in F6M12 included an agricultural byproduct/scraps product production plant in Talad Yai, Mueang district worth 40mn baht; a steel production plant in Sri Sunthon, Thalang worth 19mn baht and a software company worth 1mn baht.

There were a total of 849 new companies registered, representing a 7.88% increase y-o-y. The combined registered capital of these companies was 1.867bn baht (-24.48% y-o-y). Mostly involving real estate, hotel and tourism, restaurants and

construction contracting, 58% of the companies are located in Mueang district, with 27% in Kathu and 15% in Thalang.

REALESTATE

Construction projects spanning a total of 989,422 square meters were approved (-6.58%) in F6M12. Of these, residential space (single houses, duplexes, townhouses and condos) represented 731,057 sqm, which was 8.59% less than the previous year. These projects were located mostly in the sub districts of Patong, Sakoo and Koh Kaew.

Meanwhile, approved commercial, and particularly hotel space, represented 169,455 sqm, a y-o-y jump of 26.75%. Most of the general commercial space was located in the Sri Sunthon sub district of Thalang, with the hotel space being in Patong. Other types of construction projects approved represented 89,910sqm, and mostly included sports and recreational facilities, clubs and swimming pools.

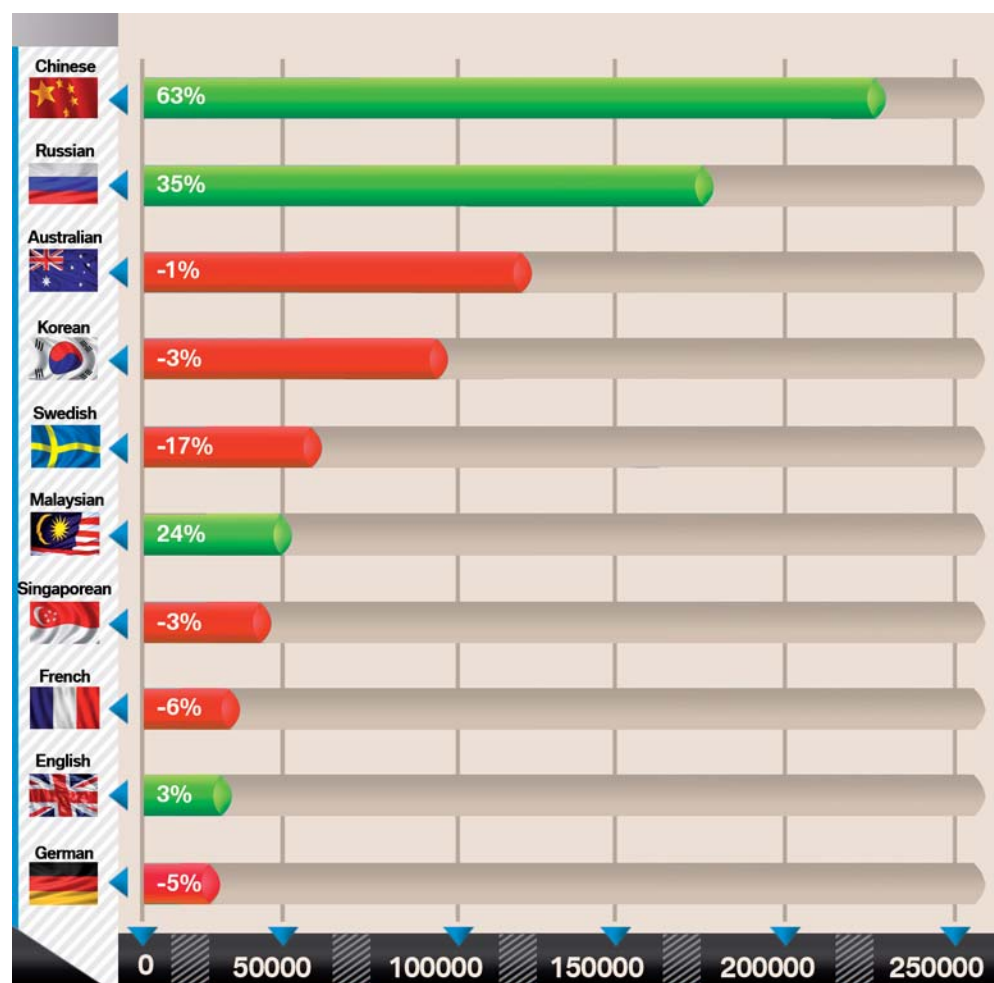
AGRICULTURE

Rubber supplies in F6M12 slowed due to the fact that during the previous year, raw rubber prices had increased in light of swelling demand in the growing automotive industry. At the beginning of 2012, a slowing world economy led to declining demand and orders in the world rubber market, particularly in the Chinese market – a key partner market of Thailand – causing local producers to reduce production, with average prices for Grade 3 rubber in Thailand dropping by 30% y-o-y (from 146.5 to 101.7 baht per kilogram – though even lower now. For more info see adjoining story).

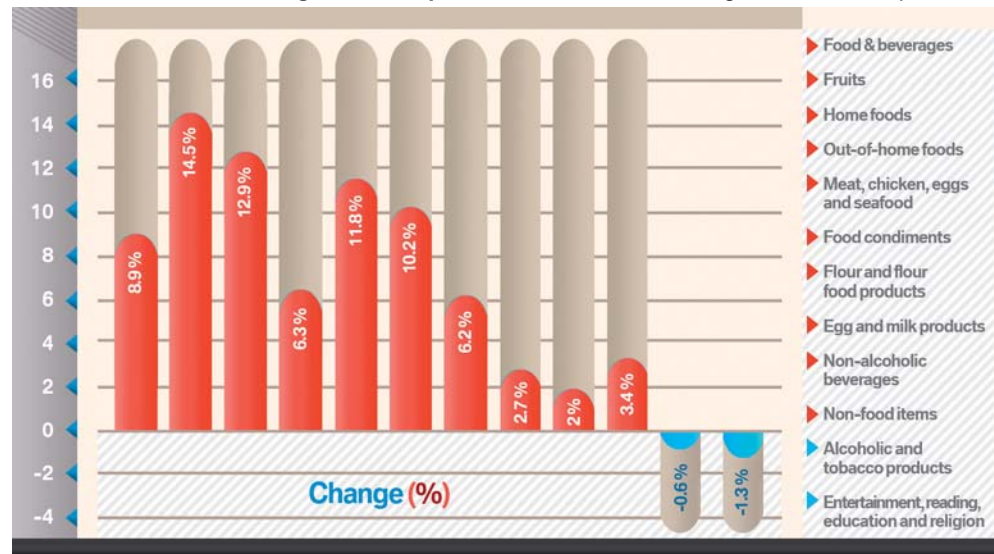
The island's fisheries sector grew in terms of sheer weight and value of combined catches. All in during F6M12, 15,172.04 tonnes (+35.96% y-o-y) of fish were caught off Phuket, which were valued at 942.23 million baht (+77.57% y-o-y).

A bulk of these fish (386.58mn baht) were what Thai fishermen classify as "Bpla Loei" which include a broad variety of sea fish such as Ornate Threadfin Bream, Fourfinger Threadfin, Common Ponyfish, Redcoat Squirrelfish and Obtuse Barracuda. This category was followed by tuna fish (257.41mn baht) and Indian Mackerel 71.79mn baht).

About 43% of these fish were sold in Phuket markets, while just over 47% were sold in other domestic fish markets including in Haad Yai, Bangkok, Krabi and Samut Sakhon, with 4.28% going to the National Tuna Factory and another 5.25% exported to countries such as Taiwan and Japan.



CHANGING LANDSCAPES: Though tourism arrivals remained steady, Phuket's top tourist source markets are shifting from Europe to Russia and Asia. Images: Gazette Graphics



Despite inflation seen in most necessities, some things are becoming more affordable.

CONSUMERISM

Consumer spending is on the up as indicated by a y-o-y increase in VAT (Value Added Tax) income by 8.44%, as well as an increase in new car ownership. No, you weren't just imagining that traffic is getting worse. According to the Car Index, Phuket's registrations of new passenger cars rose on year

by 18.31% and 18.47% for pickup trucks. This is in contrast to a 7.19% decrease in registration of new motorcycles indicating that the lower income economic tier are more hesitant to spend in light of the rising cost of living. Indeed, inflation continued to rise as measured by the CPI of various items as listed in the graphic above.

Rubber demand to bounce back

DEPUTY Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Nattawut Saikua, recently announced that the government anticipates raw rubber demand and prices to rise soon.

Mr Nattawut emphasized that the government puts high importance in solving the problem of plummeting rubber prices.

The current price of raw Thai block rubber, about 87.64 baht per kilogram sheet, has plummeted in recent years due to the suffering economies in traditional demand markets, especially in the Eurozone.

Despite a budget proposal of 30

billion baht to solve the problem, cabinet only approved 5mn baht.

"Considering this, we'll have to make the most of the budget we do have," he said.

Mr Nattawut explained that in light of slowed demand for rubber in foreign markets, the government aims to increase demand in domestic markets by promoting and increasing integration of the commodity in various projects such as road construction.

Also, he said that his Ministry is engaged in a collaborative study with the Ministry of Transport,

which is looking at applying rubber in high speed train projects.

The results of the study will be drafted into a TOR (Terms of Reference) agreement, which will be ready for application within a year, he said.

Moreover, he added that Thailand has been talking with the German government about using rubber to produce conveyor belts in its industrial production lines.

These initiatives, he believes, will boost domestic demand for rubber, and thus, increase prices.

– Bangkok Business News

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THE APPLE OF THEIR EYES: People are lining up in front of this Apple Store in Clarendon, Virginia while iPhone 5 users in Phuket may face connectivity problems. Photo: blakespot

Is Phuket smart enough for the iPhone 5?

LAST week I talked about the iPhone 5, how it compares to the Samsung Galaxy S III, and the problems that people from Toledo to Tashkent are going to have deciding which one to buy.

Here in Phuket, we have one HUGE question that doesn't concern much of the rest of the world – and it'll be a key factor in determining whether your purchase decision for an iPhone 5, should you feel so inclined, turns out to be prescient, or just another dud. Here's the core of the problem.

When you buy an iPhone 5, you'll expect it to support LTE – so-called “4G” – technology, if and/or when it ever appears in Thailand. One of the big selling points for the iPhone 5 (and the Galaxy S III) is its support of LTE.

LTE is worth the wait. In many parts of the world, LTE is almost as fast as a WiFi connection over fiber optic. That's fast – astoundingly fast for a wireless connection. Last June, *PC Magazine* ran a side-by-side comparison of LTE and HSPA+ carriers in the

US. With real-world workloads, the Verizon LTE network in the US averaged 8.5 Mbps downloads. AT&T averaged 17.6 Mbps. Compare that to the 1 to 2 Mbps international download speeds that are common in Phuket, perhaps 8 to 10 Mbps domestic – and that's for a wired connection.

Of course, if we ever get LTE, the big speed bottleneck will come when the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) artificially hold

In many parts of the world, LTE is almost as fast as a WiFi connection over fiber optic.



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

back international access. They've done it before, they're doing it now, and there's no reason to believe that will change in the future. But at least the last mile will be fast.

Apple hasn't yet announced the iPhone 5 release in Thailand, but they have announced it in many parts of the world, and there's a dichotomy. Actually, a trichotomy. While most of the world thinks there is just one iPhone 5 (with different memory capacities and different colors), in fact there are three very different phones:

The Model A 1428 GSM runs LTE Bands (think “TV channels”) 4 and 7, which just happen to be the LTE channels used by AT&T in the United States.

T-Mobile USA also has a planned LTE network that runs on band 4. Band 7 runs at 2.6 GHz. Band 4 runs at either 1.7 or 2.1 GHz. The latter, 2.1 GHz, is the frequency (with 9 “channels”) being auctioned off in the “3G Auction” next month.

The Model A 1429 GSM runs Bands (“channels”) 1, 3 and 5. Those are at 850 MHz, 1.8 GHz, and 2.1 GHz, respectively.

The former, 850 MHz, is the frequency currently used by CAT, DTAC and TrueMove-H for their “3G” HSPA+ network.

The Model A 1428 CDMA runs CDMA, which, with the demise of the CAT EV-DO network, is no longer supported in Thailand.

So here is the question. If you're buying an iPhone 5 for use in Phuket, should you get the A 1428 GSM or the A 1429 GSM?

The short answer is:

I don't have a clue.

I posed the question to Khun Papada, the Area Manager for Apple distributor Com7 International, and he doesn't know, either.

This isn't an Apple problem, really. It's a Thailand regulatory problem. Which means, by definition, it's intractable.

If you get the A 1428, you're betting that at least one of the “3G Auction” winners is able to muster the political and technical prowess to turn their 3G win into a 4G LTE network. I can hear the squeals at the trough already. If the 3G Auction winners are, in fact, restricted to putting up 3G networks, you're dead in the water, because the phone doesn't support LTE on either TOT's 800 MHz or CAT's 850 MHz networks.

If you get the A 1429, you're betting that CAT will upgrade its existing 850 MHz system to an LTE network, or that one of the 3G Auction winners turns to LTE.

It isn't an academic question.

Enormous amounts of money are involved – hundreds of billions of baht, over the course of the next few years. The regulators may have already given the nod for LTE deployment on the 3G Auction acquired bands

– I can't find any information about it, one way or the other. It's entirely possible, though, that the government is very strictly auctioning off 3G (presumably HSPA and HSPA+) access to the 2.1 GHz frequency. If that

is the case, a phone company upgrading from 3G to 4G isn't simply a matter of buying more expensive equipment for the towers, it'll involve regulatory approval from somebody, somewhere. Thus, the squeal.

3G is a different story, of course. I haven't seen the published specs, but I'd be willing to bet both iPhone 5 models will support all of Thailand's

3G services.

So, there you have it. I wouldn't be too surprised if Apple ponders this question for quite a while, before announcing which model(s) it will make available in Thailand.

If you're looking at buying an iPhone 5 outside of Thailand, be intensely aware of the fact that – depending on Thai regulatory vagaries – the particular phone that you buy may or may not be capable of running 4G in Phuket in the future.

That is, assuming Phuket ever gets 4G.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions on three Wednesday afternoons a month, 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 at woody.info, or 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/SandwichShoppe.

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HMRC approves Gibraltar

ANOTHER surprising development in a year which has seen the UK pension transfer market

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

repeatedly shaken up and placed on its head, Gibraltar announced last week that it received confirmation from (Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs) HMRC that it may resume accepting QROPS (Qualifying Recognized Overseas Pension Schemes) transfers.

The move is extremely surprising because HMRC is not known for endorsing much of anything in writing when it comes to the offshore world.

Gibraltar had originally taken the decision on its own to halt transfers due to concerns by HMRC that after the age 60, residents and non-residents of Gibraltar alike paid no taxes while drawing income from their pensions.

The recent removal of Cyprus as a jurisdiction able to receive transfers, and the fact that Malta has in the past month introduced significant taxation of non-residents' pension disbursements in the absence of a double taxation agreement, has made it obvious that a key point for HMRC is that completely tax free pension income is not acceptable to them.

Gibraltar passed legislation two months ago to tax pension income at 2.5%, which although close to zero, apparently is good enough for them to receive the green light.

The removal of the ability to transfer

pensions to Guernsey earlier in the year and the recent change to the laws in Malta (which previously allowed a retiree in Thailand to draw their pension tax free), have put a great deal of egg on the faces of those of us in the industry who had transfers underway which were railroaded by a flurry of legislative changes.

Many have now taken a 'wait and see' approach since HMRC has appeared to be very proactively looking to stop the tax advantages being gained by retirees abroad, even though it theoretically should make no difference to them if some foreign government receives tax from the pension payments (it isn't going in their own coffers). It has appeared to many to be a case of sour grapes, but this latest move changes that perception and makes it look like they are in fact interested in adding a level of clarity and confidence to the market by confirming that transfers to Gibraltar's very low tax regime are in fact okay.

The news is very good for those who have held off transferring to Malta, as the trustee fees in Gibraltar are lower and will likely drop as trustee companies will surely flock to the jurisdiction.

Luckily, I have not yet had a chance to transfer anyone into Malta and thus I don't have to have the difficult conversation explaining why it should be transferred over to Gibraltar.



PUT THAT IN WRITING: HMRC rarely endorses offshore accounts in writing. Photo: 401(k) 2012

There is still no inheritance tax collected in Gibraltar and upon death the beneficiaries are paid in full. For those with large pension pots, the ability to drop one's bracket down from something like 30-40% to 2.5% could mean a very large increase in the net value of their pension. I would advise anyone who has been considering moving their pension offshore to speak with their advisor about getting it done

sooner rather than later, as the one thing this year has shown is that the ability to transfer out of the UK net is definitely not guaranteed to be around forever.

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

Thai Beverage eyes a regional merger

THAI Beverage stands to benefit substantially if it gains majority control over Fraser & Neave (F&N), since the Singapore-based drinks firm would be key to strengthening the Thai firm's profile in the Kingdom while expanding its local drinks into the region.

Thapana Sirivadhanabhakdi, president and chief executive officer of ThaiBev, said during a recent interview with The Nation that the company had recognized that a takeover deal for F&N would be a win-win strategy for

both companies.

It would lead to a complementary effort between major businesses in this promising part of Asia, he said.

Thapana said business synergy would be adopted allowing ThaiBev to distribute its beverages along F&N's regional network, while introducing F&N beverages with potential into the Thai market.

The Singaporean company has three major businesses – food and beverages, properties, and publishing and printing.

F&N set up a Bangkok-based subsidiary, F&N Dairies (Thailand), in 2007, and operates two major factories in the Kingdom, located in Nakhon Ratchasima's Pak Chong district and Rojana Industrial Park in Ayutthaya.

Its major products sold locally include Carnation condensed milk, Tea Pot condensed milk, Creation three-in-one coffee mix and whipped cream.

ThaiBev's major non-alcohol beverages are Oishi ready-to-drink green tea, Chang drinking and soda water, Black Up ready-to-drink coffee, energy drinks, and Power Plus electrolyte beverage.

"We have considered ourselves a substantial shareholder in the Singapore firm. What the company has been doing with F&N was quite clear in the eyes

of investors and the general public. The company has never played games, but is looking for long-term value creation with F&N," said Thapana.

"Our past track record is clear, as we tend to support and create value in any company we have invested in. With F&N, we are looking to explore opportunities for our beverage business as the main objective. It is a quite natural investment, since we will have a pipeline of sequential business deals," he added.

The executive said ThaiBev had been studying F&N for a long time. The company has a strong cash flow and a distribution network that has spread throughout the Asia-Pacific, providing ThaiBev with an opportunity to grow in the region. – The Nation



Thai Beverage president and CEO Thapana Sirivadhanabhakdi. Photo: Vikrom Krommadit

Thailand to produce 2.2 million automobiles

THAILAND is expected to manufacture 2.2 million cars/trucks and 2.5 million motorcycles this year. Automotive Industry Club spokesman Surapong Paisitpatanapong said a celebration of reaching this benchmark will be held November 30.

He said the club is confident that the auto industry will continue to grow. If expansion continues according to plan for the next five years, Thailand will have a production capacity of 3 million units per year, and the country will become one of the world's top ten car manufacturers. In August, automobile sales volume reached almost 130,000 units – a 63 per cent increase year-on-year.

However, the figure was 16 per cent less than that of July. Mr Surapong said the higher sales volume was because car producers increased their production output for domestic sales more than for export, in order to hand over new cars to buyers under the government's "first car" program.

The total car manufacturing figure in August stood at about 210,000 units, a number which has been continuous for the fourth consecutive month. Production capacity last month increased around 37 per cent year-on-year, but lowered from July of this year slightly. From January through August, total car sales volume has reached over 860,000 units, a growth of 48 per cent year-on-year.

Total production capacity during the first eight months of this year reached more than 1.4 million units, an increase of 33 per cent compared to the same time last year. Of that figure, about 830,000 units were for domestic orders and 630,000 were for export. Mr Surapong believes that the auto industry will see a bright future next year, particularly exports of auto parts. The first eight months of this year saw a 21 per cent growth in auto parts, he said.



PM Yingluck tours a Honda automobile assembly plant. Photo: Nation Multimedia



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Ready, set, Go-Eco



TRASHY BEHAVIOR: Divers ready to collect rubbish surrounding Phuket's reefs. Photo: nicoboxethai
By Isaac Stone Simonelli

GO ECO Phuket prepares for its official launch on September 30, with the biggest reef cleanup of any kind in the world.

"On September 30, the eyes of the world will be attracted to Phuket," said Tony Andrews, Thailand's West coast PADI Regional Manager and Project AWARE Ambassador, at a press conference with Phuket government officials at Kata Beach Resort.

Dive Against Debris, a Go Eco Phuket, PADI and Project AWARE-sponsored event, has 14 PADI dive boats and more than 450 participants signed up to sweep the reefs off Koh Racha Noi, Koh Racha

Yai, Phi Phi Island, Koh Khao Nok and Koh Hei (Coral Island).

Of those participants, more than 280 divers prepare to tackle underwater debris, while the rest have volunteered to help as snorkelers or with beach cleanups on Koh Racha Noi.

"The government officials were interested as soon as we met them. They thought it was a great idea and were proud of the dive companies and community," Narong Chaimo, who acted as liaison between Thai officials and the Go Eco Phuket group.

More than 12 government offices and departments have pledged support for the project, with Chalong Municipality providing waste management for all debris and the

Royal Thai Navy sending three warships to maintain a perimeter to protect divers from speedboats that frequent the islands.

"We are pleased to help by disposing of the rubbish from the pier," Chalong Mayor Samran Jindaphol said.

Once the rubbish is brought up from reefs it will be sorted into categories, such as fishing nets, plastics and so on, so it can be accurately documented, explained Mr Andrews.

"Go Eco Phuket's goal is to remove the debris from the reefs and beaches of Phuket and other surrounding islands," he added.

The long-term goal of the event is to mobilize divers from around the world to return the reefs to a clean, healthy state.

"We had a strong dream of making the reefs of Phuket and the surrounding islands clean, pristine and sustainable, and making sure they belong in the top diving destinations in Thailand and the world," Mr Andrews said.

Vice Admiral Taratorn Kajitsuwan, Commander of the Navy Third Area Command at their base at Cape Panwa, pointed out that when Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra previously visited the island, she had made it clear that eco-tourism was a must for Phuket.

"One of my priorities is to help [support eco-tourism efforts], and this project goes hand in hand with PM Yingluck's vision of improving tourism and our country," he said.

"Everyone is glad that Thais and foreigners have so much interest in the local environment," he added.

During the meeting, a spokesperson for the Phuket Marine Biological Center highlighted to government officials the problem of "ghost fishing".

Ghost fishing happens when nets become snagged on corals and are left behind by fishermen, but continue to catch and kill marine animals, he explained.

"These nets affect the entire development of reef systems," he said.

Noting that the issue of marine debris was a global concern, he said, "We hope we can show the world that Phuket can do it [cleanup the coral reefs], so it can be done everywhere else, too."

The meeting provided a forum for officials concerned about the current

conditions of the marine ecosystem around Phuket.

"We will try to instigate a system to regulate and prevent boats from dumping rubbish," a spokesperson for the Marine Department office in Phuket offered.

Pamuke Achariyachai, of event sponsor Kata Beach Group, invited the public to put forward more ideas for eco-tourism on the island.

"We will always support local events like this... should there be any other ideas for eco-tourism, the Kata Group would be interested in helping," he said.

"We can show the world that Phuket is on the map for diving," Mr Andrews said.

"But it's really about what happens after September 30," he added.

Registration for the event will start on September 30, at 7:30am in the new marina building of the Chalong Pier.

At 8am, Governor Tri Augkaradacha, in his last day in office as Phuket Governor, along with other high-ranking officials will formally launch Go Eco Phuket's inaugural event.

An after party for participants will be held at Kan-Eang 2 at 6pm. A Thai-style buffet will start at 6:30pm and the raffle for a variety of dive goods and other contributions will start at 7pm.

RNR Eco Adventures and Dive Resort is sponsoring the night's entertainment by bringing together Legend Recording Studio's Dark Fiber, Legends of Siam, the Rocking Angels Band and DJ Tank, with a special guest performance by Ricky Zen.

Drinks will be provided by Molly Malones, Phuket Beer and Chang Beer.

The event will run to 11pm.

The cleanup is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and will be covered on national TV (UBC/True Visions, channel 99) by the *Gazette's* new show "Phuket Today". The show airs six times per week. For the schedule, see October's True Visions program guide.

Businesses interested in joining the *Gazette* as a sponsor of *Dive Against Debris* are invited to contact any local PADI dive center, or Tony Andrews, Regional Manager of PADI, by email at: tony.andrews@padi.com.au



Standing up for the environment are (left to right) Tony Andrews, Thailand's West coast PADI Regional Manager and Project AWARE Ambassador; Event Organizer Kerry Leach, and Narong Chaimo, liaison between Thai officials and the Go-Eco Phuket group.



ITS THAT TIME AGAIN: Paradise Divers stand behind their booty from a cleanup last year.

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THAT SINKING FEELING: A Sinkhole caused by heavy rainfall.

Climate change affects Phuket

By Anand Singh

CLIMATE change is becoming a big issue in our modern world. Changing temperatures are causing extreme weather conditions, and such changes are being noticed throughout the world.

The Arctic ice caps are melting at an alarming rate and sea levels are predicted to rise even faster in coming years. Not only is the climate changing throughout the world, but it is changing far more rapidly than we could have imagined.

Tropical storms and cyclones are intensifying in strength every year, and often the worst hit areas are the poorest countries. Although the causes of global warming have been linked to human activity and greenhouse gases, the findings are still a matter of heated debate. Still, few can deny the reality of climate change and the toll it is taking on human lives and property.

But if climate change is happening on a global scale, has the climate in Phuket been changing as well in recent decades? To answer that question, we have to look back and see what weather conditions were like in Phuket several years ago.

Recently I stumbled across a set of data on a website called TuTiempo.net. The website keeps a record of Phuket's historical weather conditions, dating back

to the year 1973. A closer look at the figures reveals a startling find.

One of the first things you can immediately point out is that temperatures in Phuket have been on the rise since the 1970s, especially in the last decade. The average annual temperature in Phuket in 1973 was only 28 degrees Celsius. Throughout the 1970s and 80s, the hottest yearly average only reached 28.4 degrees Celsius.

In the last decade, the year 2004 averaged 28.7 degrees, 2006 averaged 28.5, 2009 averaged 28.5, 2010 averaged 29.1 and 2011 averaged 28.6. It turns out that in the past three years, we have recorded some of the highest temperatures in Phuket, since we started keeping records.

The data also shows that it has been raining a lot more in Phuket in recent decades. During the seventies, average rainfall on the island was around 2,000 millimeters per year. During the eighties, average rainfall was around 2,300 millimeters per year. During the nineties, the figure had risen to roughly 2,500 millimeters. In the last decade, more than

Over the past 40 years, we have seen a 30 per cent increase in the amount of rainfall over Phuket. It's not surprising that floods, rare as they were, are now happening more and more often during the rainy season.

2,800 millimeters of rain fell on the island every year on average.

Astoundingly, from the beginning of 2010 until the end of 2011, the amount of rain exceeded 3,000 millimeters per year.

That means over the past 40 years, we have seen a 30 per cent increase in the amount of rainfall over Phuket. It's not surprising that floods, rare as they were, are now happening more and more often in Phuket during the rainy season.

Not only are we dealing with more rainfall each year, thunderstorms are also happening more frequently than ever before.

According to data, during the seventies, thunderstorms only occurred around 50 times every year, on average. However, during the 1980s, it happened roughly 57 times a year in Phuket. During the 1990s, that number had risen to 65.

Most dramatically, during the last decade, we experienced 74 days of thunderstorms in Phuket each year on average.

Average windspeeds in Phuket have also been increasing. Not only are thunderstorms happening more often, they

seem to be intensifying as well. From the beginning of 2010 through to the end of 2011, we have had an average of 75 thunderstorms per year in Phuket.

Just like the cyclones and tropical storms that occur elsewhere, each time they happen they damage infrastructure, take their toll on property and endanger human lives on the island and out at sea.

Those of us who have been in Phuket long enough will agree that weather conditions here are indeed intensifying.

Some factors, like temperature increases, may not be apparent, but the increasingly destructive storms and floods are becoming more difficult for islanders to ignore.

Each year, we see more accidents happening due to bad weather. Landslides are becoming a common sight. Such effects are not only felt in Phuket.

Last year Bangkok and much of central Thailand was submerged under flood waters for months, due to weeks of relentless rain.

Earlier this year, several areas in Phuket, including Phuket Town experienced their fair share of flooding.

It is hard to predict whether climate conditions will become more extreme in the coming years, but from what we have experienced in the past few decades, it will not hurt us to be prepared.



Recent rainfall and thunderstorms resulted in flooding in Patong. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

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**NEW
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Underwater condos provided for fish

TWO hundred kilometers of seabed off the southern provinces of Narathiwat and Pattani was once a rich source of fish able to feed more than 150,000 fishermen and their family members.

Unfortunately, the unsparing use of trawling nets has negatively affected this fragile marine environment and ecological system.

The Fisheries Department surveyed the seabed off the two provinces and found that it an uninviting habitat for fish, corals and sea fans.

So it was decided to build underwater 'condos' for marine life. That was how artificial corals, made up of old army tanks, railroad trains and garbage

trucks, ended up being placed on the seabed.

The army tank is a perfect condo for fish, many of which returned after having disappeared for years.

Naengnoi Yossunthorn, founder of *Save Our Sea*, under HM the Queen's initiative, said the giant objects making up the artificial reef have also deterred fishing with trawling nets.

"After two years, many sea objects have attached themselves to the surface of the tanks, trains and garbage trucks. Natural coral and sea fans will soon grow over them. It's so beautiful with diverse species of fish inside a train."

- *Mcot*

It's fun to eat at the ACYC

By Marc Mulloy

SUNDAY is a day when many of us generally have a lie-in, followed by a lazy morning pottering around the house, until thoughts turn to lunch. Dreamy thoughts of a traditional Sunday lunch... you know, the ones we used to have 'back home', with roasted meat, potatoes, peas, gravy and all the trimmings. But it's already late Sunday morning, we live in Chalong and who's going to cook all that?

The new team at the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) – which recently celebrated 20 years of existence – have the answer with their soon-to-be-famous "SundaySessions" held between noon and 4pm every Sunday.

Award-winning chef, Kim Mitchell and his wife Amanda took over the running of the

ACYC restaurant and bar 10 weeks ago and have been keeping a low profile in order to train up their six staff before launching the Sunday Sessions three weeks ago.

Kim knows exactly what a Sunday lunch should taste like having spent 35 years as a chef.

"I've been cooking since I was 17 and have had five of my own restaurants. My last job was as a chef in Arlie Beach, in Queensland, where we won the 'Best *al fresco* dining' award two years in a row," says Kim in a relaxed Australian drawl.

Relaxed is also a word synonymous with this idyllic setting. The tide is out and a gentle sea breeze wafts around the well spaced out tables.

"This spot is absolutely beautiful. I've always worked where people like to take a holiday and always near the sea; Tasmania, Melbourne and a salmon fishing resort in Vancouver to name but a few," continues Kim.

The restaurant is not only becoming known for its Sunday lunches but also for its extensive menu of both western and Thai food and one of the most complete breakfast menus I've ever seen.

Starting at 8am, on any day of the week, patrons can order anything from classic bacon and eggs (any style) with grilled

cauliflower cheese and roasted pumpkin together with mint sauce and gravy. The generous portion (350 baht) was just right and well presented. We wash it down with a 2010 Jacob's Creek Cabernet Sauvignon (1000 baht) leaving just enough room for their homemade desserts: apple crumble for my lady and a chocolate brownie (packed with walnuts) for myself (120 baht each).

In the afterglow of such a delicious meal I finally catch up with Amanda, who, after serving her last customer, is chatting with an Australian couple a few tables away.

"We're very happy here. It's a peaceful spot without much passing traffic but, we do have many local regulars already and the Big Buddha is looking down on us so we feel very blessed.

"We're confident we're on the right track. A customer I'd never met before shook my hand recently and said 'Thank you for a touch of Australia in Thailand'." says Amanda.

The other Australian lady sitting at the table nods her head and adds "I just had the steak sandwich – it's just like at home... even the chips".

"I want to make this a fun place to come to, it's open, there's always a cool breeze and we have regular live music and trivia nights. We're going to do a Christmas Day lunch here with turkey, ham and all the trimmings," beams Amanda.

Throughout the meal Filipino guitarist and singer, Edwin, has unobtrusively serenaded us with impeccable versions of songs from Simon and Garfunkel; Sting; Neil Young; REM; U2 and Van Morrison, among others. The food and the music bring back fond memories from the past and looking around I notice that there are a fair number of older clients in evidence, although kids are also present, and have their own sand pit and play area. Around the bar several club members swap tales about their boats, which are seen bobbing within view and the place is busy but now crowded. Amanda and Kim are right, this really is a beautiful spot and I shall return to find out what *polenta* is.

The ACYC restaurant and bar is open every day and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner from 8am to 9pm.

For reservations call Amanda on 0908 908 993 or visit their Facebook page: [facebook.com/aochalongyachtclub](https://www.facebook.com/aochalongyachtclub) Everyone is welcome and there is a 10 per cent discount for ACYC members.



KEY INGREDIENTS: Three chefs awaiting your order.

tomatoes and toast (150 baht) to French toast with grilled mango and maple syrup (140 baht) to grilled *polenta* – whatever that is – and cheddar bread with scrambled eggs (160 baht) and there is even Vegamite available, for those who are really homesick.

"From my experience of travelling and living overseas we all crave 'a taste of home'. Here you have to adjust the food to suit the venue, so this is not really an upmarket venue but everything is homemade, even my mayonnaise. I love food and we only use the best ingredients; New Zealand lamb; Thai pork, locally sourced fish and seafood – except for the New Zealand mussels which taste better," says Kim before disappearing into the newly furnished kitchen to bring out another two plates which happen to be for us.

We ordered the cooked-to-perfection lamb plate served with baked potatoes; crunchy green beans; steamed carrots and peas;



Sunday roast lamb and all the the trimmings.



LIVING THE DREAM: Kim and Amanda love the location.



SWEET: Edwin provides the music while Kim provides the apple crumble and chocolate brownie (below). Photos: Marc Mulloy



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Terminal overload: concessionaires reap record profits

REMEMBER the movie *The Terminal* starring Tom Hanks? Hanks was trapped in JFK International Airport for nine months, befriended by a flight attendant (Catherine Zeta-Jones) and chased by bad guys.

You would think the terminal concessionaires – bookshops, up market retail, food and dining establishments at JFK, would've had a ball keeping someone captive in a terminal for that length of time. Even Tom Hanks has to eat and drink.

His character was forced to live at JFK because of a diplomatic irregularity, wherein, he couldn't enter New York or return home.

That movie could have been made at Phuket International Airport (on a smaller scale), or, Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, with its vast array of shops.

Airport concessionaires are now significant contributors to revenues – but passengers' exposure to them is not necessarily something they want, or need.

Flight delays, caused by the ever increasing amount of air traffic, have led to an explosion in so-called non-aeronautical income – concessions, parking and retail outlets – which are now a huge part of airport profits. In many cases these profits far outstrip traditional aeronautical income from landing, passenger and cargo fees.

Take the US as an example. Concessions have become a crucial part of an airport's income. In 1990 only about 30 per cent of airport revenue came from retail – parting concessions and other such non-aviation businesses. In recent years, that revenue has risen to 50 per cent and higher at some large airports.

Ironically, concessionaires are benefiting from delays at airports caused by an increase in air traffic. Airports don't like delays because they make passengers grumpy. But concessionaires love them.

This brings us to two Thai media reports, which reported that the Airports Authority of Thailand (AOT) has seen a 224 per cent jump in its fiscal third quarter net profit, and Thai Airways International, AOT's single biggest customer, recorded a second quarter loss of 1.46 billion baht.

Digging down into the AOT's huge profit shows revenue from aeronautical



THE LONG WALK HOME: Concessionaires abound in the sprawling terminals of Thailand's ultra-modern Suvarnabhumi Airport. Photo: eGuide Travel

operations (landing charges, passenger and cargo fees) rose 10 per cent while non-aeronautical revenue – concessionaires – retail, parking, other concessions and rentals, rose 10.8 per cent.

Suvarnabhumi Airport is a classic example of terminal overload. Because it is a single terminal, passengers must walk long distances, in general, to their boarding gate past a myriad of up-market concessions of every description. A delayed flight just means more time for eating, drinking or shopping, albeit reluctantly.

As in many other cities, the concessions at Suvarnabhumi are held by one or two companies. In this case King Power is the main concessionaire. Such concessions are hugely profitable. In Atlanta, a family-owned concessionaire reported 48 consecutive years of profitability and growth. A major reason is that concession prices at airports are generally higher because the audience is captive. This means that passengers have already gone

“airside” through security and cannot drive down the road to get cheaper offering.

As concessions have become more profitable, the types of services available have expanded. In addition to the usual restaurants, bars and retail outlets, there are now DVD rentals, massages (already at Suvarnabhumi), nail salons, children's play areas, video game stations and live music. Singapore's Changi Airport ran a live quiz show at one point to pass the time.

Back to AOT's huge profit and THAI's loss. The vast difference in performance sums up, in microcosm, the global dilemma facing airlines. Airports, air traffic control systems, and, for that matter, global distribution systems (like Amadeus, through which your ticketing money is funnelled), all depend on airlines to make money. However, airlines make the least profit by the length of an Airbus A380 wingspan.

The International Air Transport Asso-

ciation, predicts that worldwide airline profit margins for 2012, because of oil prices and the Eurocrisis, among other impacts, will be an anemic 0.5 per cent.

Compare this, for example, with China's six largest airport operators, who in 2010 recorded net operating profits of 32 per cent.

Yet, airports continue to regularly impose higher passenger and freight charges on airlines. Most of them can do this because they are monopoly suppliers, often with government backing since they are also considered strategic assets for a country.

Airports argue that airlines are flexible in responding to economic hardship (cutting routes, grounding aircraft etc) while airports must work on 50 year time frames to invest in infrastructure such as hangars, buildings, gates, fuel farm facilities, terminals, security, runways and taxi ways. Whatever their financial argument, the fact remains that airports make obscene profits from the least profitable part of the aviation value chain – airlines.

Aviation
By Alastair Carthew



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THAI extends female hostess age limit

(THAI) Airways International's board of directors recently agreed to extend the age limit for female flight attendants, hired under outsourcing contract to 45.

The company will consider the performance of each outsource employee annually until the age of 60 before offering a new contract. For outsourced ground employees, THAI will extend the maximum age stipulated in hiring contracts to 60.

Because the company will incur higher expenses from the contract extensions, THAI is reportedly offering a “mutual separation plan”, to female flight attendants over 45-years-of-age, to reduce costs.

The female attendants aged over



A THAI jet leaves Bangkok. Photo: The Nation

45 have been offered a voluntary retirement package ahead of the obligatory retirement age of 60.

Meanwhile, the board has officially made Sorajak Kasemsuvan THAI's new president.

Chokchai Panyayong, executive vice president and acting president of Thai Airways, says the ‘cabin

factor’ of the national carrier increased in August to 78.8 per cent from 74.8 per cent in July. Cabin factor is the percentage of seats sold. THAI will have more flexibility in setting its flight schedule after Thai AirAsia moves all its Bangkok operations to Don Mueang International Airport by October 1, Chokchai said.

“Passenger traffic at Suvarnabhumi Airport will be relaxed. After buying A380 aircraft, Thai Airways plans to increase the number of flights by 10 per cent next year,” he said. The number of passengers flying Thai Airways in August was 1.78 million, up by 9.8 per cent from 1.62 million passengers in the same month last year. – *The Nation*

Jellyfish are back in the spotlight

By Patrick Campbell

A PIECE published recently in a London daily newspaper may have created some unnecessary alarm in Phuket (see page 7). The story concerned a British tourist who apparently fell overboard while on a boat in Thailand. She was so severely stung by jellyfish that she ended up in hospital with the equivalent of third degree burns, not only excruciatingly painful but which necessitated skin grafts. The injuries have apparently led to unsightly and permanent scarring.

A cautionary tale indeed. But, it is important to remember that such an occurrence is extremely rare, and that the unfortunate victim probably had the bad luck to fall into the middle of a large "bloom" or swarm of venomous jellyfish which reacted – as they do – by firing tiny toxic, barbed darts into her unprotected skin.

That she did not receive any immediate treatment would not have helped her cause. Furthermore, and since the blisters turned black the following day, she probably experienced a rare allergic reaction.

Jellyfish are one of the oldest forms of life on the planet, and exist the world over. They vary in size: from the tiny purple ones

Most jellyfish are venomous, but few are likely to produce extreme reactions, and only one, the box jellyfish, is potentially lethal.

often marooned at high tide on Phuket's beaches, to lion's mane jellyfish, with tentacles 80-feet-long. Nomura's jellyfish can have a bell of up to 200 centimeters wide.

Most jellyfish are venomous, but not many are likely to produce extreme reactions, and only one, the box jellyfish, is potentially lethal.

In any case, if you snorkel or dive, you will spot them. Most are translucent, even luminous, and consist of a gelatinous, umbrella-shaped bell and trailing tentacles – beautiful creatures in their own right. It is these tentacles, with up to 2000 stinger cells (nematocytes) per square millimeter, which do the damage.

I swim several times a week in Phuket's seas, and have only ever been stung once. Unlike the lady who likened her ordeal to being cut by hundreds of razor-blades, I felt almost nothing – maybe the plastic

embrace of a bag.

Only when I came ashore did I realize what had happened. I rubbed the red swellings with crushed sea vine leaves – a known antidote – and in the process broke many of the rapidly forming blisters. The following day, I bathed the affected areas with vinegar but it was too late. The discomfort lasted two weeks and red marks remained for six months.

If there are more jellyfish these days it is for two reasons.

One, is that the seas are dumping grounds for nutrients from agricultural runoff. Eutrophication provides ideal conditions for jellyfish which, unlike fish, can find plenty of food in shallow, deoxygenated water.

The second, and more crucial reason, is overfishing: the jellyfishes' natural predators are all in decline – tuna, sharks, swordfish and leatherback turtles. Another example of Mother Nature's delicate balancing act being disrupted.

If you do have the misfortune of being stung, don't rub the wound, which allows blisters to burst and the poison to spread. Apply vinegar (acetic acid) as soon as possible. Every boat and every lifeguard station should carry a bottle or two.



NO BRAINER: Jellyfish have no brain nor central nervous system, but employ a loose network of nerves, located in the epidermis, which is called a "nerve net".. Photo: Jim G



DON'T GO INTO THE LIGHT: An illuminated jellyfish. Photo: James Hawley

New AIDS-like virus affecting Asians



Students at Khon Kaen university's Public Health Program take a test.

RESEARCHERS at the American National Institutes of Health (NIH) have identified a new kind of immunodeficiency syndrome, so far found only among Asian people, which has AIDS-like symptoms, but is not associated with HIV.

The NIH study, released in the New England Journal of Medicine recently, found that patients made antibodies that attacked their immune systems.

Dr Sarah Browne, a clinical investigator at NIH, and lead author on the study, said in an interview with CNN that without healthy immune systems, this deficiency places hosts at risk for diseases that people with healthy immune systems would not normally get. The disease is being called Adult Onset Immunodeficiency Syn-

drome (AOIDS) because evidence suggests it only strikes adults. Recorded cases date back to 2004, with most occurring in Thailand and Taiwan. The NIH has been studying the disease since 2005.

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, the NIH study included 203 adult patients with opportunistic infections (infections that occurred because of a weakened immune system) from sites in Thailand and Taiwan. All participants were HIV-negative and hadn't previously had an identified immunodeficiency disease.

"It's more prevalent in Southeast Asia," Browne said in the interview, "But we have been diagnosing it here in the US in individuals of Asian descent."

So far the NIH has seen 12 cases, all of them in people of Asian descent, and, according to Browne, most patients survive. There have been deaths in other countries, she said, but did not know how many.

Meanwhile here in Thailand, Dr Ploenjan Chetchotisak, of Khon Kaen University's faculty of medicine, said she has treated a patient diagnosed as having scrofula (a tuberculous infection of the lymph nodes in the neck), who received treatment for many years but was not cured completely.

Research conducted by workers

at Srinagarind Hospital in Khon Kaen found that Dr Ploenjan's patient fell into a category similar to that of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE). Srinagarind Hospital has found 80 people who suffer from the disease as of 2007, and has since teamed up with Chiang Mai University and Ramathibodi and Siriraj hospitals to conduct in-depth research about the disease in 129 people. The three hospitals believe it is a new immune-deficiency disease different from AIDS or SLE.

"This new disease is different from AIDS, under which the immune system is destroyed after people are infected with HIV. People who suffer from this new disease have antibodies that destroy the immunity of liver and blood cells. They experience hair loss and rashes," Ploenjan said.

The disease has not been found in children or in adults under 20-years-old and it seems people in Thailand's Northeast have been most affected, followed by the North.

The cause of the disease has not yet been clearly determined, aside from heredity and environmental factors but the disease is not contagious among humans.

One-third of those affected could develop chronic conditions and there is currently no drug to

cure the disease in Thailand. Patients here are being treated according symptoms, while foreign countries use drugs that treat rheu-

matoid arthritis, which, costing up to 100,000 baht per visit, are unaffordable for most people here. – *Phuket Gazette*

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Peace Corps Redux

Books

By James Eckardt

WHAT to make of Paul Theroux? He has written 19 novels and 15 travel books. His travelling persona and fictional characters both share a certain mean-spirited crustiness. But,

his latest novel *The Lower River* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, New York, 2012, 323pp) is written close to the heart. Like Paul Theroux, the narrator Ellis Hock had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi at the time of independence.

Hock ditches the family clothing store in Medford, Massachusetts, along with his wife and daughter, and returns to the village of Malabo, for the first time in 40 years. Here he had spent the happiest four years of his life. What is Malabo like now?

The book is also informed by Theroux's epic travel book of 2002, *Dark Star Safari, an overland trek from Cairo to Capetown*. A consistent nemesis of his travels are the white Non-Governmental

Organization (NGO) workers, riding around in their air-conditioned Land Rovers, who never offer him the slightest bit of courtesy. He distills his hatred of these outside interlopers in the fictional aid organization *Agence Anonyme*, a sinister outfit of military precision with helicopters and walled compounds, which dominates the Lower River region in the south of Malawi, where the Sena tribe ekes out an existence of near starvation.

It must be said straight up that *The Lower River* contains some of Theroux's best prose: the sights, sounds and smells of Africa. "He recognized the flattened landscape at once, a kind of disorder even in the trees and the tall grass, and an order of dust and smoke. It had been different from anything he'd known, not beautiful, too flat and featureless to photograph, but powerful, his first experience of the world, ancient in its simplicities."

Hock finds the 30 huts of Malabo sadly shrunken, the school he had helped build gone to ruin, the destroyed dispensary occupied by an itinerant Witch Doctor, the

church gone to ruin too and the Italian missionary priest long vanished. People suffer from the lassitude of hunger and despair. Feral children, AIDS orphans, run in packs. The exuberance of independence has long subsided into sullen cynicism. The villagers had once entranced Hock with their dignity and innocence and gentleness. "All that had vanished, and what was worse, not even a memory of it remained. They weren't corrupt now; they were changed, disillusioned, shabby, lazy, dependent, blaming, selfish; they were like most people."

Hock's own generation has largely died out. The old chief's grandson, Manyenga, now rules in his place, systemically cadging money from Hock while keeping him in a lethargic prison of inertia.

"Time, too, was retarded or else crazed, circular, inverted, as it might be in deep space, in one of those black holes into which the science fiction writers trucked their voyagers. Hock could not remember when he had arrived."

Keeping vigil with him on the porch of his hut is Snowdon, a demented dwarf, and the illiterate teenager Zizi who cares for his daily needs.

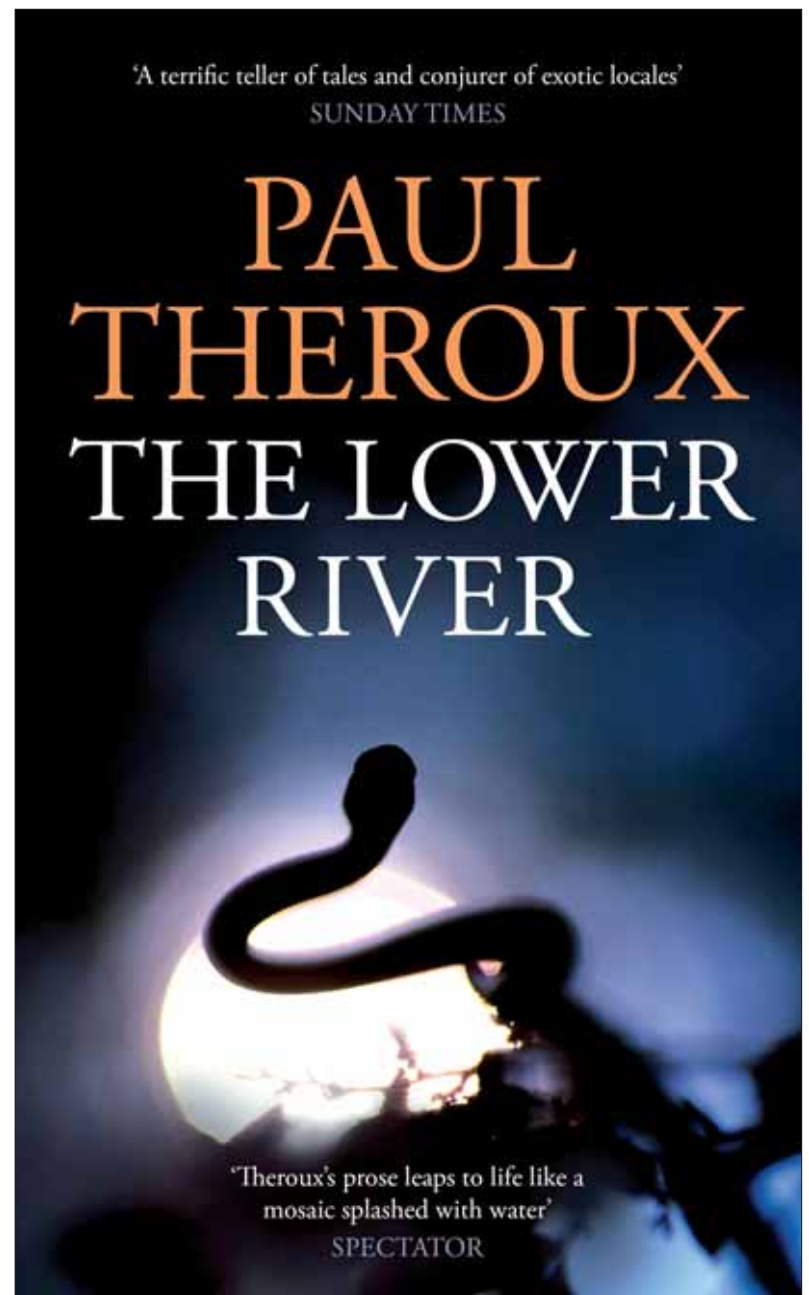
"In the tall, fixed, vigilant way she stood when she was idle, Zizi reminded him of a water bird, head erect, her arms tucked like wings, one skinny leg lifted and crooked against the other, like the elder sister of those stately herons at the edge of the Dinde marsh, the thin upright birds planted in the mud on big feet."

Zizi is the granddaughter of Gala, the thin, bright-eyed fellow teacher whom he had loved in the old days. Now old, obese and



A Malawi fisherman Photo:Lars Plougmann

"Time, too, was retarded or else crazed, circular, inverted, as it might be in deep space, in one of those black holes into which the science fiction writers trucked their voyagers."



SOUTH OF MALAWI: A heartbreaking portrait of modern Africa.

broken in health, Gala warns him to get out of Malabo: "Once they have eaten your money, they will eat you."

Hock makes his escape down river toward Mozambique only to fall captive again to a strange village of AIDS orphans, sustained by flights of the food supply helicopter of *Agence Anonyme*. Hock comes face to

face with the first white people he's seen in months, only to be ignored. He winds up back in Malabo.

The novel stretches out too long in the same eerie stasis. The pages could be shorter and the pace quicker, but the climax is swift and full of surprises. Theroux has delivered a heartbreaking portrait of modern Africa as well as a damned good read.

A most excellent movie

Film

EVERY now and again a film comes along that is genuinely touching. This is one such film and is now available to own on DVD. It tells a charming story of a random group of English retirees who for various reasons are retiring in India.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel represents the best of British cinematic dry humor in the vein of *Love Actually* and *Shaun of the Dead* and despite its theme younger viewers will find something to enjoy here. The accomplished ensemble includes Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench and *Slumdog Millionaire* star Dev Patel. The story follows seven British retirees who opt to 'outsource' their retirements to India. When they arrive at a hotel, unrecognizable from the brochure, the seven characters face up to the new challenges and learn to let go of the past.



CHECK OUT: A five star cast in a two star hotel.

Like any film set in India, the country itself becomes a central character and is always present in the background.

There are strong storylines throughout the film, which should

hit home with many resident expats living in Phuket whether they be retirees or not. For everyone else it is just a lovely story told with great aplomb.

— Marc Mulloy

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Kanittha Prasopsirikul

KANITTHA Prasopsirikul has been in a meeting all morning. She finally emerges for our interview at 2pm bearing no obvious signs of fatigue. Dressed in a designer's white lace jacket and matching short pants, she looks stylish, smart and elegant.

The poised Director of Sales for Royal Phuket Marina has been with the company for eight years – most of which time she was stationed in Bangkok, but took occasional trips to Phuket. With an increasing workload she finally moved here three months ago.

"I am a city girl and have always resisted settling down in Phuket. Although I did spend a lot of my time here doing business for RPM, I always regarded Phuket from the point of view of a visitor," says Kanittha. "Now that I live here, the real Phuket is beginning to reveal itself, and for the better!"

As RPM is expanding its portfolio, Kanittha, who has a long and successful career in property marketing with top Bangkok and international real estates companies, is here to lend her expertise and help build a "strong sales team".

It's obvious that she is a perfect fit for the job. Having grown up in a family of property developers and bankers, Kanittha learned the tools of the trade early on by accompanying her father to construction sites and witnessing him completing deals. Couple that with her confidence, energy and commit-

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

ment and she embodies a formidable marketing executive.

"I learned a lot from my father who taught me to be sensitive to the mentality of different client sectors who will respond to different marketing tactics and strategies. 'Make sure,' he used to say, 'you study your customers before even attempting any sales,'" she says.

Born in Sri Racha, Chonburi, young Kanittha dreamed of becoming an air stewardess, a vision shared by many Thai girls in the 1980s. Somehow, fate had other plans and she ended up doing a degree in international business studies at the Chamber of Commerce University in Bangkok.

"Four years at the college and I quickly realized that there was more to life than dressing up in pretty uniforms and serving drinks on airplanes."

A series of jobs followed and while working as a sales executive for premier estate agent CBRE in Bangkok she met her present boss Gulu Lalvani, proprietor of Royal Phuket Marina.

"When Mr Lalvani told me his vision to create an Asian yachting

paradise in Phuket, I was intrigued. I thought I had just about covered everything there was in the property market: residential, condominiums, offices, and factories [except for industrial estates]. Working for RPM, with its fantastic residences completed with marina, fills the gap in my folio."

It's a challenge, she admits, marketing this new and unique product, but something she regards as an opportunity to learn and grow. "My boss encourages me to think outside of the box and I love his creative working ways. It's refreshing and different from anything else I used to know."

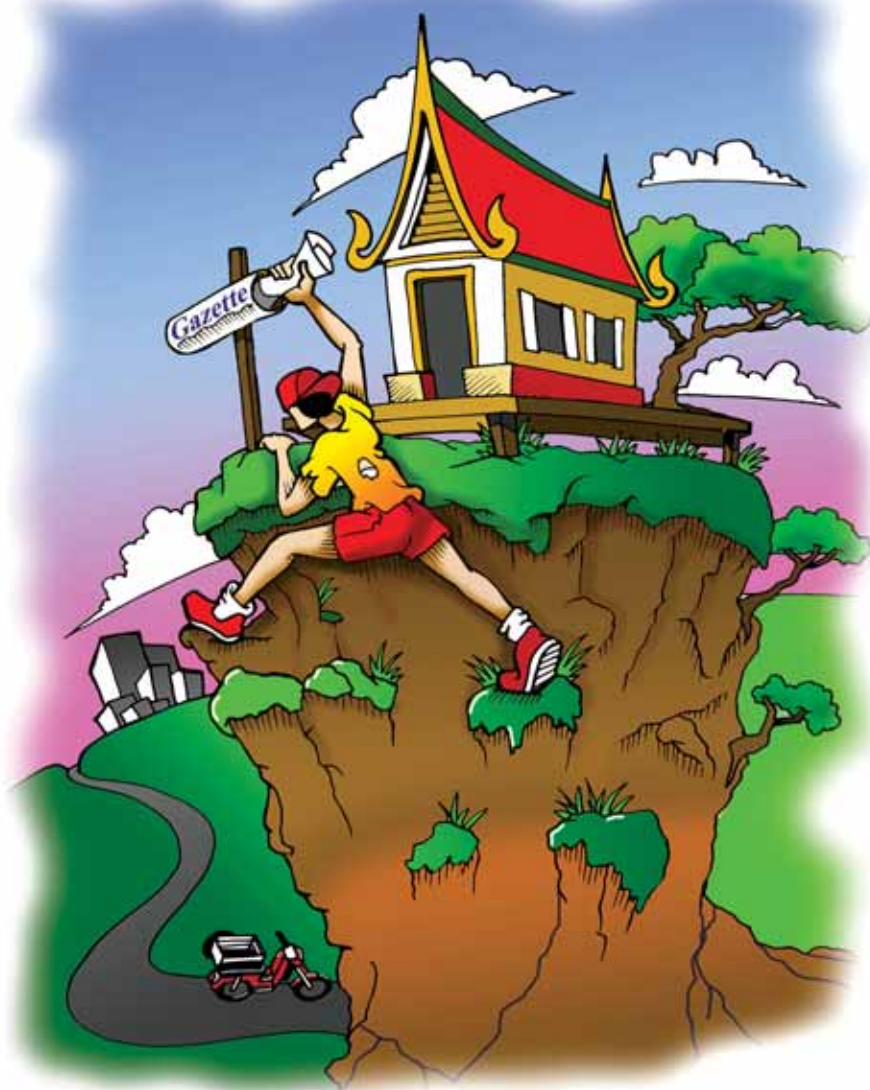
A fast and hard-working executive whose days are usually long, Kanittha nevertheless makes time to indulge her passion: food, especially street food. As with any self-respecting Thai, Kanittha and friends will seek out the best of gastronomic establishments. Being a native of Chonburi (with its multitude of sugar refineries) she also has sweet tooth. "I just love my afternoon tea with cream cakes and do have a problem keeping my weight stable."

When asked what the future holds for her, Kanittha answers: "I have two life-guiding principles. Firstly, 'do your very best today'. Secondly, 'I believe in miracles and never lose faith in life'. When opportunity knocks, I am there to answer the call."



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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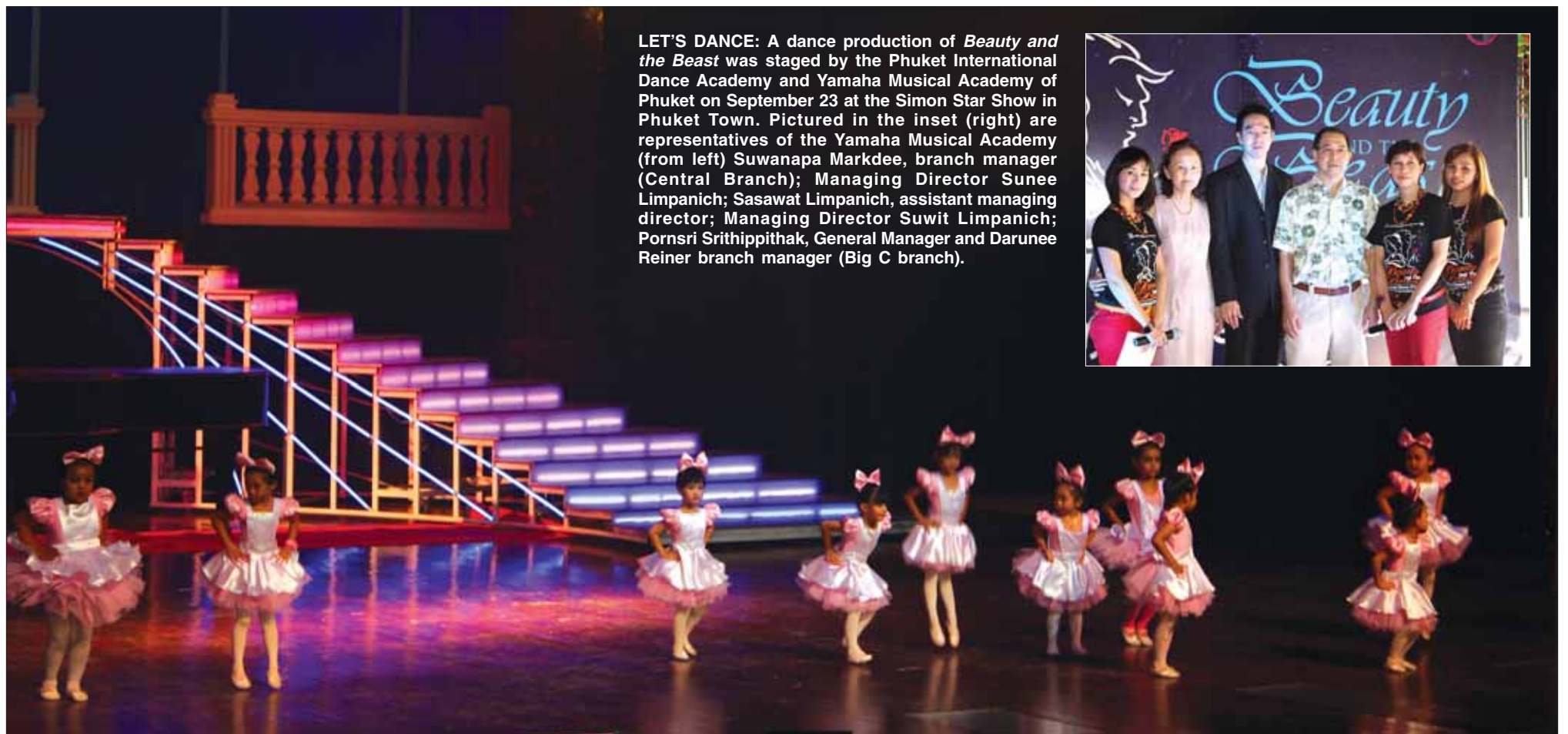
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UPWARDLY MOBILE: A mobile unit from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Phuket for an educational seminar on the Asean Economic Community (AEC) that will take effect in 2015. Pictured here are Vichitsongkram School students, with Secretary to The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Navin Boonses (center white shirt), associates and the principal of the school. Photo: Dan Miles Media



LET'S DANCE: A dance production of *Beauty and the Beast* was staged by the Phuket International Dance Academy and Yamaha Musical Academy of Phuket on September 23 at the Simon Star Show in Phuket Town. Pictured in the inset (right) are representatives of the Yamaha Musical Academy (from left) Suwanapa Markdee, branch manager (Central Branch); Managing Director Sunee Limpanich; Sasawat Limpanich, assistant managing director; Managing Director Suwit Limpanich; Pornsri Srithippithak, General Manager and Daranee Reiner branch manager (Big C branch).



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YOUR

Phuket



NONOGENARIAN: An extraordinary guest was honored at the Tropica Bungalow Hotel and Restaurant in Patong, on September 22, when Mr Louis Filli, now ninety-years-young, celebrated his birthday, which was attended by the Swiss Honorary Consul of Phuket, Andrea Kotas Tammathin and Tropica's veteran GM Khun Jo Jo. Mr Filli has visited Patong and the Tropica Hotel more than sixty times over the past twenty years.



KISS AND TELL: The Mövenpick Resort and Spa had a staff party recently where a Gene Simmons lookalike turned up but not the GM Hansruedi Frutiger... unless of course the man in the make-up was..., nah, it couldn't be, could it?



NIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN: Some *Phuket Gazette* staff were 'caught' in the act at The CATCH Beach Club 'white party', which was held on September 22 to celebrate Twin palms' 8th anniversary.



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TOUCH OF FEEL-GOOD

Spa business is getting better in Asia, P12-15



BOLD STATEMENT

Singaporean entrepreneur offers beauty biz tips, P24



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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

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September 30, 8am to 5pm: Dive Against Debris

Join the largest underwater cleanup of its kind in the World! We'll be *Diving Against Debris*, removing hazardous rubbish and surveying from the Chalong Pier. This is the largest volunteer effort to protect our ocean that Phuket has ever seen. Want to get involved? Contact Tony Andrews at: 76-286722. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the *Phuket Today* show on UBC/True Visions (Channel 99).

October 5, 19; 7 to 11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket

Curry Fridays at Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian curry buffet. Dishes like chicken Tikka Masala, very hot Mutton Vindaloo, succulent Kebabs, Goan fish curry and much more. All served with Naan bread and Basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett. Draught beer by the glass: just 50 baht nett. Special discount on beverages. Located at Navrang Mahal India Restaurant in Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa. From 7 to 11pm. For reservations: 076-286464, ext 4.

October 6, 13; 7:30 to 10pm: BBQ Buffet at RPM Yacht Club

BBQ Dinner Buffet with live music every Saturday. Special promotion for just 500 baht ++. Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat at 081-797 3364.

October 6-7, 8am to 5pm: Thanyapura Open 2012 at the Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club

Identifying & Marketing 'Brand Phuket': Culture & Heritage

The Phuket PR Network and AMCHAM are delighted to hold another collaborative event designed to create awareness about Phuket's diverse history, mainly focusing on its Peranakan roots. Dr Yongtanit Pimonsathean, Faculty of Architecture and Planning at Thammasat University, Bangkok, will be our main guest speaker for this event.

ADMISSION: 300 baht, including networking drinks and finger food.
PRESENTATIONS: 6pm.
NETWORKING: 7pm.
DINNER: 8pm. 1,000 baht net. Spend Friday night savoring Blue Elephant's fantastic cuisine. They're offering a special set menu inspired by Phuket Town's history for this event. The dinner will be served family style.

September 29, 12 to 3pm: Saturday Brunch @ Two Chefs

Every Saturday we set 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: twochefs.com.

September 29, 6:30 to 10pm: BBQ Dinner at RPM Yacht Club

BBQ Dinner Buffet with live music every Saturday. Special promotion for just 500 baht ++. Reservations recommended. Please email: events@royalphuketmarina.com or call Khun Mai at 084-306-6729.

September 30, 10am to 5pm: Thanyapura Open Day

Come and join us for a day of sports fun! Get free access to club facilities, fun games and activities, and entertainment by local schools' music band performances. Free sports activities: Pool Challenge, Yoga, Zumba, Muay Thai, Spinning, Power Plate, Altitude training, Soccer, Tennis, Aquatics, Triathlon. Also Spa, Kids Club, Arts for Fun, vendor booths and Thai street foods. If you'd like more information, please telephone: +66 (0)76 336000, or email

Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club is holding it's first 6-a-side soccer tournament in a 32-team draw for the Open Category with a round robin round and final to be held at the club's 1,500-seat 'Limonta Soccer Pro' artificial turf complex in Thalang. The winner, runner up, 3rd and 4th placing's will receive cash prizes of 20,000, 10,000, 4,000 and 2,000 baht, with trophies respectively. Registration fee is 3,000 baht per team and there is an insurance fee of 1,000 baht per team. The insurance fee will be fully refunded to the team after completion of the tournament without any penalty. Registration deadline is September 30 and the tournament draw will be held on October 1.

October 8, 5 to 11:30pm: Plum Wine Dinner at Cape Sienna Hotel Phuket

Cape Sienna, IWS and Carpineto Winery invite you to a celebration of Tuscan Food and Wine at the Plum Restaurant - Cape Sienna Hotel & Villas on Monday, October 8. Only 1,850 baht net per person, including matching wines. For reservations: fb@capesienna.com or call 076-337300.

October 13, 27; 12 to 3:30pm: Saturday Brunch @ Two Chefs

Every Saturday we set 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: twochefs.com.

October 15-23, The Phuket Vegetarian Festival

This festival is an annual event held during the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar. Though the origins of the festival are unclear, it celebrates the Chinese community's belief that a strict diet of 'vegetables only' will purify the mind and body and constitute merit-making. Sacred rituals are performed at all Chinese temples in Phuket. The processions from each temple show strict vegetarians, known as *Mah Song*, ostensibly possessed by gods, piercing their tongues, cheeks and other parts of the anatomy with sharp implements.

October 18, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch

The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch will be held at The Boathouse in Kata. All are welcome but registration is essential. Members 500 baht and guests 650 baht. Contact info@phuketiwc.com.

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

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

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Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - October 10, 1-3pm

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COFFEE break

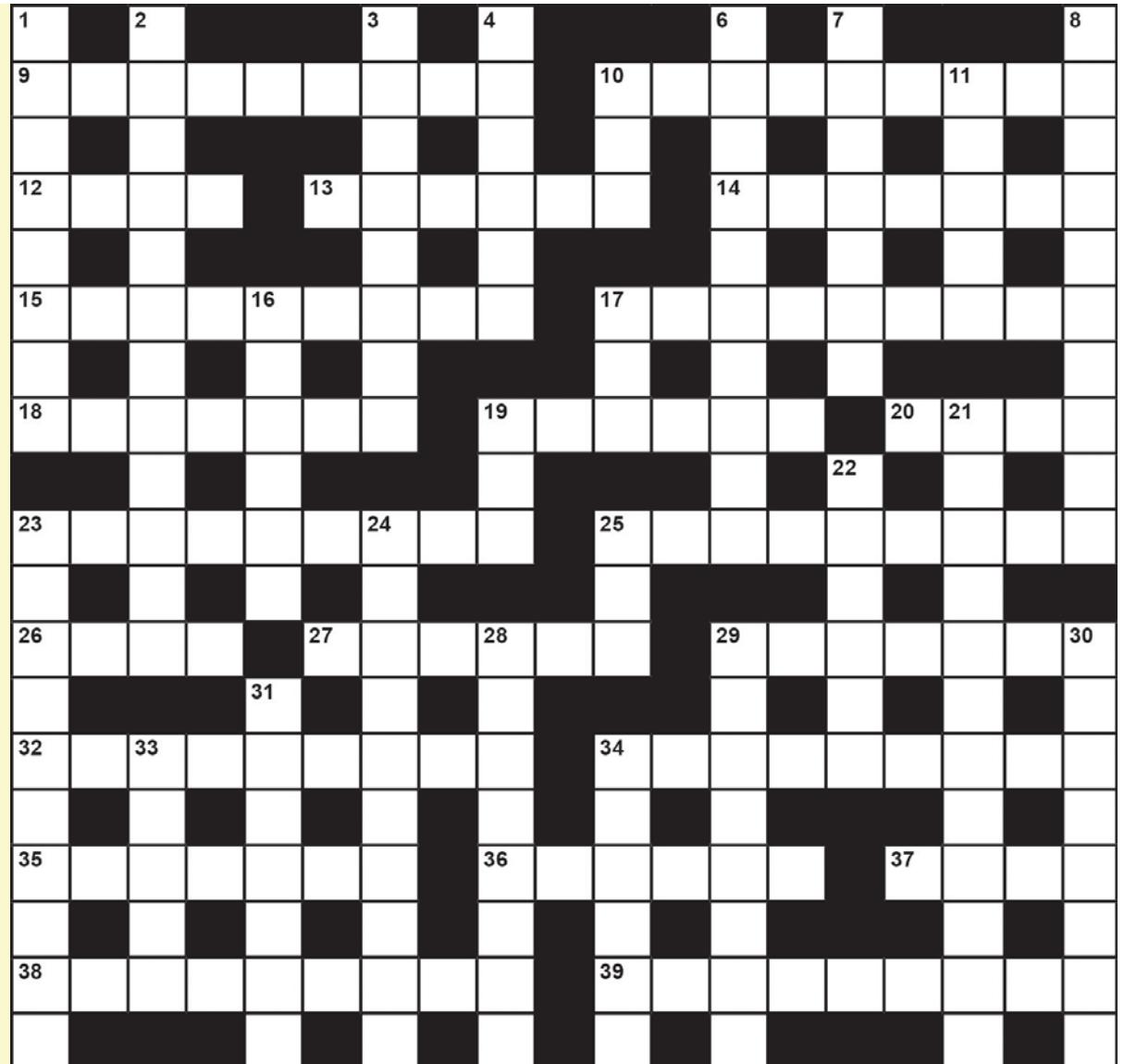
Across

9. Religious Old Turk sounds like a strong feller! (9)
10. P.R.'s please, moving all office work on computer! (9)
12. Suddenly curtail passport stamp (4)
13. Maybe dies in the interior (6)
14. With cheek, do get good luck in Thailand (5,2)
15. In a bit, rain becomes the image of Britain (9)
17. Took part, almost not moved, finished (9)
18. Each range of food offered edible (7)
19. High hat, cap, for each (6)
20. Avoid Huns anyway (4)

23. Get to other side in posh SUV (9)
25. Skinflint, clever but unhappy (9)
26. In Northeast, good man has a retreat (4)
27. Many a flower in a golf club! (6)
29. Political clique is almost fiction (7)
32. Get inner turmoil left in, giving way (9)
34. Abandoning arid island, no return (9)
35. Construct hut area in part of Phuket (3,4)
36. Drove slowly, in addition was first (6)
37. Reasonable show (4)
38. Leave flat (5,4)
39. Pale diver arranged to have got to the top (9)

Down

1. 'Morning!' I telegraph in a friendly way (8)
2. Partnerships form mental



- connections (12)
3. Nice men moving East have distinction (8)
4. Gain an awful complaint (6)
5. Amphetamines catch the traffic policeman (5,3)
6. Ice present, melting in places above origins of tremors (10)
7. Opened door, went first, salivated (7)
8. Maybe a scene can cover date of gaining dominance (10)

11. Need move daughter over (5)
16. Sailor Elizabeth is head of religious order (6)
19. Sailor thanks king (3)
21. Mongrel is clever, is capable of being crossed (12)
22. A strong drink, or two, right? (6)
23. Tory client disengages penitently (10)
24. Call it very odd. Straight up! (10)
25. Spoil Mother, right? (3)
28. Get a vet out, note, do not

- move! (8)
29. Fellow steered wrongly, rankled (8)
30. Drat. None arranged uncommercial goods and services (3-5)
31. Bore rude Ned, somehow (7)
33. Beast of burden turns up in a shopping complex (5)
34. Wilts, so drop out (6)

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

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



No matter how you look at a work related situation, the facts aren't going to change. The stars suggest that October will bring a more practical outlook on problems and Librans should be encouraged to take the action they have been avoiding. Those with a birthday in the week ahead will find that there is more on offer in the world of work during the coming year. Your lucky number this week is six.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



There are signs that Scorpions will have to let someone down at the last minute this week. If this is work related, the stars advise providing an attractive alternative – even if the cost is higher than you would like, it will be worth it in the long run. On a personal level, another water sign's disappointment can be well masked. The number five has good luck written on it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Counting the small change is advisable for those born under the sign of Sagittarius as October begins. The stars suggest that this can be an expensive month, with focus on family needing more

financial support than usual. Best days for business are Tuesday and Wednesday. Your romantic outlook is favorable; another fire sign is keen to put a relationship on a more committed level. Number eight looks special this week.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



Energy is sparked off by a successful start to October for Capricorns. There are hints that the chance of work related travel will be strong towards the middle of the month. It would be wise to make organization a priority before then; another earth sign colleague can be trusted, but a fire sign is thinking of moving on. Hot days for romance are Sunday and Monday. Number four can be fortunate this week.

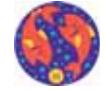
AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



This is an auspicious time to get feedback on your ideas. The month of October is highlighted to be a productive one where creativity is concerned. In the realm of romance, your idea of having a good time this weekend is set to clash with that of a partner's. Those who are single and seeking could be surprised by interest from an earth sign. Your lucky number this week is nine.

YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):



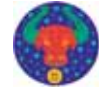
Your spirits are lifted by gestures from others this week. Those Pisceans who end September on a sad note will soon see the lighter side of life again. A fire sign friend is ready to encourage you to explore a different social scene this weekend and an air sign's invitation to include you in their physical exercise routine is worth considering. Number seven can be important this week.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):



Working with others can be affected by an unsettled cosmic climate as October starts. Those born under the sign of Aries are advised to tone down their approach, particularly when communicating with those in authority. Taking a leaf out of a successful earth sign's book can be beneficial and future collaboration with this person is well starred. Romance combines well with relaxation this weekend. Number one shines for Arians this week.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



Taureans should have ample opportunity for enjoyment during the month of October as the social scene is set to sparkle. Your ability to pour oil on troubled waters will be appreciated by friends who have fallen out. A money related issue that seemed like a big deal turns out to be a drop in the bucket and your financial outlook becomes more secure. Your lucky number this week is two.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



New skills are waiting to be learned and the stars suggest that you will be in the right mood to embrace them during October. Expect a water sign to point you in the right direction during the days ahead, with your earning power set to increase as a result. The stars caution against rushing into financial agreements before the middle of the month. Number five comes alive for Geminis this week.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Many of those born under the sign of Cancer will be looking at ways to give back during October. The stars show that appreciating your luck in life motivates you to doing

more for others and your experience can be of great value. Where personal relationships are concerned, there are signs that you should show sensitivity towards another water sign this weekend. The number three can bring good fortune this week.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



An unexpected encounter at the start of October encourages Leos to rekindle a work related project that was left on the back burner. Romance is well-starred and there are signs that you will be ready to make commitments. A relationship with a water sign that has been up in the air settles down, and love with another fire sign burns more strongly. Leos' lucky number this week is four.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



An unsettled astral atmosphere means that your world of work is subject to change during the first half of October. Taking new information on board can be a challenge for Virgoans, but an air sign is ready to encourage you to see a brighter future. In the realm of romance, you have reason to realize that every cloud has a silver lining. Number eight can be special this week.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

Karon to get a touch of chic

CHIC Condominium will be a seven-floor, ultra modern estate, overlooking Karon Bay. It will feature a large communal swimming pool, fitness center, WiFi lounge and lobby.

The estate is set on a gentle hillside, which allows many of the condos fantastic sea and sunset views. Following the demand for Chic Condominium Tower 1, work is about to begin on Chic Condominium Tower 2.

The *Phuket Gazette* spoke to Kuncharat Kulwattanasopon, of New Style Construction Company, about the development.

Phuket Gazette: When do you expect phase 2 to be completed?

Kuncharat Kulwattanasopon: Phase 2 is expected to be completed in April, 2014.

PG: How big are the rooms in phase 2?

KK: 44 square meters (Studio 1 bathroom) and 92 sqm (2 bedrooms 2 bathroom).

PG: Will phase 2 share the facilities already at phase 1 or will it have its own facilities?

KK: Phase 2 will share the phase 1 facilities except the car

parking facility. Phase 2 will have its own parking space underneath the building.

PG: How much are the units in phase 2, and how much are the units in phase 1?

KK: In phase 2, the price ranges from 2.55 million baht to 7.36 mn baht. In phase 1, the price ranges from 2.49 mn baht to 6.14 mn baht.

PG: How much of phase 1 and phase 2 has been sold?

KK: Phase 1 has sold about 70 per cent and phase 2 has sold about 35 per cent

PG: What modern conveniences will be in the units?

KK: Standard bathrooms, one air-conditioner and a standard built-in kitchen. We also have a furniture package if the client requests, but this will be sold at an extra charge.

PG: What market are you aiming for with Chic condominium?

KK: Mostly foreign investors but also local residents.

For more information on Chic Condominiums, visit their website; phuketchiccondo.com

– *The Phuket Gazette*



C'EST CHIC: An CGI photo of what Chic Tower 2 exterior will look like once it is completed next year.



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Phuket's very own superhero



By Bill Barnett

GROWING up, I never quite got into comic book superheroes. Sure there was *Superman*, *Batman and Robin*, *The Flash* and frankly more than I could list in an entire column. I preferred reading books or watching those old black and white classic movies to all that 'slam bam thank you ma'am'.

Hollywood got hold of the trend and even developed its own action-made genre of heroes and villains from *The Terminator*, *Rambo* and yes that very innocuous flick *Demolition Man*.

Out in the dark corners of my memory, I recall watching the latter movie on an airplane some 30,000 feet above the ground and the only lasting scene was a young Sandra Bullock. Sorry Sly, you had your day.

Now back on point, Phuket has its very own modern superhero, penned no doubt out of some late night churnalistic coughing fit as the one we now know as "*The Demolisher*".

Bearing down on our very island that could well turn into Gotham City, came a super-fighter, set to stamp out the evils of greed and corruption and ready to bounce law breakers back into the stone age.

Now, I have never met him. Like the vast majority of you, I can only rely on what I read in the newspaper, see on television and gather from the growing

amount of people on the island who have come into contact with him and his associates.

Writing this starts me thinking that all this superhero talk needs a soundtrack.

Rifling through my iTunes, a moment of true inspiration brings me to the OST of that superb action drama *Shaft*. Now Issac Hayes, he'd fit right in at our favorite beach club, Catch.

By the time this article comes out on Saturday, no doubt new twists and turns will have emerged, quicker than a blast down the Singapore Formula 1 street circuit. The latest news had those listed on the naughty list pushed up to 12 resorts and developments.

Newcomers are now Istana and Malaiwana. Come on down and join the police line-up as the elusive hit list continues to expand.

In the past I've received criticism for being pro-business, pro-development and even termed a "dark cynical skeptic". This is fine, and it's water off my back. If you want to write a newspaper column, be prepared to take it, just like you dish it out.

But, for the record, I am perhaps best self-penned as pro-Phuket.

Yes, I can say a portion of my business is based on the tourism and property sector of the island. Does this mean I put on rose-colored glasses on a rainy day and stay outside when lightning is about to strike? Not necessarily.

My search is for balance. The older we get, the more we understand the true nature of imperfect personal relationships,



WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY: Many people have praised the bold actions of Phuket's own superhero. But, does this kind of enforcement scare away law-abiding businesses? Photo: Robin van Mourik

friends and foes, and ultimately the entire way the universe bounces us around for a lifetime of utter confusion.

And yet I try to stay on course. I am a voice lost in the wilderness, protesting, what, in my opinion, is an exercise out of the Catholic Church's Grand Inquisition, or even those Joseph McCarthy hearings meant to root out communists in America. The current frenzy over encroachment at Sirinath National Park has the potential to detail Phuket's most valuable commodity – its brand.

I'm not going to debate the issue of flying titles or corrupt land officials falsifying documents. If this was done, they deserve to be punished.

But for businesses like Trisara or Malaiwana, who have invested

billions based on land titles that have repeatedly passed legal due diligence and in fact are issued by the Land Department of the Thai government, they are unfairly being demonized and threatened with financial ruin.

There is such a thing as due process within the legal system. And while media-friendly officials speak with haste about alleged infractions, and the penultimate threat of the demolition of private assets, what balance do they provide for those who have gone about doing business by the rules in Thailand?

While the entire island moans about the eminent threat of mass tourism and calls remain vocal to take a growth path to retain an upscale positioning and attract quality not quantity, actions speak louder than words.

In the world of business the

barbarian at the gate is the unknown, or shall we say risk. Phuket has now turned on some of its best and brightest businesses and created a dark pathway leading into the unknown.

What's at stake in the current round of investigations goes considerably further than those multi-million dollar ultra villas and posh resorts, and strikes at the heart of the legitimacy of titles throughout the island issued by the Land Department.

I have no issue with government officials doing their jobs and even the *Demolition Man* pursuing those who have reportedly broken the law. But shooting first and asking questions later could very well damage our own island in ways we never imagined.

In the recurring age of reborn superheroes, perhaps it's better to tune into real life and not simply find a way to make it into the headlines.

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



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AEC to create local competition

THE Asean Economic Community (AEC) will offer new expansion opportunities for Thai property developers, though they will also face tight competition from regional investors, property experts warned last week.

Chainid Ngowsirimane, CEO of Property Perfect, said that once the AEC goes into effect in 2015, the residential market for local property firms would expand from 65 million people in Thailand to a regional market of 600 million. However, this will also open the local property market to foreigners.

He said local property firms that were strong enough could easily expand their presence regionally, depending on each country's foreign-investment regulations, once the AEC goes into effect.

Several Thai property firms



POISON CHALICE: AEC will create competition for Thais. Photo: Aseansecretariate

have already started expanding overseas. For instance, Pruksa Real Estate is now in Vietnam, India and the Maldives, Land & Houses has entered California, Sansiri is in London and Central Pattana is investing in Italy and China.

Thamrong Panyasakul-wong, president of the Thai Condominium Association, said that

though AEC will offer wider opportunities to Thai property firms, they should also be prepared for tight competition from foreign investors, especially in the hospitality industry. "The AEC can be both good and bad for Thai property developers, depending on the firms' financial health," he said.

— Somlock Srimalee

Thai property investors to face AEC land ownership hurdles

By Somluck Srimalee

ALTHOUGH the Asean Economic Community (AEC) will open up opportunities for Thai investors in other countries in the region, they will have to be concerned about barriers to entering the property sector in those nations, experts have said.

They voiced this view at a seminar titled "AEC: Pros and Con for the Property Sector", conducted by the Real Estate Information Centre.

Prasert Taedullayasatit, director and chief business officer of Pruksa Real Estate, who has experience with investing in Vietnam, said Thai developers would need to study local laws and find the best partners when expanding into ASEAN countries.

Each nation has its own set of barriers to foreign businesses entering the property sector, especially regarding land-ownership rights. These affect residential projects, office buildings, and the hospitality business, he said.

"It took three years after deciding in 2009 to invest in Vietnam, before launching our first project there worth 3.5 billion baht this year," he said.

The main problems in Vietnam are rights to own land and the economy, which faced high inflation in 2010, which had a negative impact on business expansion, Prasert said.

Colliers International Thailand Associate Director Tony Picon said Myanmar

currently had one of the highest barriers to property developers, with the requirement that foreign investors may only operate in a joint venture in which the local partner has at least a 51 per cent interest, which is also the case in Thailand.

However, he said the demand in the property sector would grow strongly in AEC countries, especially Myanmar, where the supply of office space, serviced apartments and hotels was not enough to serve the market. This has driven the rental price of office space in Yangon to US\$150 (4,620 baht) per square meter per month, compared with US\$30 for a grade A office in Bangkok.

James Pitchon, executive director of CB Richard Ellis Thailand Co, said all the countries in ASEAN had barriers to entering the property sector. However, some of them still needed investment in this sector, including Vietnam and Cambodia.

Like Myanmar, those two countries have an insufficient supply of residential, office, and hotel facilities to serve the demand that will see strong growth when the AEC becomes effective in 2015, bringing in new investment from multinational companies, he said.

Suphin Meechuchep, managing director of Jones Lang LaSalle (Thailand), said the supply of office space in Jakarta was only 4.3 million square meters, or just over half of Bangkok's 8 million sqm. But Jakarta has an



COMPETITIVE EDGE: ASEAN will allow increased competition in Thailand. Photo: Gunawan Kartapranata

office vacancy rate of only 5 per cent, strongly indicating growing demand for office space.

In the Philippines, demand for residential projects is also growing strongly, especially for condominiums priced lower than 3 million baht. Most developers who invest in condos and open them to rental will see returns of 6 per cent per year, she said.

Malaysia and Singapore also have strong demand in the residential and hospitality sectors and the governments of both countries encourage foreign investors to come in. This is in contrast to the more difficult situation in other AEC countries, said Poramet Chantanakomet, country head of DTZ (Thailand).



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Picturing the green within



INSIDE EDITION: Even in Phuket the successful cultivation of indoor plants will require lots of tender love and care. Photos: gailf548, Maja Dumat, Michael Pieracci



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

WRITING about indoor plants in Phuket is a bit like bringing coals to Newcastle. In other words, why bother with house plants when all around your doubtless estimable property is a riot of tropical greenery?

I'll return to that. But, living in cool climates, it always did seem desirable to grow plants indoors.

By careful management of room conditions, you might summon an exotic touch to the drab colors and leafless landscape of a European winter. Brought up in austerity Britain, I recall my father bringing home our first houseplants, probably raised, as they still often are, in heated greenhouses in Holland.

The earliest was the so-called "rubber plant", actually a fig (*ficus elastica*), which can attain fifty feet in Thailand. Though these modest fellows came in small pots, at least their leathery, glossy leaves, offered

something different from anything in the garden outside. Soon African violets and variegated *coleus* became the rage, then Boston ferns and coconut palms sporting two or three elongated leaves. Much, much later, I tried *brugmansias* with their huge pendulous trumpets, and calatheas, which sported striking blotched or striped foliage with reddish undersides.

They were, I recall, known as prayer plants, because their leaves, in an example of phototropism, turned to face what

watery sun they could find.

Frankly none of them was a runaway success, apart from a *monstera deliciosa*, which I knew as a Swiss cheese plant, and which lived up to its name: it assumed such gargantuan proportions in my loft, it finally had to be given away. Still at least all these offered something more exotic and tropical, a flourish of greenery in a world dominated by concrete walls.

In fact, it may surprise some readers to learn that there is no such thing as an "indoor plant" per se: only certain varieties that can handle the additional stress of surviving in an unnatural environment – rooted in restrictive containers with little or no fresh air, no rain to raise the humidity levels, no direct sunshine.

Even in the rainforest, where so many plants exist under the canopy of massive forest trees, they at least enjoy a moist atmosphere and organic soil conditions.

Finally, remember that home interiors are tainted by exhalations from chemicals such as paint, household cleaners, aerosols and by higher levels of carbon dioxide. Air conditioning is especially difficult for plants to take. So, even in Phuket, successful cultivation of indoor plants is going to require lots of tender loving care.

Enough provisos? I think so. But, we wouldn't be without them. They add an aesthetic dimension to a living space,

especially large sculptural specimens such as palms, which can enormously enhance a modern setting, or ferns which add contrast to a bathroom.

Smaller plants generally look better if they are raised above floor level. On the other hand, plants that have a tall, slender or columnar habit such as many *dracaenas* look their best when placed at ground level.

Here's a test. Remove your plants for a few days. How stark your room will immediately look without their verdant presence. Incidentally, taking your darlings outside may not be good from an aesthetic point of view, but as a horticultural strategy, it is of paramount importance, since it will give them a much-appreciated breathing space in more natural surroundings.

But whatever you do, don't suddenly dunk them in direct sunlight. Simply transfer them to a shady, sheltered spot for a few days of rest and recuperation. Nothing too drastic.

Ever since I have lived in Phuket, I have experimented with plants indoors. And now I think I have stumbled across a few, a mere handful, that will survive the hazards of your *boudoir*. Next week I shall reveal all.

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured, you can email me anytime at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com



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Tip of the week

SOMETIMES classified as a bamboo palm because its un-sheathed stems are straight and bamboo-like, the lady palm is in fact distinct from those that belong to the *chamaedorea* family. American in origin, these low growing palms are characterized by feathery fronds, no discernible trunks and rarely exceeding four feet.

Shade lovers, they require plenty of moisture, since they come from the understorey of rainforests. Hence, their suitability as an interior ornamental.

Also pressed into indoor service, and now very fashionable in the USA, Europe and Australia, is the *kentia* or thatch-leaf palm (*howea fosteriana*). On Howe Island, it forms a substantial tree with large pinnate and arching fronds.

Very slow-growing in a container, it is particularly tolerant of poor and shady conditions. Another good house plant – if you can find it in Phuket.

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Properties For Rent

5 STUDIOS & POOL AT CHALONG



1 bed, kitchen & share pool: for short, long term. Quiet place. Price: 14,000-20,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-809 2625. Email: phuketdee1@yahoo.com

PATONG 1-3 BED APARTMENTS

WiFi, maid, pool, gym, security, cable TV. From 24,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-052 8082 (English & Thai). Email: phvcondo@aol.com

BOAT LAGOON VILLA

Luxury pool villa, 4 bedrooms, garden, security. Long term rent: 70,000 baht. Close to BIS and major malls. Tel: 081-958 7684.

POOL VILLA IN CHALONG

Pool villa in the heart of Chalong, just behind the pier in secure gated community. Fully furnished, WiFi, cable TV, 14 meter shared salt water pool, landscaped gardens. Sorry no pets or kids. Email: andrew.gar@hotmail.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

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



Near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

B.L. APARTMENT

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

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

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

BOAT LAGOON HOUSE

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. On canal, furnished, close to BIS and major malls. Long term rent only 25,000 baht. Tel: 081-958 7684.

PATONG SEA VIEW APARTMENT

1-bedroom apartment with big balcony in Baan Suan Kamnan at the south end of Patong. Very nice, green and clean residential area. WiFi. Come have a look. Edwin & Kag. 36,000 baht a month, inclusive of weekly cleaning and water. Tel: 086-786 3350. Email: buurmanb@hotmail.com

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

PRIVATE RENTAL-PATONG

1-bed apartment. Available now. Gym, WiFi, washing machine, swimming pool. 800m to beach. Tel: 085-069 0938. Email: nnorthwo@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.

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

POOL VILLAS FOR RENT

1, 2, 4 bedrooms, fully furnished, ADSL, SAT TV. Bang Tao area. Tel: 090-156 7927.

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.

LUXURY APARTMENT

At Kata Beach. Stunning sea view, pool, gym, restaurant. Contact James. Tel: 090-864 4519.

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

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.

MANGO HOUSE
Escape to Lanta Old Town, Thailand's most charming fishing village.
Weekly from 10,000 THB
Monthly from 30,000 THB
*25% discount with mention of this ad
www.mango-houses.com
086 948 6836

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.

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

KATA BEACH APTS.

1 bedroom, WiFi, kitchens, aircon, electric fan. Cheap! Tel: 081-970 4638, 086-595 8512. Email: nalumana2000@yahoo.com

FURNISHED SEAVIEW CONDO RENTAL

In Phuket Town, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, kitchen, terraces. Top facilities: fitness, pool, guard. 28,500 baht per month. Tel: 081-895 3628.

KAMALA CONDO FOR RENT/SALE

Peaceful but convenient, 5 minutes walk to beach. Well kept and clean, fully furnished. 28,000 baht per month for long term. Sale: 6.5 million baht o.n.o. Tel: 089-780 4568. Email: taareel@gmail.com

5 BEDROOMS FOR RENT

At Khoktanod area, near Bang Tao and Layan Beach. 5 beds with big garden. Special rent: 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-795 6363.

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

POOL VILLAS FOR RENT IN RAWAI

3 or 4 bedrooms. Super September price for 4 beds, only 2,000 baht per day! Tel: 087-893 8747.

PATONG SEA VIEW



Pool villa for rent. Long term only. Tel: 083-656 3784. Email: peterrantala@gmail.com

KATHU HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, aircon, internet. Tel: 086-739 3220.

HOUSE IN CHALONG

For rent, near Palai beach, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, ADSL, fully furnished, cable TV, car park. Tel: 089-728 8311.

SUPER POOL VILLA

Designed for comfort and security, has all. Laguna. Rent: 35,000 baht per month. Bargain. Tel: 089-594 4067.

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished with small garden, quiet area. Price: 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-607 8567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

7 BEDROOMS GOLF VIEW

7-aircon bedrooms, swimming pools, furnished, nice and quiet villa. 10 mins to Big C, Central, Headstart, 5 mins to Tesco, QSI. Please call 081-271 3228 or email: info@procarpentering.com for more info.

KATA HILL ONE BEDROOM

Fully furnished, 1 bedroom, terrace, bath, kitchen, aircon, internet and cable TV. Rent: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

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Your key to fast-track placement and easy payment for ads at Thailand's LARGEST classifieds marketplace. Hundreds of new ads every week! Like to have one?

Mail: AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net

A leading Home Automation and MEP Engineering company in Cherrng Talay is looking to fill:

- Secretary
- M&E Engineer
- Autocad draftsman

Good Salary. 5 day week.
Email: info@avcphuket.com
Fax: 076-615811

RECEPTIONIST KATA

Reliable female staff is required. 2 days off per week. Tel: 081-892 1621.

VILLA STAFF

Looking for two live in staff for a seven bedroom holiday villa in Patong. Must be able to cook, clean and speak English. Experience and references are mandatory. Tel: 080-699 2436. Email: kokakat@gmail.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

NEW HOTEL OPENING

Opening 01 October in Patong. Staff required in all areas: House-keeping, Front Desk, Security, and Bar Hosts. Men preferred. Tel: 60-16-974 6968 (English). Email: LouisLovestrand@yahoo.com

CHEF WANTED

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

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED

We are looking for a native English kindergarten teacher to join our team to teach 10-12 children aged 3-6 years. Must have a minimum Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Tel: 076-383150, 084-520 4978. Fax: 076-383150. Email: info@cravensnurseryphuket.com

NEWLY RENOVATED HOTEL

CC Bloom's a Boutique Hotel located in the lush hills of Kata/Karon is looking for dynamic English speaking Thai nationals to join our expanding team as bookkeeper, wait staff, engineer, receptionist, bartender, driver, housekeeping and cooks. For more information, please contact Tel: 076-333222. Fax: 076-333 234. or submit your CV together with recent photo and expected salary to sales@ccbloomshotel.com We welcome walk-in candidates.

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

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: 076-289472. Email: grahamkay@mac.com. For full details see our website www.holyclothing.com/htmlx/work.html

IT OR AV ENGINEERS

Thai nationality, can speak English. Please send CV to Email: info@techworx-project.com

THAI STAFF MANAGER

With good spoken and written English. Salary from 20,000 baht. Tel: 080-879 6058.

PRIMARY TEACHER

International School in Chalong is looking for a native English speaking primary teacher to join our dynamic team. Tel: 082-323 1188. Please send your CV to Email: phuketinternational@asia.com

HOME TUTOR K2 & GR 1 LEVEL

Need an English Kindergarten teacher to home tutor 4/5 mornings a week. Salary 35,000 baht neg. Tel: 076-321 738, 091-042 0471 (English). Email: m@bez.com.sg

ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEE

Responsible for relations with our agents and for the day-to-day operation of our company. 5 days a week. Must speak and write good English. Tel: 076-390980, 085-787 5187. Fax: 076-390 980. Email: info@phuketphototours.com

WINE & TAPAS BAR

Staff required in Phuket town, available on October 2012: bartender, helpcook, waitress. Tel: 083-969 7807.

EXPAT PRIVATE YACHT CAPTAIN

The open position is for Philippine based jobs. Applicants must hold a valid license and have the necessary qualifications & experience. Tel: 080-078 3731. Please submit your resume to markjones288@gmail.com for review by the client.

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

LOOKING FOR STAFF

Need 1 Chef, 1 Sous Chef, Help Cook, Waitress and Waiter for Thai and International Restaurant. Please Contact K. June 081-970 5830 or Laurent 081-693 3940. Email: alain.laurent8@gmail.com

Employment Wanted**PERSONAL SECURITY**

I am looking for a Job as your Personal Assistant to you and your family being safe and secure around the island! I speak many languages and work as a personal fitness trainer and can be your private dive instructor. I got a very nice personality and am easy going with children. Very strong build and very fit. Very confidential! Have Thai work permit. Tel: 084-188 4544. Email: mikeflysthai@me.com

SALES ADVISOR VACANCY

Phoenix Divers have a full time position for a shop sales adviser. Full training is provided. Female Thai national, good English. 12,000 to 20,000 baht. Tel: 084-846 3816. Email: phoenixlanta@gmail.com

MARKETING REPS NEEDED

EZYSTAYS looking for marketing representative. No experience required, full training provided, work permit and good income. Email: leoinphuket@gmail.com

PHILIPPINE STAFF

Please send CV at cc@bayshoreprojects.com Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963. Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

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

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

NEW ESTATE OFFICE PHUKET

Require 2 persons: 1 experienced and 1 keen to learn. Tel: 081-958 3830.

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS
Classic & Contemporary Interiors

Exclusive Furniture Store on Bypass road is urgently seeking staff.

Sales Assistant	Maid & Handy man
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thai national only Speak fluent English Presentable Punctual Honest Experience in furniture store will be a bonus but not necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentable Honest English speaking will be a bonus but not necessary

Send resume along with picture and salary expectation to abfabsales@gmail.com or call HR 076 350 465

NES TEACHERS REQUIRED

November start. KG teacher (38-40K baht), Early Years teacher (43-45K baht). Degree and recognized TEFL/TESOL certificate and 3 email references required. Preference given to experienced teachers. Tel: 084-846 9109 (English). Email: stegee68@gmail.com

IRANIAN PR STAFF NEEDED

The Absolute Group is currently looking to recruit an Iranian national to work in their promotions department. For more information contact Neda. Tel: 089-724 1935.

ASSISTANT HOTEL MANAGER

To assist GM in maintaining a successful and profitable hotel - 42 room 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

Authorized Agents for Classified Advertising:**CHALONG**

- Julapan Stationery (Chaofa East Rd) Tel: 076-282254
- 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

CHERRNG 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

Looking for a job?
Looking for a better candidate?
Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PhuketGazette.Net!

HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

We are looking for a Thai female with teaching skills for four English teachers and our security guards. Tel: 076-336 084, 081-607 6637, Fax: 076-336 085. Email: pornthip@sgsphuket.com

SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE WANTED

For very busy handyman company. Thai or farang. Good salary. Contact www.farang-handyman.com

OAKMEADOW INT'L SCHOOL

We are looking for a qualified Thai female teacher. Tel: 076-521550, 084-847 0732 (English). Email: info@oakmeadowphuket.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

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.

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

EXPATRIATE MARINE MECHANICS

Looking for 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 markjones288@gmail.com

WANTED SECRETARY

At Patong. Searching for qualified secretary. Speaking and writing English and Thai (French if possible). Interesting salary. Tel: 080-712 1699.

URGENT CHEF INT'L CUISINE

High salary + service charge + bonus and all benefits. Tel: 089-908 7486.

ACCOUNTING BOOKKEEPING

Thai CPA knowledge of English. Dive knowledge a plus. Pay 20k working Mon-Fri. Send CV to phuket@sssnetwork.com

TOUR GUIDES NEEDED

For popular speedboat charter and events company. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-383125. Email: info@coralseekers.com

EXPERIENCED ELDERCARE NURSE

Nurse/helper for older person or invalid. Two years experience with alzheimers patient. Reliable, hard-working, excellent references. Some English. Tel: 089-196 0940. Email: woody@khunwoody.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

SALES EXECUTIVE

Jagota Brothers Trading Co., Ltd. Long-time, well-established food importer and supplier to hotels and restaurants welcomes applications from experienced salespeople. 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

EZYSTAYS CO LTD

Ezystays (Travel Club), located in Patong, is looking to recruit a Thai Admin Assistant for its busy sales office. Candidates must have a good command of the English language and be able to work efficiently with Word and Excel, and basic knowledge of accounts. Salary is negotiable depending on experience. All applicants must apply with a cover letter and CV in English with photo. We offer an excellent working environment and a 5-day work week. Tel: 076-34421. Email: clientliaison@ezystays.com

COOK NEEDED (FEMALE)

Cook (f) needed urgently for only morning shift (Breakfast/Thai/Europe. Tel: 082-270 6385 (English). Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

SHOP STAFF NEEDED

Need more staff for our shops in Kamala and Patong. Rent out motorbikes. English speaking Thai. Tel: 085-158 7638 (English). Email: pierre_hammar@yahoo.se

BARISTA/CAFE MANAGER

1-2 persons needed for April start, at the re-opening of the Trees Club Resort Cafe. English speaking required. Tel: 086-268 3238. Email: billyanthony6@hotmail.com

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 a Thai national, organized, and confident. Tel: 076-383 435. Email: info@obiettivothailandia.com

MANDARIN TOUR GUIDE

Tour guide for Chinese tourists. Must be fluent in Mandarin and English. Tel: 084-415 0546(English). Email: careers@gojitravel.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, for further details, please see our website at oriental-living.net

TIGER GRILL JOBS

- Waiter/ Waitress
- Kitchen Staff
- Assistant Kitchen Manager
- Executive Chef Secretary
Good pay, benefits, fun job, training etc. Tel: 076-367071
Email: cheffy@tigermuaythai.com, www.tigermuaythai.com

NEW HOLIDAY CLUB IN SAMUI

Infinity Vacation Club is opening soon in Koh Samui. We are in need of a sales manager, good salespeople, OPCs and receptionists. If you are a proven performer, we want to talk to you. Our commissions and bonuses are the best in Koh Samui. We are looking for top people who want to grow with us in Southeast Asia. Contact James. Tel: 086-690 6977 (English). Please send your CV to tjrgolfer72@gmail.com



The Racha is Thailand's leading 5 Star beach resort located on the beautiful island of Koh Racha Yai, just 30 minutes by boat from Phuket.

We are growing and looking for the following talented individuals to join our dynamic team:

Human Resources Manager

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree or higher in Human Resources Management or other related field
- Previous experience in similar position in a 5 star hotel
- Excellent interpersonal and leadership skills
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Strong problem solving and decision making skills

Chief of Security

Qualifications:

- Male
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Solid background in similar position

Guest Service Officer

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree, fresh graduates are welcome
- Customer oriented, motivated
- Able to communicate in English and Mandarin is an advantage

Purchasing Officer

Qualifications:

- Previous experience preferred
- Motivated, a team player

Waiter & Barman

Qualifications:

- Basic knowledge in F&B
- Customer oriented with pleasant personality
- Able to communicate in English

Operations Technician

Qualifications:

- Male with previous experience
- Committed to work

Beach Club Manager

Qualifications:

- Male
- Bachelor's degree
- Previous experience in similar position in a 5 star hotel
- Excellent command of spoken and written English
- Strong leadership, great personality

Demi Chef de Partie

Qualifications:

- Vocational or Culinary degree
- Previous experience in similar position in a 5 star hotel
- Good attention to detail
- Able to communicate in English

Spa Receptionist

Qualifications:

- Female with pleasant personality
- Diploma or higher with previous experience
- Good command of spoken and written English

Spa Therapist

Qualifications:

- Female with pleasant personality
- Previous experience
- Good command of spoken and written English

Sports and Beach Attendant

Qualifications:

- Male with previous experience
- Able to communicate in English
- Customer oriented

Security Officer

Qualifications:

- Male with previous experience
- Committed to work
- Able to communicate in English

Attractive salary with guaranteed service charge

If you have what it takes and wish to join a people-oriented company that prides itself in excellence and the belief that people are our most important assets, then please submit your resume and a recent photo to: executiveoffice@theracha.com



The Racha
42/12-13 Moo 5, Rawai, Muang,
Phuket 83130, Thailand
Tel: +66 (76) 355455 Ext. 402
Fax: +66 (76) 355637

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

GRAPHIC ARTIST 1 POSITION

- Graphic-design skills and knowledge of Adobe Illustrator, PageMaker, Photoshop required
- Freehand drawing and web-design skills a plus
- Responsible, hard-working, attention to detail
- Able to work in a fast-paced environment and meet deadlines
- Good communication skills, team player
- Thai-English speaker

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Khun Anna (General Manager), by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Keaw, A. Muang Phuket 83000

Tel: 076-273555, ext 102 Fax: 076-615240

Email: anna@phuketgazette.net

Articles For Sale

POOL EQUIPMENT
FOR SALE

Hayward 55kw pool pump with filter, 200-liter sand filter with valve, and electrical box with switches. 2 LEED lights and more. 3 years old. Make an offer. Tel: 081-893 7068.

FARANG SELLING
WASHING MACHINE

Samsung, 9kg, 6 months old, security. Price: 5,000 baht. Tel: 083-635 2414.

2ND HAND GOODS
FOR SALE

Shelves, executive tables and more. Prices negotiable. Tel: 081-978 2725.

FURNITURE AND MORE

Furniture, sofa, TV and bookcase, chairs, lamps and more. All in good condition. Please call or email for photos. Khun Arno. Tel: 087-827 4991 (English). Email: arnyfirst@hotmail.com

Bar &
Restaurant
EquipmentCAPUCHINO,
COFFEE MACHINE

2 coffee stations with steam and hot water, Brasilia with Saeco coffee grinder. Price: 200,000 baht. Tel: 089-964 2188.

SURIN BEACH BLOCK

5-storey (5x100sqm) units overlooking Kings park/Surin beach for sale. Ground floor commercial restaurant, 2 apartments + 2-storey penthouse. All very modern & open plan. Email: stewart lees@gmail.com

HOTEL + RESTAURANT
FOR SALE

Chanote title, central position, new building, 4 years old, 20 rooms, reception and restaurant fully furnished. Price: 38 million baht negotiable. Contact Stefano: 086-279 8175 (English or Italy). Contact Ning: 084-840 1566 (Thai).

GUESTHOUSE / KARON

5 luxury rooms, cafe sports bar, excellent location, situated in center of Karon. 2 minutes walk to beach. 6 years key money paid in full. Very low monthly rent includes limited company. Great deal. Must view! Tel: 081-891 9461.

BAR / HOUSE RAWAI

Big kitchen, 2 bedrooms, great location. Price: 475,000 baht. Tel: 087-417 8379.

HAIR SALON & SPA
FOR SALE

2 floors. First floor is hair salon, second floor is spa. Full equipment and car park. Tel: 089-622 0101.

BUSINESS FOR SALE

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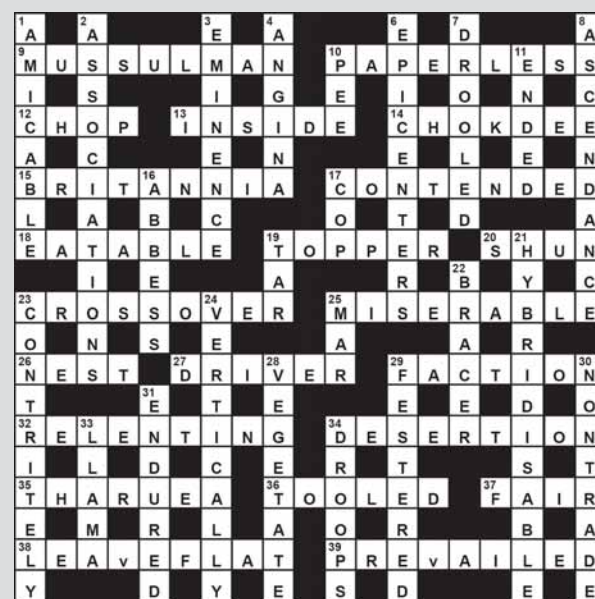
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Ryder Cup tees off

By Andrew Scott

RORY McIlroy goes into this weekend's Ryder Cup as the man to beat. The World #1 had a bit more pressure bestowed on his young shoulders by Europe's captain Jose Maria Olazabal, who claims that the young Northern Irishman is playing just as good as Tiger Woods did in his prime.

This year's Ryder Cup is held at Medinah Country Club, Illinois, and the Americans will be looking to avenge the defeat they suffered two years ago.

The Europeans have won four out of the last five Ryder Cups, and Davis Love III knows his American team needs a strong start to mount any sort of challenge.

Phil Mickelson, Jim Furyk and Tiger Woods bring a wealth of experience to the American team. But Woods has an awful record in Ryder Cups; Mickelson has

probably had the worst year out of all the players on the American team and Jim Furyk remains consistently Jim Furyk.

The American team is full of tournament winners: Woods had a strong finish to the season, Brandt Snedeker won the Tour Championship this year. Keegan Bradley, Bubba Watson and Webb Simpson all won majors in 2012, but it is difficult to see where the main threat from that group will come from, and more importantly for the Americans, who will challenge McIlroy.

The European team is more than just a one-man show, but to put it into perspective here is McIlroy's record over the last few months: first at the PGA Championship, first at the Deutsche Bank Championship and first at the BMW Championship. He is coming into the tournament as the man to beat.

The European team only have



HOLDER: Olazabal with Cup. Photo AFP

one debutant – Colsaerts – and seven of Europe's team have played in a Ryder Cup match away from home.

The teams are:

Team America – Davis Love III (Captain) Keegan Bradley, Jason

RYDER CUP SCHEDULE	
TEAM USA	TEAM EUROPE
FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2012	
7:20 PM FIRST TEE TIME (FOURSOMES)	
12:05 AM OR 1:05 AM FIRST TEE TIME (FOURBALLS)	
SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2012	
7:20 PM FIRST TEE TIME (FOURSOMES)	
12:05 AM FIRST TEE TIME (FOURBALLS)	
SUNDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2012	
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MONDAY, 01 OCTOBER 2012	
05:30 AM CLOSING CEREMONIES (APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES AFTER PLAY CONCLUDES)	

Dufner, Jim Furyk, Dustin Johnson, Zach Johnson, Matt Kuchar, Phil Mickelson, Webb Simpson, Brandt Snedeker, Steve Stricker, Bubba Watson, Tiger Woods.

Team Europe – Jose Maria

Olazabal (Captain) Nicolas Colsaerts, Luke Donald, Sergio Garcia, Peter Hanson, Martin Kaymer, Paul Lawrie, Graeme McDowell, Rory McIlroy, Francesco Molinari, Ian Poulter, Justin Rose, Lee Westwood.



Formula 1

By The Digby

Pride, punishment and pain

SINGAPORE was a tragedy for Lewis Hamilton and McLaren. Hamilton would have been the clear winner, until his gearbox disintegrated and catapulted Vettel into first place, Button to second, and most importantly, Alonso into third place.

That changed what might have been. A resurgent Vettel is now hunting down Alonso, and Hamilton has dropped to the back of the chasing pack.

There are six races to go, and any of the leaders could take around 10 points per race out of Alonso's lead. That assumes those in the hunt win with 25 points, and Alonso does no better than third.

So those less than 60 points adrift still have a mathematical chance of winning the Drivers Championship. To claw back 60 points would require the same driver to win all six races, which is unlikely, but Hamilton has said he is going for it.

Anyway, Vettel, 29 points adrift, Räikkönen, 45 short, and Hamilton 52 behind are still in with a shout. Webber and Button are too far behind now. But of course Alonso could yet have another disastrous race or two, closing the gap with those who chase him.

In Singapore, Renault supplied Magneti Marelli alternators – pre-dating the Monza

and post-dating the Valencia fiascos – and none of the Renault engines failed. Red Bull is considering a new alternator supplier, but Renault may be close to understanding the problem.

At Monza they luckily recovered a Lotus alternator that only nearly failed, so unlike the Red Bull one, it was not all melted. They are even now examining its entrails.

In another development, Malrussia's Charles Pic and his crew have received the unusual sentence of one day's community service to the FIA's Road Safety Campaign for unsafe behavior on track. This may seem more onerous than the usual 5,000 Euro fine, but remember Schumacher's penalty in 1997, when he was required to take part in road safety work for the FIA. It became his Road to Damascus, and ever since he has been a road safety spokesman around the world.

And the rumor mill had been fed a tidbit. A leaked copy of the 2013 calendar shows three question marks and a puzzle. The question marks are over New Jersey, which is not yet an approved circuit, South Korea, where negotiations are ongoing, and the German GP whose location is not yet finalized. The puzzle is why there is a three week gap between



CATCH UP: Sebastian Vettel (C) celebrates with second-placed Jenson Button of Britain (L) and third-placed Fernando Alonso (R). Photo: AFP

Silverstone and the German GP. Could it be that there is a shadow race, mayhap a French GP in the wings?

The next race is on October 7. It is the Japanese GP at Suzuka, the Honda owned track where Vettel, Button, Alonso and Räikkönen have dominated the last

five outings. Hamilton's best showing was third in 2009. He won the Japanese GP in 2007, but at the rival Toyota owned Fuji Circuit, Hamilton Vettel and Räikkönen all must win, Alonso needs to hold on to third place and Button is a natural for the track.

It's not over yet!

Premier League roundup and look forward

THE BIG games last weekend were played on Sunday and they all ended as you would expect.

Manchester United and Liverpool showed a bit of respect towards each other before the game at Anfield, with Manchester United legend Sir Bobby Charlton handing a bouquet of flowers to Liverpool's record goalscorer Ian Rush.

Opposing captains Gerrard and Ryan Giggs released 96 red balloons in memory of those who lost their lives at Hillsborough, and Evra and Suarez shook hands.

The pre-game solidarity didn't

take away any of the famous rivalry from the match itself. Liverpool went a man down before halftime when Jonjo Shelvey saw red for a two-footed lunge on Jonny Evans.

Steven Gerrard put Liverpool in the lead just after the break but Manchester United leveled five minutes later through Rafael. Manchester United had to wait until Van Persie scored a penalty in the 81st minute to claim all three points.

Manchester City drew 1-1 with Arsenal in a breathtaking game that Arsenal really should have

won. Santi Cazorla seems to be growing in confidence with every game and he was a constant thorn in the Manchester City side.

Newcastle beat Norwich 1-0 thanks to a Demba Ba goal.

Pick of the games this weekend: Arsenal take on Chelsea in the early kick off on Saturday and Manchester United play Tottenham in the late game on Saturday. The only game on Sunday is between Aston Villa and West Brom.

For this weeks fixtures and table turn to page 47.

– Andrew Scott

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Craig gives Phuket a sporting chance

By Andrew Scott

ARRIVING at Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club (TSLC) to interview the new director of the Sports Academy, Craig Johns, gives the uninitiated a sense of awe and wonder at what's been built on this land in the north of the island.

The sheer size of the campus and its state-of-the-art facilities are unrivaled anywhere in Asia and offer world-class fitness facilities for elite athletes and amateur enthusiasts alike.

The *Phuket Gazette* spoke to Craig Johns about his role as director and of the Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club's plans for the future.

Phuket Gazette: What is your vision for TSLC?

Craig Johns: I have five sport disciplines underneath me and each sport has a director. My job is to make sure the strategic planning is done right, so no mistakes are made along the way. I need to make sure TSLC understands the requirements in regards to sponsorships and equipment and also, that the coaches train in an environment where they can get the best out of the athletes. Looking

at it from a strategic point of view: we can be more creative with our marketing, and making sure we bring in clients who leave Thanyapura wanting to come back again. We have other sports that want to bring in: martial arts, boxing, beach volleyball and golf, which have a lot of potential. I try to keep it simple and realistic as TSLC moves forward.

PG: What do the academies offer?

The academies encompass everything from beginners to children to adults to elite athletes. For each sport the academies offer unique opportunities. There are opportunities for beginners just as much as there are for elite athletes to excel in. Everybody can learn and improve.

PG: What ties do the academies have with Phuket International Academy?

During school hours the aquatic academy learns to swim with the students and we have activities after school from 2:30-3:30pm, and the school has links with all of the academy programs.

PG: How do you attract athletes?

A lot of our members come

through the school.

The coaches in the academies are of a very high level and TSLC provides opportunities and an environment where the athletes can really excel and where sports science is used.

Competitions are held so athletes can put into practice what they are learning.

PG: How do you assess academy athletes?

Students have to reach a performance criteria and it has to be feasible.

The academy can't have a beginner and someone who is at a really high level in the same group.

The academy has to find children of similar levels and allow them to grow together. Academy age groups cater to all.

PG: How do you see the new 77-room Sports Hotel fitting into the TSLC?

The Sports Hotel will allow TSLC to bring in international teams who can come and train here.

Olympic swimmers will be arriving at the end of October, and hopefully the hotel, along with our facilities, will help us attract professional rugby and soccer teams next year.



EYES ON THE FUTURE: Craig Johns has many plans for TSLC.

The hotel allows people who stay at TSLC to utilize its facilities.

For people who want to get away, it is a nice destination and TSLC provides that performance opportunity for athletes. It allows Thanyapura to have an all-in-one shop where athletes can come and stay, use the facilities, have a massage and use the latest sports science.

PG: How do you nurture a talented child athlete?

With all sports there is a long term athlete development plan that needs to be put into place. At certain ages children can only

be challenged so far and coaches have to make sure their technique is correct from a very young age and follow that through. Coaches should look at things like injury prevention and making sure athletes get exposure to other athletes of similar ability or better through training and competitions.

Also, sports science and dietary needs – so they are eating properly – checking their physiology and adapting their training program guidance to manage school, family life, social and training is a big part.

Don't isolate the athletes.



Phuket Soccer School's under 10s play in Patong

ON Sunday, September 23, Phuket Soccer Schools (PSS) took their Under 10 Academy team to Patong to play in a four team tournament at Patong Football Club.

The squad went straight into their semifinal against local Patong team playing a 2-3-1 formation, and despite dominating for much of the half, the boys could not find their shooting boots and entered the break tied at 1-1.

The team started the second half strongly and deservedly took the lead with substitute Jonah D coming off the bench to score a well struck volley at the back

post with his first touch. Sadly, the lead did not last long as Patong A scored an equalizer to level the scores and send the match into a penalty shootout for a place in the final.

Micah D and Khun Fard stepped up and scored the opening two penalties for PSS but Patong A equalized by scoring their opening two. Poom was unlucky to strike the underside of the crossbar and Patong went on to score their spot kick and secure their place in the final 3-2.

Not to let the disappointment of losing on penalties get them down, the boys entered the 3rd and 4th

playoff matches – determined to finish on a positive note. This they did in emphatic manner, showing some deadly attacking football. Their opponents, also from Patong, had no answer to PSS's movement and shooting accuracy. The match eventually finished with an incredible 12-0 win for the PSS team.

Man of the Match Award went to Jonah Dochowny. Another great afternoon of football was had by all the players, parents and coaches alike. PSS would like to thank Football Shop Patong (FBS) for the invitation and organizing another exciting football tournament.



CHILD'S PLAY: A young player scores a penalty.

This weekend Phuket Soccer Schools Academy looks forward to the Youth Football Home tournament on Saturday, with the finals on Sunday. Squads at U11 and U13 age groups will be repre-

sented by PSS.

For further information on all that is Phuket Soccer Schools, please e-mail us at info@phuketsoccerschools.com – *The Phuket Gazette*

Islanders conquered



BATTLE OF SARABURI: Phuket players, staff and fans would rather forget Sunday's loss. Photo: Aofap Saraburi

By Steven Layne

A POORLY coordinated and lackluster Phuket FC defense conceded five consecutive goals in a devastating 5-1 away loss last Sunday to Saraburi FC.

Played in front of 1,328 fans at Saraburi's OrBorJor Stadium in Saraburi province, about an hour's drive northeast of Bangkok, the match was both side's 28th of 34 scheduled fixtures.

Though playing without their key Brazilian midfielder, Marcio Santos, who was benched with a foot injury, the Islanders went into the match confident for at least a draw.

It would be the first match that Phuket's hi-profile Brazilian keeper, Alonso Goleiro, was fielded, with Ivorian import Makalou Ibrahim (commonly known as Kanoute) and Korean Seongwon Byeon also part of the starting 11.

However, the Warlords were clearly more prepared for the match, launching their attack early with Manus Tadsunton scoring in a

breakaway in the 8th minute, sliding his shot to the far post, through the hands of Alonso.

Though Phuket dominated possession through much of the match, posing a constant attacking threat, they were unable to find the equalizer, and Saraburi were keen to capitalize on a number of fatal defensive mistakes by Phuket.

Saraburi's leading scorer, Suppakorn Narknoi scored two more in the 38th and 43rd minutes to put his side up 3-0 by the break.

The speedy midfielder completed his hat trick 12 minutes into the second half, smashing home his 14th of the season.

Suppakorn is now tied with four others in the football league for the golden boot race, including Suphanburi's Pipat Thonkanya, Bangkok United's Romain Gasmi, Airforce United's Kouassi Yao Hermann and Ratchaburi's Douglas Gardozo.

Saraburi's fifth and final goal would come on 68 minutes from Choi Jaewon, the Korean who

played for Phuket last season.

Down five, the Islanders still continued to fight, and finally found a consolation goal in the final minute of normal time, scored by Narakorn Wisetthanakarn.

With the win, Saraburi secured their mid-table standing of 10th place.

The loss sees Phuket fall down into 13th place, just one place above this year's five team relegation pot.

The Islander's next match will be a tough home match this Sunday against 3rd place Sri Racha Suzuki FC.

Relegated to Division 1 this season, the Sri Racha "Blue Marlins" are looking to get re-promoted to the elite league and if Phuket doesn't improve its form quickly, could be made to pay dearly this coming Sunday. In their first meeting in Sri Racha in April, Phuket lost 4-2.

Ahead of the match, newly appointed coach Anuruck Srikerd (see back page) predicted a Phuket victory. Kickoff, at Surakul Stadium, will be at 6:30pm.



Tennis anyone?

AFTER a year away from Phuket running two 'start up' tennis programs in Oman, tennis coach Darran Ferre returns to the island to re-establish himself at Indigo Pearl and among his fellow coaches and colleagues.

"There have been a number of changes at Indigo Pearl since I left," said Ferre, "With new facilities and much-needed court resurfacing completed – which is all good news."

Ferre's top student, Sumitra Basnyat, (see pic) is set to continue her rise up the world junior rankings and will play events in Asia throughout the year. You can follow her progress in the *Phuket Gazette*.

Ferre says, in an effort to increase regular competitive match play in Phuket, he is starting a monthly invitational tennis league, which will offer six-players the chance to play some challenge matches at Indigo Pearl.

A different category will be played each month and if you would like to be considered you can use the contact below. The

results of the league will be published in the *Phuket Gazette*.

Ferre says he hopes, this will become a popular monthly event.

"I am happy to be writing for the *Phuket Gazette* again and will offer tennis tips to players, young and old, at all levels of the game."

Darran's top 5 quick tips:

1. Watch the ball
2. Don't hold the racquet too tightly
3. Breathe out when you hit the ball
4. Weight transference is a key component for healthy play
5. Early preparation and quick recovery

All are self explanatory really but they are extremely helpful. Former articles can be read at www.darranwildkatz.wordpress.com

Hope to see you on the courts!

Darran Ferre is a 20-year full time tennis pro, based at Indigo Pearl. He has worked around the world with players of all ages and abilities. He can be contacted with questions or comments by email on darranferre@hotmail.com

Unity earn basketball gold

USA'S Team Unity won the gold medal in Phuket's first international basketball tournament.

Held between September 14-22, the TOA Thailand Open 2012 Phuket Championship featured six teams – two from Thailand and a team each from USA, Australia, Indonesia and Brunei – who played 17 exciting matches at Phuket's brand new 4,000-seat gymnasium.

Despite only playing with one substitute throughout the event, a fit Unity squad won the gold fol-

lowing a 98-83 win over Thailand's Rising Stars squad in what was largely a one-sided match.

Earlier this week, the Rising Stars delivered Team Unity their only defeat in the tourney, edging the Americans by a free throw, 80-79.

The rematch, however, saw the Americans, who had dominated every other team, embrace the sweetness of revenge, extending a lead by more than 20 points by the end of the third period of the final.

In the final five minute stretch,

the Rising Stars put up a commendable comeback, with strong play inside the paint by Americans Justin Howard and Michael Earl,

who helped to bring the margin down to 9 points. But it would be the all-American side to prevail at the final buzzer. – **Steven Layne**



Kevin Burleson of Team Unity

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE			
TEAM	P	GD	PTS
1 Chelsea	5	7	13
2 Man Utd	5	6	12
3 Everton	5	4	10
4 West Bromwich	5	3	10
5 Arsenal	5	7	9
6 Fulham	5	5	9
7 Man City	5	3	9
8 Tottenham	5	2	8
9 West Ham	5	1	8
10 Newcastle	5	0	8
11 Swansea	5	3	7
12 Sunderland	4	0	4
13 Stoke	5	-1	4
14 Aston Villa	5	-4	4
15 Wigan	5	-5	4
16 Southampton	5	-6	3
17 Norwich City	5	-6	3
18 Liverpool	5	-6	2
19 QPR	5	-8	2
20 Reading	4	-5	1

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES	
SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2012	Arsenal vs Chelsea
18:45	
SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2012	21:00
Everton VS Southampton	
Fulham VS Man City	
Reading VS Newcastle	
Stoke VS Swansea	
Sunderland VS Wigan	
SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2012	Norwich vs Liverpool
21:00	
SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2012	Man Utd vs Tottenham
23:30	
SUNDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2012	22:00
Aston Villa VS West Brom	
TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2012	02:00
QPR VS West Ham	

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June brings hope in October

Phuket FC get a new head coach to help them in their bid to avoid relegation in the final six-game stretch of the season

By Steven Layne

FOLLOWING the Islander's devastating 5-1 away-loss to Saraburi FC last Sunday (see report on page 47), Phuket FC fans were given some hope and resolve with the appointment of a promising and confident new head coach.

The appointment of 38-year-old Anuruck "June" Srikerd on Wednesday follows the resignation of Coach Narong Ajarayutt – the Islander's second head coach this season.

Coach Narong, commonly known as "Noi", formally submitted his resignation letter to the club on Tuesday following the regretful loss to Saraburi.

Joining the club in July, Coach Noi had filled the vacancy left by Serbian national, Coach Milos Joksik, who resigned immediately after Phuket's 6-0 away loss to PTT Rayong.

Under the leadership of Coach Noi, the Islanders won four, drew six and lost five.

"I gave it my all but was unable to achieve the best result. In a show of spirit for the team, I must take responsibility for the results and step down, giving the chance for someone else to lead the team," Coach Narong was quoted in a statement to fans. His replacement, Coach June, landed



ONLY WAY IS UP: Phuket FC's new head coach, Anuruck "June" Srikerd (left) arrived on Phuket on Wednesday. Here, he is seated next to the club president, Pamuk Atchirayachai.

down at Phuket Airport on Wednesday morning, leaving behind his post at premier side Bangkok Glass.

"Though my former position was challenging, I was kind of down, so when Pamuk [Phuket FC president] told me there was a vacancy in Phuket, I didn't hesitate

to accept," he told a press conference held at the Phuket FC office across from Surakul Stadium.

Coach June is well respected within the game and recognized for his accomplishments in leading Pattalung FC in their successful promotion campaign to Division 1 this

season. He has also been part of the coaching staff of Buriram FC and Rangsit FC.

Only after the Southern side on the other side of the peninsula nearly went bankrupt earlier this season was Coach June forced to find another post in the capital.

Asked about his goals and strategies for the final six matches, with an air of confidence, Coach June said: "I'm going to strive for fifteen points. For this to happen, I need to get acquainted with my team ASAP, and find out which players can play and follow the systems the best. But first we'll need to work on building unity, love and pride within the team, so we play as one."

As for his first test, a tough one at that, this Sunday against third placed Sri Racha Suzuki FC, Coach June said he is confident for a Phuket win.

"I was able to lead Pattalung to victory over Sri Racha earlier this season. Sri Racha are good but are used to playing on artificial turf. We will have an advantage on Sunday at Surakul Stadium, using what we got. I'm anxious to get to know my team and predict a 3-2 win," he said.

Kickoff for Sunday's match will be at 6:30pm. Spectators looking to dodge the rain are advised to arrive up to an hour early.

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