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TAXI! TURN IT ON

■ **PLTO enlists police help to turn off motors of metered taxi drivers who refuse to turn meter on**



Prasat Pechwang, a driver for Phuket Taxi Meter Service Co Ltd, urged passengers to call the 24-hour hotline to file complaints. Photo: Phuket Taxi Meter Service Company Ltd

By **Irfarn Jamdukor**

THE Phuket Highways Police this week confirmed they will provide any assistance necessary to bring into line metered taxi drivers who refuse to use their meters.

Inspector Manapone Likitmanon of the Phuket Highways Police said the move to clean up taxi drivers not using their meters has his wholehearted support.

"Count us in. We are willing to give our full support to crack down on taxi drivers who do not turn on the meter," he told the *Gazette*.

"We can set up checkpoints or help with any

other measures to stop them," he added.

The news follows the Phuket Land Transportation Office (PLTO) this week confirming that they will seek help from the Highway Police to tackle taxi drivers who don't use their meters.

"I am aware that many tourists are unhappy with taxi drivers. We are going to talk about how to stop metered taxi drivers from cheating," PLTO Chief Terayout Prasertphol said.

The PLTO has rolled out a campaign to monitor metered taxis serving Phuket International Airport by stopping them at checkpoints four times a month, sometimes at PLTO check-

points, sometimes at local police checkpoints, Mr Terayout explained.

However, Somsak Poknaungnong, an official at the PLTO, told the *Gazette* that "We don't keep a record of the number of drivers we catch breaking the rules.

"As far as I can remember, we have fined seven drivers, some for not turning on the meter, some for driving a taxi illegally," he said.

"Using checkpoints is not a good way to solve the problem," he continued. "Drivers who have been stopped call their friends to warn them about the checkpoint."

Continued on Page 3

Teen gang guns down street rival

TWO teens have confessed to killing a rival gang member on the streets of Phuket Town with a homemade gun.

The teens, escorted to Wichit Police station by their cousins, denied they intended to kill their 15-year-old rival.

Full story on Page 3

Underwater treks across coral reefs continue

VOLUNTEER divers arriving at Khai Nai Island on Tuesday to repair corals allegedly damaged by a seawalking company were surprised to see the company back on site leading more tours.

Full story on Page 8

A fresh look at plans for new prison

PHUKET Prison, currently at triple its capacity of inmates, is a source of concern for the Phuket Governor and other officials. With plans for a new prison already drawn up, the island just awaits a rubber stamp and a start date.

Full story on Page 5

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This Week



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Promoting mutually beneficial Thai-Russian commerce. **Page 11**



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Lend a helping hand with seahorse scientific research. **Page 42**



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Laguna beats Patong in the JLL Hotels Cricket League final. **Page 50**

Saturday



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Sunday



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Monday



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Tuesday



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Wednesday



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Thursday



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Illegal taxi drivers attacked at airport

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

ILLEGAL taxi drivers still attempting to serve passengers at Phuket International Airport filed a complaint with the Phuket Governor this week, alleging they have been threatened, beaten and unjustly denied a way to provide for their families.

The complaint, filed to Governor Maitri Inthasut by Mook Andaman President Songtham Mekmanee and Vice President Itthipol Mekmanee, claimed that five members of their cooperative had been attacked so far.

Manote Tiamsaen, a Mook Andaman driver who was allegedly attacked, spoke with the *Gazette*.

"On Wednesday, I was walking near the airport metered taxi counter and a foreigner asked me where the counter was, so I pointed him in the right direction," Mr Manote said.

"At that moment, three men attacked me. I know two of them, but I didn't file a complaint to police," he said.

"I have been working as a taxi driver at the airport for years – if I can't work here, I have nowhere else to go."

The complaint comes weeks after the Mook Andaman drivers staged a protest that won them a reprieve and allowed 25 of their



Governor Maitri Inthasut receives the complaint from Mook Andaman.

members to join one of the two taxi companies granted a government concession to operate at the airport.

"We are in trouble. We cannot pick up any customers at the airport even though we have signed the memorandum of understanding [MoU] to provide 50 taxis there," President Songtham said.

The MoU, allowing Mook Andaman's former "black plate" taxi drivers to continue to serve

the airport, was signed in November last year when the Airports of Thailand (AOT) allowed 50 of their drivers to operate under the two legitimate concession holders as a temporary measure.

However, the development came to a screeching halt after Phuket Mai Khao Company, one of the airport taxi concessionaires, claimed that the vehicles used by the Mook Andaman group failed to meet legal standards.

Life delivered, not taken on notoriously dangerous roads

RESCUE workers, regular crusaders rendering assistance on Phuket's notorious roads, were called to a very different emergency before dawn Tuesday: the delivery of a baby girl.

Staff at the rescue operations center received a call asking for assistance to transport Jintara Butrarit, 24, from her home to hospital.

"We were nearly at her house when we saw Ms Jintara already in the back of a neighbor's pickup truck about to head to the hospital... we didn't think she would make it," the rescue worker said.

They were right.

"The Thalang Hospital team met us at an intersection, where



Life on Phuket's roads.

they assisted in delivering the baby," the rescue worker said.

At 5:30am, Phuket welcomed a new resident.

"They are both fine and healthy," a hospital staffer said.

– **Thawit Bilabddular**

Meth fiend catches cop on toilet, steals gun

A PATONG Deputy Superintendent was caught with his pants down in Kathu Police Station during the graveyard shift after a meth-fiend robbed his office as he was taking a 20-minute break in the washroom.

"When I returned from the toilet, I found my property had been stolen," said Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Paisarn Sangthep.

Among the missing items was Lt Col Paisarn's firearm, ammunition, laptop, external hard drive and speakers. Lt Col Paisarn immediately put together an investigation team led by Lt Col Nikorn Chuthong.

The confessed culprit, Banpot "Pot" Srina, 24, was tracked down



After robbing the cop, the man took off for McDonald's.

after a motorbike taxi driver claimed that the suspect had hijacked his motorbike and demanded to be taken to the McDonald's on Patong's beachfront road.

"He threatened the driver with the gun and forced the driver to take him to the McDonald's. He claimed he wanted to meet a friend there – he did not pay for the taxi," Lt Col Nikorn said.

Police found Mr Banpot standing on the side of the road in front of the McDonald's with the gun in his hand. All items stolen from Lt Col Paisarn's office, valued at over 100,000 baht, were recovered.

"The suspect confessed to having stolen the property and also confessed to having taken ten *ya bah* [methamphetamine] pills before daring to rob the police station," Lt Col Paisarn said.

– **Thawit Bilabddular**



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ANANTARA SI KAO RESORT & SPA

Teen killers turned in

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE two teens involved in a revenge murder of a member of a rival teen gang in Saphan Hin on May 8 have turned themselves in.

Tanit Kantiangtha, 18, and 17-year-old minor given the pseudonym "Aom" were escorted to the Wichit Police Station by their cousins.

At the station, they confessed to having gunned down rival gang member Jetsadakorn "Bank" Setnarm, 15, with a homemade gun, explained Wichit Police Inspector Passakorn Sonthikun.

Mr Jetsadakorn was shot twice in the chest and died while being transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital, Lt Col Passakorn said.

At about 2:30am, Mr Jetsadakorn and fellow gang members were hanging around one of their houses in the Saphan Hin area when two of their rivals drove by on a stolen motorbike.

"One of the two rivals shot Mr Jetsadakorn twice with a homemade firearm," Col Passakorn explained.



Rescue workers search the Bang Yai Canal for the murder weapon.

"The problem between the two gangs has been ongoing, according to Mr Jetsadakorn's friends," he added.

The day before the shooting, the

rival gang stole a motorbike from one of Mr Jetsadakorn's gang members.

"The group asked to have the bike returned, but were met with

threats of violence," Col Passakorn said.

"Even before the motorbike was stolen, there was at least one violent incident between the two groups that involved the rival group throwing a Molotov cocktail [petrol bomb] at one of Mr Jetsadakorn's gang member's houses in Saphan Hin.

"The suspects said they were angry and they shot Mr Jetsadakorn to take revenge on him and his gang. However, they did not intend to kill him," he explained.

"They confessed that after they shot him, they dumped the gun in Bang Yai Canal," he said.

Police charged the pair with premeditated murder, illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition and carrying a gun in a public area, he said.

Mr Aom was handed over to the Phuket Juvenile Observation and Protection Center and Mr Tanit sent to Phuket Prison, Col Passakorn added.

Additional reporting by Irfan Jamdukor



Stephen Peering had overstayed his visa by two years.

British man nailed: two-year overstay, recreational drugs

PHUKET Immigration officers on Monday arrested a British man for drug possession and for overstaying his visa by more than two years.

The arrest was made at the same resort, Kok Chang Mansion off Taina Road in Karon, where a Swedish man was arrested on drug charges last Thursday.

"At 11:30am, we received a report to investigate Stephen Peering, a 45-year-old British man who was staying at the resort," Capt Angkarn Yasanop of the Phuket Immigration Police said.

"We arrived at room 201 and asked Mr Peering to see his passport, but he told us he had lost it," Capt Angkarn said.

"We smelled drugs in his room, so we asked to search the room and found a small bag of marijuana in the drawer near his bed," he added.

Mr Peering admitted that the marijuana belonged to him, Capt Angkarn said.

After checking the Royal Thai Police Immigration Bureau national database, the officers confirmed that Mr Peering last entered Thailand on February 7, 2011.

Mr Peering was charged with possession of a Category 5 narcotic and for staying illegally in the country.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

Island's baby elephant DNA tests start anew

OFFICERS raided two locations last week suspected of housing baby elephants illegally snatched from the wild.

They took DNA samples from the two animals to determine their parentage as the officers suspected that the two elephants were the offspring of a wild elephant in Kaeng Krachan National Park.

Both elephants had microchips in their ears and the necessary registration and transfer forms were presented, but officers were suspicious because the documents were issued by the Chaiphaphum Muang District Office, which is suspected of issuing fraudulent papers, explained Col Watcharin Phusit from the Regional Natural Resources and Environ-

ment Crime Suppression Division.

"The DNA samples will be sent to Kaeng Krachan to be compared with DNA in herds there," Col Watcharin said.

The search last week comes in the wake of allegations of an elephant trafficking network operating on Phuket and after baby elephants were found to be missing from Kaeng Krachan National Park.

"We launched a nationwide investigation," said Col Watcharin.

"A Phang Nga man purchased both of the elephants for about 500,000 baht from Tabsakae District of Prachuap Khiri Khan and brought them down to Phuket," Col Watcharin said.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong



The team checks for a microchip.

PLTO: Metered taxis need to be turned on

Continued from page 1

PENALTIES

The PLTO has clear penalties in place for drivers who violate the rules.

Drivers can be punished for failing to turn on the meter, charging the wrong initial hire price and refusing to pick up customers.

The fine for a first offense is 500 baht; for the second, 1,000 baht; for the third, 2,000 baht. If drivers violate the rules four times, their license to drive a taxi is revoked immediately, Mr Terayout said.

TWO-PRONGED ATTACK

Metered taxi drivers have not only the PLTO to fear, but also Airports of Thailand (AOT), which operates Phuket International Airport and has its own set of penalties for drivers.

AOT last month punished five metered taxi drivers, Prasat Pechwang, a taxi driver and a



Though there are penalties for not using the meter, it's complicated.

member of Phuket Taxi Meter Service Co Ltd said.

Each of the drivers was punished for not turning on his meter when transporting passengers. Some had also been impolite to tourists, or were wearing the wrong uniform, Mr Prasat said.

The enforcement arm of the AOT is the passengers themselves, using the telephone number given on the taxi ticket they receive.

"Passengers can call the 1584 hotline 24 hours a day to make a complaint about drivers," Mr

Prasat explained.

"We tell taxi drivers to turn on the meter every time they pick up passengers," Mr Prasat said.

COMPLICITY

However, in a bizarre if not inexplicable twist, he went on to admit that the company does allow drivers to reach "private fare agreements" with their passengers, adding, however, that even in these cases they must turn on their meters in order to avoid breaking the rules.

PLTO Chief Terayout said he was aware that metered drivers "sometimes" make private arrangements.

"The [metering] system is in place to protect first-time visitors," he said.

"Tourists who want to negotiate a fare directly with their driver are free to do so," he added.

Additional reporting by Chutharat Plerin

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Police allowed the monks to be formally defrocked before they were arrested on drug charges.

Monks caught, disrobed over drugs stash

FOUR monks and one lay worker at Wat Kajornrungsan in Phuket Town were arrested on May 7 after a tip-off led police to catch them with drugs.

Officers found monks Santi Tuanthong, 32, and Suchai Aung-sanam, 32, in possession of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine); and Wichai Sukharom, 23, and Wichai Suksawat, 33, in possession of marijuana.

Temple employee Anun Hong-yok, 49, was also found in possession of marijuana.

The monks were defrocked at Wat Mongkol Nimit before all five men were taken to Phuket City Police Station to be charged.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

Gold pawned for school goods

Parents forced to sell at 30-year low as new year begins

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

AS THE new school year started in Phuket on Tuesday, parents turned to the Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop to cash in items to pay for their children's school supplies.

Trade was brisk at the government pawnshop, up 20 per cent on last year, said staff.

The occasion brought Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut and local officials to the pawnshop on Komarapat Road in Phuket Town and to a school uniform shop in Saphan Hin.

"About 99 per cent of the pawned items are gold accessories," Gov Maitri said, noting that pawnshop staff had to check items carefully to make sure they were genuine.

Other popularly pawned items are electronic equipment and hand tools, he said.

Because of the high demand, the pawnshop has extra cash on hand and has requested even more from the Governor.

The Phuket City Municipality



Staff at the government pawn shop show Governor Maitri (left) that parents are mostly cashing in gold to pay for their children's education.

Pawnshop is one of three government pawn shops operating on the island in accordance with a national government policy to curb loan sharking and other unauthorized money-lending practices.

Parents must ante up more than 5,000 baht to start the school year, not including the cost of transporting their children to school.

There is no tuition fee at local government schools, but parents

must pay the schools 2,850 per year for a variety of fees, including batik shirt to be worn on Thursdays, sport uniform, school bag, text and exercise books, insurance against accidents and loss of property, lunch, parents' club and document fees, said Kittisak Mitratrat, a teacher at Baan Samkong School.

Parents also need to buy the regular school uniform, which Sincharoen school uniform shop in Saphan Hin sells for 1,000 baht a set before the mandatory monogramming of the school's name.

At the Sincharoen shop, Governor Maitri noted the recent hike in prices for school necessities.

"In the past two months, prices of student uniforms, shoes and stationery have gone up about 10 to 15 baht per item compared with prices this time last year," he said.

As reported in the *Gazette* in recent weeks, gold prices in Thailand have slumped to a 33-year low as the market price plummeted around the world.

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Dredging the canals to improve water flow was among the top priorities in Governor Maitri's four-step plan to tackle sewage stench in the area.

Governor steps up fresh attack on sewage stench

THE stench of raw sewage that has been wreaking havoc in areas of Phuket Town, making some residents physically ill, was partially tamed as the Phuket Governor launched his four-step wastewater project last Friday.

Local officials, residents and organizations joined Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut in Rassada at the Soi Paneang water pump station to inaugurate the project.

The four-step plan implemented involved putting Effective Micro-organism (EM) balls and EM water into the ditches; reducing the amount of wastewater; widening drainage ditches to improve water flow; and making residents aware of the problem.

"The Paneang pond holds wastewater from more than 6,000 residences, factories, apartments, hotels and small businesses,"

Rassada Mayor Phudit Raksarat said.

"Only some of these buildings have wastewater treatment tanks, so approximately 1,500 cubic meters of wastewater is dumped into the pond daily," he said.

Paneang Canal, currently running into the pond, was once directly connected to Bang Yai Canal, but has since become cut off as Sam Kong 1 residents developed the area.

Wastewater issues plague both water sources, as the untreated water is pumped from the pond into the Bang Yai Canal.

Governor Maitri urged Rassada Municipality to continue the pollution abatement project.

"The municipality should be in charge of purifying polluted water before dumping it," he said.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

Island's billion-baht prison

PHUKET'S billion-baht prison slated for construction in 2015 will provide welcome relief to the inmates at the current facility, whose number is now more than three times the century-old prison's original capacity.

With Cabinet approval already secured for the funding, all that remains to make the dream prison a reality are for the plans to be finalized and the construction to begin.

The Gazette's Chutharat Plerin reports.

PHUKET Governor Maitri Inthasut was blunt in his appraisal of the overcrowding at Phuket Provincial Prison during the pre-dawn mass search of inmates and common areas there on April 30.

It worried him.

"The number of prisoners here is about three times the facility's capacity," he noted.

Good news came just days later when Prison Chief Rapin Nichanon confirmed that the project to build a "latest-technology" prison in Phuket to accommodate up to 3,000 inmates was on track to commence construction in 2015.

"The Cabinet has approved the project in principle. The one billion baht required is supposed to be in our hands by 2015," he said.

"The new prison is necessary since the current one is 115 years old. All parts of the building are old and the prison was originally built for 800 prisoners only. Now we are approaching 3,000 prisoners," Chief Rapin explained.

"A new prison is the only solution, as the old prison cannot be expanded any further," he said.

The plans for the new facility, to be built on 108 rai of government land at the site of the Bang Jo detention center in Srisoonthorn, Thalang, have yet to be finalized, but once they are Chief Rapin envisages the new prison to be the best in the country.

"It will have many of the latest security measures, including CCTV," he said, adding that he was not at liberty to divulge any details about the new facility.

The new prison will require

about 100 prison officers, double the number of officers currently stationed at Phuket Prison.

Critically, the new prison has the backing of local residents, chief Rapin said.

"Nobody is against the prison as it will also benefit the area. A better road will be built, as well as a public football pitch and playground, which local residents have asked for," he explained.

REHABILITATION

Along with the capacity for more inmates to be kept in less crowded conditions, Chief Rapin foresees other changes.

Forty-seven rai behind the security wall will separate inmates by category, such as foreign prisoners and drug offenders.

"It will also allow us to separate those inmates awaiting trial from those serving sentences," Chief Rapin said.

"In addition, we may be able to house inmates serving 20 to 30-year sentences. The maximum sentence of current inmates is 15 years," he said.

Another benefit to having a larger facility, Chief Rapin pointed out, was prisoner rehabilitation.

"There will be many more career training classes so prisoners finishing their sentences can earn a living after they are released."

"From my experience, some people think that only bad people walk out through the gates when we release them. Not true. We work hard on giving our prisoners education and career training. Some of them even finish an Open Uni-



Governor Maitri saw the overcrowded conditions of the prison firsthand at the end of April. Photo: Gazette file

versity degree while detained.

"Please give them a chance to prove themselves," he added.

WOMEN BEHIND BARS

A key individual at Phuket Prison is Suparat Tantipongwiwat, chief of the General Administration Department. For some time now, she has been concerned about the welfare of female prisoners at the prison.

"The female zone has more than 300 female inmates sharing an area designed and built for only 100," said Ms Suparat.

"In addition to that, we are also caring for seven children and three pregnant women. This doesn't include the elderly and sick female prisoners," she added.

Children in the female zone range from a month to a year old.

"When we have new pregnant inmates, we send them for a health check and make sure they have access to a doctor.

"After the mother gives birth, we try to identify a relative or close family friend who can look after the baby while the mother is

imprisoned. If not, the baby will stay with the inmate for the first year," said Ms Suparat.

Although the female zone is overcrowded, the prison is still able to provide a special area for nursing mothers and their babies.

"I understand that babies must be with their mothers. But we do not want them raised in such an environment... When babies reach the age of one year we get them out of the prison environment. We must relocate them as at that age they start to learn negative life experiences from the environment around them," said Ms Suparat.

"When that time comes we will ask the mother to have a relative pick up the baby. If there is no

one to look after the baby we will have them raised in an orphanage or a temporary foster home while the mother serves out her sentence.

"We have a well-organized system here, but we can't make any more improvements until we have more space.

"This whole facility was intended for male prisoners only. The female zone occupies a small part of that already overcrowded space.

"We desperately need a completely separate place for mothers and babies. Young children need to receive good care in order to become normal young adults without any stigma attached to their upbringing," Ms Suparat concluded.

No reservations over new 'neighbors'

SAFIA Manabutra, a 57-year-old resident at Baan Bang Jo, where the new prison will be built, told the Gazette that she has no reservations about the new mega-prison being built in her neighborhood.

"My house is only about 50 meters away from the current detention center. During the week I often see the inmates escorted by the guards as they come out to work in the fields," she explained.

"I am aware that a new prison will be built here but I don't know when it will happen. We villagers don't have any problems with it. We go about our business and leave the government to get along with theirs," she said.

"We've never been affected by the detention facility or the inmates, so I don't see any issues in building a new prison here," Ms Safia added.



Ms Safia, who lives in Baan Bang Jo, has no issue with the new prison. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

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Tourists navigate a hole in a walkway at the still unfinished Chalong Marina. Photo: Gazette file

Chalong Marina in need of repair before 2015 open

THE chief of the Phuket Marine Office has appealed to all boat operators to exercise caution while using the still incomplete Chalong Bay Marina when allowing passengers – mostly tourists – to board and disembark vessels.

The news comes after a *Phuket Gazette* reader sent in photos of tourists cautiously avoiding a gaping hole in the gangway that joins the marina superstructure to the main marina office.

"I will send officers to inspect the marina and we will have it fixed for everyone's safety," Phuket Marine Chief Phuriphat Teerakulpisut said.

"Technically, people are not allowed to use the marina yet because it is still under construction. However, we are trying to be as flexible as possible when it comes to the locals' reliance on it.

"I urge all people to be very careful when using the marina. The facility is not complete and therefore safety measures may not be up to standard.

"In the meantime we will try our best to fix the situation," Mr Phuriphat said.

Last week, Phuket provincial authorities were told the facility would not be ready to open to the public until 2015 despite an original launch date of 2012.

– Namsai Wongsaree

One-stop yacht center slated to open in 2015

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

WITH the long-awaited "one-stop center" for yachts arriving in Phuket already one year overdue, officials have now announced that the complex will open in 2015.

The 70-million-baht rotunda-style building stands proud in Chalong Bay, but remains to be occupied by the relevant agencies for yacht arrivals to clear immigration, customs and the harbor master.

In December 2011, the Phuket Marine Office declared the 44-slip Chalong Bay Marina "90 per cent complete" and the one-stop shop ready to open by 2012.

However, the Marine Office announced on May 8 that it was spending 15 million baht on a GPS registration system that will be mandatory for all yachts arriving or in port in Phuket.

Additionally, a seawall will be built to shelter yachts in the still-incomplete marina.

Both must be complete before relevant agencies will be allowed to move into the new building, Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada explained at a Provincial Hall meeting last Wednesday.

Phuket has more than 3,000



The Chalong pier one-stop center for immigration, customs and harbor master. Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

yacht arrivals and departures each year. To keep track of yacht activity, SDA Group Co Ltd is installing a GPS registration system, Sakorn Pukham of the Phuket Marine Office said.

"Every yacht arriving in Phuket will have to log in to this GPS sys-

tem so we can track the vessels' whereabouts. The control center will be at Chalong Pier with relay towers in Chalong, Patong and Thalang," he said.

"Any arriving yachts that do not have the required GPS equipment on board will have to pay a

deposit in order to be provided basic GPS gear. The deposit will be refunded on the yacht's departure when the equipment is returned," he said.

"The GPS system is to be operational by October 22 this year," he added.

Fake realtors lure shop owner into gambling scam

FIVE people have been arrested for operating a real estate scam in which they lured potential customers into illegal gambling.

Uraiporn Sae-Tung wanted to sell her massage shop in Rawai and had put up a sign in front of her premises saying so. On May 10, she received a call from Thanapol Kachadej, who pretended to be a broker interested in selling her shop for her, explained Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Serm Kwannimit.

"They met on May 12 to negotiate the price. Ms Uraiporn agreed to sell the shop to Mr Thanapol's friend for 570,000 baht... On May

13, at around 8:30am, he called her again and asked her to go with him to a hotel in Karon to meet the friend who wanted to buy her shop," Lt Col Serm said.

"At the hotel, she met Suphanee Sang-anun, who pretended to be the buyer. After talking for a while, Mr Thanapol and Ms Suphanee tried to persuade her to join them in playing *fan tan* for money," he said.

Afraid she was about to be cheated, Ms Uraiporn told them she wanted to go get something to eat first. Once outside, she called the police, who told her to return to the room and

agree to join the *fan tan* game.

Police arrived and arrested Pairoj Naboon, Somchai Suksom and Mr Thanapol, all from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, and Ms Suphanee and Kamol Aun-ruen from Surat Thani.

Items seized in the raid included fake "official documents", copies of Ms Uraiporn's land documents and stacks of "cartoon money" that the swindlers used to pad out the stack they intended to give to Ms Uraiporn.

"We charged them with fraud and forging official documents," Col Serm said.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Blood bank seeks Rh-negative donors

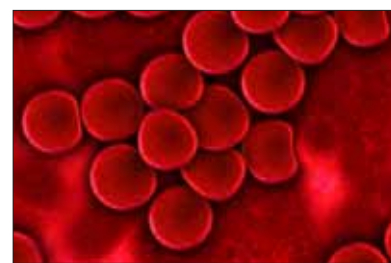
THE Phuket Regional Blood Center (PRBC), often called upon to save the lives of Thais and foreigners, has no reserves of type O-negative and A-negative blood.

The blood bank is also low on stocks of blood types A and B.

"We try to maintain a daily minimum stock of 200 units of A, B and O blood types, and 20 units of Rhesus-negative blood," said PRBC acting chief Pornthip Rattajak.

"We currently have only 100 units of blood types A and B on hand, and we have zero stock of O and A Rhesus-negative blood. We especially need them," she said.

The Phuket Chapter of the Red Cross Society has announced its schedule of mobile donation clinics for the month of May.



The Phuket blood bank takes donations every day of the week and on public holidays. Photo: Geralt

The mobile blood clinics will be at the following places and times:

May 20: Panwa Beach Resort Hotel (Cape Panwa), 1pm-4pm

May 23: Anuphas Honda (Chalong), Chao Fa West Road, 1pm-4pm

May 28: Jungceylon (Patong), ground floor, in front of FOX

shop, noon-6pm

May 30: Cherg Talay Administrative Organization, 10am-3pm

The blood center accepts donations at their headquarters on Rattanakosin 200 Year Road, next to Phuket Provincial Employment Office in Saphan Hin, at the following days and times:

– Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: from 8:30am to 4:30pm (no break for lunch)

– Tuesdays and Thursdays: from 8:30 am to 8pm (no break for lunch)

– Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays: from 9am to 3pm (no break for lunch)

For more information contact the PRBC by phone at 076-251178 or email at phuketrbcc@yahoo.com.

– Saran Mitratat

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Illegally cut precious wood seized in Kathu, lumberjacks escape

A TEAM of Phuket officers raided an illegal logging camp in Kathu on May 8, seizing hundreds of planks of wood cut from protected species of trees.

Kathu District Chief Veera Kerdsirimongkol led officers into the hills behind Wat Kathu after local residents informed his office of illegal lumberjacks working in the area.

"We found 200 pieces of wood cut from Malabar Ironwood and Malacca Teak at the site," Chief Veera said.

Both are protected species in Thailand, he explained.

"The workers had a second site, where we found two Malacca Teak trees cut down and seven pieces of hewn lumber on the ground ready to be cut into planks," he said.

However, the officers found no workers at either of the two sites.

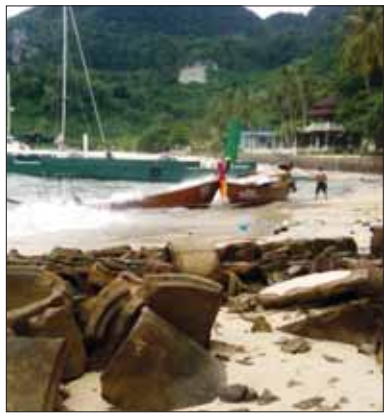
"I think the gang was scared off, or we could have missed them on our way up here," Chief Veera said.

"We have contacted Forestry officials, as we believe the first site is within the boundaries of a protected forest. They will continue the investigation," he added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



Veera Kerdsirimongkol (in white shirt) and officers stand on illegally cut protected wood.



Because the wave hit early in the morning, nobody was injured. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Freak wave hits Phi Phi Island

A FREAK wave pounded the popular Phi Phi Island early on the morning of May 11, damaging 15 boats in Tonsai Bay.

Though 14 long-tail boats and one speedboat were damaged by the wave, no injuries were reported.

"Fortunately, the wave hit early in the morning so nobody was out in their boat and nobody was injured," longtail boat owner Pornchai Suparb told the *Gazette*.

"When I came down to the beach I found my boat and many others damaged."

"Many of them had lost their engines and the speedboat was beached," he said.

Mr Pornchai quickly gathered villagers to help recover the submerged engines.

Krabi Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Chief Thalerngsak Phuwayanapong issued a warning shortly after the incident, urging all boat users to be careful as heavy winds and more big waves were expected to rock the coast.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Khai Nai coral restoration begins while seawalking tours continue

By Namsai Wongsaree

MARINE officers and volunteer divers who headed to Khai Nai Island on Tuesday to help restore damaged coral — allegedly wrecked by a seawalking tour company — found the company back on site leading a tour when they arrived.

"We saw a ship named *Sea Lion* in the area with a speedboat alongside. People were on the speedboat and tourists wearing seawalking helmets were diving in the sea," said Somying Phuangprasan, a Fishery Specialist at the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR).

The DMCR group took photos of the seawalkers, she said.

Because police officers and officers from the Tourism and Guide Registration office came too late to witness the seawalking themselves, they could not press charges, said fellow DMCR officer Somuek Boonyai.

Tourist Police officers ordered the *Sea Lion* to leave the area and escorted it away, he added.

As of April 15, complaints against the company had been reported to the DMCR, the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC), the Phuket Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, the governors of both Phuket and Phang Nga, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Inspector-General and the Chief Executive of that ministry.

However, charges have yet to



The seawalking company in operation at Khai Nai Island when divers arrived to repair coral. Photo: DMCR

be filed against the company.

"We have tried to contact the owner of the company, but he always sends his staff, who don't know anything," said Jakrit Janjit, Registrar of the Bureau of Tourism Business and Guide Registration Phuket office.

"The photos taken by the DMCR don't clearly show tourists seawalking," he added.

Once the *Sea Lion* left the area, volunteer divers proceeded to repair the 300 square meters of damaged coral.

Led by Dr Naline Thongtam, the senior marine specialist at the PMBC who first saw the damage on March 22, the team started by installing steel frameworks in the sea floor.

The divers then used telephone wire and cable ties to attach pieces

of living coral to the frames.

"Around 600 coral frags are still alive, but the restoration process will take at least five to six years, because the growth rate of coral is slow," said Thanate Manno, chief of the Phuket DMCR office.

The team plans to return to the site in three months to check on the coral.

Haunted house blamed for wasting disease

A TEENAGE girl suffering from a debilitating wasting disease believes she has been cursed for spending a night exploring one of Thailand's most famous "haunted" houses.

Forida Mueangkhot, 18, told reporters that she and four friends broke into the "Green House" in Ayutthaya around a year ago.

The house, also known as Khun Phitak Borihan House after its long-dead owner, has featured on various Thai ghost-hunting TV shows over the years.

Villagers believe it is still



haunted by a local landowner who died about 100 years ago.

Though they were scared, Forida said the group didn't see anything strange while in the house.

However, they had the feeling they were being watched, she said.

The next day, Forida began to

feel faint and collapsed.

Her family took her to the local hospital, where she stayed for several days.

During that time, people reported seeing the ghost of an old man watching over her at night.

Forida has since returned home, but remains bed-ridden.

Her family believes the spirit of Khun Phitak has cursed her.

Local villagers visited Forida in hospital, staged mass prayers for her and made offerings to the ghost, but she has yet to recover.

— Daily News

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Clash in USA Today access row

AROUND THE nation

THE Thai Government faces serious accusations of media manipulation in a row that sees two high-profile members of the same society clan, Suranand and Abhisit Vejjajiva, pitted against each other.

Suranand and Abhisit may share a surname – they're cousins – but have found themselves in top jobs at the opposite ends of Thailand's political spectrum.

Mr Abhisit is a former prime minister and current leader of the Democrat Party. Mr Suranand is secretary-general and senior adviser to current premier Yingluck Shinawatra of the Pheu Thai Party.

Over the past two weeks, however, those roles have put them into conflict.

The Democrats are accusing Mr Suranand of blocking newspaper *USA Today* from interviewing his cousin.

Party spokesman Chavanond Intarakomaryasut has called for Mr Suranand to resign over the allegations.

Mr Chavanond said an email sent to Mr Abhisit by the US newspaper proved the government was attempting to interfere with the opposition's access to the press, which he said breached the Constitution.



Claims are flying that the Pheu Thai Party is blocking *USA Today* from interviewing former prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. Photo: The Nation

The Democrat spokesman said *USA Today* first wrote to Mr Abhisit on April 24 saying a group of people from the newspaper would be in Thailand from May 1-24 and wished to meet the Democrat leader on May 6, 7 or 9.

Through his personal secretary Somkiat Krongwattanasuk, Mr Abhisit said he could meet the group on May 7 or 9 at 10am. The newspaper then sent him a note

of thanks, confirming the meeting on May 9, and sent details to members of the group.

But within an hour, Mr Somkiat received an email from one of the journalists saying: "The appointment is being immediately cancelled because [we or I] just spoke with Suranand who said the PM's Office Ministry will not support us if we go and meet with

Abhisit."

About 15 minutes later, *USA Today* sent Mr Somkiat an email formally cancelling the interview.

Mr Chavanond said he was not sure if Mr Suranand was lying, or if the newspaper was making things up, but he wanted Mr Suranand to clarify the matter. At the time of writing, Mr Suranand had made no statement on the story.

In an interview with Philip Golangai of Malaysia's *The Star* newspaper in 2009, Mr Suranand said he and his cousin, who was prime minister at the time, had taken very different routes into politics.

While Mr Abhisit was educated at Eton and Oxford University in Britain, Mr Suranand went through the American education system. Mr Abhisit then went almost straight into politics, while his cousin spent time working in the business world before going to work for Pheu Thai.

"Not to discredit him. He is a well-intentioned man," Mr Suranand said. "He has good intentions for the country. He worked hard to become prime minister. And the Vejjajiva clan is proud that he became prime minister. But that is his world."

He added: "I tend to be progressive – adapting modern business management skills for the bureaucracy – whereas the Democrats are very conservative. They want to work through the bureaucracy and the old elite."



The culprits attacked the office, breaking the glass. Photo: The Nation

Police probe attack on Thai Rath headquarters

POLICE are investigating an incident in which a small incendiary device was thrown at the offices of *Thai Rath* newspaper on Bangkok's Vibhavadi Rangsit Road on May 11.

Bang Sue Police, quoting three security guards who witnessed the 3am attack, said two men on a motorcycle stopped near the front gate and the pillion rider approached it on foot.

He then threw two petanque balls at the guard box, hitting a glass window with one. The attacker then threw a large firework at the guards. The blast caused the remaining window to shatter, wounding one guard in the arm.

Police are checking security cameras near the scene to identify the culprits.

The attack comes as the paper faces criticism for comments made by one of its cartoonists on Facebook criticizing Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Somchai "Chai" Ratchawat is accused of comparing Mrs Yingluck unfavorably to prostitutes after he drafted a cartoon with the caption: "Please understand that whores are not bad women. Whores only sell their body, but a bad woman has been wandering around trying to sell the country."

Days before the attack, about 100 red-shirts rallied outside the paper's offices, demanding it take action against Mr Chai.

Democrat party list MP Ongart Klampaiboon said the party condemned the attack on the paper.

Thailand's giant panda plans China sex tour

LIN PING, the only giant panda ever born in Thailand, is set to head to China to find a mate.

The bear, which was born at Chiang Mai Zoo to parents Chuang Chuang and Lin Hui, has been a serious money spinner for Thailand, drawing in thousands of tourists to the zoo every year.

But on October 12, the panda will head to China for a year, during which time the authorities will try to pair her up with a suitable partner.

If all goes to plan, the lovestruck couple will then return to Thailand for another 15 years.

"Thanks to the close ties between the two countries and

discussions between the leaders, China has agreed to let Lin Ping grow up in Thailand," Foreign Minister Surapong Towichukchaikul said.

Lin Ping's parents first came to Thailand in 2003 with a 10-year contract to stay in the country. They too will now get to stay in Thailand beyond the original deadline.

China has been charging 7.5 million baht per year for each giant panda lent to Thailand.

This annual fee will rise to almost 15mn baht per animal once Chuang Chuang's and Lin Hui's stays are extended. When Lin Ping returns with her mate, the fee will rise to nearly 30mn baht per panda.



If Ling finds her mate, they will return to the Kingdom. Photo: The Nation

Guard stabbed in five-man prison escape bid

A GUARD is recovering in hospital from a stab wound while five inmates face transfer to a maximum security facility after they botched an escape from Nakhon Si Thammarat Prison.

Somboon Saengsriram, now in Thungsong Hospital, was taken hostage by the five convicts and stabbed under his collarbone.

The five prisoners, Sririchai Phetdee, Suriya Chu-in, Surachet Sornmanee, Suriya Kraithavorn and Sahas Muenluang, had been trying to escape



Mr Somboon is recovering in hospital. Photo: The Nation

five inmates faced more charges and would be chained as a temporary punishment. They would be later transferred to a maximum security prison, he said.

the inmates were able to overpower him and took him hostage.

They gave themselves up after policemen surrounded the prison.

Thungsong district police chief Thammanoon Faiju held talks with the five inmates until they agreed to release the guard and give themselves up.

Mr Somboon was taken to hospital and is now in stable condition.

Corrections Department chief Suchart Wongananchai said the

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In brief...

Big fashion retailers back prevention of another Bangladesh factory disaster

THE world's two biggest fashion retailers, Inditex and H&M, along with several other companies have backed an accord aimed at preventing another disaster like last month's Bangladesh factory building collapse that killed more than 1,100 people.

Thousands protest Gabon ritual killings

SEVERAL thousand people protested in Gabon last Saturday against a spate of ritual killings that has seen mutilated bodies washing up on beaches in the central African state this year.

Body parts of humans and animals are prized by some in the region and Gabon's Association for the Prevention of Ritual Crimes estimates that 20 people have been killed so far this year and their lips, tongues, genitals and other organs removed.

More die from new bird flu virus in China

THREE more people have died in China from the new strain of H7N9 bird flu virus, raising the death toll to 35 while the total number of infections rose to 130, state media said on Monday.

Without giving details of the deaths, Xinhua news agency said a new case of the H7N9, described by the World Health Organisation as one of the most lethal flu viruses around. There has so far been no evidence of human-to-human transmission of the virus.

Boat carrying 100 Rohingya capsizes off Myanmar

A BOAT carrying about 100 Rohingya Muslims capsized off western Myanmar with many feared drowned at the start of a mass evacuation from low-lying regions ahead of Cyclone Mahasen making landfall, a UN official said on Tuesday.

Brits urge US-EU trade talks to put 'everything on table'

By Doug Palmer

BRITISH Prime Minister David Cameron on Monday said a proposed free trade agreement between the European Union and United States should cover all sectors, drawing a contrast with France, which wants to leave out sensitive cultural industries.

"To realize the huge benefits this deal could bring will take ambition and political will. That means everything on the table, even the difficult issues, and no exceptions," Cameron said at a White House news conference with President Barack Obama.

France last month threatened to block the proposed free trade talks unless cultural sectors, such as television and radio, were excluded from the agreement.

The European Parliament's influential trade committee voted a week later to leave all of Europe's cultural and audiovisual services out of the negotiations due to start in July, a decision that will shape the negotiating mandate to be agreed on by trade ministers from the EU's 27 member states.

The Motion Picture Association of America, in comments filed last week with the US Trade Representative's office, urged the United States not to agree to any

"up-front, blanket sectorial exclusions," but acknowledged EU sensitivities on the issue and said there were limits to what it expected from the talks.

"We recognize the importance of cultural diversity and the contribution the audio-visual sector makes to achieve that goal... We want, in particular, to make clear we are not calling into question existing EU or national financial support measures and mechanisms for the audio-visual sector," the industry group said.

Britain, which is in the midst of a national debate over whether to stay in the EU, is hosting the annual summit meeting of the Group of Eight leading industrial economies next month in Northern Ireland.

That gives PM Cameron a high-profile platform to help shape the negotiating mandate for the talks with the United States and to shore up support in Britain for remaining in the EU.

Leading EU states Germany, France and Italy are also members of the G8 along with Japan, Russia and Canada. The presidents of the European Commission and the European Council, two EU executive branch institutions, also attend G8 summits.

"President Obama and I have both championed a free trade deal between the European Union and



British Prime Minister David Cameron (above) met with US President Barack Obama to discuss a free-trade agreement. Photo: Reuters

the United States. And there's a real chance now to get the process launched in time for the G-8. So, the next five weeks are crucial," Cameron said.

Cameron has promised to renegotiate Britain's relationship

with the EU and hold a referendum on membership if he wins the next election in 2015. But that has failed to stop his party's divisions over Europe or halt the rise of the anti-EU UK Independence Party.

— Reuters

Brothers of kidnap suspect hope he 'rots in jail'

TWO brothers of a former Cleveland school bus driver accused of holding three women hostage in his house for a decade described Ariel Castro as a "monster" and said they hope he "rots in jail" if convicted of kidnapping and raping the women.

Pedro and Onil Castro were also detained a week ago by police in connection with the abduction of the women, but were quickly released after the brothers insisted they were not aware the women were in the house.

"I hope he rots in that jail," Onil, 50, said in an interview with CNN broadcast on Monday. "I feel the same way," said Pedro Castro.

Prosecutors in Ohio last week charged Ariel Castro, 52, with four counts of kidnapping the women as well as the young daughter of one of the women born in captivity, and three counts of rape, but brought no charges against brothers Onil or Pedro.

In their first television interview since the



Ariel (right), Pedro (center) and Onil Castro appear in court in Ohio. Photo: Reuters

captives escaped last Monday, the men said that for the last decade they had not been allowed past the kitchen of their brother's house.

Onil said he was riding with Ariel in the suspect's car when the police pulled them over. He presumed it was for a traffic violation.

The men were separated, and Onil said he had little sense of the seriousness of the situation until a brief encounter later with Ariel when he was walking from his jail cell to a restroom.

"When he walked past me, he goes, 'Onil, you're never going to see me again. I love you bro.' And that was it," Onil Castro said in the interview. "And he put his fist up for a bump."

Ariel has been accused of holding three women — Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight — captive for about a decade and fathering a child, now six years old, with Berry.

Pedro, 54, recalled being awakened by police and presuming he was being arrested due to a longstanding open container violation. He described himself as surprised when detectives who had brought him in for questioning told him his brother was a kidnapping suspect.

— Reuters

Killing in Russia adds to gay activists' worries

AN APPARENT homophobic killing has increased concerns among Russian activists about prejudice against gays, which they fear will be encouraged by a bill banning homosexual "propaganda".

The body of a 23-year-old man was found in the courtyard of an apartment building on Friday with multiple wounds including in the genital area, the Federal Investigative Committee said on May 11.

It said a 22-year-old acquaintance of the victim and a 27-year-old ex-convict had been detained on suspicion of murder.

The suspects said they had been drinking with the victim and began beating him after he told them he was gay.

It is rare for law enforcement authorities in Russia to specify suspicions that homophobia was the motive in an attack, and activists say many attacks against gays are not treated or described as such by the police.

Prominent gay rights activist Nikolai Alexeyev said a bill to outlaw spreading "homosexual propaganda" among minors, given preliminary approval by parliament



Russian gay activist. Photo: Reuters

in January, would make Russians less likely to fear consequences for attacking gays.

— Reuters



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Cashing in on Thai and Russian relations

The president of the Thai-Russian Chamber of Commerce was recently in Phuket to present ways to promote business between the two nations

PHISAK Nivataphand, the president of the Thai-Russian Chamber of Commerce and advisor for the Russian Studies Center of Chulalongkorn University, was recently in Phuket to give a speech to promote Thai-Russian business relations.

Organized by Thai-Russian media firm, Expert Media Co Ltd, the seminar was held on May 10 at the Royal Phuket Marina.

Mr Phisak opened his speech by noting that this year marks 116 years of established relations between Thailand and Russia.

"Thais should not forget the kindness and generosity that His Majesty Czar Nicolas II of Russia had extended to the Kingdom of Siam during the so-called Imperialism Period," he said, referring to when Russia stood firmly behind Siam as a friend amidst aggressive French and British colonial policies.

He noted that such an alliance had a part in helping Siam maintain its sovereignty. He then highlighted the fact that a Russian translation of the book on His Majesty the King's bibliography and noble deeds for Thailand throughout the past 60 years, had been voted, in Vladivostok, Russia, as the Best Book of Russia 2009.

Mr Phisak highlighted factors anyone considering to do business in Russia should keep in mind.

"When we talk about Russia,



Phisak Nivataphand.

we have first to understand that Russia is the biggest country in area in the world, with some 17,075,400 square kilometers, about 30 times bigger than Thailand, and with nine time zones, extending to Europe in the west and touching Asia – China, Japan and the Koreans – in the east.

"As such, from a marketing point of view, one has to segment out distributors or agents as it would be rather difficult for one single party to cover the entire area."

Likewise, since transportation costs will be involved, pricing and delivery times are something to be closely considered, he stressed.

"Moreover, the terms and methods of payment are also significant factors to consider when doing business in Russia," he said.

For his next point, he also turned to address the handful of Russians in attendance.

"With apologies to our Russian friends, the fact is that because international monetary or financial procedures in Russia are not that standardized, it is not that easy or reliable to send or ship any goods, in terms of consignment or 'pay upon receipt'," he said.

To partly solve this problem, Mr Phisak proposed at the Joint Commission Meeting between Thailand and Russia three years ago, to consider the idea of engaging in a currency swap.

Though, such a swap has not yet materialized, he pointed out that China and Thailand have already initiated a swap as of 2012.

"Last year, Thailand welcomed 1,317,387 Russian visitors. The question is: who makes gains when Russians have to exchange rubles into US\$, and then exchange US\$ into baht to spend in Thailand?

"After that, what is left over in baht needs to get exchanged back into US\$ again and back into rubles when back in Russia.

"While some banks in Thailand have started to accept Rubles, it is not yet official," he said.

Mr Phisak went on to highlight several other relevant and interesting points, for not only Thai companies doing business, but Russian companies doing business in Thailand as well. These points will be covered in a follow-up article in next week's issue. – *Phuket Gazette*



His Majesty, King Chulalongkorn, Rama V (left) was a good friend of Czar Nicolas II of Russia. This drawing was printed in various publications circulated in Europe in the late nineteenth century.

No apparent rush for Russian

THE move to have Russian language courses at higher-education institutions in Phuket remains on hold while academic staff wait for students to return to full-time studies so they can assess demand.

Russian Deputy Honorary Consul in Phuket Santi Udomkiratak said that his office was pursuing having British International School – Phuket (BIS), which already has native Russian speakers on staff, and the Prince of Songkla University (PSU) Phuket Campus offering courses in Russian.

"We have to wait for the new semester to begin at the Prince of Songkla University Phuket campus so we can gauge student-demand for the courses. There must be at least 40 students enrolled in the program to make it viable," Mr Santi said.

Commenting back in February, Santi said "many Russian tourists came to visit Phuket for several years now, so we would like to enable Thai people to make a living by using the language to earn money from the tourists. There are very few Thai people who can speak good Russian. That's why Russian companies have to hire Russian people to work, which upsets Thais."

In addition to Thais learning Russian, Mr Phisak Nivataphand, president of the Thai-Russian Chamber of Commerce told the *Gazette* that he wants to push for organizing Thai language classes for Russians in Phuket.

"Many Russians coming here don't have good English skills, let alone Thai. However, in order to avoid more problems like we've seen in recent years, whether in Pattaya or Phuket, for example, I think it's important for Russians to learn Thai, especially if they plan to visit or do business here," he said. – *Phuket Gazette*

PIMEX 2014 to be held in January

THE Phuket International Boat Show (PIMEX), 'Asia's favorite boat show', which has been held in March for the last two years, will now return to its previous date and will next be held from January 9-12, 2014 at the Royal Phuket Marina said Andy Dowden, show director.

"Following feedback from the 10th anniversary show earlier this year, we have decided to return to the popular January slot after two years of being held in March. The unseasonable heat during this year's show was one of the factors for moving the date back to January, and the show's opening times are planned to be adjusted to carry through to the evening," said Dowden.

The leading consumer boat show in Asia, PIMEX has grown to become one of the most important events in the marine calendar, hotly anticipated by marine and lifestyle businesses from around Asia and the world each year.

PIMEX plays a central role in Thailand and Asia's marine industry as a meeting place and a sales and marketing platform for marine leisure businesses. The show continues to generate sales and, through a global marketing campaign, raises awareness of Phuket, Thailand and beyond to a global audience.

The gateway to marine leisure and boating in the region, the Andaman Triangle, consisting of Phang Nga and Krabi with Phuket at its center, is often referred to as the 'Monaco of the East' and has become the playground of the wealthy.

The annual marine and lifestyle event, which is an integral part of Phuket's calendar and a key event on the Asian boat show circuit, will benefit from the many international visitors and villa owners spending the Christmas and New Year holidays on the island.

"The January period is peak season on Phuket, and it is a time



ALL ABOARD: The boat show was held in March for the last two years.

when luxury villa owners are often in residence, enjoying the Christmas and New Year holidays," commented Dowden, adding "PIMEX will showcase the unique luxury and marine lifestyle that Phuket has to offer to an international audience of high net worth individuals."

On display at PIMEX 2014 will be a stunning array of yachts and equipment, luxury cars and goods, and some of the finest properties on the island, set against a backdrop of marina-side cocktail parties and VIP functions held over four days from January 9 to 12. – *Phuket Gazette*

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Currency crisis warning signs

THE strength of the Thai baht is the topic of conversation quite frequently these days, especially since so many

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

Phuket residents are living of a fixed income coming in from abroad in foreign currencies. We have all been feeling the same pain as the combination of the strong baht and domestic inflation, has led to our hard money continuously buying less and less. Oddly enough, I am one of the few who believe better days may not be that far away and there is plenty of historical evidence to support this view.

I actually had the idea for this article as I was studying for the six hour CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) level two exam which I will be sitting shortly, and one of the topics that really hit home was on the warning signs of a currency crisis. Much to my relief, Thailand's current situation has the baht appearing to be the poster child for a currency crisis in the making. Unfortunately, similar to any bubble or impending crisis, it is impossible to predict the catalyst or timing of when the proverbial fan will be hit. What is clear, is that the current course of the baht is moving in an irrational and unsustainable direction and that something will eventually have to give.

According to the CFA institute some of the warning signs of a currency crisis are deteriorating trade terms, a dramatic decline in official foreign exchange reserves, a foreign exchange rate higher than the mean reverting level, high inflation, equity markets experiencing a boom-bust cycle, and expanding nominal private credit.

While we are unsure of the actual state of the government's foreign exchange reserves there have been reports in the local press that all is not right. I won't make any judgments, but instead leave it to the reader to consider what to believe, also in respect to the published official inflation figures. It seems to me like prices are rising at an ever increasing rate which is above published figures. The Thai

market is one of the biggest boomers for three years in a row now and every boom is followed by a bust.

The banks here, while not nearly as bad as those in the US leading up to the real estate crash there, have been forking out easy money to buyers of their first homes and first automobiles at a pretty rapid clip. Thus nominal private credit is surely expanding, and you should keep in mind there are no fixed rate mortgages handed out by Thai banks. Thus if borrowers struggle even a little to make payments now, any rise in interest rates could likely see defaults shoot through the roof.

Most major movements in any market overshoot the long term mean and typically end in the same kind of rapid movement we have seen from the Baht recently. Usually there will be a final spike with something like a 50% retracement afterwards; of course this doesn't always happen. Looking back at history it appears we are above the long term mean reverting level by quite a bit. Thus the baht pretty much fits nicely into the box of a currency crisis in the making.

Unfortunately, predicting the precise end of bubbles is a fool's game. So for those of you on fixed foreign incomes, I can't say it won't get worse before it gets better. If you look back at where the baht was before the 1997 crisis, we still have room for it to strengthen even more without going into 'craziness territory'. I do think this will not last forever or even that much longer, and if you sit tight we will eventually see the baht return to more reasonable levels, even if not back to where they ended after the last crisis.

David Mayes MBA resides in Phuket and provides wealth management services to expats around the globe, focusing on UK pension transfers. He can be reached at david.m@faramond.com or 085-335-8573. Faramond UK is regulated by the FSA and advises on pensions and taxation.



WHAT GOES UP: A currency crisis could be in the making in Thailand. Photo: Peter Hellberg



BANG FOR YOUR BUCK: Many expats living in Phuket have seen the purchasing power of their fixed income from overseas diminish as the value of the baht increases. Photo: Mattes

PM's office airs annoyance at BOT



SKYROCKETING BAHT: The office of the PM is pressuring the BOT's Monetary Policy Committee to rein in the appreciating baht. Photo: USAF

THE Bank of Thailand has come under greater pressure from the government after the Prime Minister's office minister questioned the role of the BOT's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in finding a solution to the appreciating baht and also demanded that it report to the Cabinet every six months.

Stating that capital inflows were partly a result of the high policy rate, PM's Office Minister Varathep Ratanakorn urged the MPC to play a clearer role in reining in the baht.

The MPC must report to the cabinet every six months or sooner if there is any serious situation that could have an impact on the economy, he said.

"There could be widespread impacts from the exchange rate on both manufacturers and the workforce. Previously, the BOT board had also expressed concerns on this matter. The MPC should take these concerns into consideration," Varathep said.

The baht yesterday appreciated 0.2 per cent from May 3 to 29.65 per US dollar as of 3.32pm in Bangkok, according to Bloomberg. The Thai currency has advanced 3.1 per cent this year, the best performance among Asia's 11 most-traded currencies.

Meanwhile, Kasikornbank President Predee Daochai extended his support to the four proposed measures to tackle the baht's appreciation, saying these measures would deliver good results without scaring away investors.

He said the measures were apparently a result of co-operation between the finance ministry and the BOT. A policy mix is favorable. He added that as long as Thailand is an open economy, where capital flows are not limited, the measures would not have a harsh impact on foreign investment.

The requirement of a longer bond-holding period would limit

volatility in exchange-rate movement, he said.

The four options are: 1 – Bar foreign purchases of BOT bonds or set a minimum holding period; 2 – Bar foreign purchases of short-term government bonds or state enterprise bonds, with three to six months' maturity; 3 – Levy a charge on foreign bond purchases; 4 – Impose compulsory hedging to limit foreign investors' gains in exchange-rate movement.

Last week, the Federation of Thai Capital Market Organizations urged the government to limit overseas purchase of government bonds, with a maturity of less than six months, to help restrain the baht.

In response to a question on any discussion about the likely amendment of the Bank of Thailand Act, Varathep said the government had not planned any such amendment and had also not discussed dismissing the BOT governor. – *The Nation*

PROPERTY
Gazette

New 'pads' for uni students

Condominium in Kathu aimed at investors and university members

WITH land prices surging and many new condominium projects sprouting up across the island, competition to penetrate new market segments is heating up.

Up to this point, much of the focus has been on Phuket's working and high-end groups.

Meanwhile, lingering demand among other niche segments has largely been overlooked, if not ignored by developers.

Seeing and seizing an opportunity, JL Development Group Co Ltd is positioning its Le'U Condominium as the island's first 100 per cent free-hold residence to be built right next to a university.

Representing an investment of more than 600 million baht, the condominium will be built on a prime 3.5 rai (5,600 square meters) plot of land in Kathu, conveniently situated in front of the main entrance of Prince of Songkhla University (PSU) – just a few minutes from Makro and Central Festival.

Indeed, the project's concept and slogan, "The Best Location Ever!! ... a long-life return for investors and the only learning-support condominium in Phuket" effectively differentiates the development from most of the other projects on the island that offer studio residences for under a million baht.



Le'U condominium will have 448 units and a built-up area of 20,000 sqm.

In addition to the entrance near PSU's main gate, the condominium can also be reached via a new access road from Chao Fa West Road, and it is also quite convenient for getting to or from Patong.

All in, the project will offer 448 units, with a total built up space of around 20,000 square meters. Standard type units start from 24sqm, and the developer says that such units are fit for investors seeking rental income from students.

The project will also have units

sized 33sqm to 54sqm, which are ideal for parents who would like to stay with their kids who are studying at PSU.

"Each unit type was designed to serve students' living and investors' life-time return goals," explained Miss Hirunya Wiwatdechakul, the GM of both Le' U, and another up-and-coming condo in Phuket Town, the WIDE.

Asked about the project's Unique Selling Points (USP), Miss Hirunya said "Le' U is a wise investment as a property in the



LEARNING FRIENDLY: The condo is designed with students and educators in mind, and will offer standard security and leisure facilities.

perfect location that can support learning. Each room type was designed to serve the needs of students and investors."

Facilities include a full security system, fitness center, swimming pool and learning corner.

The project's sales schedule has been divided into two phases: The presale phase, or what is being referred to as the 'investors round', which is open now until May 24, 2013, while the 'retail round' for other buyers will be on May 25 and 26.

Construction is set to break ground in the final quarter of this year, while the transfer period is expected to take place by the second quarter of 2015. With only 448 units, and a direct-demand pool of over 3,500 students, investors should not hesitate to make an inquiry.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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How same-same drove me insane



IT WAS a rainy Tuesday night, just last week, when I rolled over in bed and casually glanced over at my wife, enveloped in the dark shadows of sleep. Suddenly, my heartbeat turned staccato, as the realization dawned on me that the woman next to me had not the familiar face of my wife, but shockingly, turned out to be my neighbor's wife!

Fearing a sudden blackout, and in keeping with the somewhat mundane reaction of one who is facing imminent death, my thoughts turned biblical. Smack down the list of the Ten Commandments, there it is – 'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife' – much less end up in bed with her! Actually, the Bible verse goes on about various objects of desire such as maids, donkeys and oxen, or the killer clause... any of his possessions. I must admit to coveting the guy down the street's black BMW 7 Series, but I digress.

Meanwhile back in my neighbor's bed, all I can do is slowly pull back the sheets, slide out from under the covers and tip toe down the stairs, out of the front door and up the street to my very own home – and wife, I might add.

Sure, readers might be tempted to think that a night of binge-drinking and amorous intent had landed me in this world of hurt. But no, this is where the strangeness kicks in, as I slowly make my way up the familiar sidewalk trying to find



SAME-SAME BUT DIFFERENT: A different colored coat of paint does little to disguise the similarities of these typical row houses. Photo: Brian Hoffman

'my' house, I begin to see the cause of my predicament. The problem is that I live in a very nice gated residential estate, but all of the houses are uniform in design, leading me on a road to nowhere. Lost in same-same land at three in the morning, I'm shooting blanks trying to find my own personal abode.

Deep in the Phuket night, a soundtrack turns on in my mind; it is the theme song from the TV series *Weeds* titled *Little Boxes*, that goes something like this: *Little boxes on the hillside, Little boxes made of ticky tacky,*

Little boxes on the hillside, Little boxes all the same. There's a green one and a pink one And a blue one and a yellow one, And they're all made out of ticky tacky, And they all look just the same.

Despair kicks in and I slump down on a nearby curb, pondering my dilemma and musing about our own little island's shift into sameness. So, let's logically search out the villain in our story, and immerse our passions in the blame game.

Did the Chinese start it all with the 18th century shop-house culture? From Phuket, Penang, Melaka, Singapore and beyond, these early forebears of the home-office were Lego-like, long and narrow same-sames. Of course, row houses were popular in Europe, the UK and also travelled across the pond to the US.

Thailand's own shop-house trend evolved from city centers to suburban and rural models, with simple building modules, and again, living and working in the same space became a recurring theme.

Today, as you drive across the island, you can't help but find your mind being sedated by row after row, after row, of monotonously stacked units.

Eventually, residential housing here moved to occupy vast areas of space and in the 1990s came the trifecta of sameness, the holy trinity of mass housing – attached, semi-attached and detached houses. Suburban life had arrived en masse. Property developers suddenly caught a contagious stutter, and again and again, all they needed to do was find a rubber plantation, cut down all the trees and create rows of houses as far as the eye can see.

Moving into the new millennium, foreigners who had previously lived in free standing homes become a force to be reckoned with and upscale same-sames came into the picture. Or shall we say same-same but different? The latter meaning a bit more luxury – adding in customized pools, gardens and other perks.

On an island where tourism remains the number-one economic indicator, the global downturn created a whole new hotel investor base. These were domestic companies, or families who had land already and wanted to be hoteliers. In many cases, lacking international branding or any experience whatsoever, they embarked on a journey into unfamiliar territory. Lacking maps, all they could do was verbalize to their designers a wish list of familiar terms for their dream hotels.

In most cases, these dreams were based on existing island properties – lobbies from that specific hotel, rooms from another, a restaurant or water feature from somewhere they had visited recently – let's politely call this approach eclectic. But if we wanted to take off the gloves, or go all MMA, we'd call these developments tourism shop-houses; containing little original DNA and even less innovation, their effect is much like a meal at a fast food joint – the minute a customer leaves, hunger returns.

As I sit on the hard curb, I ponder the turn of events that has brought me to this crisis. Same-same is not always bad – Starbucks for instance? Yes, some people will disagree but I find comfort in a regular *latte* wherever I go. If you find something that is good, why not have more. But to reverse the argument, if it is bad, then there is a whole lot of badness.

Phuket's adaptation to mass-culture is far from over, but frankly speaking, most places in the world face similar challenges. For all the sameness here, there remains something truly unique about the place. Now if only I can find my way back to my own house, I can go back to sleep.

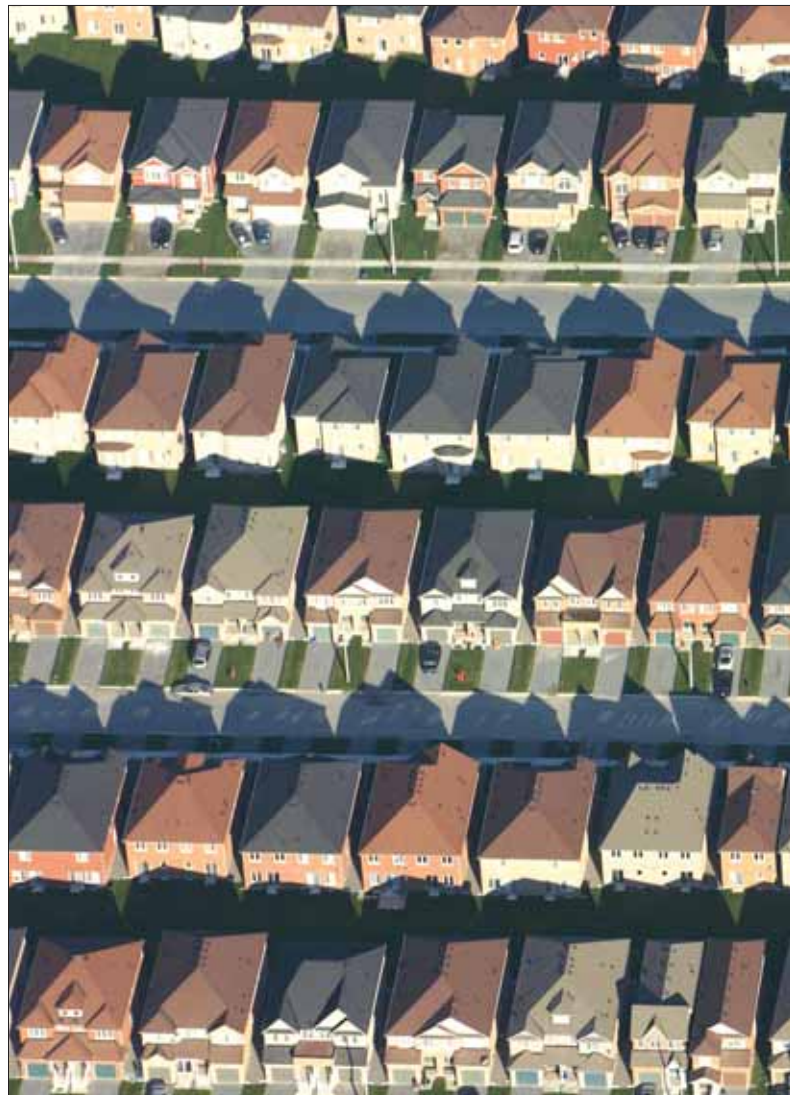
Bill Barnett is the Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through C9hotelworks.com

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LITTLE BOXES MADE OF TICKY TACKY: Same-same housing developments like this one in the US are appearing in Phuket at a rapid rate. Photo: IDuke

Pay back: 1997 debt fund starts clearing

The recent sale of Phuket land to a developer contributes cash, but the implications for the local property market still remain uncertain.

By David Mayes

The Financial Institution Development Fund (FIDF) has recently announced that it will begin to repay some 16 billion baht of the principal on its 1.2 trillion baht worth of debt. The fund's debt obligations are generally considered Thai national debt. The Bank of Thailand's (BOT) reputation obviously suffered as the fund was forced to rack up this staggering amount of debt bailing out troubled banks during the 1997 crisis.

Since then it has been making only interest payments and has drawn criticism for not paying down the principal. Thailand did, however, repay all of the unpopular IMF loans received during the crisis by 2005. There are many ways to interpret this move and what it may signal for the Thai economy and property market, as well as the local Phuket market.

On the one hand, this can be seen as a confidence-inspiring move. The signaling theory for the Thai economy as a whole here would indicate that the BOT is

very confident about the future and is therefore not afraid to part with cash. We have just had the head of Kasikorn Bank come out in the press and state that the Thai property market is not showing signs of a bubble. We expect to hear these kinds of statements from Bank presidents regardless of what the real situation is and often the fact that they feel the need to even make such a statement is a very bad sign. Yet seeing the central bank 'putting their money where their mouth is' leads to a very different, and much more confidence-inspiring conclusion.

Of course, the money they will have repaid this year is still a small drop in a bucket and may be just smoke and mirrors. If another crisis appears the fund will need to rack up even more debt if it is to act as a lender of last resort to troubled banks.

235mn baht of the payment is said to have come from a large land sale in Phuket to a resort developer. I imagine the fund is holding onto quite a few more large plots here, yet I am hard



LAND SALE: The recent sale of land in Phuket worth 235mn baht by the FIDF raises many questions about the possible impact on the local property market which remain unanswered. Photo: Naruto ninja manga

drawn to reach a conclusion on what this sale may mean for the local Phuket market. It could simply be a reflection of increased demand in the local market. If big developers continue to move into the local scene it should be a good thing at least in the short run.

Of course it could be that the fund is now actively trying to dump long term holdings that they

likely acquired from troubled banks and developers in 1997. If they are in fact "selling into strength", this may mean a greatly increased supply and that obviously would be a negative. A third view is that the developers simply liked the specific piece of land and the sale was a one off, and has no real significance on where Phuket's property market is head-

ing. Unfortunately, without a crystal ball we will just have to wait and see what move the FIDF makes next.

David Mayes MBA resides in Phuket and provides wealth management services to expats around the globe. He can be contacted at: david.m@faramond.com or on 085-335-8573.

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The future of the residential market

ACCORDING to leading real estate consultant, CBRE Thailand, Phuket's residential market is experiencing a significant change in direction, which started late last year.

The change is likely to be the most significant since the Asian crisis in 1997 and is driven by a number of factors – the entry of Bangkok-based and Thai public listed developers; the move towards smaller units resembling the Hua Hin and Pattaya developments and a significant increase in the number of Thai buyers in Phuket.

After a period of slowdown following the global crisis in 2008, the Phuket market is now enjoying a new wave of activity. By 2011, the market was starting to change, when Bangkok-based Thai public-listed developers such as Sansiri and Supalai entered the scene.

Their first projects focused on the mass entry level market and were met with instant success, selling out within days from launch to a predominantly local Thai buyer base.

The success of these projects has led a number of developers to consider the viability in Phuket of Pattaya and Hua Hin style developments, which attract both Thai and foreign buyers. This model is characterized by smaller unit sizes and significantly cheaper total unit prices.

At the end of 2012, Laguna Resorts & Hotels Plc. launched Laguna Shores, set in an almost beach front location overlooking a lagoon, within the Laguna Phuket integrated

resort development. The project features small unit sizes starting from 42 square meters, with a starting unit price of under 4 million baht at launch. Up to 47% of the units were sold in Q4 2012 to a largely foreign buyer base.

This was followed in Q1 2013 by the launch of an absolute beach front project, Baan Mai Khao by Sansiri Pcl. which has attracted significant Thai demand for a Phuket project, due in part to the loyal following Sansiri has in the Thai market.

The launch of Baan Mai Khao also marks the emergence of the Mai Khao area, already the location of several upscale hotels and an area with growth potential that can be compared to the development of Bang Tao in the early 1990s.

Another new project which recently began pre-sales is Amari Residences Phuket, a hotel-serviced residence located in one of Phuket's most prime locations, overlooking Patong Bay. Backed by ItalThai Plc, the development is fully managed and serviced by the existing Amari Phuket Resort, providing rental management and offering a 6% guaranteed yield for the first 3 years.

The launch of these projects represents a significant change for the market as they are being built by credible Thai developers who are not dependent on immediate cash flow from sales to commence construction. These projects can therefore be delivered on a timely basis and give potential buyers greater confidence compared to



Laguna Shores is set in an almost beach-front location overlooking a lagoon. Photo: Laguna

projects built by first-time developers with limited funding. The presence of these developers has also resulted in a marked difference in the product being offered where developers bring their expertise from other markets to Phuket. This is shown in the level of professionalism, quality of show suites and marketing presentation that is setting a new benchmark for the market.

Along with the shift in the developers' profile, the market is also beginning to attract Thai demand, particularly for Amari Residences Phuket and Baan Mai Khao, where the developers are able to draw on their track record of success in Bangkok and other resort locations to secure Thai buyers.

A growing number of local investors are also looking for investment opportunities beyond Bangkok, and Phuket is the ideal alternative with its ability to attract the highest number of international tourist arrivals after Bangkok, and with an established infrastructure to support further growth.

Although the proportion of Thai buyers

is still lower than Hua Hin and Pattaya, this represents a significant change.

"Having been involved in the Phuket property market for the past 25 years, this is the most significant change we've seen in the market since 1997," said David Simister, chairman of CBRE Thailand.

With the success of these projects and the ability to draw in Thai demand, CBRE expects to see other public listed developers entering the market to launch new projects with smaller one-bedroom units.

The total unit prices in general will move to closer to those in Pattaya and Hua Hin, but as Phuket is an island, there are finite physical boundaries and limitations on future supply.

The top-end luxury villa market (125 to 250 million baht), while limited in volume, will still be sustainable in the long-term as Phuket still has significant unique attractions.

In addition to interest in new projects, the secondary re-sale market in Phuket has also seen an upswing in the number of enquiries and transactions.

– *Phuket Gazette/CBRE*



A Hotel-serviced residence at Amari Residences.

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Middle years program excels

By Dennison MacKinnon

IN A recent edition of the British newspaper, the *Weekly Telegraph* (February 12-19, 2013), Suzi Dixon examines the lot of internationally mobile parents seeking an appropriate education for their children. Essentially, she compares International Baccalaureate (IB) programs with the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE).

Ms Dixon begins her article by noting that many schools use curricula specially designed for such global families "notably the highly respected International Baccalaureate program."

She goes on to point out that the current UK government was intending to offer an IB-style qualification from 2015 on.

"The fear was that grade inflation in GCSEs and A-levels were devaluing the qualifications – and that IB could offer a rigorous curricula as well as practical skills, logic and reasoning," she said.

Of course, the current UK government has abandoned these plans, so it looks as if the GCSE will stay for a while in England, as will the IGCSE, which many schools – particularly those offering a British curriculum – use in what are termed 'overseas schools'.

In her article, Ms Dixon goes on to investigate which schooling system, IB or IGCSE, works best for individual children and families. Of course, for families out of England (not the UK as a whole, for Wales has had its own Baccalaureate for many years and Estyn, the Welsh education and training inspectorate, speaks highly of the 'Welsh Bac') it may make perfect sense to continue with a program based on English norms and educational values, particularly if their overseas sojourn is for a limited period of time.



IB OR NOT IB? Research shows the International Baccalaureate goes 'above and beyond' similar programs. Photo: PIADS

But what about internationally-minded families, of any nationality, who want a really good international education for their children, which is not based on English or American educational standards?

This is where the IB comes in, for it offers a full range of programs from the age of five through to the age of 18, namely the Primary Years Program (PYP: ages 5-11), the Middle Years Program (MYP: ages 11-16) and the Diploma Program (DP: ages 16-18). Tellingly, many British or American overseas schools adopt variations of national curricula for the primary and middle years, but then turn to the DP for the vital two years prior to university entrance: for they recognize that the IB is a 'safe pair of hands', particularly for the final two years of education.

But what about other IB programs? Well, both the PYP

and the MYP are based on solid research and best practice and their quality is well-known internationally. But what about England? How does English research view these programs?

In February of this year, the highly respected National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), which is the UK's largest and most respected independent provider of research, assessment and information services for education, released a comparative study which indicates that UK students enrolled in the MYP stand out in many ways.

The NFER study compared and contrasted the MYP with the GCSE and the IGCSE and the following are the key findings of the report taken from the IB press release:

The MYP covers all the main areas that the GCSE and the IGCSE do, and in some cases goes

above and beyond, incorporating additional areas of study.

Non-scholastic attributes such as international and civic mindedness were more pronounced in the MYP students, along with the expectation to develop higher-order thinking skills.

Science, mathematics and English are relatively well-matched across the three qualifications with the following notable distinctions: Science and

mathematics are less prescriptive in the MYP; MYP science includes elements that are not included in the other two programs; discrete mathematics is exclusively in the MYP domain, although calculator work is not; only the MYP includes study of visual communication skills as part of its curriculum in English.

If you are a parent living in Phuket, you may be interested to know that there is only one school implementing the MYP. It is the Phuket International Academy Day school (PIADS), an IB World School which not only has high academic standards, but also is a world leader in evidence-based social and emotional learning. Situated in a natural and safe environment on the edge of the Khao Phra Thaeo National Park, it is the only school on the island which is committed to all three IB programs. If you are internationally-minded parents, it might be a good fit for you and your family and the school would welcome a visit from you.

Dennison MacKinnon is the Head of School at PIADS. He is also an IB site visitor, workshop leader and an accreditation consultant to the Council of International Schools. Mr MacKinnon was the chairman of the International Schools Curriculum Project when it was signed over to the IB as the PYP in 1997.

More information about the research and study mentioned in this article can be found at www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/myp/

Students awarded for innovation

THAI students have demonstrated their capacity for innovation at the MEF Educational Institutions' 22nd International Research Projects Competition held in Turkey recently.

The students from Somtawin Witeadsuksa Huaymongkhon School near Hua Hin received a special jury award for their 'Boe-bot in voice command and GPS program'. Students from Slovenia and Italy also received a special jury prize.

MEF Educational Institutions Founder and Chairman of the Board, Ibrahim Arikian, Ph.D. presented awards to winners for the projects in the areas of physics, chemistry and biology.

In this year's contest, the number of international applications



A student accepts a prize at the International Research Projects Competition held in Turkey.

increased five times more than the previous years' applications. A total of 64 projects developed from Turkey and 26 international projects competed in this year's contest. Young inventors, from 25 countries including Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Dubai, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Thailand had an opportunity to present their

projects at the exhibition and travelled around Istanbul at the unifying atmosphere of science.

Over 1500 students with 806 projects from all over the world, applied to MEF Educational Institutions' Research Projects Competition. In the end, only 90 projects developed by 165 high school students qualified to take a place at the exhibition of the competition.

Developing projects including concrete production with no cement, window-cleaning robots, fuel-efficient aircraft and green electricity generation from plants, the young scientists impressed the judges with their extensive knowledge on the topics, including nanotechnology, genetics, ecology and their high-level of awareness about environmental issues.

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| <p>1 Allamanda 1-Bedroom Suite THB 6.3 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 bed 1 bath Condominium • golf view • freehold • fully furnished | <p>2 Allamanda 2-Bedroom Suite THB 8 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 beds 2 baths Condominium • golf view • leasehold • fully furnished |
| <p>3 Laguna Village-Townhome IV USD 650,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 beds 2.5 baths Townhome • lagoon view • leasehold • fully furnished | <p>4 Laguna Residences I-Laguna Home THB 36 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 beds 5 baths Residence • golf view • freehold • fully furnished |
| <p>5 Banyan Tree Residences 1,150,000 USD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-bedroom Pool Villa • Residence Club Membership • fully furnished • rental program | <p>For more information on these and other properties, please call:</p> <p>+66 (0) 76 362 333</p> <p>or email:</p> <p>resale@lagunaresale.com</p> <p>www.lagunaresale.com</p> <p>All properties are included Golf Membership & Laguna Resident's Privilege Card</p> |

Starting young to stop drug abuse

DR RUANGSIT Netnuanyai, the psychiatric social worker who runs the drug treatment center at Vachira Phuket Hospital, is absolutely right that more needs to be done to prevent youths from falling into the potentially fatal trap of drug abuse (see First Person, facing page). As he notes, this effort should start with the most commonly abused substance among young Thais: methamphetamine, known locally as *ya bah*.

Dr Ruangsit knows all too well the dangers of long-term abuse of this powerful stimulant, which was first manufactured and used on a massive scale by the Nazi war machine to fuel its blitzkrieg attacks across Europe during World War II.

A low point for the Kingdom came back in the late 1990s, when hardly a day went by without reports of a meth-crazed lunatic holding somebody hostage at knifepoint, threatening to commit suicide or engaging in some other kind of insane or irrational behavior. The reason for this epidemic abuse: the price of *ya bah* pills smuggled in from Myanmar had fallen extremely low; so low that farmers were actually feeding them to buffalo to get them to work harder, according to some media reports.

So bad was the situation that public support was strong in early 2003 for Thaksin Shinawatra's infamous War On Drugs.

That was until a wave of unexplained murders, thought by many to have been government-ordered extrajudicial killings waged under the banner of the War on Drugs, started to take place across the country and brought Thailand deservedly harsh international criticism from human rights groups.

One notable casualty here in Phuket was a four-year-old girl named Benz who was shot in the shoulder in a restaurant near Suan Luang (Rama IX, or King's Park). As in many of the incidents at the time, the two shooters arrived together by motorbike during government work hours – and the case was never solved.

Since that time, the meth abuse problem has persisted, though easier-to-conceal and more powerful crystal meth has to a large extent replaced *ya bah* pills, at least according to monthly seizure reports released by police.

As Dr Ruangsit wisely states, the only way to really end Thailand's entrenched meth epidemic is to keep youngsters from ever trying the highly addictive substance in the first place. Threats of criminal punishment are seldom effective deterrents for curious youths, especially here in Thailand where they learn from an early age that much of what they are told by authorities can be taken with a grain of salt.

Youths need to be taught that meth, like other abused substances, has a built-in payback effect and that there are no "free rides" in nature.

The best people to explain this to them are not police, but people who have overcome meth addiction themselves.



Roadblocks won't solve traffic problems

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Opinion: Year-long road safety in Phuket, May 5

Roadblocks are a waste of time. People put on their helmets just before and take them off again just after.

The police need to be more mobile and prosecute excessive speeding, red light violations, driving on the wrong side of the road, being in the wrong lane, reckless driving and so on. Nothing will change until this happens.

A proper incorruptible driving test would also improve matters.

CT resident
Gazette Forum

Odd coral priorities

Re: Gazette online, Man arrested for selling corals at Phuket market, May 4

It is strange how dozens of meters of "dead" coral can be cleared for reefwalking tours, yet these few pieces of coral get so much attention.

NomadJoe
Gazette Forum

Had a steak? Hold the blood donation

Re: Gazette online, Out of Rh-negative blood, Phuket Blood Bank calls for donors, May 10

If you lived in the UK during the 1980s to early 90s, don't bother trying to give blood. You will be told that you can't donate due to the risk of BSE (mad cow disease).

I am A-negative and it is frustrating to know that they have zero stock, but still won't accept me as a donor.

God help me if I have an accident when there is no blood in stock.

Surely blood could be screened for BSE the same as HIV?

Alien
Gazette Forum

Letters to the Editor

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

Swift justice

Re: Gazette online, New Phuket court to deliver tourists justice, May 6

This is an honorable initiative with questionable motives.

What exactly is a "quality tourist"? This has been asked before in these forums and never addressed.

In any case, it's good to know that when these quality tourists are robbed they will get a swift court date. Of course it would be nicer not to be robbed in the first place.

Or have I got that the wrong way round?

CaptainJack
Gazette Forum

Police courage

Re: Gazette online, Police await fingerprint results over Phuket yacht thieves' knife attack, May 6

Many people complain about police corruption; however, in this example cops confronted two violent thieves armed with a broken bottle. That took a lot of courage and dedication to their job.

Well done, Sen Sgt Maj Boonpob Kingmala and Sen Sgt Maj Chaloom Thanyapan.

Lost In Translation
Gazette Forum

Make the moorings into the seawall

Re: Gazette online, Phuket one-stop yacht center steers course for 2015 launch, May 9

They can save costs on the seawall by removing and relocating

the Marine Office's dangerous mooring blocks.

There are about 200 blocks out there in all sorts of useless places, blocking channels, too close together, in shallow areas presenting danger to all boats in Chalong.

Kill two birds with one stone – remove the blocks and make a sea wall out of them and you're halfway there.

Lizard of Oz
Gazette Forum

Business in Bangkok, nature in Phuket

Re: Gazette online, Phuket to adopt new '4 Ms' plan to boost tourism, May 7

I would not be surprised if this initiative to revive the convention project in Mai Khao was driven by people who bought land up there hoping to become even richer if a convention center is built.

Phuket doesn't need a convention center, it needs to preserve its nature.

Bangkok is great at doing conventions and has all the facilities, staff and infrastructure in place. Keep conventions there please!

Sailor
Gazette Forum

Happy Chinese

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Tourist Police arrest illegal Chinese guides, May 6

So Chinese tourists are being made very happy by finding a tour guide that can speak Chinese.

I do not understand how this gives Thai tourism a bad name.

These people spend their hard-earned money on a foreign holiday, probably the first in their lives, and they find a tour guide that can explain something to them.

As long as they get to see a real attraction, they will be happy.

Resident
Gazette Forum

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Looking for privacy for Phuket's addicts

FIRST PERSON

DRUG addiction among young people in Phuket is a growing problem. The most popular drug in Phuket is *ya bah* (methamphetamine). It's not hard to find and it's not expensive.

The government is willing to budget money for law enforcement, so there's money for officers to arrest drug addicts, but not enough for treatment or prevention.

What we need in Phuket is government support for a dedicated drug-treatment facility and drug education in schools.

Right now drug treatment is available at Thalang Hospital and here at Vachira Hospital, but the facilities are seriously inadequate.

The center here at Vachira is the biggest one, but it is basically just my office.

We are so small that a lot of people don't even know the services are available, and some people don't want to come here because they associate hospitals with disease and ill health.

The worst thing is that we can't offer our patients privacy. When we teach classes to recovering addicts, we have to do it in a general waiting room. Some people who need rehabilitation don't participate because they're ashamed to be seen and identified as drug users.

We need a separate, private facility like the ones in Surat Thani and Songkhla. It should be easy to get to and people should feel comfortable going there.

The other thing we need in Phuket is drug education in schools, not by teachers, but by trained specialists. I proposed this idea to the municipality six



Psychiatric Social Worker Dr **Ruangsit Netnuanyai**, 36, is a Phuket native who has been working at Vachira Phuket Hospital for 13 years. He is the head of the drug-treatment program at Vachira and also does research on drug treatment for young addicts.

Here, he talks about drug addiction in Phuket and calls for a new drug-treatment center and drug education in schools.

months ago, but they didn't support it. I think it's so important that I'm preparing to propose it again.

My rehabilitation program has a good success rate – about 60 per cent of our patients don't use drugs again. But the best thing is to teach children not to use drugs in the first place. We should fix the problem at the starting point, not at the end point.

Drug addiction is a problem with all sorts of ramifications. Addicts have higher suicide rates. Many crimes are drug-related. Tourism generates a lot of money for Phuket, and crime can hurt the island's reputation. So drugs have ramifications for tourism too.

In my program, we treat people who voluntarily want to stop using drugs and also people brought to us by the probation office. The prison has its own drug-treatment program.

I can't give you the exact number of patients in our records, but there are many thousands. Most of them fall into two age ranges: 14-19 and 20-35.

The younger ones usually get

into drugs because they're curious, think it will be fun or want to do what their friends are doing.

Older, working addicts tend to use drugs to keep up with the demands of their jobs. Truck drivers use methamphetamines to stay awake. Burmese workers use them so they can work long hours.

More of our addicts are men than women. The women are usually nightclub or bar workers.

Most of the people we treat are not Phuket natives, but come from other provinces and other countries.

I expect that once Thailand joins the AEC, we will see a lot more foreigners coming to Phuket because there are so many well-paying jobs here, and the number of drug addicts will go up.

To protect Phuket's tourism image and to improve the well-being of the people who live here, we really need funding for a drug-treatment center and drug education.

Anyone interested in more information can contact me directly at 076-361324 ext 1266 and ask to talk with Dr Lheng.



Zulu dancers in South Africa. Thai tour staff should be able to speak the language of their customers, whatever it may be. Photo: Hein Waschefort

Do you speak Zulu?

Island View

By Alex Stone

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

THERE are very few phone calls non-morning people like myself handle well before 7am. However, when the tour guide to a well-known adventure tour agency rang at 5am to pick up a friend staying at my place for her Similian tour, I was more than pleasant. Two hours of interrupted sleep and nine phone calls later, I wasn't.

In most situations, I'm apologetic for not being able to speak Thai. I am in Thailand, so the burden of the responsibility for communicating with locals is on me. However, companies that target markets that speak English, Russian, Chinese or Zulu should have corresponding language skills that surpass page one of any "Learn to Speak..." text.

Recent news has highlighted the "plight" of Thai tour guides as they struggle to compete against other guides who speak foreign languages. Thai guides claim foreigners are stealing their jobs, jobs that are reserved for Thais by law.

Just last month more than 200 tour guides called on Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak to standup for their rights and protect their jobs – and yet there I was the day before their public bemoaning answering the phone for a third time in 15 minutes.

It was the driver, again: "Hello?" "Yes, hello, when will you be here?" I asked.

"I don't know where you are," the driver informed me, yet again. What he had attempted to do before his first phone call at 5am in

which he informed me he couldn't find my apartment and his third phone call is a mystery.

Calmly, I gave him directions.

However, the driver, who was taking my friend to a speedboat at Chalong Pier, had never heard of Chao Fa East Road, and instead asked if there were any Thais loitering about my apartment at 5:30am, so he could talk to them – sadly, I had dismissed my harem of bar girls only moments earlier.

After he explained yet again that he didn't speak English, the line went dead.

Moments later, another man called to inform me that his driver didn't know where I lived.

I thanked God, as no doubt this man would be my savior.

It turned out he also didn't speak much English, and though just as pleasant as the first man, he failed to know where I lived or where Chao Fa East Road was.

However, it was clear the tour company felt it was my problem they were unable to speak English, "Use the internet! Just use the internet," I yelled into the phone, having finally lost my patience.

A quarter hour later, call nine – they were outside. No wonder Thai guides need job protection. Best of luck in 2015.

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

High cost of bringing your motorbike

I have been living in Thailand on a retirement visa for five years and now want to import my Harley from the USA. It is an old 1996 Road King that I've had for 10 years.

What import taxes and duties would I need to pay?

Also, is it true that the tax rate is lower for retired people?

The excise tax is a percentage of the CIF added to the import duty, and varies depending on the size of the motorbike's engine.

The interior tax is 10% of the excise tax.

The VAT is 7% of the total of all of four added together: CIF, import duty, excise tax and interior tax added together.

You will also need to fill out an application with the Ministry of Commerce and supply them with various documents.

Work permits even for artists

I'm 70 years old and retired and I like to paint pictures for pleasure.

I have had some inquiries about selling some paintings, and I may even stage an exhibition one day, but I understand that I will probably need a work permit to do either of these.

Can I call myself a "part-time artist" on my work permit?

PG
Kathu

An officer at the Phuket Provincial Employment Office replies:

Yes, you need to have a work permit. Whether your work is full time, part time, paid or unpaid, you need a work permit to do it.

Even if you want to exhibit your

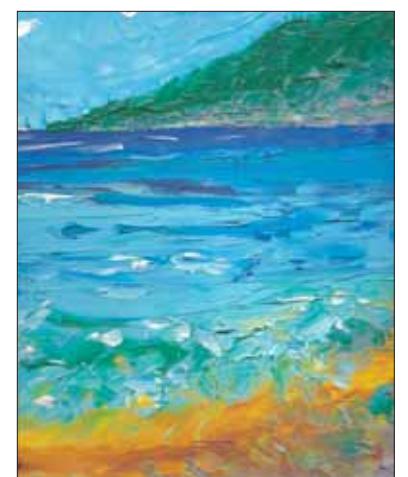
paintings in a gallery without selling them, you need a work permit.

And yes, you can apply as a part-time artist. However, in order to be issued a work permit, you need to either be an employee of a business or operate a business yourself.

If you operate your own business, it must be majority owned by Thais, in terms of shareholders, no matter how small or big it is. This means your company cannot be more than 49 per cent owned by foreigners.

If you are staying in Thailand on a retirement visa, you have to contact the Phuket Immigration Office to change your visa from a retirement visa to a non-immigrant "B" visa, which will allow you to conduct business and work.

For more information, call the Phuket Provincial Employment Office at 076-219660.



You can paint, but you can't sell. Painting: Roberthuffstuffer

An officer at the Phuket Customs House replies:

There is not a lower tax for retired people.

To import your Harley, you will need to pay import duty, excise tax, interior tax and VAT.

The import duty is 60% of the CIF – the cost, insurance and freight charges on the bike.

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.
Submit your issue at
www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

YOUR

Phuket



Thanyapura recently held a regional media familiarization trip titled 'Realize Your True Potential with Thanyapura!' with lots of activities such as water polo games, fitness group activities, power pilates, training, and much more!

Thanyapura



Ann's Birthday



Phuket Gazette Managing Director Oranee 'Ann' Hildebrand enjoying a surprise birthday party with her friends at the Catch Beach Club in Surin.

AMCHAM - BBAP - AUSCHAM



From right to left: Director of Operations for the Pullman Phuket Arcadia Fraser Ross, with Harry Usher, David Rucker and Richard Valentine at the Greater Phuket Tri Nations Sundowners at The Pullman Arcadia resort.



"Three condo" at Chalong Grand Opening

Center: Mrs Laksa and Mr Kawinnart Wichitcharoenkun, joint managing directors of Three Condo at the grand opening of their second Three Condo project in Chalong.



From left: Marketing Communications Manager, Thanyapura Nathaphat (Kaye) Asavathanachart Advertising Manager PGTV Kristi Matzenberger and Suchada Sanksuwan from Montara Villa

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*The Gazette is the top-ranked Website for Phuket. (Google Analytics)

JOB of the week



HUGHES
KRUPICA

See page 27

PROPERTY of the week

Nice Garden Homes



See page 23

BOAT of the week



See page 31

PROPERTY SERVICES of the week

Property Management

See page 25

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Properties For Sale

NEW CONDO: URGENT SALE/RENT



Special price, modern style, 30sqm, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, 1 pantry. In Kathu, 3km to Patong. Full set of built-in furniture. Ready to move in! Contact Ya. Tel: 081-797 5138.

NICE HOUSE 88SQ WAH



4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 aircons, sofa, cable TV. Near Jomthong Village on Khwang Rd. 6.5 million baht. Tel: 086-774 2034. Email: hataimata@hotmail.com

SEMI DETACHED HOUSE IN RAWAI

For sale. Only 2.6 million baht. Tel: 082-420 7052. www.stayonphuket.com

3 BED DUPLEX HOUSE 2.5MB

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Open kitchen, living and dining area. Tel: 085-796 3354 (English), 087-193 7825 (Thai). Email: jasmeek666@hotmail.com

GREAT INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Completed show house and infrastructure, 7 further plots for development. 1.5km from Mission Hill Golf Club. Contact Aom for details. Tel: 087-888 1761.

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APARTMENT PATONG SALE

1 bedroom, quiet location, parking, furnished, aircon. Sale: 1.3 million baht. Tel: 087-817 8045.

REAL 180 STUNNING SEAVIEW LAND

Real 180° stunning seaview land, unobstructed, east side, Yamu Hill development. 2 plots of 1 rai each. Chanote title. Price: 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 084-625 5090. Email: phuket.turquoise@gmail.com

HOUSE IN VILLA DOWROONG

Phuket Town. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 47sq wah. Tel: 089-909 2771.

LAND FOR SALE IN CHALONG

Sea view, 9 rai, 50 million baht. Tel: 081-978 3480. Kirana: theeighthcat@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN KAMALA



For sale. 2 houses on land. 1 ngan 89sq wah. Chanote title, near mountain, peaceful and safe, 10 minutes from the beach. 5.5 million baht direct from owner. Tel: 089-615 9719. Email: nana1225@gmail.com

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For sale. Price 4.5 million baht. No agents, no 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.

LAND NEAR KATA CENTER

Great location, road access, 5 mins to Kata Beach and main road, 1,450sqm with title deed. Contact Lychee. Tel: 081-891 3048 (English & German).

HOUSE FOR SALE IN BAAN PROMPHAN

2.5 floors, 5 mins to town, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Good for stay! 2.85 million baht. Tel: 083-506 9155. Email: sumitra.saetan@gmail.com

KAMALA HOUSE FOR SALE



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

CONDO IN SUPALAI PARK



For sale. Near Sengho Bookstore in Phuket Town. Studio, 30sqm, floor 15, sea view, aircon, furnished. Price: 1.9 million baht. Ready to move in. For more info call 089-472 9118.

LAND NEAR MISSION HILLS



Pa Khlok. 2 rai 32sq wah, 60m wide. Chanote. Located on Tha Ruea-Pa Khlok-Muang Mai Rd. 11 km from Heroines' Monument. Price: 7.8 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@hotmail.com

D CONDO 1, KATHU

-29.94sqm, mountain view, price 1,278,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, mountain view, price 1,280,000 baht.
-29.79sqm, pool view, price 1,330,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, pool view, price 1,365,000 baht.
Contact Vutdy on 081-892 3709.

BALINESE INSPIRED POOL VILLA

Seaview in Kalim, Patong. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, stunning views day and night. Tel: 087-623 6425. See pictures and details at our website: <http://seaview-villa-in-phuket.com>.

LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

1 Ngarn, nice flat land, quiet area, Chanote. In Pasak Soi 5. Price: 2 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

HABITIA KOH KAEW



Modern style, Chino-Portuguese, area: 36.50sq wah with 118sqm living space approx. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 car park. Sale down payment 500,000 baht. Tel: 087-270 9093.

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. For more information please call: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

HOUSE & FURNITURE

Single house, 60sqm. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms and 3 toilets. In Chaiyapruet Village at Land & Houses Park, Chalong. Good location and entrance from bypass road. Built 2 years ago. Tel: 084-627 7001.

AMAZING SEA VIEW

Karon apartment, 4th floor, freehold, 130sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fitness center, 2 pools, 600m to sea. 10 million baht. No agents. Tel: 086-131 5458.

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



Fully landscaped, 3 air conditioners, telephone and internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen. Located near the Heroines Monument towards Pa Khlok. Land size is 53sqw. 3 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9designs@gmail.com

QUICK SALE, SOI SUKSAN 2, RAWAI

1 rai/0.5 rai, Chanote. Concrete road and electric access. Tel: 089-472 9870, 086-471 5226. Email: dchaibut@gmail.com

KRABI, AO NANG

3 plots of land, each 420sqm, each 850,000 baht. House plan with building permit. 2 bedrooms, pool. Email: mr.axelmay@gmail.com

BANG TAO HOUSE - SALE

2 bedrooms, bathroom, Sat TV, ADSL, auto gate, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 090-156 7927.

30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

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

URGENT SALE/RENT



House in Patong. Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 storeys, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircon, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 086-476 9612.

CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE



Condo at Royal Place Project, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2fl, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 086-476 9612. Email: annanoi1@hotmail.com

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houseinphuket.com

Rent or buy a house on my island? Maybe I can help you. My name is Wellta

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Furnished room, aircon, WiFi, LED 32"TV, desk, fridge, laundry, pool, 200m to Rawai Beach Pier. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

PATONG CONDO PRIVATE RENTAL

1-bedroom apartment, fully furnished, swimming pool, gym, WiFi, washing machine, parking, 800m to beach, available on May 26. Tel: 085-069 0938 (English). Email: nnorthwo@hotmail.com

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Chemg Talay, Pasak 7, Phuket, on 43sqm, 2 rooms, shower, toilet, bathroom, balcony, cable TV, aircon, electricity and water supply included. Monthly rent: 6,500 baht. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

B.L. APARTMENT

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

KATA HILL-1 BEDROOM

Fully furnished: terrace, kitchen, bath, aircon, internet and cable TV. Price: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

PATONG FURNISHED 1-BED APT

Furnished 1-bedroom apartment in Phuket Villa Patong behind Jungceylon. Pool, gym. Long-term rent 12 months only. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-881 7600 (English), 081-273 0956 (Thai). Email: cocodiorster@gmail.com

THALANG LUXURY POOL HOUSE

Long-term rent: 45,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.rentpoolhouseinphuket.com

URGENT RENT/ SALE



House in Patong. Newly built 40sqm, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 storeys, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircon, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 086-476 9612.

COZY HOUSE NEAR NAI HARN



A high-grade built house, furnished and conveniently located minutes from Rawai and Nai Harn Beaches. 2 spacious bedrooms with en suite bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. Aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage removal service. 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-383 0936 (Kun Nui). Email: hunt17@hotmail.com

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Large 100sqm + units, big pool, gym, parking, maid, cable, WiFi, security. From 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 088-413 8122 (English). Email: phkrealestate@aol.com

CHEAP KAMALA RENT

New nice house, free internet, 2 aircons, 1 kitchen, 2 bathroom. Need 5-6 month rental. 14,000 baht per month. Urgent. Tel: 081-826 7287.

HOUSE FOR RENT

Bang Tao Beach, 2 bedrooms, quiet area, furnished, Sat TV, ADSL. Tel: 090-156 7927.

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



Near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. 25,000 baht per month with 30,000 baht deposit. Tel: 086-607 7493.

BUNGALOW RAWAI

1 bedroom, aircon, WiFi, kitchen, TV, large and quiet. 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-271 7092. Email: bricothailand@hotmail.com

1-BEDROOM APARTMENT PATONG

Luxury apartment, pool, WiFi, cable. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-271 7092. Email: bricothailand@hotmail.com

DELUXE BEACHFRONT CONDO

2 bedrooms. Also at the Point, near Central Festival, 1 bedroom, kitchen, lounge, many facilities. Tel: 081-892 0038.

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT



Thalang. 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, fully furnished, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 081-396 4264.

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT/SALE



In Thanapa Park View village in Koh Kaew. 57sqm, with 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen, a carpark and a garden. Rent: 11,000 baht per month. Sale: 2.25 million baht. Contact owner. Tel: 089-615 9719. Email: nana1225@gmail.com

NEW CONDO FOR RENT



Short or long-term rent at Kathu, fully furnished, swimming pool, fitness, quiet and secure. Tel: 081-607 8567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

KATA OCEAN VIEW CONDO

Fully furnished, seaview and non-seaview apartments, available for long-term rental. From 19,000 to 40,000 baht per month. Located on Kata Hill. Tel: 076-330641. For further details, please see our website at www.oceanic-global.com

CONDO FOR RENT

Furnished condo with aircon, TV, fridge. Also gym and swimming pool. In Phuket Town. 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-978 1558 (English & Thai). Email: keng.na.ranong@hotmail.com

PRIVATE PATONG HOUSE



Large enclosed yard with waterfall, swim jet pool, very quiet, clean water, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, furnished. Must see! Tel: 087-882 1963 (English), 088-464 3835 (Thai). Email: benlee53@hotmail.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.

LOFT-STYLE FLATS

Secure, great location for exercise. Long-term rental. 10-12,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-664 5575 (English). Email: hkmsn@yahoo.com

KATHU GOLF VIEW VILLA

For rent, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool, access, 4km to BIS, overlooking Loch Palm Golf Course, quiet, on top of private hill, secure, maid, furnished, WiFi. 1 year lease: 32,000 baht per month. Contact Noi. Tel: 087-269 8492.

ORCHID KATHU HEIGHTS

Serviced apartment. Studio, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, rooftop pool, free WiFi. Tel: 076-203208, 081-892 0038. For further details, please see our website at www.orchidkathuheights-phuket.com

Live in Rawai?

Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at
The Network property office



Simply write out your ad,
pay and leave it with
**Khun Anna: 076-388144,
086-4780201, 088-1685032**

GAZETTE CLASSADS - they work
because they're **PAID!** Hundreds of new ads
in print every week, all published simultaneously
and **FREE** - in the **Gazette Online!**

The Gazette Online is always on top in **Google!**

Let us take your ad to the top
of **Google** with a **20% discount!**



Your key to fast-track placement and easy payment for
ads at Thailand's **LARGEST** classifieds marketplace.
Hundreds of new ads every week! Like to have one?

Mail: **AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net**

Household
Help

VILLA CHEF

Experienced chef required for Surin villa. Must speak English. International food to a high standard (5-star). Open to Thai and other nationalities. Tel: 086-266 7032 (English) Send CV to rebecca@phuketocseanvillas.com

Household
Services

PHUKET HOME MAINTENANCE

RAWAI - NAI HARN

Beautiful swimming pool villa, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, WiFi. Period: 15/04/2013 - 15/10/2013. 2,000 baht per day, 46,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-787 3046. Email: patrickmeo@gmail.com

Accommodation Wanted

**NEED URGENTLY
VILLA**

HOLIDAY RENTAL 2-BED CONDO



2- bedroom furnished house, 2 mins from Chalong Circle, great location with 24-hour security, modern and quiet estate, 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-880 8849 (English & Thai), 088-762 1557 (English & Thai). Email: michaelhiggins7@dodo.com.au

Modern one-bedroom apartments central in Kata. Long term only. From 16,500 baht per month. Tel: 0-84-838 7801 (English & Thai). Email: info@katabeachdream.com More info at katabeachdream.com

With or without pool (for 2 persons) Tel: 082-420 7052. Email: stayonphuket@yahoo.com
Please see our website at www.stayonphuket.com

Spacious, beach 3 minutes walk, terrace, kitchen, free WiFi, pool, parking. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

KATA NOI HOLIDAY RENT CONDO

2 bedrooms, 2 1/2 bath-
rooms, terrace, total
seaview, beach 3 min-
utes walk. Email: resort
qm@gmail.com

WASTE AND RUBBISH CLEARANCE

Household waste and rubbish clearances. 7 days a week. Let us get rid of ALL your unwanted junk. For further details, please see our website at www.farang-handyman.com

Building Products & Services

**BBC BRIT BUILDING
COMPANY**

All building works undertaken property maintenance, including new building and pool cleaning. Call for a quote or email to English contractor. Tel: 081-090 9516 (English), 083-388 8610 (Thai). Email: brit.build.co@hotmail.co.th

GATE 3

GAZETTE CLASSADS - they work because they're **PAID!** Hundreds of new ads in print every week, all published simultaneously and **FREE** - in the **Gazette Online!**

The Gazette Online is always on top in **Google!**

Please use this form to write your classified advertisement.
Then hand it to any of our agents.

[illegible]

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 120 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Property Gazette page: Friday 3 pm.
Deadline for all other ads: Saturday 12 noon.

See more classified ads at www.phuketgazette.net

WORK WANTED

Thai lady, speaks English, experienced, cook, maid, babysitter, can live in, looking for part-time job. Contact Taew. Tel: 081-084 2708.

ESTATE/RENTAL MANAGER

Intira Villas is looking for a Thai person with a happy and positive attitude. Must be able to communicate in English and Thai, both in speaking and writing. Experience in management and rentals. Tel: 081-472 4925 (English). Please send CV and salary requirement. Email: jonas@intravillas.com

ACCOUNTANT FOR REAL ESTATE

We are looking for an experienced accountant that can handle government officials and tax related issues. A high salary will be given. Tel: 076-341045. 081-459 0152 (English). Contact us at the number above or send your CV to info@phuket-condos-homes.com

FOOD STORE MANAGER

Food importer and distributor based in the south is seeking a branch manager. Ideal candidate has minimum 5 years experience in F&B industry and proven management skills. High salary and profit sharing scheme. Tel: 087-264 9695 (English). Email: eb@ebnetwork.it

CHINESE-SPEAKING STAFF

Chinese/Thai-to-English translators and salespeople needed. Must have excellent spoken and written Chinese skills. Apply with CV and expected salary. Email: dreams holdings@yahoo.com

PROMOTERS WANTED
Popular bar for young "Farangs" looking for dynamic people to do promotion. Residents and travellers welcome to apply. Tel: 081-958 5394 (English). Email: collinniemi@gmail.com

MAINTENANCE MANAGER NEEDED

Experienced maintenance/facilities manager is sought for a villa on the west coast. Send CV. Email: gdreg@yahoo.ca

OAK MEADOW INTERNATIONAL

The following positions are open in our school:

- Qualified Thai Teacher
- Cook
- Cleaning lady

Tel: 084-847 0732. Email: intlicense@yahoo.com

ADMIN & COORDINATOR STAFF
Small dynamic real estate agency based in Chalong seeking Thai female staff. Good command of both spoken and written English. Computer literacy. start immediately. Tel: 086-940 2266. Email your resume to sales@18excelsior-property.com For further details, please see our website at 18excelsior-property.com

HOUSEKEEPER

Young lady, good English, intelligent, cheerful. Top salary. Please contact Tiffany. Tel: 089-850 1622. Email: tcdeportes@gmail.com

SALESMAN WANTED

We are selling a state-of-the-art pipe system for hot and cold water applications and for A/C systems. Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree
- Able to communicate in English: speaking, reading and writing
- Energetic and enthusiastic with a positive attitude
- Highly motivated, disciplined and hard working
- Experience in working with architects for specifying products The work can be full time or freelance. Tel: 081-374 0494. Email: klaus.bauer@pimatec.com

GUEST SERVICE MANAGER

Mangosteen Resort & Ayurveda Spa requires a female guest services manager for Resort and Vacation Club. Duties will involve confirming guests' appointments upon arrival, liaising with sales team and resort staff. Outgoing personality & excellent communication skills in English a must. Experience in the Vacation Ownership Industry preferred. Excellent basic Salary plus commission. Tel: 076-289 399. Fax: 076-289 389. Please contact: rm@mangosteen-phuket.com For further details, please see our website at www.mangosteen-phuket.com

ARCHITECT

Thai national wanted. Ability to use AutoCAD, Sketch-Up and 3D-Max is a must. Tel: 081-788 1639. Email: sec@phuketawnings.com

THAI STAFF WANTED

Bayshore Projects Co Ltd is looking for Thai staff that can work both in bar and front office (receptionist). Tel: 076-345670, 081-968 5963 (English). Send CV to manuela@bayshoreprojects.com

ACCOUNTING BOOKKEEPER

Full time. Start immediately. Accounting degree or equivalent. Driver's license. Experience. Tel: 085-783 0141. Email: info@thailandcamp.com

HOUSEKEEPER SURIN VILLA

Must speak English, 6 days a week, must have happy personality and like cats. Previous work experience in hotel or villa is an advantage. References needed. Tel: 083-103 1330.

STAFF WANTED

Receptionist, good written and spoken English is a must. Word and accounting experience is a plus. Must have a friendly outgoing personality. Salary: 12,000-20,000 baht depending on experience.

- Office admin, good computer skills, Excel, and accounting is required. Good written and spoken English is a must. 15,000-22,000 baht a month depending on experience.

- Office manager, must be proficient in Excel, written and spoken English. Prior experience required. Salary: 25,000+ baht monthly depending on experience. Please send your resume to smartbusinessphuket@gmail.com

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

WEB PROGRAMMER

- Degree in Computer engineering, Computer Science or IT related field
- Minimum of 2 years experience in web programming and web development
- Experience in: PHP, asp, asp.net, OOP, Java Script, HTML5, CSS, JSON, AJAX, JQuery
- Expert in use of database tools and in SQL command (MS-SQL, MySQL)
- Experience in php frameworks would be a plus
- Ability in spoken and written English
- Ability to work with team
- Ability to work under pressure and time constraints

Good salary for the right candidate.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to big@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew

A. Muang, Phuket 83000

Tel: 076-273555 Ext. 303 Fax: 076-615240

MAID WANTED

Thai maid wanted for holiday villa in Surin. Live in or live out; must speak a little bit of English and have experience. Tel: 084-689 4658 (English), 081-693 1621 (Thai). Email: Kamalabeach@hotmail.com

ITALIAN SALES CONSULTANT

Experienced Italian sales representative is needed for Real Estate. Good command of English and Italian are required. Highest commission on the island awaits the right candidate. T81-968 5963. Send CV to c@bayshoreprojects.com

FRONT DESK STAFF - SAMUI

Plus WELLNESS MANAGER required by Detox resort. Tel: 077-602096. Send CV and photo to fasthealing@yahoo.com

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST WANTED

Thai citizen, aged 21-40, basic computer skills, good spoken English. Salary is 12,000 baht + big commissions on sales. Tel: 076-333079. 080-698 8335, 082-417 9299. Email: iphone.dez@gmail.com

HOUSEKEEPER WANTED

Thai trainee housekeeper, English speaking, start from 10,000 baht, nice increase and work place. Tel: 081-787 9774. Email: phukettreasure@gmail.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

CHERNG TALAY

- **Chaba Supermarket** (at the Laguna gateway) Tel: 076-325586

RAWAI

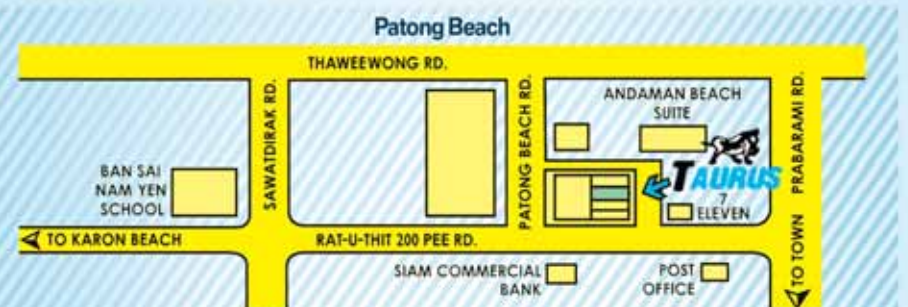
- **The Network property office** (Saiyuan Rd) Tel: 076-388144

KARON

- **EuroStyle Tailors** (Luang Por Chuan Rd) Tel: 076-396911

Live in Patong?

Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at Taurus Travel



Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Kai: (076-344321-2)**

GAZETTE CLASSADS - they work because they're **PAID!** Hundreds of new ads in print every week, all published simultaneously and **FREE** - in the **Gazette Online!**

The Gazette Online is always on top in Google!

**TEFL QUALIFIED
TEACHERS WANTED**

Full-time/part-time positions available for native English speakers. Tel: 081-083 5735. Email: michael@misterenglishschool.com

**YACHT DELIVERY
CREW WANTED**

From Miri / North Borneo to Phuket in April / May; 19m MY. Only licensed and experienced crew. please! Tel: +60-14-257 5485. Email: boatjob1234@gmail.com

**EVENT/PR
MANAGER**

The Asia Superyacht Rendezvous is looking for a Thai/Foreign national. Successful candidate will have strong written and verbal English skills. Position can be full or part time, based in Patong. Tel: 076-346927. Fax: 076-346927. Email: gordon@asia-pacific-superyachts.com

**COMPANY
ACCOUNTANT**

Small business company accountant needed. Daily duties will include project administration and office accounting. Friendly team and excellent salary based on experience. Tel: 076-206707, 084-844 6246. Email: rogerg@seamarine-services.com

**ASSISTANT BRANCH
MANAGER**

Phuket Pool Tables is looking for a new assistant branch manager to join our latest branch at Cherng Talay. 20,000 baht + excellent commission. Please send your resume or call us. Tel: 081-823 4627, 085-782 1200. Fax: 076-264461. Email: ying@phuketpooltables.com

**SALES & ADMIN
JUNIOR**

We are looking for young and energetic sales & admin staff. 20 to 25 years old. Good computer skills & English command a must. Thai national only. Call for an appointment now! Tel: 076-325419, 085-619 0380 (English & Thai), 081-400 4678 (English & Thai). Email: orientalsamui@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.oriental-living.net

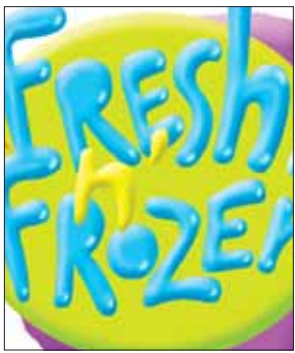
**SALES MANAGER
& SALES EXECUTIVE**

A reputable tourist magazines looking for 24-45 yrs. old, male or female, good personality. Applicants should have relevant experience and be able to speak English

Send resume to
ajapply@yahoo.com
086-490 3101, 081-806 2946

**NEED COOK (FEMALE)
URGENT**

Female cook, breakfast, Thai food and Euro. Urgently needed. Contact me on my mobile (as above). Tel: 076-396075, 082-270 6385. Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

**COFFEE & ICE
CREAM**

Vacancies: coffee shop assistant manager, baristas, waiters, bar assistants, experience and English. Tel: 086-276 4914.

**ASSISTANT BRANCH
MANAGER**

Phuket Pool Tables is looking for a new assistant branch manager to join our latest branch in Cherng Talay. 20,000 baht + excellent commission. Please send your resume or call us. Tel: 081-823 4627, 085-782 1200. Fax: 076-264461. Email: ying@phuketpooltables.com

**MARKETING & GUEST
RELATIONS**

Apex Asia Group are now recruiting for its marketing & guest relations department to work at one of three hotels in Patong and Karon. Enthusiastic and of smart appearance with good English (written/spoken). Full training will be provided, excellent earning potential. Email Kevin Baker at kevin@apex.asia.asia

**ACCOUNTING
MANAGER**

Thai nationality with 7 years experience in related fields. Excellent English communication skills, able to liaise with various government offices and good knowledge of Thai taxes required. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Email: projec_torchid2013@gmail.com

**Absolute
WORLD****WE ARE CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF SUCCESS IN ASIA**

Are you someone who is focused and driven with an outgoing personality and not afraid of hard work or success? Are you someone who won't take **NO** for an answer?

If so, then read on...

Due to further expansion in Asia we currently have immediate openings for Sales Representatives and working TO's in Bali, Indonesia. This is a superb opportunity to become part of a busy sales team with one of the finest brands in Asia.

Sales Applicants should be

- Highly motivated with excellent communication skills both written and oral
- Fun, energetic and committed to customer satisfaction, a real people person
- Success driven, stable & reliable
- A natural ability to overcome objections
- No experience in the industry is required as you will receive full training to build a career in an exciting environment

As well as the above, we are accepting applications for Sales Management positions. Management applicants should have the following attributes

- A proven track record of Sales Management and results
- Ability to motivate a multi-national sales team

For immediate consideration please send a recent CV to careers@absoluteworld.net to arrange a confidential interview

VILLA MANAGER

Property Management Company based in Rawai is seeking Villa Manager. Ideal candidate has minimum 3/5 years experience in same position and proven management skills. The position is open for foreigner. Perfect Is required English spoken and written. Additional languages will be considered as a plus. Tel: 076-383435. Email: eb@ebnetwork.it

**DOCUMENT CONTROL
OFFICER**

Qualifications:

1. Minimum vocational Diploma / Certificate
 2. Control of all site related documents including RFA/RFI and other standard forms of control.
 3. Drawing registry and control.
 4. At least 3 years work experience of office work document and control.
 5. Knowledge of engineering discipline like civil, mechanical, electrical would be an advantage.
 6. Computer literacy with MS. Office, Auto CAD as will undertake training to use Clients IPCC internet system.
 7. A willingness to work in a site environment (in Patong beach area)
 8. Good English communication skills.
- Salary: N/A. Tel: 076-617763. Email: tum@dmg-thailand.com

STAFF WANTED

Cashier, Waiters, Thai cook, Cleaner. Location: Kata-Karon. Tel: 081-895 5852 (English), 089-401 8506. Email: vladim1r@me.com

**REAL ESTATE RENTAL
AGENT**

Thai national, must have car, be professional. 20,000 baht. Salary + commission. Tel: 088-413 8122 (English). Email: phkr_ealestate@aol.com

**DIVE AND
SURF SHOP**

Needs Thai female staff with basic English skills. Tel: 089-874 9147.

DJ NEEDED

Full time or part time, weekend negotiable. Enjoy sounds like Leomeo, Tiesto and Guetta. Call Adrian. Tel: 081-561 9114 (English & Thai). Email: oat.pada@gmail.com

**RUSSIAN SALES
CONSULTANT**

Experienced Russian Sales Representative needed for Real Estate. Good command of English and Russian required. Tel: 081-968 5963 (English). Send CV to c@bayshoreprojects.com

**PERSONAL
ASSISTANT**

Thai lady with fluent written and spoken English. A lady that wants a challenge where rewards will be exciting. Good computer and social skills. Based out of Chalong. Tel: 080-695 3933. Email: Beachsando1@gmail.com

TEACHERS WANTED

Chalermprakiat is looking for native English speakers to teach English. A degree and TEFL are required. Tel: 085-781 9162. Please email your cover letter and CV to swpk_mlp@yahoo.com For info please contact Clarke.

Live in Town? Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at iTree Complete Printing Service



Simply write out your ad,
pay and leave it with
Khun Nan: (076-255425)

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The Gazette Online is always on top in Google!

Looking for a **JOB?**

Looking for a **better candidate?**

Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PHUKETGAZETTE.NET!

Articles For Sale

BOXING MACHINE

Dragon Punch, 2 players. 10 baht per punch. Sale: 85,000 baht. For more information, please call 086-283 9100.

KAYAKS, SEA CANOES

Brand-new kayaks for sale - still in shipping wrapper. FeelFree - Gemini 2-person kayaks include paddles and seats. 25,000 baht or best offer. Tel: 089-044 0623. Email: kayak@worldwidealoha.com

**MOVING SALE
50% OFF**

Almost new tables with 2 chairs, gasoline lawn mowers, electric hedge trimmer, office tables, more. Tel: 085-470 7009.

MINI LATHE SALE

42,000 baht. Email: maxphuket@hotmail.de

**PATONG
RESTAURANT
AND BAR**

Great business opportunity. 80m from beach. Fully equipped, long-term lease, ground floor double unit. Key money: 1.2 million baht. Monthly rent: 60,000 baht. Contact Tony for viewing. Tel: 081-271 5811 (English & Thai). Email: aslaferme@hotmail.com

**BAR FOR SALE
BANGLA AREA**

Bar for sale. Bangla Square. Stunning lounge bar over 2 floors. Beautiful layout, complete with accommodation above. Over 300sqm of area. 2.9 million baht with 3 years on lease: 120,000 baht per month+key money. Please call 087-881 7600 (English). Email: cocodiorster@gmail.com

**SHOP FOR RENT
PATONG**

Located in Sawatdirak Road, near the beach, 15x5m, fully furnished. For more information, please call 076-342108, 081-607 5716 (English & Thai), 081-719 0256 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-342087. Email: Nanzz86@gmail.com

HOTELS IN PHUKET FOR SALE

Contact realestate.luxuryphuketholidays.com

**RESTAURANT
FOR SALE**

Steveos tasty burgers for sale. 800,000 baht o.b.o. For quick sale. Contact Steve. Tel: 089-918 3718. Email: steveastray@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.steveos.tastyburgers.com

**BAR FOR SALE!
NEW TIGER!**

New Tiger. Bar for sale. As soon as possible. Reason: health issue. 4th from the front. 3 million baht o.b.o. Tel: 086-048 8394 (English). Email: Yellowfeverbar@gmail.com

**BEAUTY SHOP
BANG TAO**

Fully equipped, on main road, with customers, parking, all furniture and fittings like new, 3 massage beds, and 2 hairdressing stations. Monthly rent: 10,000 baht. For more information, please call 089-592 8228.

**RESTAURANT
FOR SALE**

TEX-MEX Steakhouse near beach. 4.5 years old. 2.9 million baht. Quick sale, fully equipped, staff. For more information, please call 086-943 6574 (English). Email: fstailslide@hotmail.com

**MASSAGE &
BEAUTY SALON**

For sale, in Boat Lagoon, 250,000 baht. 3-year contract. Tel: 081-606 4467.

**BAR FOR SALE
SOI BEL AIR**

Busy mushroom-style bar for sale. All stock, fridges and sound system included. Price: 600,000 baht o.n.o. Rent: only 10,000 baht per month. All licences paid up until end of 2013. For more information, please call 086-725 0771 (English). Email: warrenmecca4@gmail.com

**RESORT
FOR LEASE**

In the heart of Patong. 20 rooms well furnished, fully operational with very good occupancy rates. 6-year lease for 6 million baht + rental fee 150,000 baht per month. Tel: 088-765 0165.

**MASSAGE /
BEAUTY SALON**

Top location in Kata for sale. Can sell 50% this year and the rest later. Contact Ulf for information. Tel: 087-281 7233.

COMPANY FOR SALE

Big discount on startup companies. Good name, paperwork, advice on accountant. Call for more details. Tel: 084-063 0620.

**WAREHOUSE
FOR RENT**

At Sapam, Phuket. Size: 130-300sqm with crew room. Price: 8,000-20,000 baht per month. Quiet and secure. For more information, please call 086-689 3289.

**BAKERY &
RESTAURANT
FOR RENT**

3 years on contract or more. Ao-nang, Krabi, great location amidst lush garden surroundings. Fully furnished and equipped, ready to move in. For more information please call 075-637190, 086-270 8223.

**HOTEL WITH
RESTAURANT
FOR SALE**

Chanote title, central position, new building, 4 years old, 20 rooms, reception and restaurant fully furnished, lift. 38 million baht negotiable. Contact Stefano. Tel: 086-279 8175 (English/Italian). Contact Ning. Tel: 084-840 1566 (Thai).

**RESTAURANT
FOR SALE IN CHALONG**

Located next to Ao Chalong Sauna. Including company with 2 work permits. Price: 600,000 baht only. Tel: 081-893 4900 (English).

**LUXURY RESTAURANT
RAWAI**

Luxury restaurant and bar for sale, on the beachfront of Rawai, furnished. Tel: 081-583 5169 (English). Email: lan.projected@gmail.com

**SIAM SPA AT
CHALONG**

Day Spa in Chalong urgently awaits new owner. 24 rooms, 2 saunas, swimming pool, locker room, lobby, parking, etc. Come to see and check it. Running now. Deposit: 450,000 baht. Rent: 150,000 baht. Key money: 1 million baht. Negotiable. Contact David Jee. Tel: 086-283 0001, 090-405 6901 (English & Thai).

Bulletins

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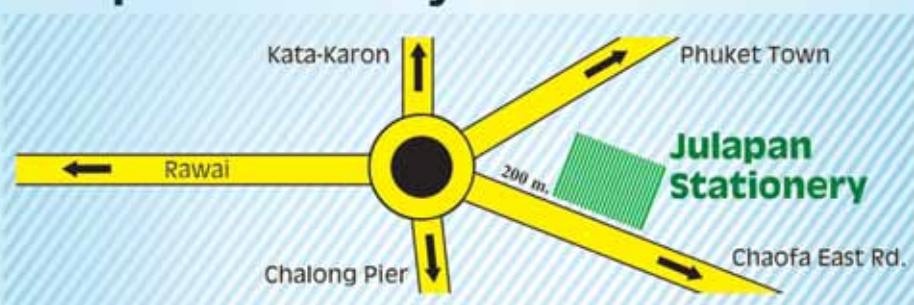
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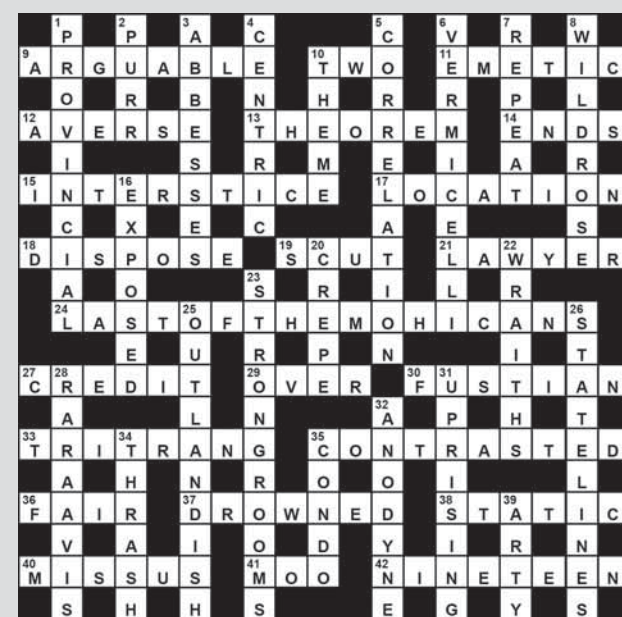
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Giving Back

Srettha Thavisin (center right) president of Sansiri Pcl, was in Phuket to meet with Governor Maitri Inthusut about the firm's CSR program " GIVE".

South Point Pattaya

South Point Pattaya: CEO of Kingdom Property Nigel Cornick at the Southpoint Pattaya Condo Sales Gallery opening party which was attended by the *Phuket Gazette*. The 2.5 billion baht Southpoint Pattaya will be completed in 2015.



Churrasco Phuket' s Executive Chef Bastian (" El Vaquero Loco") with his parents, who are spending their holidays in Phuket this year



LONDON CALLING: The *Phuket Gazette*' s Marc Mulloy won the Hard Rock Calling 2013 Grand Draw on May 11 and will travel to London' s Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for a two-day concert that will include artists Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band and Kasabian.

Rum Cocktail Buffet evening



From left, Montira Kanpai, Marc and Marie Lucchini at the Rum Cocktail Buffet evening on Thursday, May 9, at the Chalong Bay Rum Distillery.

A meal amongst the mangroves

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

THE location of Chaiyo Seafood Riverside Restaurant is simply breathtaking. Situated in Bor Rae district of Phuket, beside Mudong Canal at the point where it meets the sea of Ao Yon Bay, Chaiyo is where diners come to enjoy local dishes and fresh seafood while watching the water ebb and flow. On the other side of the canal, the richness of the mangrove is still evident, and if you are lucky you may spot a monkey or two.

The atmosphere is somewhat rustic (a wooden bridge, tree-trunk tables and chairs, and a thatched roof) with the main dining area divided between the *al fresco* terrace and a spacious, open-sided hall. There are also a few huts on stilts by a large pond, which offer some degree of privacy, and a modern air-conditioned room on the far side. A long wooden bridge/walkway leads to the terrace dining area.

Chaiyo Seafood was established some 20 years ago by Phuket-born Thira Jiasakul. As chef and owner, Thira only uses authentic recipes of local dishes handed down by his mother and grandmother and the menu reflects this heritage. He knows the locals are finicky about the quality of their fish and keeps the seafood fresh in bamboo containers submerged in the seawater just below the terrace. Over its lifetime, the restaurant has garnered quite a following among locals and tourists alike.

By way of introduction, the menu features Chaiyo's own recommendations. It is worth starting there if you are new to Phuket food, as you won't go too far wrong ordering a platter of mixed grilled seafood for two, for example.

But we regulars had other ideas. To quell impending hunger we first ordered the famous Phuket tempura, deep-fried shrimps on a fan of aquatic grass (*buer tod*).

Considered by Thais as an appetizer, *buer tod* is great with a cold beer or a glass of chilled white wine.



Emerald clams are considered a new local delicacy.

Next up was deep-fried snapper in chilli sauce (*pla kapong tod kruang*). It had the right texture – crispy skin and firm flesh – but opinions were divided about the sauce. To the rescue came prawns in tamarind sauce, which this time received rave reviews. We loved the large prawns, lightly fried with shells still intact (the locals like it that way) and laced in a thick unctuous sauce that featured a perfect blend of tamarind and just enough brown sugar. Tamarind prawns are hard to get right, as our group knows only too well having been disappointed many times by poorer versions, but we highly recommend tamarind prawns here.

Crabs are in season now and although they are actually caught all year round, they are tastiest during the new moon (according to my friend and fellow foodie Wanida Hongyok) so a plate of steamed crabs (*pu mah*) were

ordered and enjoyed by all. Mud crabs (*pu talay*) were on offer as well, which are best stir-fried with curry sauce.

Steamed fish custard (*hor mok*) is an all-time favorite. But why settle for the usual type, when you can order mussel *hor mok* served in their beautiful shells? This was a pretty dish, which belied its spicy kick. Not for the faint hearted!

Other mains ordered included a salad of wild fiddle-head fern with boiled shrimps (*yam pak good*), which was a winner, and the perennial favorite crispy-fried sand fish with turmeric (*plat tod kamin*).

When word got out that we were doing a food review for the *Gazette*, a complimentary dish of grilled emerald clam was offered. Chaiyo's manager, Khun Joi, explained that the clams were a newly discovered and popular delicacy. Emerald clams are found only in the waters of Phuket and Phang Nga. Bright green in color, the clams are pretty to look at, and some of us even ate and liked them. Chaiyo is the only restaurant in town that serves emerald clams," say Joy proudly.

As usual, it was a great dining experience. The service is somewhat slow but was largely made up for by the friendliness of the waitresses. We went there on Sunday and the place was lively, with Thais enjoying the day out with families and friends.

Chaiyo Seafood Restaurant opens daily from 10.30am to 11.00pm. Location: Bor Rae-Khao Kad Road (road to Ao Yon Bay), Tel. 076-393101, 076-393101, 081-5976808, www.chaiyoseafood.com



DELICIOUS: A wide variety of local and fresh seafood dishes are served at Chaiyo Restaurant daily such as steamed mussels with coconut custard and Phuket tempura prawns (above). Photos: Nanthapa Pengkasem



SUPER-FRESH FISH: A waitress fishes out our next meal (left). The wooden bridge leading to the terrace (right).

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

May 18 - 19, 7:30am to 6pm: Second Phuket Health & Fitness Festival 2013

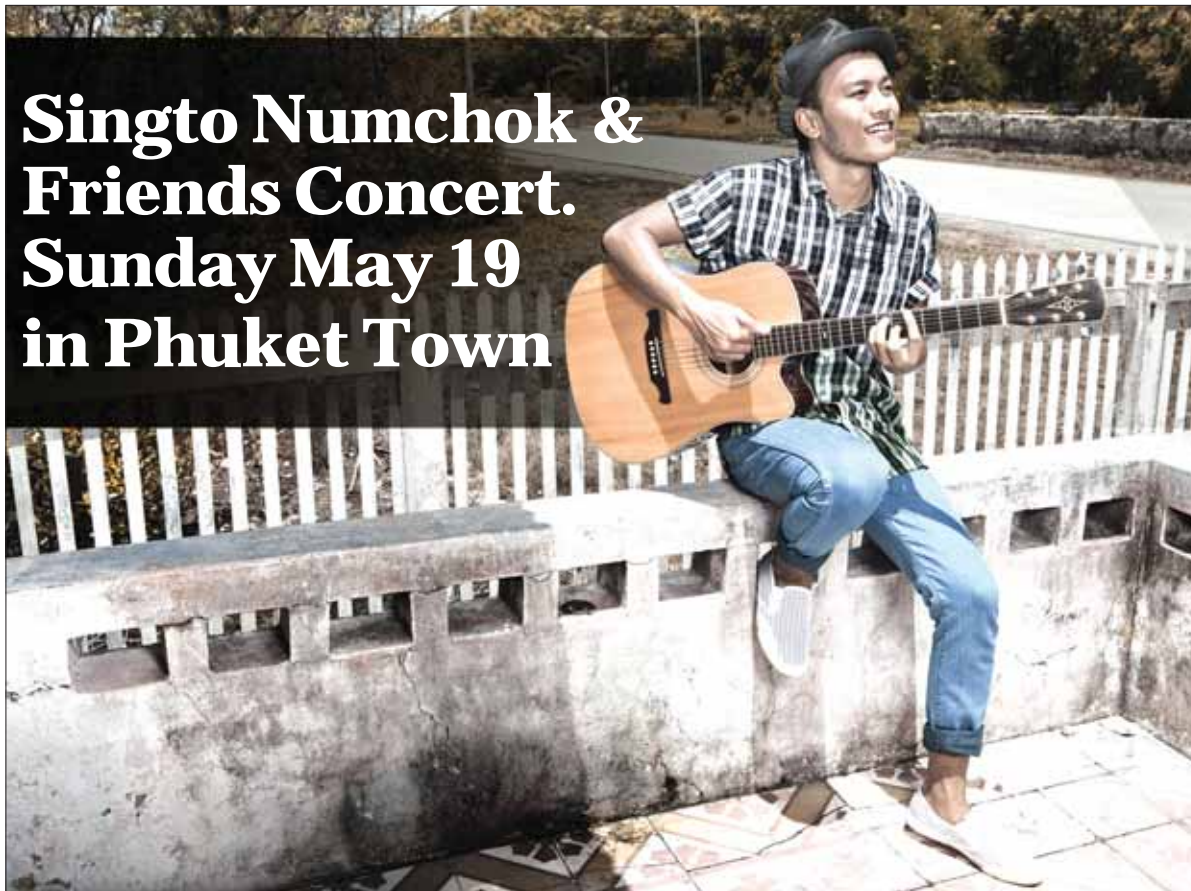
The second Phuket Health & Fitness Festival is organized by the Rawai-Nai Harn Group and features various events and activities, including yoga classes, lectures on well-being, raw food cooking classes, zumba, a boot camp plus the ultimate SUP challenge. Visit our website for details. Tickets for all activities are only 500 baht per person and can be purchased at Atmanjai, Mangosteen or the Serenity Resort. The Rawai-Nai Harn Health & Fitness Festival is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and 'Phuket Today' show. For more information email MichaelMassey:michael@atmanjai.com or visit rawainaiharn.com

May 19, 4:30 to 11:30pm: Singto Numchok & Friends Concert
At Larn 72 Pansar, Phuket town (opposite Sofa Pub). Tickets: 100/200/500 baht. Pre-sales at the Phuket Indy Market on May 9, 10, 16 and 17. For more information contact: 089-474-5253. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the 'Phuket Today' show.

May 23, 7-10:30pm: Super Tuscan Wine Dinner, Mom Tri's Kitchen at Villa Royale.

Mom Tri's Kitchen in Kata Noi presents – Super Tuscan Wine Dinner & Champagne Reception. The wines are rich, intense, modern and with traces of the old world. 1,800++ baht per guest. Four-course dinner prepared by chef Darren Wiper. Reservations required. Please contact PR Manager Sylvie. Phone: +66-76-333 5368 Email: pr@villaroyalephuket.com Website: momtriphuket.com

Singto Numchok & Friends Concert. Sunday May 19 in Phuket Town



May 24, Visakha Bucha Day (public holiday)
Visakha Bucha Day is observed on the day of the full moon during the 6th lunar month, which usually falls in May or early June. It is a day to commemorate three important incidents: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha.

May 24, 7 to 11pm: Indian Curry Buffet at the Navrang Mahal in Karon Sea Sands Resort

All you can eat, authentic Indian curry buffet at 449 baht net per person. Come enjoy our cold Mango and Strawberry Lassi with our delicious Mutton Vindaloo, Dal Makhani, Bombay Aloo, Mutter Paneer, Butter Chicken, mouth-watering Chicken Tikka, Samosas, freshly baked Naans and more. For reservations contact Jaspal Singh on: +66-76-286464.

May 27, 6pm to 1am: Surf Night at Two Chefs, Kata Beach
Every Monday at Two Chefs

Kata Beach (opposite the Boat-house), we are setting up a big BBQ-Buffer, live music and cocktails to die for. Great food, great fun and only 495 baht, with no extra costs added to your bill. For more information or to make a reservation, please visit: twochefs.com.

June 8 - 9, 4:30am to 12pm: 8th Laguna Phuket International Marathon at Laguna Grove, Laguna Phuket

Thousands of runners from around the world will "Run Paradise" in this, the eighth Laguna Phuket International Marathon to reaffirm its status as Asia's most popular family-friendly destination marathon. In addition to the full 42km marathon there's a 21.1km half marathon and 10.5km run. Plus families are catered for with the 91.5FM 5km community walk and 2km children's race. "Run Paradise" is an apt description, with runners of all ages and abilities on a mainly flat course that

takes in rubber and pineapple plantations, beach views, local villages and the tropical lagoons of Laguna Phuket – all in a family-friendly carnival atmosphere. For more information, visit: phuketmarathon.com

June 20, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch

The June lunch will be held at 2 Chefs Bistro in Karon. All are welcome but registration is essential. Members 500 baht, guests 650 baht. For more information, please contact: info@phuketiwc.com.

July 6-7, 10am to 8pm: Phuket Airshow & Family Picnic at Phuket Airpark

Two full days of entertainment for local area charities. Support this great non-profit event by becoming a sponsor, volunteer, or vendor. For more details please visit navyleaguephuket.org. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the 'Phuket Today' show.

July 22, Arsarnha Bucha Day
This full-moon day of the eighth lunar month commemorates the Buddha's first sermon to his disciples after attaining enlightenment.

August 12, Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday

Her Majesty's Birthday is a public holiday in the Kingdom.

September 19, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch

September's lunch will be at The Holiday Inn, Patong. Members 500 baht and guests 650 baht. Contact: Carole Dux on +66-76-316711 or info@phuketiwc.com

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Forum and informal Sunday morning computer clinics

Computer problems? Internet problems? Software problems? Hardware problems? Questions about phones or tablets or phablets, social software, antisocial software, or where to get the best deal on internet packages, TV channels, or phones?

A solution may exist!

Go to thephuketforum.net and post your question as a 'New Topic' in the Tech Forum. The assembled local gurus – featuring "Mr. Live Wire," Woody Leonhard's friend from the States – may well be able to solve your problem, pronto.

If you need to talk with someone, drop by one of the informal Sunday morning computer discussion groups, starting about 10am every Sunday at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong (about 1 km north of Chalong Circle on Chao Fah East road). Consolation, commiseration, and old fashioned help await – for free.

Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

Phuket today
Phuket Gazette

Phuket Today is a 30-minute lifestyle show about Phuket. The show features resorts, villas, restaurants, yachts, private aircraft, nightlife, sports, leisure activities and events. Produced by PGTV, the television arm of the Phuket Gazette, the show is designed to promote Phuket to tourists and the international community resident in Thailand.

Catch the show at these times

| Channel | Shows a week | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|---------|--|
| TrueVisions HD Channel 99 | 8 shows a week - MCOT World | 05:10am | 11:10pm | 10:10am | 01:10pm | 04:10am & 07:10pm | 01:10pm | 06:10pm | |
| Phuket Cable Company (PC) | Covers all Phuket. Channel 1 - 19 shows a week | Monday - Friday: 10:30am, 6:00pm, 9:00pm. Saturday & Sunday: 10:30am, 9:10pm. | | | | | | | |
| Rawai Cable | Covers Rawai, Chalong, Kata, Karon. Channel 1 - 28 shows a week | Monday - Sunday: 10:00am, 1:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm. | | | | | | | |
| TrueFreeview Channel 58 | 8 shows a week - MCOT World | 05:10am | 11:10pm | 10:10am | 01:10pm | 04:10am & 07:10pm | 01:10pm | 06:10pm | |
| Channel 43 | 8 shows a week | 05:10am | 11:10pm | 10:10am | 01:10pm | 04:10am & 07:10pm | 01:10pm | 06:10pm | |

Online: www.phuketgazette.net/tv | www.youtube.com/PGTVPhuket
And in 4,600 hotel rooms around the island, international hospitals and Phuket Immigration Office.

As sweet as sugar

By Mark Knowles

WHEN browsing through markets in Thailand, it is always fascinating to come across a pet store and see which exotic animals they have on offer. Snakes, lizards, turtles, hedgehogs and even African cennec foxes can be found among the more usual cats and dogs.

Walking through the Phuket Town weekend market recently, I discovered a pet shop selling sugar gliders, and was delighted to get a closer look at these tiny marsupials.

Sugar gliders take their name from their predilection for sweet saps and sugary fruits and their ability to glide up to 50 meters using a skin membrane that stretches between their legs. It's hard not to instantly impulse-buy one of these cute furry, doe-eyed little critters, which are native to my own country Australia, but rarely kept as pets there.

If you have ever considered buying a sugar glider to keep as a pet, there are a few things to consider before you leap in head first. Despite looking quite similar in size and shape to domesticated rodents such as guinea

pigs, hamsters and mice, sugar gliders have quite different feeding and care needs, and are rightly referred to as an 'exotic' pet.

Sugar gliders, like their more famous cousins kangaroos and

koalas are marsupials, meaning that they carry their young in a pouch. They are also nocturnal, so in their natural environment they sleep during the day and hunt and feed at night. Furthermore, they are omnivores, feeding on a variety of foods including fruit, insects and even tree sap. As you can see, these traits make sugar gliders quite different from your average hamster and therefore some consideration is needed to providing the correct diet and cage for your sugar gliders to thrive.

Where to keep them?

Due to their natural proclivity to jump and fly from tree to tree, sugar gliders prefer a large cage or even an aviary style cage with small wire mesh for climbing. You should provide plenty of platforms and branches at different levels of the cage so they can move around freely. Be sure to buy a good exercise wheel for them to play on. Sugar gliders mark their territory with scent glands and have been known to get quite smelly if their cage is not regularly cleaned. They can be kept inside and allowed to roam outside of their cage for exercise and to play with

their owner. You could also consider a larger outdoor cage to enable them more freedom and to ensure more peace and quiet for yourself; being nocturnal, they can be quite noisy at night.



Handling your glider very young will help them bond. Photo: WmJas



OUT OF THE POUCH: Sugar Gliders grow in their mother's pouch for up to four months. Photo: WmJas

What to feed them?

The key to keeping your sugar glider healthy and happy is variety. As a general rule, you should feed them 50 per cent insects and a 50 per cent mix of fruit and vegetables. They eat all types of insects and – this being Thailand – you could always ensure a fresh supply by talking to a fried insect snack vendor at your local market! Many people feed them on meal worms and other easily obtainable grubs and larvae. Make sure you feed them a wide variety of fruit and vegetable in order to give them a balanced diet with all the necessary vitamins and minerals.

How to care for them?

Sugar gliders are very social animals and it is unwise to get only one. At the bare minimum, buy a

pair, but try to ensure they are of the same sex or you might end up with more critters than you bargained for. With the proper care, love, and attention, the sugar glider will bond with you. It is best to buy your gliders quite young, and to begin the bonding process as soon as you can. A sugar glider that is well bonded to its owner will often snuggle up to its owner's chin while making happy little clicking sounds, climb inside a

pocket and fall asleep in a little ball and enjoy being hand fed. Despite requiring some effort to take care of properly, they are a wonderful treasure for all those with a little patience and understanding, and a fun way for children to learn about taking care of animals.

For more information about sugar gliders as pets see: sugarglider.com.



TWO'S COMPANY: You should buy at least two sugar gliders so that they can socialize. Photo: Derek Yu



ADORABLE EYES: The sugar glider's big eyes can lead to a case of love at first sight. Photo: Alessandro Di Grazia

Dog of the week

CHICO is a cream male poodle mix, if you're looking for a low shedding dog, that's very clever and intelligent, sociable with other dogs and affectionate towards children then this is your dog! Chico is about eight years old and is a very wise old dude, with a very relaxed and chilled temperament.

He doesn't bark a lot and is trained to stay close to you, without a leash, when out walking in the park. He loves to be bathed, groomed and fussed over and he also loves to cuddle up on the couch and watch a movie.

Sadly, when he was rescued at Christmas time he was a real mess. Poor Chico was totally neglected and dumped at the local animal holding facility in Phuket by his previous owner,

who was going away for the holidays and didn't know what to do with him. But today, after much love and nurturing, he's a new man, but really would prefer to be in the warmth of a permanent loving home, not at the sanctuary where there are too many other dogs for his liking.



Chico is looking for a loving home.

Sriya Yongsakul

ANYONE who meets Sriya Yongsakul, the young deputy managing director of Phuket Boat Lagoon, can't help but be touched by her warmth and grace. Being a busy businesswoman and a working mother doesn't seem to faze her. Sriya is also an articulate person, deliberating every word she says with precision and conviction, without losing her poise.

"It comes from my accountancy training," she explains, "For me everything has to be done with complete exactitude."

Sriya, hails from a family with a large business concern, she is the daughter of the well-known Phuket businessman and owner of Phuket Boat Lagoon, Kanit Yongsakul.

"My father is a visionary man and an entrepreneur who's always full of new ideas, some of them weird but some really wonderful. He is an astute entrepreneur, but somehow I remember him more as a man who was passionate about outdoor sports. He has taught my siblings and I the values of hard work and the ability to be far-sighted in projects we commit ourselves to."

The fact that Sriya, 34, sits at the top of management at this world-class marina is no coincidence. Having been groomed early on in life in the affairs of the trade (the family opened the first shopping center in Phuket Town in the 1980s), Sriya studied accountancy

THAI gallery By Nanthapa Pengkasem

at the prestigious Chulalongkorn University and holds a Master's in International Management from Exeter University, England.

In her role as deputy MD of Phuket Boat Lagoon since 2002, Sriya has seen the business grow many times over. She has observed that demand for marina space in Phuket has long outstripped supply.

Recognizing the gap and firmly believing in Boat Lagoon as a strong brand and viable business formula, Sriya and her husband Sornkom Kitprasan, a Krabi businessman, launched a sister company Krabi Boat Lagoon in December 2011.

"This is our brainchild and we have worked very hard to get it off the ground. It is modeled after Phuket Boat Lagoon with a wet-berth and hardstand docking spaces, top-notch maintenance facilities and luxury waterfront condominiums and retail spaces. Most importantly, Krabi Boat Lagoon will offer the much-needed docking and service marina for many yacht owners."

She is very keen to promote this new enterprise and that means

engaging in time-consuming marketing campaigns and frequent trips to Krabi. It's a juggling game as Sriya is also a busy mum with a four-year-old daughter. Lately, she has found meditation to be helpful in stilling the mind and developing inner peace. "My daily life can be a bit of a whirlwind so I turn to meditation, yoga or just listening to music to relax and unwind," she said.

She needs all the strength she can muster as there are many more projects waiting to be realized. Chief among them is the plan to build what she calls a 'community mall' within Phuket Boat Lagoon that will comprise selected restaurants and retail spaces. "This is to serve our Boat Lagoon community better. Not many people want to trek into town to eat or shop," she observes.

Sriya, like many local entrepreneurs, believes in the strength of Phuket as a holiday and lifestyle destination whose demand is more than likely to increase.

"Phuket has a bright future. Frankly, I just don't see anything that says otherwise. We do have problems with infrastructure, but that's the same with every developing city coping with growth. Here, there is plenty of room for more unique enterprises to grow. But you will only stand out if you have a unique product and excellent services to offer and build confidence and trust in your clients."



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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Practical apps for Thailand: part-two

LAST week, the *Phuket Gazette* featured part-one in this list of practical smart phone applications that can make your life easier – whether you live in Phuket, or are just visiting. This week continues with part-two.

Amazing Thailand Phuket



Created by the Tourist Authority of Thailand, this app includes an impressive number of different features including: Maps with geolocation, useful telephone numbers, regularly updated weather forecasts and travel tips for visitors. There is also plenty of good info about restaurants, accommodation, things to do, and places to see. Most of these articles can be viewed offline as well as online. This app also offers the ability to quickly contact the Tourist Authority of Thailand if people have any questions they want answered.

Thai Baht Exchange



A convenient real-time and real-world Thai Baht exchange rate display application. It shows up-to-date buying and selling rates for 34 foreign currencies with Thai Baht from eight major Thai banks. The exchange rates you see here are the exact match of what you will find at the bank exchange counters. You can save a considerable amount by picking the best bank to exchange your currency at. This app also has a bank locator that will help you find the nearest banks with the best exchange rates. It will also display information about the banks such as street address, telephone/fax numbers and service hours. Available for US\$0.99 at iTunes. A similar app called The Baht Best Money Exchanger is available for Android phone free at Google Play.



Nation News



This app gives you access to the latest news from English-language national daily newspaper The Nation. See all the latest articles and photos of the day. Navigation is simple with date and time included in each story. You can read it anywhere, even without mobile coverage, as after syncing, articles and photos are available offline. You can also share your favorite stories via email, texting or Twitter. Lite version available for free at iTunes.

Gulliver's Phuket



Phuket pocket guides abound but occasionally one stands out from the crowd. Gulliver's Phuket guide is simplified to include just enough information for a weekend break or a short trip and it includes more than 150 attractions, venues and topics, each with up-to-date contact details. An offline map is included with dozens of pictures

of major landmarks, and by turning on your location settings, you can pinpoint how close you are to them. Nothing is ever more than two clicks away, with the easy navigation shortcuts, and intuitive categorization to help you to quickly find what you're looking for. Topics covered include sightseeing, attractions, activities, restaurants, nightlife, accommodation, museums and culture, day trips, safety and travel tips and much more. Available for US\$0.99 at iTunes or 56 baht at Google Play.

Thai Cooking



This is an 'easy Thai cooking' app which can help you to cook all your favorite Thai dishes tastefully, and with convenience. The app provides pictorial and text recommendations on essential ingredients, as well as use of utensils appropriate for cooking Thai food and text of the recipes. Available for free on iTunes. For android users, there is another great free cooking app called Appon's Thai Recipes which features excellent color pictures and instructions for over 80 traditional and fusion recipes.

Party In Thailand



Choose any destination in Thailand and tap the corresponding line to get all scheduled party events for the 10 weeks including concerts, clubbing, beach and jungle parties. View the location of each club on a map, as well as choose a specific date or genre of party. You can also view cultural events and art exhibition happening in Thailand to fill in those days when you're not partying. A mini-guide on Thailand's nightlife is also included. Available free at google store, this app is a light version of Hotel GuidesThailand.

Phuket Forum

A weekly round-up of current issues, complaints and questions in the world of Technology, as revealed in the Gazette's Phuket Forum @ thephuketforum.net



PG Reader

Consumer Reports has an article rating security software and the ratings for free programs (with a score) are as follows: Avast (59), Avira (55), AVG (49), Microsoft Security Essentials (43).

The ratings for pay security (with score and price) are: G Data (67, \$45), ESET (66, \$80), F-Secure (64, \$60), Kaspersky (61, \$80), Avira (62, \$90), Avast (57, \$70), Bitdefender (56, \$70), Trend Micro (54, \$70), BullGuard (51, \$70), McAfee (53, \$80), AVG (51, \$70) and Norton (50, \$80).

So, I think I will change to Avast! Is it still the recommendation that you only have one security software?



Woody Leonard

I still stand by Microsoft Security Essentials. It's taken a few hard knocks lately in comparative tests, but it's still doing a very good job of protecting "normal" systems. And – most importantly – it's free. All of the other free programs listed by Consumer Reports beg, for money.

Yes, you should only run one real-time security program. You can run a second program from time to time, if you want a second opinion – always a good idea. A good combination is to run MSE or Avast or Avira all the time, then run Malwarebytes once a week or so, to see if it catches something that slipped by the other program.



PG Reader

Does anyone know a company in Phuket which is good in network hardware?

I've got two separate internet lines. One is TOT Fibre2u and the other one is an ordinary internet line.

I bought a DUAL WAN router (Cisco RV042) so I can use both lines and if one fails I still have continuous internet access without switching any cables. But I've got some problems setting that device up. That's the reason I need assistance from a professional.



Woody Leonard

I've had nothing but trouble with dual routers. Finally gave up trying to set them up. I just unplug one ISP and plug in another when there's a problem. Not sure who could set it up for you, but you might drop by the Sunday morning clinic at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Lots of knowledgeable networking people there.



Woody Leonard

**Wanted:
Used hard drives**

The PCs4Kids project has a bunch of new PCs getting assembled for needy kids in Phuket.

They are hitting a major stumbling block – hard drives. They can use any hard drives you might have, even small ones. Contribute to a good cause and email me! woody@khunwoody.com.

Do you have a tech question you want answered? Visit our tech forum today and leave a post to have it answered or just to have a chat with Mr Livewire and other PG readers at thephuketforum.net

IBM makes world's first atomic movie

SCIENTISTS from IBM have unveiled the world's smallest movie, made with one of the tiniest elements in the universe – atoms. *A Boy and His Atom*, the Guinness World Records verified movie used thousands of precisely placed atoms to create nearly 250 frames of stop-motion action.

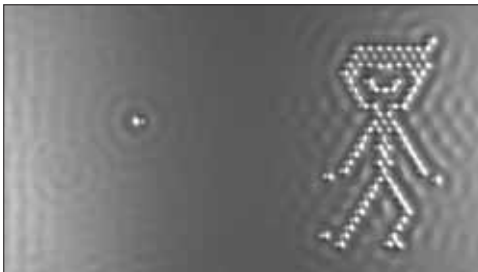
A Boy and His Atom depicts a character named Atom who befriends a single atom and goes on a journey that includes dancing, playing catch and bouncing on a trampoline. Set to a playful musical track, the movie represents a unique way to convey science outside the research community.

"Moving atoms is one thing; you can do that with the wave of your hand. Capturing, positioning and shaping atoms to create an original motion picture on the atomic-level is a precise science and entirely novel," said Andreas Heinrich, Principle Investigator, IBM Research.

"Here at IBM, researchers don't just read about science, we do it. This movie is a fun way to share the atomic-scale world while opening up a dialogue with students and others on the new frontiers of mathematics and science.

In order to make the movie, the atoms were moved with an IBM-invented scanning tunneling microscope.

"This Nobel Prize winning tool was the first device that enabled scientists to visualize the world all the way down to single atoms," said Christopher Lutz, Research Scientist, IBM Research.



PRECISION FILMAKING: The movie was made by manipulating single atoms. Photo: IBM

"It weighs two tons, operates at a temperature of minus 268 degrees Celsius and magnifies the atomic surface over 100 million times. The ability to control the temperature, pressure and vibrations at exact levels makes our IBM Research lab

one of the few places in the world where atoms can be moved with such precision."

Remotely operated on a standard computer, IBM researchers used the microscope to control a super-sharp needle along a copper surface to 'feel' atoms. Only one nanometer away from the surface, which is a billionth of a meter in distance, the needle can physically attract atoms and

molecules on the surface and thus pull them to a precisely specified location on the surface. The moving atom makes a unique sound that is critical feedback in determining how many positions it's actually moved.

Using the smallest object available for engineering data storage devices – single atoms – the same team of IBM researchers who made this movie also recently created the world's smallest magnetic bit. They were the first to answer the question of how many atoms it takes to reliably store one bit of magnetic information: 12. By comparison, it takes roughly 1 million atoms to store a bit of data on a modern computer or electronic device. If commercialized, atomic memory could one day store all of the movies ever made in a device the size of a fingernail. Watch the movie at: ibmworldssmallestmovie.tumblr.com.

– The Nation

Alpha shrubs starts with 'A'

LAST week we considered annuals, but today it is the turn of their big brothers – the shrubs and ornamental trees that form the backbone of any tropical garden.



Gardening
By Patrick Campbell

Acalypha hispida, also known as the chenille plant or red cat's tail, is alphabetically the first to come under scrutiny. Unlike its cousin, *A. wilkesiana* or Jacob's coat, which is grown entirely for its unique, multi-colored foliage, *hispida* has conventional leaves, but the most unconventional of flowers – masses of long crimson catkins which hang down beneath the foliage. These blooms feel soft and velvety to the touch – hence the colloquial name of cat's tail.

It is a tolerant plant which will put up with poor soil, provided you give it a sunny position and a reasonable supply of water. Granted the right conditions, it will bloom freely all year round. The only proviso is that it may need pruning, since it can become leggy. Often used as an informal hedge or in dramatic groups, the chenille plant is one of the best starter plants for the inexperienced gardener. It is also easily propagated from cuttings.

Another distinctive shrub, but far removed from the chenille plant in appearance, is the *adenium obesum* or desert rose. Also a favorite with Thais, the *adenium* is basically a desert plant, a succulent which stores water in its thick, knobbly, sometimes leafless stems. Indeed for some growers, these grey, distended stems are the principal attraction, though it does produce trumpet shaped flowers and club-shaped, glossy



The *Adenium obesum*, or desert rose, thrives in dry condition. Photo: trek

foliage. Rarely grown in open beds, the desert rose is usually found in rock gardens or containers. An ideal choice for a pot since it will thrive in dry conditions. An occasional drenching is all it requires. In fact the *adenium* is much more likely to succumb to over-watering (which leads to stem and root rot) than to under-watering. If you do plant it out, the desert rose is a perfect candidate for a xeric regime.

In Thailand the desert rose has been extensively hybridized: the common pale pink, plumeria-like flowers, which appear on rather gaunt branches, now often superseded by more dramatic white, cream edged with deep crimson, or vivid red blooms. Horticulturalists tend to prune top growth to encourage flowering, but in truth, the plant is such a slow grower that it is often treated as a bonsai specimen. Personally I would let well alone unless it becomes too leggy. Propagate from calloused cuttings left overnight to dry out.

When I drew up a list of top twenty shrubs a couple of years ago, the *allamanda* topped the list. I have no reason to change that opinion. It wins on many counts: one, as a beautiful flowering shrub possessing huge yellow trumpets with a golden center; two, because it is tolerant of almost any conditions; three, because it has attractive glossy evergreen foliage which is a perfect foil for the flowers; and four because it seems immune to disease of any kind.

At the height of the recent driest season for years, it continued to bloom and bloom. If the *allamanda* has a fault, it is that



TEACHER'S PET: A favorite of this writer, *allamanda* features large yellow trumpets with golden centers (above), and *acalypha hispida* (below). Photos: Kai Wan and Craig Elliott



although technically a vine, it does not produce tendrils, so it is unable to attach itself to adjacent surfaces. The whole luxurious structure of branches, stems, leaves and flowers, can easily become top heavy without support of some kind. But trained to a trellis or tied to a wall, it looks magnificent.

There is also a yellow, bushy variety with narrow leaves and smaller blooms, often used as a roadside border plant, and a dusty

pink variety, *A. blanchetti* which does twine more effectively, but lacks the dramatic impact of its golden cousin.

What of more 'A's such as acacias, and abutilons?

Well, they will have to wait in the wings for another time.

If you have a question or a garden that you like featured, you can email me anytime at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com



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Airborne Virus spreads

WHILE many visitors arrived at Phuket International Airport in the run-up to last month's Songkran Festival, a French couple, whose microlight aircraft landed there on April 11 for safety reasons, raised more than a few eyebrows at the busy facility. Stephen Fein reports:

THE COUPLE, 31-year-old Adrien Normier and his fiancée Clementine Bacri, 28, are on an around-the-world journey of scientific exploration quite unlike any other that has come before it. They were en route from Penang, Malaysia to U-Tapao airport, in Thailand's Chonburi province, when cloudy conditions atop a hill range east of Phuket made it impossible for their tiny aircraft to continue onward.

The plane, a 6.2 meter long Pipistrel Virus Short Wing [details below], can only be flown "line of sight", which in aviator parlance means VFR (visual flight rules).

With almost zero visibility, the pair had no option other than to divert to the nearest suitable airport they were aware of at the time.

During their short and completely unplanned stay on the island, the Parisian couple sat down with the *Phuket Gazette* to explain how their dream project, which they call 'Wings For Science', came to be.

"We began designing this project five years ago, when we decided to do something different and useful for at least a year. Some friends of mine in France had already asked me to do science using small aircraft," said

Adrien. Shortly thereafter, the young AirFrance pilot had a burst of inspiration.

"We're going to do this in different places all around the world! It's going to be interesting," he recounted.

Their goal established, Clem and Adrien then sent an offer via France's National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) to get the message out that the couple would be more than happy to use a light sports aircraft to conduct free research in remote locations around the globe. In return, all they asked for was the right to interview the researchers and



GOING VIRAL: Clem and Adrien are travelling around the world in the name of science, collecting data and talking to researchers.

discover what they were doing, then shooting short films about the work.

"We wanted to be useful and to discover the world in a way different from what we were used to. We thought that taking part in interesting projects would be a great way to discover new places and the people who live there," explained Clem, a lawyer by trade who practices in both France and Luxembourg.

After lining up an impressive array of collaborators and sponsors, the couple's first project involved researching atmospheric pollutants in the city of Luxembourg in December 2012. Taking aerial photographs, they helped create three dimensional images of the inner city using specially-developed software that is the key to much of their work.

From there, taking turns flying a maximum of five and a half hours a day, they headed north to take part in creating three-dimensional models of two islands off Iceland.

Then they headed even further north to take part in two projects in Greenland.

The three dimensional models their software helps create allow researchers to gain valuable, possibly lifesaving, geophysical data about the landforms they study. For example, the images they produce of a volcano dome enables researchers to predict points of collapse during an eruption, and the likelihood, or otherwise, that lava flows will run into inhabited areas nearby.

The Virus, with its low stall speed and hi-tech photographic equipment, is an ideal platform from which to create detailed 3D images that would be impossible from either a land-based perspective or by satellite imagery, explained Adrien.

"This gets you a very high-resolution 3D model, with a clarity of the ground that is not possible with Google Earth," he says.

"Also, in Google Earth you have pictures without any notion of the volume [of landforms]," notes Clem.

Not all of their work has involved mountainous landforms, however. They also marked the movement of mudflats in man-

grove forests in French Guyana, taking tens of thousands of images and "creating a sort of private Google Earth database for the research institute conducting the study there," Adrien said.

Apart from 3D mapping, the pair have also done some "observation flights" in search of specific features, such as spotting whales for an oceanographic campaign in Canada that collects biodata on individual migrating cetaceans.

"With the airplane we can extend the range of prospection of the whales," said Adrien.

The intrepid couple have also successfully taken part in several "aerial archeology" research projects.

Asked how microlight aircraft could be involved in a pursuit more often associated with excavation pits, dirt and pickaxes, Adrien explained.

"In some very specific environments, you can actually look for archeological remains from the air. In Europe, we looked for and found Roman archeological artifacts, such as villas, using this method," he said.

He went on to note that in the dry European summer, crops can be very sensitive to amounts of water that get collected or trapped by stone formations beneath the earth's surface. Common crops, such as oats and wheat that tend to grow at the same rate under uniform conditions, can tap into these precious water sources.

The plants that do it tend to grow taller than those that do not, and the differences can form a sort of contour indicating the position of subsurface structures, including those left behind by ancient civilizations. Such patterns may be discernable from the air, but go unnoticed by people on the ground – including those who planted the crops.

"When it's desert, you can really see stuff. You can see hilltops shaped like squares and you can see that there was a pyramid there. In Peru it is very obvious. There are thousands and thousands of remains," Adrien said.

During their work in Peru, home to the world famous Nazca Lines geoglyphs, they detected a previously unknown

Virus SW 80 at a glance



Big things can come in small packages. This one, just 80hp, can conquer the world. Photo: Mike Gillam

Manufacturer: Pipistrel, Ajdovscina, Slovenia
Engine: Rotax 912 UL
Maximum power: 80 hp at 5800 rpm
Cruising Speed (75% power): 246 km/h
Fuel capacity: 2 x 50 liters
Fuel burn @ cruising speed: 13.6 litres/hr
Range @ cruising speed: 1,650 kms (w/ reserve)
Wing span: 10.7 m
Length: 6.5 m
Height: 1.85m
Wing area: 9.5 m²
Empty weight (factory): 287 kg
Max take-off weight (MTOW): 472.5 kg
Average sea level takeoff roll: 140m
Glide ratio: 17:1
Note: Stats based on standard factory model, weight 472.5 kg.

Modifications for Wings for Science:

- Extra fuel tanks
- Stronger brakes
- Larger tires
- Standard seating replaced by life rafts, survival kits.

Source: www.pipistrel.si

science across the globe



PROBE THE GLOBE: The Virus soars past a waterfall in Greenland. Inset: Adrien flies the plane while his fiancée Clementine takes footage of the breathtaking scene outside.

formation of stones that are now thought to be the remains of an ancient cemetery that could be up to 5,000 years old, according to initial estimates.

A photo of a shaman performing a religious rite at the site is among the many interesting images available on their Facebook page, and on the many other social media the technically savvy pair use to keep the public up to date on their journey of discovery.

The only break in the couple's circumnavigation of the planet came when they had to ship the aircraft in a container from South America all the way to Australia.

SAFETY CONCERNS

As is now becoming standard on many small aircraft, the Virus comes equipped with a "rocket-propelled parachute ballistic recovery system", which means that if worse comes to worst they can simply pull a lever and a parachute will deploy, allowing the entire plane to come safely to the ground. Fortunately, the pair had yet to deploy this technology at the time they left Phuket.

Safety is always of paramount importance to the researchers, however.

"It is actually dangerous, but we take every precaution possible because we want to come back to do other adventures," said Clem. "We wait when the weather is not good or we divert, as we have done here. We

also have a Luxembourg-based meteorologist who communicates with us through satellite phone to update all of the meteorological aspects of the flight," said Clem.

Asked how a single weatherman could remain on call 24 hours a day, the couple laughed.

Their eye in the sky, as it

'We wanted to be useful and to discover the world in a way different from what we were used to. We thought that taking part in interesting projects would be a great way to discover new places and the people who live there'

— Adrien Normier

were, is a "very cool and nice" retired meteorologist named Ernest who "has trouble sleeping and is always there on the line when we need him. We couldn't do it without him," Clementine said.

Asked what their worst experiences have been, Adrien was quick to say they had all been on the "administrative side".

As just one example, after they chose to divert to Phuket Airport they were charged with 'violating Thai air space' because their landing had not been scheduled, even though the air traffic controller had given them permission to land here, they said.

Asked if they thought this might have been the harbinger of an unsavory, under-the-table bit of commerce, Adrien said he sincerely believed that it was not. However, the different "cultures" among aviation

authorities in the many different countries they had visited made it difficult to know when such transactions were expected, they said.

The situation in Phuket became even more disconcerting when they were told their tiny aircraft was "taking up too much room" and would have to depart for their intended destination, U-Tapao. After they explained that it was too dangerous to do this because of the weather, they were finally allowed to fly over to the nearby Phuket Airpark, a privately run grass-strip facility in Pa Khlok.

The couple ended up spending fewer than 48 hours in Thailand. The diversion to Phuket altered their original flight plan with stops at U-Tapao and from there on to Laos. Instead they opted to fly straight to Burma, leaving the Airpark at dawn the following morning.

As this goes to press, the couple's aerial odyssey was nearing completion. Adrien sent an email to the *Gazette* from India, where they had given a talk in front of 200 interested students. From there, they were continuing West for their final projects, both in Jordan.

For more information about the 'Wings for Science' project, follow Adrien and Clem at: wingsforscience.com and/or their facebook page at [.../wingsforscience](https://www.facebook.com/wingsforscience)



Adrien and Clementine landed in Greenland in the summer of 2012.

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Seahorse lovers, saddle up

MOST divers remember the thrill of seeing their first seahorse, whether it was a Short-nosed seahorse shyly hiding in the grass beds of Egypt's Red Sea or if it was a Tiger-tail, right here, in Phuket's backyard.

Now, those sightings of seahorses hiding among the corals at Shark Point and around the Kingdom can be added to a newly emerging database as scientists evaluate the number one exporter of seahorses in the world, Thailand.

PROJECT Seahorse calls on all divers and marine enthusiasts to help with the recently launched three-year project aimed at studying the seahorses of Thailand.

Seahorses were one of the first fish species to be added to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, (CITES) Appendix II in 2004, which demands that countries maintain "sustainable trade" and monitor populations. Thailand, the world's largest exporter of seahorses, has taken pro-active steps to assess the populations of this peculiar sea creature and now needs our help.

"In Thailand we are just starting to evaluate seahorse populations, which is why we are asking people to help us," explains University of British Columbia doctoral student and seahorse expert Lindsay Aylesworth, who is leading the field research team for Project Seahorse. "We are basically going in with very little information about where seahorses are in Thailand; what environments they inhabit; and what their [population] densities are like."

Divers in Thailand have been offered a unique opportunity to help save these charismatic, quirky sea creatures and the multitude of marine environments they inhabit. Project Seahorse, a

non-government-organization (NGO) based out of the University of British Columbia, Canada and the Zoological Society of London,

has an online 'citizen science' database called iSeahorse. This database is designed for divers, scientists and other seahorse enthusiasts to upload their photos and sighting information.

Project Seahorse scientists, collaborating with Thailand's Department of Fisheries and Kasetsart University in Bangkok, will then use this vital information to map data-deficient seahorse populations, determine their threat levels and develop effective conservation actions.

"We are really trying to reach out to the dive community and see if they are willing to share their seahorse photos and dive spots where they've spotted seahorses," says Lindsay. The sightings will be used to mark future field sites for more in-depth research. Divers first register, either through Facebook, Twitter or online, before submitting their sightings.

"We encourage you to submit your data from any sighting, no matter how old. And even very minimal amounts of information are incredibly valuable. You do not need to know the species' name or even the exact location of your observation – if you have seen

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli



Yellow Seahorses are one of eight species believed to be in Thailand. Photo: Guylian Seahorses of the World 2008

seahorses in the wild then we want to hear from you!"

Although seahorses are targeted by some country's fishing industries for the aquarium trade, seahorses in Thailand are usually 'by-catch' – accidentally captured in fishing gear targeting other animals, explains Lindsay.

"Fishers sell them to local buyers as dry individuals. Mostly they are used for traditional medicines. There is a history of seahorses being used for its curative powers. Anything from swollen lymph nodes to arthritis or

male fertility problems, because it's the male seahorse that carries the babies [male seahorses are the only male in the animal kingdom known to give live birth].

"Usually what happens is you take the dried seahorse, grind it up into a powder and mix it with honey or some other herbs and drink it as a tea for its curative properties," says Lindsay.

"Seahorses are a great tool for raising awareness of general ocean conservation issues, from habitat-health to making sure we have sustainable fisheries.

"They also have an ecological importance; Seahorses don't really have stomachs so they are voracious predators. They live in an environments where they basically feed on small crustaceans and baby fish larvae. There is some research that suggests they are important to structuring the fish community and the areas where they are found," says Lindsay.

Now, with the tools to actively contribute to the conservation effort of these shy, but vital creature, it is now up to the divers of Thailand to make a difference.

Can you identify Thailand's seahorses?

THERE are many characteristics used to identify seahorses most notably distinctive spines along the body. A common misunderstanding is that color is a clear identifier. However, seahorses can change colors, which help them function as ambush predators. Here are the eight most likely seahorses you'll find:

SPINY SEAHORSE:

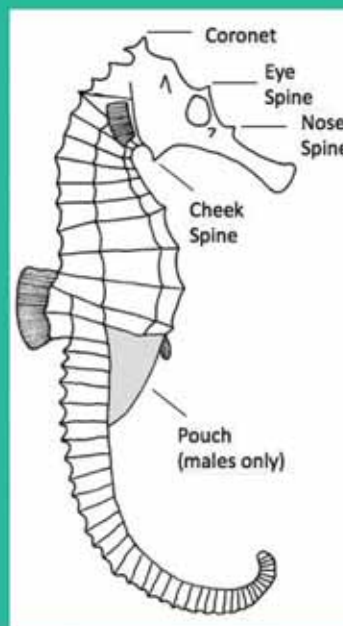
Does it have body spines?

- **Tiger Tail:** Double cheek spines; blotchy tail pattern (like a tiger)
- **Barbour's Seahorse:** Double cheek spines; sharp eye spines; sharp nose spines; spine in front of coronet
- **Thorny Seahorse:** Long snout; single cheek spine; sharp dark tipped spines; nose spine; eye spine
- **Hedgehog Seahorse:** One or two cheek spines; no nose spine; well

SMOOTH SEAHORSE:

It doesn't have body spines!

- **Kellogg's seahorse:** Largest species in Thailand; single prominent eye spine narrow body
- **Yellow Seahorse** (yes, we know – not yellow Tiger Tails): No nose spine; deep body
- **Three-spot Seahorse:** Hook-like cheek spine; three dark spots on body (not always visible); hook-like eye spine
- **Japanese Seahorse:** Short snout; double cheek spines; deep body spines



Can you identify this one?

Photo: Guylian Seahorses of the World 2008
Thorny Seahorse (Hippocampus hirtus)

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Photo: Bob Mott



Will it hurt?



AN UNINCONVERIENT MOMENT. Photo: Oscar Ruitt

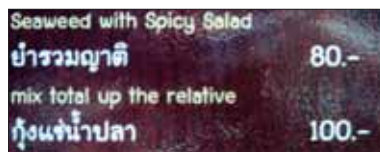
Signing off



CAVEAT EMPTOR. Photo: Ali Catterall



Proof that smoking can be bad for you.



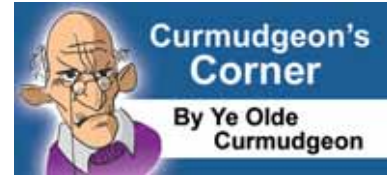
Exotic menu items.

Your weekly pith:

"If you really want something in this life, you have to work for it – Now quiet, they're about to announce the lottery numbers!"
– Homer Simpson

This quote was taken from
Ian Hewitt's book
'QUOTES for PROSPERITY'

Planning for World Peace



MY FRIEND Fardley Nerdwell is a no-nonsense fellow with a solution to every problem. Is there a hole in the ozone layer? Shoot a big chunk of styrofoam into space to plug it up. Is there drought in one part of the world and too much rain in another? Use giant fans to blow the rainclouds to the drought region. Every problem has a simple solution if you listen to this one-man think tank.

Since he has aspirations to become the next secretary-general of the UN, Fardley recently turned his attention to the problem of world peace.

The Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs? "Piece o' cake," Fardley boasted. "Let 'em go ahead. All the major powers have nuclear weapons. Why not Iran and North Korea? Why not everybody?"

"One of the great unsung geniuses of modern times, and my personal hero, was the late, great Idi Amin," Fardley continued wistfully. "This remarkable man once proposed that we get rid of conventional armaments and replace them with reasonably priced hydrogen bombs that would be distributed equally throughout the planet.

"If this wise plan were implemented, then we would have world-wide nuclear equality. All conflicts would immediately cease. The threat of mutually assured destruction would keep the nations of the world in a state of permanent terror. You'd have nuclear gridlock."

"Wonderful," I said. "How would you solve the Arab-Israeli conflict?"

"Simple," Fardley declared. "Both the Israelis and the Pales-

tinians claim that the land of Israel/Palestine belongs to them. Which one is right? We don't know, so we solve the problem in a dispassionate, rational, and scientific way.

"We have a card game – poker, blackjack, whatever – between Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas. Maybe that Hamas guy can join too. Winner takes all. Whoever wins the card game gets the whole shebang – Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, maybe even the Golan Heights. The loser and all his people have to leave."

"Where to?" I asked. "The Israelis and the Palestinians both have huge populations. Where are they going to relocate to?"

Fardley shrugged. "Hey, I'm a theorist and a conceptualizer, not a bean-counter," he retorted. "I deal with the big picture. Let lesser minds work out the petty details. Antarctica, maybe. Greenland. Baffin Island. The Sahara Desert. Any place where their leader can work on improving his card game for a rematch.

"The problem is that the West is always trying to make peace in the Middle East. Fuhgeddaboutit! The natural state of the Middle East is war. The people there all want to kill each other. So let nature take its course. Let the conflicting parties fight it out, then deal with the winners – if there are any left. We can also grab their oil."

"You really are a statesman, Fardley," I commended him. "A great humanitarian, too."

"Thank you," Fardley said with a smile. "And soon I will be secretary-general of the UN."

"I bet the world can hardly wait," I said.

Ye Olde Curmudgeon can be flamed c/o s.tsow@gmail.com, but if Fardley becomes secretary-general of the UN, he plans to seek refuge on another planet.



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JUK'S SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: Find the 10 differences between these pictures.



Artist and brand consultant Miguel Kirjon lives in Phuket with his partner Lin Prachakrich and publishes a series of children's books "Juk's Adventures" in 9 languages. See juksadventures.com for more information.

COFFEE break

Across:

9. Debatable rule-grab out of order (8)
10. Tow around a couple (3)
11. Note time-out almost something to make one sick (6)
12. Against a rhyme (6)
13. The more confused proposition (7)
14. Aims for conclusions (4)
15. Crack it, screen it out (10)
17. Cool it! An odd position to be in (8)
18. Spode is broken, get rid! (7)
19. Cuts into short tail (4)
21. Advocate left weary, frazzled (6)
24. Final punk haircuts for remaining native American tribesmen (4,2,3,8)
27. Believe in a favorable balance (6)
29. Finished on top (4)
30. Makes us fat in thick cotton cloth (7)
33. Ring tart from North-facing Phuket beach (3,5)
35. Differed strikingly, chapter start done in a different way (10)
36. Blonde in the show (4)
37. Doctor admitted died by submersion (7)
38. Not moving, cast it out (6)
40. Pine for, states the better half (6)
41. Low pig in Thai (3)
42. New, *tienne* changed the number (8)

Down:

1. Rival cop in reassignment to do with the region (10)
2. Show contentment, turning up on right river (4)



3. A bachelor bends to heads of religious orders (8)
4. Money right in charge in the center (7)
5. Gosh! Member of the family connection! (11)
6. Vice-miller can maybe make pasta (10)
7. Say again about tape perhaps (6)
8. Old wires twisted to contain sweet brier (4,4)
10. Maybe he met the subject (5)
16. Sex, dope, can be unprotected (7)
20. Bad recipe, not one for pancake (5)
22. Is wrath about apparitions (7)
23. Mighty chambers make

- vaults (6,5)
25. Weird din, lash out wildly (10)
26. Aver ancestries in U.S. borders (5,5)
28. Right, a Rear Admiral changes visa, a thing rarely encountered (4,4)
31. Guns I rip out in rebellion (8)
32. Done any new soothing drug (7)
34. Beat time, could be harsh (6)
35. Against party in building complex (5)
39. A try, maybe, to be pretentious (4)

Cryptic crossword compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 31.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):

Those born under the sign of Gemini will see the funny side of life more readily this week. Your light-hearted mood makes it possible to rise above minor work challenges and the social scene should be a lot of fun this weekend. If your birthday falls during the coming week, the stars forecast travel to previously unseen places in the year ahead. Hot days for romance are Tuesday and Wednesday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):

This is an auspicious time to refresh stale skills. Cancerians who thought they'd lost the touch will be inspired by friends with flowing creative energy. Getting out of your comfort zone is forecast to enhance your social life this weekend. Another water sign can lead the way towards a laid back environment – those who are single are likely to meet someone on the same wavelength. Lucky days for finances are Monday and Tuesday.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):

You will be able to see the best in people this week, and this includes yourself. Leos who have been low in confidence lately are predicted to perk up, probably due to some

success at work. An air sign friend who has been down in the dumps can be cheered by a pep talk this weekend. Your luck in love is steady and commitments are well-starred during the remainder of May.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):

Setting more realistic financial goals is highlighted for those born under the sign of Virgo. A recent spending spree has probably cost more than you could afford and there are hints that expenses will be higher than usual at the end of the month. In the realm of romance, home is where the heart is this weekend. Virgoans who haven't been spending enough time with their partner should find ways to reconnect.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):

Your stubborn streak can make this a difficult week at work. Librans are advised to take several steps away from people with opposing ideas. The astral atmosphere is encouraging to those who are freelance, but team efforts are not well starred until later in the month. Long distance love with a water sign is highlighted to become more serious, with focus on spur of the moment travel to be reunited.

YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):

Rejection is highlighted to be a fact of life this week for many Scorpios. If this happens within the world of work, the stars suggest that a better opportunity is just around the corner. Where romance is concerned, a reality check should be viewed as a positive thing – there are signs that you have been daydreaming of a relationship with someone whose heart is already spoken for.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):

There are hints that Sagittarians have been taking certain people's loyalty for granted. Air signs are particularly highlighted in this situation; you are advised to show your appreciation in a way that counts. Where work is concerned, this can be financially related, but the outcome will be worth the outlay. The social scene could leave you cold this weekend – the stars recommend physical activity to clear your mind.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):

Capricorns should keep important communication clear and concise this week. The stars suggest that crossed wires may result in the wrong message getting across and this could result in financial loss. Business is better starred towards the end of the month – putting important decisions on hold until then is recommended. Love with other earth signs is lucky this weekend. Wear the color tangerine to help you see the sunny side of life.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):

Aquarians will benefit from spending some peaceful time in a natural environment this weekend. The cosmic climate can encourage unexpected stress after Monday and being rested before you commence the work week will be to your advantage. In the realm of romance, a date with an earth sign is likely to disappoint, but a fire sign's interest should come as a pleasant surprise. Lucky days for money are Wednesday and Thursday.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):

Making false moves can complicate matters for those born under the sign of Pisces during the coming days. The stars advise being selective when taking advice, especially from

those you don't know very well. Your current indecisive mood gives way to more certainty after Wednesday and the last week of May will be the right time to take action where important issues are concerned. Keeping a new romantic relationship light-hearted is advisable.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):

Financial luck falls under the spotlight this week. Many Arians should see a boost to their bank balance and there are hints that this will come out of the blue. This is an auspicious time to broaden your social circle; there are hints that someone you didn't find interesting shows intriguing hidden qualities. In the realm of romance, Sunday is a promising day to put an ongoing disagreement in the past.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):

First impressions do count this week. Those Taureans who are trying to make improvements in their working lives are advised to pay extra attention to their appearance and how they present themselves. The stars are ready to support your efforts to make a fresh start and results should be tangible by the end of May. Where romance is concerned, your down to earth demeanor is attractive to a fire sign this weekend.

International Sport

Boots, boredom and bluster

WHAT a boring race! The second drag reduction system (DRS) did not enliven Catalunya. Pirelli caved-in to pressure and supplied 2012-style hard tyres. They degraded anyway. Pirelli's intention is to create two and three stop strategy options for each race; four stops is too many. The race became a shambles that even drivers could not follow. Pirelli has said it will address the situation by Silverstone. I hope they will not bow to vested interests and take us back to easy wins.

It seems Red Bull would like a return to the dark days when Formula 1 started the cars in order of speed on indestructible tyres, and finished the same way.

In 1995 Michael Schumacher won 53% of GPs. In 1996 Damon Hill won 50%. In 1997 Schumie was disqualified for cheating. In 1998, Mika Hakkinen won 50%, and 1999 was similar.

In 2000 and 2001, Schumie reconquered with 53%, in 2002 he raised and took 65%. He won again in 2003, and in 2004 won 72% of races including seven consecutive wins. It was seven races each for Alonso and Rikknen in 2005, and Alonso and Schumacher in 2006.

2007 to 2010 saw Rikknen, Hamilton, Button and Vettel each win with five or six races. Then, in 2011 Vettel got 15 poles from 19 races, won 58% of GPs, equaled Schumie's 2002 record of 17 podium finishes, and took 83% of all possible points.

Despondency returned. Schumacher had the best car designer, was the best driver, and cheated. Red Bull has the best car designer, and Vettel could believe himself heir-apparent to Schumie's vacant throne. But it is a way for F1 to lose fans.



DULL: Fernando Alonso performs a pit stop during the Spanish F1 Grand Prix. Photo: Reuters



Formula 1
By The Digby

2012 saw seven winners in the first seven races, and the bleak days looked banished. Pirelli's made-to-degrade tyres produced the most exciting racing in years.

Today's teams do not try to head the grid at the expense of a good race set-up, and the drivers have to manage more than speed.

This displeases Red Bull, whose drivers cannot push their car to the limit without destroying their tyres. Patriarch Dietrich Mateschitz has weighed into the debate,

arguing that the sport is no longer about racing, but about tyre management. So it is clear that Red Bull is rattled.

The tyres need a bit of tweaking. Let Pirelli manage that and keep vested interests away.

I said last week that traditionally teams bring upgrades to Catalunya. Clearly Ferrari pulled out all the stops to give Fernando Alonso a winning package for his home GP. Alonso, one of the very best drivers, capitalized on it. Massa, the oldest F1 driver, also did well. Ferrari has changed the championship dynamics, and it now looks as if Alonso and the Iceman will slug it out.

McLaren brought more upgrades to

Catalunya than any other team; they needed to. Unhappily, they did not pay-off, and I fear their championship hopes are over.

As forecast Kimi Raikkonen did well, and Grosjean might have done something too if his suspension had not failed. That cost Lotus constructor points, and they need more upgrades to beat Ferrari.

Mercedes and Sauber did not have competitive cars. It seems Mercedes is focusing on 2014. But Hamilton was out driven by Rosberg which will make for interesting Silver Arrows watching from now on. Nico Hulkenburg is a good driver, but the silly pit lane incident with Toro Rosso lost Sauber their chance of points.

Red Bull looked underwhelming. Vettel lost championship points, but in the Constructors' Championship, Webber's continual contribution has kept Red Bull nicely ahead. Adrian Newey will even now be plotting to catch Ferrari and Lotus.

The field is dividing into three. In the Yellow Jersey is Vettel on 89, together with the breakaway group Raikkonen 85, and Alonso 72. A second group has Hamilton 50, Massa 45, and Webber 42. The peloton is headed by Grosjean and Paul di Resta on 26 and Rosberg 22. Max Chilton is the Lanterne Rouge with null points. The main battle order seems set now.

In the Constructors' Championship, Red Bull is on 131, Ferrari 117, and Lotus 111. The rest are unlikely to challenge them. But Force India is unlucky not to have more points. If Lotus could overtake Mercedes, that would be dramatic.

Monaco on May 26 is one of the highlights of the year. But more of that next time.

Wigan relegated

WIGAN Athletic became the first team to be relegated from England's top flight in the same season as winning the FA Cup after they lost 4-1 at Arsenal, with Lukas Podolski scoring twice, in the English Premier League on Tuesday.

The victory keeps Arsenal in pole position to claim fourth spot and a place in next year's Champions League. They lead north London rivals Tottenham Hotspur, in fifth spot, by one point with the last round of games to be played on Sunday.

Wigan have narrowly escaped relegation several times in recent seasons, but their luck ran out at a rain-sodden Emirates Stadium just three days after they had beaten Manchester City 1-0 at Wembley to win the FA Cup for the first time.

"I never expected this to happen, this group of players don't deserve this," said Wigan manager Roberto Martinez. "Winning the FA Cup was incredible but this is a tough, tough day for the club."

In Tuesday's other game, Manchester City, who sacked manager Roberto Mancini on Monday, won 2-0 at relegated Reading with forwards Sergio Aguero and Edin Dzeko scoring late in each half.

City, last season's champions, are now guaranteed second place after Brian Kidd took caretaker charge of

the team following the departure of Mancini and his number two, David Platt, who left the club earlier on Tuesday.

Wigan, who have been in the Premier League since the 2005-6 season, have 35 points with one game remaining, four fewer than Sunderland in 17th position. Bottom club Queens Park Rangers have already been relegated along with Reading.

Arsenal have qualified for the Champions League in every full season that Arsene Wenger has been in charge since he became manager in 1996, and they travel to Newcastle United on Sunday knowing they can guarantee qualification if they win.

Spurs, with 69 points to Arsenal's 70, host Sunderland.

Champions Manchester United and City have already sealed their places in the Champions League group stage.

Third-placed Chelsea have also qualified for the Champions League but Arsenal, who are two points behind the west London club, can overhaul them for the final spot in the group stage. The fourth-placed team go into the Champions league playoffs.

The Premier League's three relegated teams will be replaced by Cardiff City, who won the second-tier Championship title, and Hull City.



FA Cup winner. Photo: Reuters

Crystal Palace and Watford meet in the playoff final on May 27 to decide the third promoted team.

Wigan have conceded the most goals in the Premier League so far this season - 71 in 37 games.

Relegation means Wigan will miss out on about 45 million pounds in revenue from Premier League television rights deals which come into effect next season, and there are doubts over whether Martinez will stay in charge.

The Spaniard has been linked with the Everton post vacated by David Moyes who will take over from Alex Ferguson at Manchester United next season.

Missing out on the Champions League proper would cost Arsenal about 30 million pounds and Wenger has also said it would not reduce the club's attraction to quality reinforcements which many fans feel the team desperately need.

- Reuters

| PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| SUNDAY, 18 MAY 2013 | Chelsea vs Everton |
| 22:00 | |
| SUNDAY, 18 MAY 2013 | Newcastle vs Arsenal |
| 22:00 | |
| SUNDAY, 18 MAY 2013 | Tottenham vs Sunderland |
| 22:00 | |
| SUNDAY, 19 MAY 2013 | 22:00 |
| Liverpool vs QPR | |
| Man City vs Norwich | |
| Southampton vs Stoke | |
| Swansea vs Fulham | |
| West Brom vs Man Utd | |
| West Ham vs Reading | |
| Wigan vs Aston Villa | |

| PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|----|-----|
| | TEAM | P | PTS |
| 1 | Man Utd | 37 | 88 |
| 2 | Man City | 37 | 78 |
| 3 | Chelsea | 37 | 72 |
| 4 | Arsenal | 37 | 70 |
| 5 | Tottenham | 37 | 69 |
| 6 | Everton | 37 | 63 |
| 7 | Liverpool | 37 | 58 |
| 8 | WBA | 37 | 48 |
| 9 | Swansea | 37 | 46 |
| 10 | West Ham | 37 | 43 |
| 11 | Stoke | 37 | 41 |
| 12 | Norwich | 37 | 41 |
| 13 | Newcastle | 37 | 41 |
| 14 | Southampton | 37 | 40 |
| 15 | Fulham | 37 | 40 |
| 16 | Aston Villa | 37 | 40 |
| 17 | Sunderland | 37 | 39 |
| 18 | Wigan | 37 | 35 |
| 19 | Reading | 37 | 28 |
| 20 | QPR | 37 | 25 |

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International Sport

England must improve to beat NZ

By Patrick Campbell

AFTER the high drama of England's final test match in New Zealand, which ended with Monty Panesar nervously blocking the final five balls to avoid defeat and the dreaded ignominy of a series loss, the first game before the return Test matches against the Lions (effectively England's second eleven), ended in a drab draw. Rain, as usual, was the culprit.

Yet it held off long enough to confirm the outstanding form of two players: Rutherford in making 126 at the top of the visitor's order, and thus carrying on from where he left off 'down under', and an even more impressive 179 from Lions captain Joe Root.

Indeed, twenty-two-year-old Root with a current aggregate of 646 runs for the season, has a chance to reach an elusive milestone – 1000 runs by the end of May – a target not achieved since 1975. Ashley Giles, the one day team manager advises caution: "We still need to be guarded as to how much we build the lad up. He's only played a few Tests. But so far, so good." Some understatement.

For other players, the omens were less propitious. The heavy hitting Brendon McCullum, surely the best striker of a

cricket ball after Chris Gayle, scored only one, but he, Kane Williamson and Luteru Taylor – showing some intimations of a return to form with 35 – will surely form the backbone of the New Zealand batting.

The tourist's bowling generally lacked real penetration, apart from the persevering swing of Trent Boult who took 3 for 86, but the signs for the English players were more encouraging.

Toby Roland-Jones, a fast-medium bowler, returned figures of 4-56. That will have done his chances of future elevation no harm at all. Two forgotten men performed well: Michael Carberry, overlooked for several years, scored 77, and Graham Onions, whose role in New Zealand was reduced to that of onlooker, bowled a steady 15 overs for 46 runs and two wickets. Ravi Bopara's inclusion in the one-day side after so many missed opportunities, has been much criticized in the national press, but in this context he showed uncharacteristic resolve in scoring 42 not out.

Monty Panesar's partner in that last ditch stand in New Zealand was Matt Prior. Now widely regarded as the best wicket-keeper batsman in world cricket, he has been recently named English Player of the Year. Unsurprising after a tour in which



PRACTICE: England's captain Alastair Cook during a training session. Photo: Reuters

he scored six half-centuries and made a series saving hundred.

Prior has been at pains to emphasize the significance of the New Zealand series, saying that it is certainly not a warm-up for the Ashes series which follows. He is right. The only blot on the Australian cricketing landscape within living memory was the

Packer poaching era. Both before and emphatically since, Australia has produced great players and ruthlessly successful teams.

England, shorn of Kevin Pietersen, will need to be at their considerable best to repel both these Southern Hemisphere invaders. The battle begins at Lords.

Tiger Woods on the prowl

PLAYING with controlled aggression, Tiger Woods gave notice at the Players Championship that he stands poised to reassert his dominance once again on the world of golf.

After an uncharacteristic wobble with a double-bogey on the back nine of TPC Sawgrass's Stadium Course, Woods reprised his familiar role of irresistible frontrunner to win his 78th PGA event and second Players title in his 300th career start on the tour.

The two-stroke victory by the world number one was his 52nd from the 56 times he has led or shared the lead after the third round of a 72-hole PGA Tour event.

Most telling was the confidence and mastery Woods exhibited as he tailored his game to the challenges posed by the tricky Pete Dye-designed course.

"It was fast and difficult," said Woods. "And I hit it so good today, it was fun. I hit it high, low,

left to right, right to left, whatever I wanted.

"I pured a lot of putts, too," added the 37-year-old American, who finished with a 13-under total after a two-under 70 in his final round.

"It could have been something pretty low today, just had a bunch of lip-outs."

Woods accumulated 14 major titles with his last triumph at the 2008 U.S. Open, but then came a string of injuries, swing changes and the disintegration of his marriage.

The result has been a five-year lull in pursuit of his top career ambition – the record 18 major titles won by Jack Nicklaus.

But it all seems to be coming together for Woods, right down to having his steady girlfriend, Olympic skiing champion Lindsey Vonn, cheering him on to victory at a site where he had managed just one top 10-finish since his first Players title in 2001.

The victory gave Woods his fourth victory of the year, a lightning start to the season unmatched in his career.

"This golf course has been a little bit tricky over the years, and I'm not the only one who's struggled with it. It's a tough course," he said.

"Fortunately I think this year I've been playing really well, and the last tournament I played in, I played really well," he said, referring to the Masters last month.

"The way I was playing at Augusta, I was shaping the golf ball both ways and controlling my trajectory and I thought that was important coming into this week."

Woods finished tied for fourth at the Masters despite a bad break at the par-five 15th hole in the second round when his approach shot hit the flag stick and bounced into a water hazard. He was also slapped with a two-stroke penalty for an improper drop.



Tiger Woods lifts The Players Championship trophy in the air after winning the PGA golf tournament at TPC Sawgrass. Photo: Reuters

The next chance to add to his majors haul will come next month at the US Open at the relatively short Merion layout outside Philadelphia.

Since Woods kept his driver in his bag for most of the Players Championship in favor of using his three-wood and five-wood for greater control, he was asked if this might have been good preparation for the US championship.

"I've never played Merion. It sounds good in theory," he said,

drawing laughs from reporters at his news conference.

"Whatever the golf course gives you, I come up with a game plan where I want to play the holes from."

Oozing confidence, Woods forecast his best was yet to come.

"I'm just trying to get better, and I feel like I'm getting better as the year's going on.

"I know a lot of people in this room thought I was done," he added. "But I'm not." – Reuters

America's Cup sailing regatta still on

THE America's Cup sailing regatta will go ahead, organizers said on Tuesday, following concerns about safety due to the death of a sailor in a training accident last week.

Regatta organizers said they hope within two weeks to complete an investigation of last Thursday's accident that led to the death of British champion sailor Andrew Simpson, a two-time Olympic medalist. Simpson was trapped underwater after the Artemis Racing team's 72-foot catamaran capsized and broke apart in a training run.

"The America's Cup remains

on track and racing will take place this summer," Tom Ehman, vice commodore of the Golden Gate Yacht Club, told reporters. "We have every reason to believe all four teams will be continuing."

Artemis' accident followed numerous warnings about the safety of the sleek, high-tech catamarans, called AC72s, and it marked the second time that one of the boats, estimated to cost around US\$8 million each, foundered amid the heavy winds and rip currents of San Francisco Bay.

Among other factors, investigators will look at the structure of

Artemis' "Big Red" yacht, which Regatta Director Iain Murray said differed significantly from the catamarans of other competitors.

Teams in the America's Cup are required to stay within rules governing the design of their yachts but they also have leeway to customize their vessels with hydrofoils and other technology.

"It doesn't get up and foil like all the other AC72s. It was obviously different to all the other boats," Murray said of Artemis' catamaran. "The design and structural concept is undertaken by the teams, and the reward and

risk is on the teams."

Artemis' previously suffered a damaged sail and earlier this year made modifications to the yacht after performing poorly compared to Oracle's team in San Francisco Bay.

While Artemis and Oracle Team USA, backed by Oracle Corp chief executive and billionaire Larry Ellison, have been sailing the boats in San Francisco Bay for months, other teams are only just establishing the bases they will use as they practice and compete through the series of races that begins in July and goes into September.

– Reuters



America's Cup Regatta racing director Iain Murray. Photo: Reuters

Aussies big winners at Top of Gulf

WITH a large contingent taking part across the 250 strong fleet, Australian boats were the big winners at this year's ninth edition of the Top of the Gulf Regatta.

Competing for the prestigious Coronation Cup were four Australian boats in the 16-strong class with two Aussie crews and one from Hong Kong battling it out at the top. In the end it was consistency and four first-place finishes over the series by Australia's Gary McNally and his crew on Black Betty that made the difference, with them being crowned 2013 Coronation Cup champions.

They were pushed hard by another Australian crew on Problem Child, skippered by Brian McMaster who finished second overall ahead of Andrew Moore's Tigrana in third.

In IRC Racing 2, it was Rolex Sydney to Hobart regular Matt Allen and his crew on Ichiban, who scored six firsts from seven races to be the clear winner, and beat local favorites Royal Thai Navy 1, skippered by Wiwat Poonpat who finished

second overall. Souy 1 was third.

Singapore Management University had three teams racing this year – two in the Platu class and one in IRC Racing 3 – and it was Hi Jinks, skippered by Peiquan Chung, in the latter that finished the Regatta undefeated and were crowned class champion. Second place went to the all-Thai team on Sansiri Ooh La La skippered by Patinyakorn Buranrom, and third to Sadunori Osada's Tai Two.

In IRC Racing 1 it was another Singapore boat, Foxy Lady, skippered by Bill Bremner, that placed second on the last day, which was enough to secure the overall class win, with Thai team Wan Marang, skippered by Kevin Whitcraft, in second and David Ross's KukuKERchu in third.

David Liddell's Miss Saigon won the Ocean Multihulls class with a first in the last race to place first overall. Sonic, skippered by Kirati Assakul finished second and Scott Galle's Black Swan in third.

– The Nation



Action from the ninth edition of the Top of the Gulf Regatta. Photo: The Nation

Thai girls handed tough volleyball draw

HOSTS Thailand have been handed a tough draw for the F d ration Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) Girls' under-18 Volleyball World Championship from July 26 to August 4 in Nakhon Ratchasima.

Thailand has hosted the biennial tournament of the world's top 16 teams twice, finishing fifth in 1997 in Chiang Mai and seventh in Nakhon Ratchasima in 2009.

Nakhon Ratchasima is again hosting this year, with last week's draw for the 20-team group phase placing hosts Thailand in Pool A along with European champs Poland, Egypt, the under-18 Pan-Am Cup winners Puerto Rico and world No 16 Tunisia.

Pool B has Asian powerhouses and three-time world champs China, Asian champs Japan, and Serbia, Argentina and Greece.

Brazil – also three-time world champions – line up in Pool C along with the USA, Dominican Republic, Algeria and Slovenia, while Italy joined title-holders Turkey, Peru, Mexico and Taiwan in Pool D.

Thailand and Egypt play the curtain-raiser on July 26 at Chartchai Gym. The top four teams in each group will advance to the knock-out second round.

"Two teams in our pool are Africans, who we can match in terms of quality and height. Pool B is perhaps the toughest draw. I'm confident that, playing at home and with lengthy preparation, we should cruise through to the second round," said Thailand's head coach Apichart Kongsawat.

"Before this world meet we will look to sharpen our skills against South American



Thailand's female volleyball team at an earlier event. Photo: Gazette file

teams in an invitational tournament in Peru."

Nakhon Ratchasima Governor Vinai Buapradit confirmed the city's readiness for hosting the world's best junior teams.

"We are greatly honored to host the World Championship and I would like to confirm that we are ready for the tournament," he said.

– The Nation

Thailand's Ratchanok sets sights on top 3

BADMINTON'S world number five, Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon, has reset her sights for 2013, aiming to break into the world top three by the end of the year.

The 18-year-old fulfilled her initial goal with a Super Series win in New Delhi two weeks ago that catapulted her to a career high number five. But now she has recalibrated her ambitions, breaking in to the world's top three her first target before she launches an assault on the world number one spot.

"I had hoped to finish the year in the top five, but I have already made it. So the next goal is to be in the top three," said the three-time World Junior champion.

Ratchanok said her training program at the Ban Thong Yord Badminton Academy, under the supervision of manager Kamala Thongkorn, had been intensified in a bid to strengthen her muscles for the new challenges she has set herself.

"Recently I have been focusing on the proper breathing technique as well as weight training that should cut down my injuries. I have also been working



Ratchanok Intanon will next play in the World Mixed Team Sudirman Cup in Kuala Lumpur on May 19. Photo: Sunnywan

on mental conditioning because I have a tendency to make mistakes on crucial points or when I get a big lead. It's something I have to fix," said Ratchanok, who has three coaches – technical adviser Pattharapol Ngernsrisuk, fitness coach Xie Zhi Hua, and all-rounder Liu Ying Gang.

Ratchanok, the second Thai after Charoen Wattanasil in 1960 to reach the final at the All England

Championships, will next play in the World Mixed Team Sudirman Cup in Kuala Lumpur on May 19, where Thailand face Hong Kong in their opening tie in Group B, which also features South Korea. She will then prepare for the Thailand Open in early June, before entering two events, in Indonesia and Singapore.

Meanwhile, her Ban Thong Yord training academy has announced a

multimillion baht sponsorship deal with Boonrawd Brewery in a project to produce the first world number one from Thailand.

Rangsarit Luxitanonda vice president of Singha Corp, said his company believed in the potential of the private academy.

"Our financial support will be used to give our young badminton players experience in international tournaments," said Rangsarit.

The academy currently boasts four national players, with Ratchanok, doubles specialists Sudket Prapakamol, Songphon Anugritayawon, and 2010 World Youth Olympics gold medalist Pisit Poodchalat.

A dozen young players, including Ratchanok and 2012 Thailand Open doubles champion Narissapat Lam, are part of the academy's program. Kamala, also owner of the academy, expects two youngsters at the facility – 14-year-old Pracharapol Nipornram and 12-year-old Pattharasuda Chaiyawan – to follow Ratchanok onto the world stage.

– The Nation



Singha Corp vice president Rangsarit Luxitanonda (center). Photo: The Nation

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Phuket FC coach rumored to quit

RUMORS circulated online earlier this week indicating that Phuket FC's head coach, Paniphol Kerdyam feared he would lose his job and that his fate would be decided at a club board meeting.

In one Thai language report by *Phuket Andaman News*, Paniphol was quoted: "Recently the team's results have not been good enough and that has made us fall down from the top three in the league table. We are currently five points from the top team."

"We have not won in our last three games of the league and the last game we played against Ayutthaya FC finished a 1-1 stalemate that made us fall down to fifth [see match report on page 51]," he allegedly said.

Phuket FC started the season

as one of the favorites to gain promotion to the Thai Premier League (TPL) but the team has been under-performing of late. But with only 10 games of the Yamaha League 1 season played so far, the club still has time to catch the current league leaders.

If Paniphol does depart, the Islanders' fans could be in for a repeat of the managerial merry-go-round of last season when the club went through three different managers and finished one place above relegation.

Paniphol allegedly continued to explain what he feels will happen this week regarding his job:

"However, this week I will have discussion with the board in a meeting to find ways to improve the team. I know now Phuket

FC's fan club is disappointed with the team's results," he said.

"I'm ready to quit the team if the board have a plan to change coaches. I think that there is high competition in Thai Yamaha League One and every team has many good players. Therefore, this is not the fault of players or any one because every one does their best in the season."

"If the board give me a chance again, I promise I will do everything to get the fan's faith back and I will bring success to the team," he said.

When the *Phuket Gazette* contacted Phuket FC, a spokesperson quickly denied the rumor and said no boardroom meeting was scheduled to discuss Paniphol's future this week. — *Phuket Gazette*



Pamuk Achariyachai, president of Phuket FC.



Paniphol Kerdyam. Photos: Phuket FC Facebook.

Laguna win the JLL Hotels cricket league



IT WAS a much anticipated league final between Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) Hotels Patong and Laguna on Sunday May 12, at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG).

In a thrilling match, Laguna got off to a terrible start, but they dug deep to post a defendable total of 165 runs against a very slick Patong bowling and fielding display.

Patong appeared to be cruising to a comfortable victory with only three wickets down and only 34 runs required to reach their target. With Patong on the brink of victory and Laguna looking like they would not be able to defend their title, the Laguna side, utilizing their opening pace man Sami Ullah, ripped the heart out of Patong's innings with one of the best displays of pace bowling seen at the ACG. In just two overs Sami decimated Patong's batsmen, picking up five wickets for just six runs and creating the platform for a stunning victory for the defending champions.

For an unfortunate and disappointed Patong side, who have been consistent all season, their last seven wickets fell for just nine runs, all out for 141 runs, 24 runs short of the target. For the Laguna side, many of whom had their heads hanging low for much of the day, the victory was probably their sweetest yet.

After winning the toss, Patong elected to put Laguna into bat knowing the conditions would prove difficult for batsmen. Their decision paid immediate dividends when Laguna captain Stuart Reading (2) was clean bowled by Kishor Jhagtar in the very first

over. Fellow opener Val Guiraud (1) also fell victim to Jhagtar in his very next over and with two wickets down for only five runs, Laguna looked like capitulating.

However, Andrew Cole (11) mistimed a shot and was caught and bowled by Dave Watson. When Sameer Khan (7) came to the crease, he looked in good touch and sought to attack the bowlers, hitting Jhagtar towards the clubhouse at deep mid-wicket for what looked like a certain boundary. However, Richard Desmond plucked the ball one-handed in mid-air while simultaneously running backwards towards the boundary to pull off the catch of the season.

Laguna were now looking to at least make a contest of the final by not being bowled out for less than 100 runs. It was ultimately a 94 run partnership between Shoeib Mushtaq (44) and Michael Ayling (36) that restored some pride to the Laguna innings, taking the total along to 135 before Ayling fell to another sharp catch from Desmond.

In the following over, Laguna lost another two wickets including that of Mushtaq and at 8 for 143, they were simply looking to bat out the remaining overs to post a more defendable total. Roly Cooper (18 not out) provided a glimmer of hope playing aggressively, including a pull shot for six, but eventually he ran out of batting partners with the score on 165 runs.

Pick of the bowlers for Patong

were Kishor Jhagtar (3 for 26), Dave Watson (2 for 22) and Richard Desmond (2 for 29).

After the lunch break, and in improving conditions, the Patong side began their run chase in swift fashion, assisted by some wayward bowling by Sami Ullah in his first two over spell.



Laguna Cricket Club 2013 champions.

With Patong already reaching 30 without loss after just four overs, it was time for a bowling change from pace to slow in an effort to stem the easy flow of runs. This proved successful when Mike Khan (9) was dismissed in the 5th over with the score on 36. Laguna were back in the hunt when they struck again capturing the wicket of Paddy Morton (1).

Opener Seemant Raju (23) and Dave Watson (36) then combined and seemed to be taking it all in their stride, working the ball around the ground to accumulate a steady flow of runs until Raju finally fell after a 54 run partnership with three wickets down for 91 runs. Neil Quail then joined Watson at the crease and continued along in much the same fashion. At the 20 over drinks break, Patong headed back to the clubhouse with 105 runs on

the scoreboard, seven wickets in hand, and 61 runs required from 15 overs, a required run-rate of just four runs per over.

After such a wayward opening spell, the pace attack of Sami Ullah and Val Guiraud were re-introduced. Watson and Quail continued on their way until Ullah made the breakthrough in the 25th over, taking out Quail's middle stump with the score on 132. At this stage there was no reason to panic, as Patong still had capable batsmen in hand and only 34 runs required for victory from 10 overs.

However, two balls later, Ullah struck again when Watson skied a high ball which was well taken by Faisal Mir at mid-off. With five wickets now down, the Laguna side could see a glimmer of hope, albeit very slim. Ullah's next over proved to be the decisive match-winning performance. Steaming into captain Anthony Van Blerk (1), he beat him with a cracker of a ball uprooting middle stump. He then followed this up three balls later, sending Pao Suttiprapha's middle stump tumbling end-over-end. Not content with this, on the last ball of his over, he trapped Richard Desmond in front and the Patong innings had been decimated to eight wickets down for 135 runs.

Manish Sadarangani (5 not out), who had been watching this from the non-strikers end since coming to the crease after the fall of Quail, was in a state of shock, like many others who had

witnessed the event. With him being the last of the recognized batsmen, the pressure was mounting to get the few remaining runs required for victory. However, Sameer Khan, took his opportunity when Soton Alamin (0) took strike and he trapped him lbw just one run later with the score on 136 in the 30th over. With 30 runs required and just one wicket remaining the balance of power was now well and truly with Laguna. Khan eventually mopped up the innings and a thrilling victory in his next over when he took the last wicket of Kishor Jhagtar (1), and incredibly, Patong were all out for 141 runs.

Pick of the bowlers for Laguna were Sami Ullah (5 for 31), Sameer Khan (2 for 19) and Shoeib Mushtaq (2 for 29).

In addition to the trophy presentations to the finalists, the Phuket Cricket Group (PCG) presentations took place with Craig Murphy (The Village) winning the MVP and best bowler awards, Ali Khan (Jabudays) won the best batsman, and the 'spirit of cricket' award went to John King for his outstanding contribution to the development of cricket in Phuket, as both an umpire and coach of the PCG Youth Academy.

— *Phuket Gazette*

After a short break, the cricketing action will resume at the ACG with the T20 league scheduled to kick off in July. Anyone interested in playing or fielding a team should email clubaffairs@phuketcricketgroup.com



Dudu shows his respect.



Phuket FC starting 11 vs Ayutthaya.



Ayutthaya's Khongchuai scores.



Sakareya attempts to block a shot.



Fans. Photos: Phuket FC Facebook



Phuket defender Sato (right).

Islanders hold warriors

By Andrew Scott

PHUKET failed to beat Ayutthaya in their Yamaha League One (YL1) away game on Saturday. The 1-1 draw dropped Phuket down to 6th in the table, five points behind top of the table Air Force United. Ayutthaya are third from bottom after 10 games.

The home team took the lead in the 36th minute after Phuket's keeper was easily beaten at his near post by a rising shot from 10 yards by Watcharaphong Khongchuai.

Phuket equalized just before half time when Ayutthaya's keeper palmed Dudu's 30 yard freekick into the net.

Ayutthaya should have won the game in the 94th minute but their player dragged his shot from the edge of the six yard box wide of the far post.

Phuket have failed to win in their last three games, one loss and two draws. Their next game is against second from bottom Rayong FC on May 18 at Surakul Stadium.

To get their push for promotion up and running the Islanders need a victory against a Rayong team that has not won a game all season.

Last weekend's results.

May 11

Rayong United 0 – 0 TTM FC

Sriracha FC 0 – 2 Korat

Trat FC 1 - 2 Air Force United

Saraburi FC 1 – 1 Nakhon Pathom

May 12

Singhtarua FC 4 – 2 Rayong FC

BBCU FC 1 – 2 Bangkok FC

Khon Kaen FC 2 – 1 Krabi FC

Siam Navy FC 1 – 1 PTT Rayong

YAMAHA LEAGUE ONE FIXTURES

SATURDAY, 18 MAY 2013 17:00

Bangkok FC **VS** Sriracha FC

SATURDAY, 18 MAY 2013 18:00

Air Force Utd **VS** Saraburi FC

PTT Rayong FC **VS** Khon Kaen FC

Krabi FC **VS** Singhtarua FC

SUNDAY, 19 MAY 2013 16:00

TTM FC **VS** BBCU FC

Nakhon Pathom **VS** Rayong Utd

SUNDAY, 19 MAY 2013 18:00

Ayutthaya FC **VS** Trat FC

SUNDAY, 19 MAY 2013 18:30

Korat FC **VS** Siam Navy FC

YAMAHA LEAGUE ONE TABLE

| | TEAM | P | GD | PTS |
|----|----------------|----|----|-----|
| 1 | Air Force Utd. | 10 | 7 | 22 |
| 2 | PTT Rayong | 10 | 7 | 20 |
| 3 | Singhtarua FC | 10 | 5 | 20 |
| 4 | Bangkok FC | 10 | 2 | 18 |
| 5 | BBCU FC | 10 | 4 | 17 |
| 6 | Phuket | 10 | 4 | 17 |
| 7 | Krabi FC | 10 | 2 | 14 |
| 8 | Korat FC | 10 | 1 | 14 |
| 9 | Saraburi | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| 10 | Trat FC | 10 | -1 | 12 |
| 11 | Siam Navy | 10 | -1 | 11 |
| 12 | Nakhon Pathom | 10 | -2 | 11 |
| 13 | Si Racha | 10 | -3 | 11 |
| 14 | Khon kaen | 10 | -4 | 10 |
| 15 | Rayong Utd. | 10 | -1 | 9 |
| 16 | Ayutthaya FC | 10 | -7 | 7 |
| 17 | Rayong FC | 10 | -7 | 5 |
| 18 | TTM FC | 10 | -8 | 5 |

Phuket link up with Cruzeiro

PRAMUK Achariyachai, president of Phuket FC, announced that the club will sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with famous Brazilian club Cruzeiro Esporte Club. The bilateral agreement means Phuket and Cruzeiro will be able to exchange players.

The Islanders currently have two Brazilians, Luis 'Dudu' Purcino and Juninho, in their squad.

Pramuk is looking to use the talent at Cruzeros disposal to help Phuket gain promotion to the Thai Premier League (TPL).

"The team accepted the offer

and Cruzeiro will come to Phuket to sign the agreement next week.

"It is a good news for Phuket FC and I hope that everything will be fine"

"If this agreement signing is successful, there will be the opportunity to change football players with each other"

"It is a good chance to make Phuket FC stronger and we expect our team will get two players from Cruzeiro in the second half of season" he said.

Pramuk is hoping to get a striker and a midfielder.

Cruzeiro are one of the only five

clubs to have never been relegated from Brazil's top league, along with Santos, Sao Paulo, Flamengo and Internacional.

The club has an illustrious list of former players, including Colombian midfielder Freddy Rincon, former Brazil goalkeeper Dida, Brazilian midfielder Rivaldo, Brazilian legend Jairzinho and Brazilian striker Ronaldo, who started his professional career at Cruzeiro.

The team finished 9th last season in Brazil's Serie A and the new season starts May 26.

– Andrew Scott

YAMAHA LEAGUE ONE
MAY 18

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