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‘THE RESCUERS ACTED SWIFTLY AND VALIANTLY’ Freak accident sinks dive boat

■ Similan ship's propeller ripped out by sea debris

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THE freak accident that sank a liveaboard dive boat to a depth of 75 meters just outside the Similan National Park was unavoidable, said the Regional Marine Office chief this week.

MV *The Flying Carpet* based out of Ranong and operated by Aladdin Dive Safari had its propeller partially ripped out between the popular dive destinations of Koh Bon and Koh Tachai on January 29. All on board were safely rescued.

"We got a rope in the propeller that actually broke the propeller off, not all the way, but that's why water came inside the boat too [fast] to pump it out," reported the company manager, who asked to be identified only as Frank.

Accidents like this are nearly impossible to prevent, noted Wichai Khamkong, Director of the Marine Department's Region 5 Office.

"It is not easy to see rope or..."



Continued on Page 6

Everyone was rescued from the liveaboard as it rapidly sank below the surface. Photo: Marine Office

Visa-run van driver takes off with cash

MALAYSIAN police have arrested the visa-run driver who took off at the border with about 37,000 baht in cash, leaving a large group of expats and tourists sitting in an idling van for nearly five hours.

Full story Page 8

Yachties fight execution of boat-stay rule

The yachting and marine industries on the island have launched a petition calling for customs officials to repeal a new regulation which drastically limits boat stays, noting that berth contracts are being cancelled, potentially retarding growth.

Phuket Customs Director Nanthita Sririkub admitted that the regulation has been enforced since January 7.

Full story Page 3

Health hazard canal getting a B370mn fix

SEVERAL projects targeting wastewater runoff, including two treatment plants, are to be completed by 2015 to once and for all rid the Bang Tao Canal of its dangerously soiled water.

Full story Page 5



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This Week



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Phuket International Hospital's 800mn baht expansion. **Page 13**



Business
Governor to bolster the island's pineapple industry. **Page 17**



Events
This Friday is the night of love, and also one of light. **Page 34**



People
'World's Happiest Man' to share his secrets in Phuket talk. **Page 39**



Education
A baker that can bake anything. Crust: a top-notch pizzeria. **Page 40**



Sport
Davis Cup with Hong Kong vs Thailand in Phuket. **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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Media blackout ordered in island execution case

By Gazette Reporters

MOSHE David was in court on Monday for the execution of Hungarian businessman Peter Reisz, whose body was found with hands bound in a rubber plantation on Phuket in 2012.

The judge ordered a media blackout on reporting evidence presented at the case, which started at 2pm at Phuket Provincial Court.

The judge asked for the blackout to avoid the possibility of presented evidence affecting the testimony of other witnesses.

Police arrested the Israeli-Hungarian dual national at a shopping mall in Bangkok in December 2012.

Mr David confessed to killing Mr Reisz in a fit of rage and dumping the body. However, he denied the charge of murder.

The trial is set to continue on February 24.

In a separate case, Moshe David is suspected of murdering Hungarian billionaire Laszlo Csepai, 39. The remains of Mr Csepai, who had been missing



Moshe David being led by police during the crime re-enactment.

since February 2011, were found in the basement of a villa owned by Mr David.

A key witness in that case is serving prison time in Hungary.

The witness says he saw Mr David murder Mr Csepai and bury the body, confirmed Surat Thani Provincial Police Commander Kiattipong Khaosum-ang.

Boy dies after chasing kite into sea

A BOY died after being pulled unconscious from the sea in northern Phuket on Sunday.

Noppadol Kerdsin, 9, had been flying a kite on Bang Duk Beach at Tah Maphrao Bay with friends when the line snapped and his kite fell into the sea.

Noppadol, who could swim, went into the water to retrieve it, but was repeatedly hit by waves caused by a passing boat, witnesses told police.

"When his friends saw he was in trouble they



Noppadol's mother (left) and nanny accompanied the body.

shouted for help from nearby fishermen, who took about 10 minutes to rescue the boy," said Lt Suporn Muangkhai of the Thalang Police.

Rescue workers rushed him to Thalang Hospital, but doctors were unable to save him.

Thalang Police were notified of his death at about 2:45pm and rescue workers returned Noppadol's body to his village for funeral services.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

Bar owner takes deadly stumble

AN AUSTRALIAN expat fell down a flight of stairs to his death last Thursday after a night spent at his bar in Patong.

Adin Medzic, 47, had allegedly been drinking at his bar in the OTOP Market since 7pm on Wednesday.

He and his Thai partner, Fon Somwong, left together after the bar closed, Maj Weerapong Raktito of the Patong Police said.

"We were told that once the pair arrived home, Mr Medzic lost his balance and fell down the stairs, hitting his head," Maj Weerapong said.

"At about 1:50am, Ms Fon called 191 for help. Patong Hospital sent an ambulance to pick up Mr Medzic from the Chutima Apartments, but it was too late to save him."

Mr Medzic was pronounced dead on arrival at Patong Hospital at about 2:10am.

— Chutharat Plerin



Adin Medzic.
Photo: Facebook

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Yachties petition boat-stay rules

By Saran Mittrarat

THE yachting and marine industry in Phuket has launched a petition calling for Customs officials to repeal the new regulation limiting boat stays in Thailand to a maximum of two months during any one visit.

The news comes as contracts for berths at Phuket marinas for six months or longer are being cancelled.

"Some boats in Phuket are undergoing long-term repairs and the owner is not in the country," one yacht services representative told the *Gazette*.

"When repairs are complete, the owner will have to pay overstay fees of 1,000 baht per day up to a maximum of 10,000 baht.

"Many boats are being taken to Langkawi, where there is no tax and they can stay as long as they want."

The petition has been sent for signature to at least 21 yacht and marine services companies on the island.

Phuket Customs Director Nanthita Sririkub confirmed that the regulation has been in force since January 7.



Phuket Customs Director Nanthita Sririkub confirmed that new regulations are now in force. Photo: Gazette File

The admission from Ms Nanthita flies in the face of her statement on January 9 that the new rule would not be enforced in Phuket until she received clarification from her superiors in Bangkok.

"The regulation has been introduced... We have to follow our orders from Bangkok, which

means we are already using the new regulation for permits-to-stay for foreign boats entering Thailand," Ms Nanthita confirmed.

Ms Nanthita declined to comment further on the issue, other than to point out that she has met with representatives from Phuket's marine and yachting industry, who unanimously oppose

the new restriction.

Ms Nanthita also sent a request to Bangkok asking her superiors to reconsider the drastic reduction in boat-stay periods.

"We asked [Thai Customs officials in Bangkok] to allow us to continue using the previous regulation while we waited for their decision, but the protests in

Bangkok forced our head office to close. We are still waiting for their official response," she explained.

One Phuket Customs official warned that the initial permit-to-stay for a boat might be, in some cases, as short as one month.

"It depends if the owner is accompanying the boat, or if it is just the captain and crew," said the official – who declined to be named in this report, saying that he did not have the authority to confirm the new rule or how it would be applied.

"We can be flexible in issuing permits-to-stay. We will consider each application case by case."

The new rule has stirred outrage throughout Phuket's yachting and marine industry.

"We were first told about the new rule on January 7, and that was when they [Customs officials] had already started enforcing it," a representative from one local yachting company told the *Gazette*.

"The new regulation is not good for yachts coming to Phuket. We offered our suggestions on January 15. We can only hope they will revert to the previous rules."

Doctors unable to save girl pulled from water

DOCTORS were unable to save 12-year-old Varissara Thongkham who was pulled unconscious from the bottom of the sea at Nai Harn Beach on January 31.

"She arrived at about 3pm in critical condition," Vachira Phuket Emergency Medical Service nurse Ladda Thongtan told the *Gazette*.

"She was pronounced dead at about 4pm," a hospital staffer said the next day.

"We did our best to save her, but it was too late."

Eyewitnesses to the drowning said Nong Varissara was playing in the 2-meter deep water just past the mouth of the lagoon with a group of children.

Three of the children were quickly saved, but Nong Varissara disappeared underwater.

After rescuers were able to pull her out, Nong Varissara was given



Signs warn swimmers to be safe at Nai Harn. Photo: Mark Donnithorne

CPR continuously for the 10 minutes it took an ambulance to arrive, said Nai Harn chief life-guard Julia Nontree.

Nong Varissara's family is preparing funeral arrangements, said mortuary officer Prapan Sriharun.

– Irfan Jamdukor

PACC targets officer for human trafficking

THE Public-sector Anti Corruption Commission (PACC) Region 8 is awaiting final approval from Bangkok to start an investigation into a Phang Nga police officer accused of trafficking Rohingya women more than eight months ago.

The charges against the officer, Sen Sgt Maj Weerayuth Feuangfu, stem from the case of a Rohingya woman who reported that she was repeatedly raped after being smuggled out of a

refugee shelter in Phang Nga on May 27, 2012.

Sgt Weerayuth has already been found guilty of helping illegal immigrants enter the country, a crime for which he received a suspended sentence.

Despite previous reports that he had been discharged from the Royal Thai Police, the *Gazette* learned last week that he had only been suspended, and remains suspended as the PACC investigates.

A former employee of Sgt

Weerayuth's, Koreemura Ramahatu, is also facing charges of human trafficking, in addition to charges of raping the woman from the shelter. He is due to be sentenced on February 26.

Sgt Weerayuth's involvement in the case began when he reported discovering the alleged rape victim and her daughters by the side of the road. That event led to the arrest of Mr Koreemura and shortly thereafter, Sgt Weerayuth himself.

– Saran Mittrarat

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Thao Srisoonthorn. Photo: PPAO

'Nine Heroes' stand tall at Victory Field

THE long-awaited nine bronze statues of important figures in Phuket's history were officially installed at Thalang Victory Memorial Field on January 30.

Governor Maitri Inthasut led a blessing ceremony at Saphan Hin the night before the installation to welcome the Nine Heroes.

The statues, each about 2.5 meters tall and cast in bronze, together cost 26 million baht.

"These statues will become a tourist attraction, where visitors can learn about Phuket's historical victory," Gov Maitri noted.

A further 24mn baht will be spent on developing the site.

— Chutharat Plerin

Officials shift down on scope of Patong bus ban

By Irfarn Jamdukor

THE Patong Hill bus ban, set to begin by the end of February, will bar buses and large trucks from crossing Phuket's most infamous hill only from 6am to 9am and 4pm to 7pm.

"We will not prevent buses from using the hill to enter Patong all day, just during rush hours," explained Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) Chief Terayout Prasertphol.

"We are especially concerned about bus brake failure when there is a large volume of traffic on the road."

Signs detailing the prohibited large vehicle access times will be set at the bottom of the hill in Kathu, said Mr Terayout.

"Trucks with more than six wheels and buses will have to use alternate routes via the Karon and Kamala Hills," he added.

The ban was originally planned



A bus begins the steep descent from Patong Hill. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

to start within two weeks of January 9.

"Further meetings were delayed when protesters closed government buildings throughout the island," said Mr Terayout.

"We expect to hold another

meeting by mid-February to appoint an enforcement officer, and for the enforcement to begin as soon as possible after that."

The move to prohibit heavy vehicles from using the hill road was one of nine recommendations

made by the PLTO to Phuket Governor Maitri Inthasut in the aftermath of a horrific tour bus crash on Patong Hill on December 29. Two people were killed and 26 tourists injured.

Brake failure was cited as the cause of the accident.

The suggestion to ban heavy vehicles from the hill entirely came under fire when local experts pointed out that tour buses would still have to overcome large hills on the coastal roads in order to reach Patong.

Since then, transport officials have been struggling to come up with a solution that would make traversing the hill safer and be acceptable to local residents and officials.

Have your say in the latest Phuket Gazette online poll: "What is the best way to prevent further deadly bus accidents on Patong Hill?" Visit PhuketGazette.net

Kayaking couple found alive on holiday island

A CHINESE couple whose rented kayak was swamped by large waves off Ao Nang, Krabi, late in the afternoon on January 29 were found safe and well the next morning.

Tourists Li Qi Ying, a 40-year-old businessman and his 28-year-old wife, Li Bei, were paddling with a friend when a large wave swamped the couple's kayak, dumping the pair into the sea.

"We were paddling out to an island [Koh Poda] about five kilometers from Tonsai Bay," the friend, Guo Xiao, said.

"I tried to help, but the waves were too big, so I raced back to the beach to call for help."

Thankfully, they were wearing life jackets, he added.

Lt Col Autthapong Saenjaiwut of the Krabi Tourist Police said his officers were notified of the incident just before 6pm.

"We spent the whole night look-



Li Qi Ying and his wife Li Bei were found alive and well on Poda Island. Photo: Handout / Krabi Marine Police

ing for them, with the Royal Thai Navy, Marine Police and local rescue teams joining the search," he said.

"They were found on Poda Island at 9am [January 30], with their kayak. They had no injuries, but they looked very tired."

The couple were taken to Krabi Hospital to recover from their ordeal.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Canal water cured by 2015

Over 355 million baht to be paid for wastewater-infrastructure development

By Irfan Jamdukor

A MULTITUDE of infrastructure projects designed to stifle the stench and improve the quality of water being released from the Bang Tao Canal into the ocean are about 30 to 40 per cent complete, Cherng Talay Administrative Organization officer (Palad) Krichanut Suphantakit has confirmed.

The projects include two wastewater treatment plants: one in Bang Tao and one in Surin, 32 wastewater pipes, and seven wastewater pump stations, constructed at a cost of 355 million baht.

An additional 15mn baht will be used to build a retaining wall on the canal; construction is due to start in March.

The rapid progress on the projects follows the public exposure of dirty canal water that caused a rash of health problems for tourists and local boatmen, some of whom were hospitalized for blood infections early last year.

"The wall and sewage pipes will combat three main issues: coastal

erosion, flooding and the release of untreated water from residences and hotels," Governor Maitri Inthusut said during an inspection of the retaining wall on January 17.

"Once finished, hotels and residences will have to release wastewater into the new system."

Several warnings were issued last year about the damage caused by untreated wastewater directly entering the canal and going from there into the sea.

Some of the new wastewater pipes will run parallel to the Bang Tao Canal and directly to the wastewater treatment plant being built on Bang Tao Road, about 200 meters away from Sunwing Resort and Spa, Mr Krichanut explained. The plant in Surin will be built on Surin Soi 8.

"These plants are smaller than the one in Patong, but they will use the same water-treatment process," Mr Krichanut said, adding that residents will be able to connect to the wastewater lines free of charge.

The water treatment projects,

'This issue has affected villagers for too long. We will be happy when we can see clean water again, like in the past'

— Piyawan Manajit, local villager



Governor Maitri Inthusut (orange shirt) and Cherng Talay Administrative Organization President Ma-ann Samran inspect the Bang Tao Canal, which has been polluted with wastewater over the years.

which started on August 8, 2012, are due to finish on August 8, 2015.

"Having clean water will not only solve the health problems lo-

cals have faced, but also improve the image of the area for tourists," Mr Krichanut said.

Bang Tao local Piyawan

Manajit, 35, said "This issue has affected villagers for too long. We will be happy when we can see clean water again, like in the past."



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Sinking of dive boat ranked 'unavoidable'

From page 1

...other debris in the sea that might damage a boat," he said.

Shortly after the news of the ship's rapid sinking broke in the Swedish tabloid *Aftonbladet*, allegations of the ship not being fit for sea, registered or even insured began to spread.

Australian news outlet News.com.au ran the headline: "Dramatic video footage as an illegally operating boat sinks in Thailand." The agency cited a local Phuket news source.

Mr Wichai set the record straight on Tuesday.

"The accident had nothing to do with the condition of the boat or where it was operating. It was legally registered with state insurance and not overloaded," he confirmed.

"The captain and crew of the rescuing boat MV *Peter Pan* acted valiantly and swiftly in their rescue of everyone on board the sinking ship.

"What they did was very impressive."

A total of 13 people, including the ship's captain and the crew, were rescued.

The Office Manager of the Similan Seven Sea Club, which owns the *Peter Pan*, confirmed that his ship and staff took part in the rescue of those on board *The Flying Carpet*. However, he declined to comment further on the incident.

There will be no attempt to salvage the 19.2m wooden *Flying Carpet* from the depths, confirmed Frank.

Meanwhile, Mr Wichai said his officers would maintain their regular inspections to ensure local tour boats were seaworthy.

Foreigner dies after ultralight plunges from the sky

A FOREIGN man died after his ultralight flying boat fell from the sky off the east coast of southern Phuket on Wednesday afternoon.

Staff at a nearby resort in Rawai who witnessed the accident reported hearing an explosion from the machine's engine before watching in horror as the craft plummeted into the water about 500 meters from the shore.

Resort staff scrambled a boat to recover the pilot from the crash site.

Witnesses reported that the man was unconscious when he was pulled from the water. Attempts to revive him on the beach were unsuccessful.

The man's identity had yet to be confirmed at the time of going to press. Initial reports said the man's given name was "George".

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



Resort staff scrambled to recover the foreigner from the crash site.

Wildlife vendors netted for selling turtle, coral jewelry

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

WILDLIFE preservation officers and Marine Police arrested three people and seized more than 300 items of jewelry made from pieces of coral and from the shells of the endangered Hawksbill turtle at the Wat Chalong Fair on Tuesday night.

Tanet Munnoy, chief of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) Phuket office, led the raid after his office received a tip-off from people visiting the fair, held each year to coincide with Chinese New Year.

Chaluay Wongmuda, 39, was caught with 26 bracelets made from Hawksbill turtle shells and 68 bracelets, two necklaces and 11 rings made from coral.

Manus Suebsot, 31, was caught selling 115 bracelets and one necklace made from coral, and Mayura Suebsot, 22, was arrested with 114 bracelets and two necklaces made from coral, and two pieces of decorative coral.



Chaluay Wongmuda, 39, was caught in possession of 26 bracelets made from Hawksbill turtle shells and 81 decorative items made from coral.

The street value of the items was estimated at more than 200,000 baht.

"We were told that a lot of protected wildlife products were

being sold at the fair, and that there were many more than the three vendors we caught, but we failed to find any others last night," said Mr Tanet on Wednesday.

"They might have run away when they saw officers arriving. We plan to inspect the fair again tonight [Wednesday]."

Some people believe that ornaments made from black polished coral are lucky, he explained.

"But it takes so long to grow. Some corals grow only about 5mm a year," Mr Tanet said.

Items made from Hawksbill turtle shells are particularly sought after. "These turtles are harvested for their beautiful shells to make a range of small decorative items," Mr Tanet lamented.

"Although local conservation efforts have increased in the past few years, Hawksbill numbers have been decreasing and they are close to extinction."

The vendors were taken to Chalong Police Station and charged with illegal trading in protected wildlife species.

"The penalty is four years in prison, a fine of up to 40,000 baht or both," Lt Col Panya Chaichana of the Phuket Marine Police said.

Malaysia Airlines marks new Krabi-Kuala Lumpur flights

MALAYSIA Airlines flight MH770 made its inaugural flight from Kuala Lumpur to Krabi on Monday, initiating a service operating four times a week between the two destinations.

The new B737-800 flights operate on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, departing from Kuala Lumpur at 2:55pm (local time in Malaysia) and departing from Krabi at 5:20pm (local time).

"Last year, more than 90,000 tourists from Malaysia visited Krabi," said Wiyada Srirangkul, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand Krabi office.

"We also have two flights a day from Kuala Lumpur to Krabi with Air Asia. The new Malaysia Airlines flights give Malaysian visitors more options for visiting Krabi and definitely support tourism here."

Krabi is a popular holiday spot for Malaysians, said Ahmad Jauhari Yahya, Malaysia Airlines



The welcome party at Krabi International Airport. Photo: PR Dept group chief executive officer.

"This will also be a gateway for our guests to connect... with other destinations served by Malaysia Airlines as well as oneworld [travel alliance] routes," he said.

Ms Wiyada noted that tourism in Krabi was robust despite the protests in Bangkok.

"Krabi has 100 per cent hotel occupancy in four- and five-star hotels. For all hotels, occupancy is at 85 per cent," she said.

— Chutharat Plerin

EC eyes alcohol ban for senate term elections

THE Election Commission of Thailand this week revealed that a nationwide ban on the sale of alcohol is likely to be called into effect on March 30.

The ban would be enforced to make way for the regular senatorial elections.

Election Commission Secretary-General Puchong Nutrawong explained on Monday that the current term for senators will expire on March 3.

The regular end of term for Thailand's Upper House will necessitate another national election, this time for the 76 elected members of the Senate.

The EC is considering setting March 4-8 as the registration period for candidates, ahead of national senatorial polls slated for March 30, Mr Puchong said.

— Phuket Gazette

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One-stop for yachts opens

By Saran Mitrarat

PHUKET'S one-stop center for arriving yachts is scheduled to be open for business this weekend.

The opening of the facility, on Chalong Pier, was initially set for 2012, then delayed until 2015 before being moved forward.

"We are opening now for financial reasons," Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) President Paiboon Upatising said.

"We signed a three-year contract in July 2013 to rent out the building, but have not been able to generate rental income since then. So we pushed to have the building open sooner".

"The unofficial opening will be [on February 7]. Arriving yachties can come to the building on the Chalong Pier to clear entry with immigration, customs and the

harbor master. This will make it easier for yacht owners to do all their paperwork, and it will also make it easier for marine officers. With the office right on the pier, they won't have to go far to inspect boats."

In May of last year, Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada said that the one-stop center could not open until a 15-million-baht tracking system was in place and a seawall constructed.

The tracking system is installed, Mr Paiboon said, but construction on the seawall has yet to begin. However, the Marine Office budget for the wall – 98 million baht – has just been approved, he said.

"Vice Governor Chamroen will determine when the official opening of the one-stop center will be, but yacht owners can start using the new facility on Friday," he added.



The PPAO signed a contract to rent out the space on Chalong pier in 2013 and is eager to begin generating rental income. Photo: Dean Noble



Mr Jirawat's brother weeps beside his body as his father reaches to comfort him. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

Body of son lost at sea recovered

THE body of a mentally-handicapped man who was knocked off a Phuket longtail boat by a large wave on January 31 was found washed ashore two days later.

Jirawat Srisomporn, 27, who had been on the boat with his father, a fisherman, could not swim.

After he fell into the sea between Rang Yai Island and Maphrao Island, off the east coast of Phuket, rescuers spent four hours searching for him before stopping because of rough seas.

His body was found at Laem Deang Beach in Baan Yamu at about 4:30pm on February 2.

"Mr Jirawat's father identified the body," said Lt Suporn Munagkhai of the Thalang Police.

Mr Jirawat's body was taken to Thalang Hospital to confirm the cause of death, and later collected by his father for funeral services.

– Thawit Bilabdullar

B15mn AIS boat tracking system operational

A 15-MILLION-BAHT system that will track the location of the roughly 3,000 boats visiting Phuket each year finally has wind in its sails.

"Right now, we can use our Automatic Identification System [AIS] to track boats on the north, west and south sides of the island. We are trying to get the budget to cover the east side too," said Pracha Asawateera, Phuket branch manager of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA).

SIPA, part of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, is in the process of extending the range of the system to include the Similan Islands and Phi Phi Island. Boats in those areas should be trackable with the AIS system by November, he said.



The goal is for all yachts and tourism boats in areas around Phuket to be trackable. Photo: Supplied

"We can track boats using radar, but AIS gives us more detailed information about vessels and their locations. This is important for safety, and will be useful in emergencies," Mr Pracha told the *Gazette*.

The system was seen as so important that last year Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada stipulated that the Chalong one-stop clearance center would not be permitted to open without it.

The scope of mandatory boat registration is expected to change over time.

"At first, not all boats will be required to log into the system," Mr Pracha said.

"However, in the interests of safety, we are pushing for all boats operating within the tourism industry to be required to register."

– Saran Mitrarat

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Foreigners stranded at border

Runaway driver swipes B37,000 and leaves sleepy passengers waiting in the van

By Mauri Grant

A ROUTINE visa run to Penang late last month hit a speed bump at the Malaysian border when visa runners returned to the van from the immigration checkpoint to find their driver had absconded.

It had been business as usual for the passengers until they reached the border checkpoint in Sadao on January 20.

"This time was the same as always. We had one driver from Phuket to the border of Malaysia, but we changed drivers once we arrived at Sadao," explained Mr Klaeden.

After crossing the Thai-Malay border, the KBV passengers left the van and walked through the Malaysian immigration building so officers could check and stamp their passports, recounted Klaus Klaeden, 47.

"When we exited the building, we found our van waiting with the engine still running," he said.

"The driver wasn't there, so we assumed he was in the restroom. It was early, about 6am, so after a few minutes everyone fell asleep."

One of the passengers woke

about 30 minutes later to find the driver still missing and the van still running. He woke the other passengers, including Mr Klaeden, and the group began to search for the driver.

After scouring the grounds and questioning border police, the visa runners concluded that their driver had gone, and taken all of the money collected for the trip.

Mr Klaeden estimates that about 37,000 baht was stolen and four travel hours were wasted during the ordeal.

The passengers contacted

KBV and the company sent a new Malaysian driver to pick them up and take them to their hotel. They arrived in Penang at 12:30pm rather than the standard 8:30am, but still made it to immigration in time to file their visa applications, ensuring no further delays.

The owner of the KBV visa run company said the driver was later arrested by the Malaysian Police and that the stolen money was returned. However, she declined to name the driver and the company he worked for.

Despite the rare circumstances surrounding this visa run, the

'I was laughing, I could not believe that this was happening'

— Klaus Klaeden, One of the passengers stranded at the border



The risk of visa runs is normally chalked up to the chance of an accident, but not this time. Photo: Saran Mitratat

owner said she believes the company accomplished its overall mission by completing the visa run on time for its customers.

When asked his initial reaction to the situation, Mr Klaeden said, "I was laughing. I could not be-

lieve that this was happening. This was my fourth trip with KBV and all of them have gone well."

The owner said she understands how important these trips are for foreigners staying in Thailand.

"I would like to apologize to our

valued customers for any inconveniences caused by this trip. This is the first time ever that we have encountered such a situation."

Additional reporting by Saran Mitratat

Airport's new charter terminal inaugurated



Passengers flying to China were the first to use the terminal. Photo: AoT

PHUKET International Airport's new charter terminal saw its first successful flight depart on Wednesday.

Jet Asia Airways provided the flight, JF840, which flew to Changsha, the capital city of Hunan in south-central China, said Phuket International Airport Director Pratuang Sornkham.

The building, named X-Terminal, is being used to help relieve crowding in the main terminal by providing check-in facilities for passengers from Phuket's two largest source markets, Russia and China, Mr Pratuang explained.

"The first two weeks are trial weeks for the terminal. We will

start with six charter flights per day: three to Russia and three to China," he added.

Airport officials said the first flight had been a success.

"The system worked well. The passengers checked in at the X-Terminal, then took the shuttle to the main terminal to clear Immigration and Customs," Mr Pratuang said.

A second charter flight was scheduled to leave on Wednesday night.

"We believe the X-Terminal will do well, but we will make sure that the check-in system is working properly before it becomes fully operational," Mr Pratuang said.

Phuket International Airport is the only airport in Thailand that has a terminal dedicated to serving charter flight passengers, Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut said at the official opening on January 31.

According to Airports of Thailand (AoT) statistics, nearly one-third of all international passengers arrive and depart on international charter flights.

The X-Terminal is part of a 5.8-billion-baht airport expansion project currently underway. Among the other facilities scheduled to open to the public this year is a five-storey car park that can accommodate 1,500 vehicles.

— Chutharat Plerin

Russian tourists, leaky kayak rescued

TWO Russian tourists foundering in Phang Nga Bay after their kayak sprung a leak were rescued by a passing Phuket fishing boat on January 31.

Maxim Abaturov, 37, and Valerii Grakhouskii, 38, were three kilometers from Phuket when a seal in the front of their two-man vessel began to let in water.

Although the kayak remained afloat, it could not support the weight of the men, who ended up in the water clinging to it.

"We received a call at 1:40pm from the captain of Aong Chamroen

3, reporting that he had just picked up two tourists floating in the sea," Marine Police Inspector Chatchai Sakdee told the Gazette.

"We organized to meet the boat at the Jirawanit Port in Rassada to pick up the tourists. They are both safe."

Officers from the Phuket Tourist Police returned the men to the Village Coconut Island Beach Resort and Spa on Koh Maphrao.

"We kept the kayak as evidence so we can determine what exactly went wrong," Lt Col Chatchai said.

— Irfarn Jamdukor



The kayakers were returned to Phuket after being rescued by a fishing boat. Photo: Marine Police

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Demonstrators to fight Chalerm's back-to-work order

PHUKET protesters stand united in defying an order from Bangkok to re-open all government offices on February 6.

Chalerm Yoobamrung, caretaker Labor Minister and director of the Center for Maintaining Peace and Order, issued the order last Monday.

"I don't care what Chalerm said, we are not under his control," said Phuket protest leader Amnuay Kumban on Tuesday.

"We will maintain our blockade of Phuket Provincial Hall and Phuket Revenue Office until Suthep Thaugsuban orders us to allow

them to re-open. Our actions are in support of the People's Democratic Reform Committee [PDRC] protesters in Bangkok."

Other government offices in Phuket have been permitted to quietly re-open, a decision that has caused a split in the anti-government leadership.

Protest leader Suratin Lian-udom has announced that he no longer supports the lenient strategy of coordinators Theerawut Sritularak and Mr Amnuay.

"Mr Amnuay and Mr Theerawut have sometimes made too many allowances for officers,

letting them enter buildings to go to work. I think we should be more firm," he explained. "However, I still have the same goal as Mr Suthep - to stop the people who want to destroy our Kingdom."

Mr Amnuay played down the split.

"It's normal for people who work together to have different styles. The important thing is, we're still working for the same company," he said.

Mr Chalerm vowed that those blocking government offices on February 6 would be arrested.

- **Saran Mittrarat**

Good luck for tourists with honest drivers



French tourist Andre Cellier collects his bag from Chatree Saengnon. Photo: Tourist Police

TWO forgetful tourists got lucky last week when drivers returned belongings they had left behind - in one case, nearly 150,000 baht in euros.

It was Frenchman Andre Cellier, 57, who left the euros - 3,300 of them - along with his passport and a mobile phone in the airport taxi he took to Patong on January 22. He called the Tourist Police, who located the driver, who had already filed a report about the belongings.

A meeting between the grateful tourist and taxi driver Chatree Saengnon, 35, was arranged for January 29, and the belongings were exchanged.

A few days later an absent-minded Finn left a bag containing his passport, plane ticket home and some cash on a bus in Kamala.

The driver of the *songtaew*, Kiattisak Hoksad, found the bag and immediately reported it to the police, who quickly mobilized and within two hours had located Sami Oskari Lyytinen, 25.

Kamala Police Superintendent ML Pattanachak Chakrabhandhu commended Mr Kiattisak. "We admire him for what he did. It impressed Mr Lyytinen and helped build a better image for Phuket."

- **Chutharat Plerin**

Protesters block vote

By **Saran Mittrarat**

THE national election last Sunday ended in Phuket before it even got off the ground, when at 8:30am Phuket Election Commission Director Kittipong Thiengkunakrit declared, "Phuket elections have been terminated for today."

Anti-government protesters in Phuket, with the help of those elsewhere, had succeeded in blocking the vote.

Their efforts began in December when candidates were prevented from registering for the election. Only one person, Jirayus Songyos of the Pheu Thai Party, managed to register on December 29, when, surrounded by an entourage of 20 people, he entered Community Hall in Phuket Town.

Despite the dearth of candidates in Phuket and other Southern provinces, the election proceeded as scheduled on February 2.

At 9pm the night before, a large crowd of protesters gathered outside Thalang Police Station, where the MP ballots were being kept, in an effort to prevent their distribution throughout the island.

"We disagree with the elections



Demonstrators of all stripes made sure that ballots never left Thalang Police Station. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

being held tomorrow, and will continue to show our support for the protesters in Bangkok," said protest leader Suratin Lian-udom, vowing that protesters would remain at the police station until all election polling stations on Phuket had been closed.

The MP ballots held at Thalang

Police Station were not the only ones needed for the election to go forward; the others were the party list ballots, on which voters select not a person but a party. These ballots were due to arrive from Chumphon, but with the help of protesters there, never did.

Both election officials and

Thalang Police stressed throughout that confrontation with the protesters would be avoided at all costs.

Despite the inability of Phuket residents to vote, the alcohol ban for election day remained in effect.

Additional reporting by Thawit Bilabdullar

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Luang Phor Dee has fasted since January 11. Photo: The Nation

Monk vows to not eat until peace returns

AS THE violence intensified in the days leading up to last Sunday's election, a monk continued his pledge to continually pray and meditate – without food or sleep – until peace returned to the country.

The Venerable Luang Phor Dee Suwattano said "peace" meant when everything had returned to normal and there was no more political violence in Thailand.

Luang Phor Dee, 57, has been meditating since January 11. Surviving solely on water and tea, he has slowly grown weak, and fell ill on January 20.

When the monk became sick, his disciples asked him to drink fruit juice for nourishment so he could continue his meditation, reported *The Nation*.

He is now drinking juice to sustain himself, but he is determined that he will not stop fasting until his goal is achieved.

In a weak and quiet voice, he explained, "Thailand is approaching a dangerous turn, which is the result of everyone forgetting their duties. Everyone should know their duties, particularly the governing bodies, but also the people."

"The government should forget its lust for power and turn to helping its citizens, and the people should vote for true, honest governments."

He emphasized that he was not fasting in opposition to any particular political group.

"I'm not here to protest against specific people, but I am meditating so that I can make merit for the country and eliminate bad things from Thailand," he said.

National election blockades infuriate prospective voters

MANY Bangkok voters were angry last Sunday morning as more than 400 polling stations were closed and potential voters were obstructed from casting a ballot in the snap election.

"I was so upset and frightened that I could not enter the polling station and cast my vote. Voting is our civic duty and responsibility. An election means that everyone has the right to express their opinion and we have to respect other people's opinions as well," said Petcharat Wongwiset, 62, who flew from Singapore in the morning to vote in Bangkok's Din Daeng district.

She wore a white dress with the message: "I love Thailand. I go to cast my vote. Peace."

But when she learned she could not cast her vote because the polling was cancelled, she was very upset.

The anti-government People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) had locked and blocked Din Daeng District Office.

The Din Daeng District Office wasn't the only one closed by protesters, as demonstrators demanding the resignation of Caretaker Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and the expulsion of the "Thaksin regime" from Thailand prevented 67 constituencies in 18 provinces from partaking in the national elections.

The provinces most seriously affected were in the South, a stronghold of the Democrat Party.

Of the 12,335 polling stations in the South, only 3,104 opened.

Democrats launch assault as election legal battles begin

THE opposition Democrat Party on Tuesday brought to the Constitutional Court the first legal case against the government regarding last Sunday's election.

The move was the latest in a host of problems facing the government of Caretaker Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, reported *The Nation*.

Ms Yingluck is under investigation by the Election Commission (EC) for alleged abuse of authority in recent poll campaigning and by the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) for alleged



A woman arrives at Din Daeng polling station in Bangkok to exercise her democratic right to vote. Photo: Reuters



"Not a single polling station was able to open in nine southern provinces," Election Commission (EC) deputy secretary general Thanis Sriprathes said.

In Songkhla, the PDRC members surrounded the Haad Yai Post Office for days to block the distribution of ballots and ballot

boxes. Without these, polling stations could not open in many southern provinces (see page 9).

Despite the efforts of the PDRC, the Pheu Thai Party is expected to win at least 300 MP seats even though each candidate has secured fewer votes than in the past, a party source, who asked not to be named, told *The Nation*.

In Central Thailand (excluding Bangkok), there are 94 constituencies in 25 provinces. Of them, Mr Thanis said only four constituencies faced problems.

In the North and Northeast, no constituencies had problems.

The Royal Thai Police will pursue criminal charges against protesters who disrupted the election, as well as election officials who quit and walked out of polling booths, Department of Special Investigation (DSI) chief Tarit Pengdith warned this week.

The Center for Maintaining Peace and Order (CMPO) has instructed police to collect evidence for the charge, said Mr Tarit, who is a member of CMPO.

Mr Tarit encouraged people with evidence of protesters conducting criminal acts to present them to the police.

dereliction of duty involving the rice-pledging scheme.

The EC is looking into accusations that the prime minister abused her power by having many senior public officials join her provincial trips in the run-up to the election, said EC member Boonsong Noiso-pon on Monday.

Mr Boonsong said the EC was also investigating a complaint against Ms Yingluck and Cabinet members that accused them of drafting the amnesty bill unlawfully.

The Democrat Party also lodged a petition with the Constitutional

Court against the government for holding the poll unconstitutionally.

The government violated Article 68, said Democrat leader Abhisit Vejjajiva. This article prohibits people from exercising a right with the aim of overthrowing the democratic system, or of acquiring power to rule the country by any means not in accordance with the Constitution.

Mr Abhisit said there were many legal problems with the election and Ms Yingluck had decided to go ahead with it, though she was warned by the EC.

The Democrat Party would also ask the NACC to file criminal charges against Ms Yingluck and Cabinet members, Mr Abhisit said.

The Democrat plans to ask the Constitutional Court to order the dissolution of the Pheu Thai Party, disqualify its executives and ban 18 Cabinet members who are Pheu Thai MP candidates.



Abhisit Vejjajiva. Photo: The Nation

Court finds former transport permanent secretary guilty of being 'unusually rich'

THE Civil Court last Friday found former permanent secretary for the Transport Ministry Supodh Sublom guilty of being unusually rich and ordered the seizure of his assets worth 46.14 million baht.

The court reasoned that it was impossible for Mr Supodh to have amassed such wealth through honest means during his time in government.

Mr Supodh faced a graft investigation by the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) after eight suspected thieves broke into his house on Soi Lat Phrao 64 on the night of November 12, 2011 and made off with 18mn baht in cash and gold ornaments.

After the arrest of the suspects, Mr Supodh initially claimed that only 5mn baht was stolen from his house and the money was a gift for his daughter's wedding.

Following an investigation, the NACC asked the Civil Court to seize assets belonging to Mr Supodh valued at 64.998mn baht, including savings in nine bank accounts, savings with the Highway Department cooperative, land plots, his house, vehicles and condominiums. The amount included the 18mn

baht recovered from the thieves.

Defending himself, Mr Supodh presented six relatives who claimed that some of the assets frozen by the NACC belonged to them. Mr Supodh also claimed that he had already owned most of the assets before he took the position of permanent secretary for the Transport Ministry.

The Civil Court ruled that Mr Supodh and his six relatives failed to provide sufficient evidence that 13mn baht of the 18mn baht in cash retrieved from

'It is impossible for Mr Supodh to have amassed such wealth through honest means during his time in government'

– Civil Court verdict

the suspected thieves belonged to them.

The court noted that the six witnesses presented by Mr Supodh were close to him and therefore their testimonies did not carry enough weight without strong evidence.

Mr Supodh began his government service in 1977. In 2012, as permanent secretary, he was required to submit his assets statement to the NACC for the first time. The court pointed out that during the period Mr Supodh would have earned only about 5mn baht from his government salary. It was therefore irregular for him to report to the NACC that he had assets worth 46mn baht, the court said.

Officials seize tonnes of ivory headed for Vietnam

AUTHORITIES in Togo have seized nearly four tonnes of ivory hidden in containers destined for Vietnam, officials said on Monday.

The tusks, disguised as a shipment of cashew nuts and timber, were found late last month, underscoring a flow of ivory to Asia that environmentalists warn is decimating elephant populations and diplomats say also risks fuelling conflict in Africa.

Some 500 elephants would have been killed in the haul, which has a value of about US\$8 million on the international market, said

Kotchikya Okoumassou, a senior official in Togo's environment ministry.

Two locals and a man from Vietnam were arrested but it was not clear where the ivory came from.

"Togo only has 115 elephants so it is clear that the ivory did not come from here," Mr Okoumassou said.

The international trade in ivory has been banned but conservationists say African elephants are being poached at an alarming rate, especially in Central Africa. — Reuters



The elephant tusks, weighing nearly four tonnes, were bound for Vietnam. Photo: Reuters

In brief...

Multinational firm fights off grenade attack from rebels

SECURITY personnel of multinational firm Del Monte Fresh Produce battled Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF) gunmen in Tulunan, North Cotabato, the Philippines, on Monday.

The gunmen, one of them firing a rocket-propelled grenade, stormed the facility around 8pm. The plantation's security force engaged the rebels until soldiers arrived. No one was harmed in the incident, said Senior Inspector Ronnie Cordero, Tulunan police chief. — *Philippine Inquirer*

Gold mine in Laos shuts down, more than 400 lose jobs

LAOS' high-profile Sepon mine in Savannakhet has laid off 420 workers following its announcement to halt gold production in December last year.

The restructure resulted in the reduction of 360 Lao positions and more than 60 expatriate advisory positions. Over 30 per cent of the expatriate workforce has been reduced. — *Vientiane Times*

Journalist killed over illegal fishing

THE death of journalist Suon Chan from a fatal beating over his report on illegal fishing in Kampong Chhnang province has drawn concern from the press in Cambodia.

"Suon Chan's death indicates... a culture of impunity, where people can resort to committing murder, knowing that they will probably never be brought to justice," said CCHR Human Rights Defenders Project Coordinator Chhay Chhunly. — *Cambodia Herald*

Indonesia on alert

AROUND THE region

THE Indonesian government has raised the status on 19 volcanoes in the country to alert level – the second-highest category – in the wake of Mount Sinabung erupting in North Sumatra last Saturday, killing 16 people.

The National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB), which issued the raised alert status, has yet to call for the evacuation of populations living nearby.

Though Mt Sinabung has been sporadically erupting since September, BNPB spokesperson Sutopo Purwo Nugroho called on nearby residents not to panic.

"Volcanoes erupt in stages, they won't suddenly erupt. Their activity can be categorized from normal to *waspada* [alert] to *siaga* [high alert] to *awas* [danger, the highest level]," he said.

Mr Sutopo said that the BNPB was now keeping an eye on Mt Kelud in East Java, where the status was raised to alert following



A woman flees as Mount Sinabung erupts, sending clouds of ash into the sky, last Saturday. Photo: Reuters

intensified volcanic activity. The raised alert status of Mt Kelud triggered panic among local residents, as local officials warned people to stay outside a 2-kilometer radius from the mountain.

Last Saturday, at least 16 people were killed and three others

severely injured due to pyroclastic clouds emitted by Mt Sinabung.

Previously, the volcano's ongoing eruptions had claimed the lives of 31 evacuees from various illnesses such as depression, asthma and hypertension.

Sixteen villages had to be

evacuated following the eruptions. However, rescuers had to halt operations due to fears of further eruptions.

Currently, the evacuation zone is between 5 and 7km on the southeast slope of the volcano.

— *The Jakarta Post*

Borneo man escapes death sentence for rape of girl, 12

A RESTAURANT manager and father of four who tried to evade the law by marrying a 12-year-old girl he had sex with has been sentenced to 12 years in jail for statutory rape in Kota Kinabalu, on Malaysian Borneo.

Sessions Court judge Ummu Kalthom Abdul Samad also ordered Riduan Masmud, 41, to be given two lashes of the *rotan*.

She, however, allowed a stay of execution after Mr Riduan's counsel Ram Singh said his client would be appealing his conviction and sentencing.

Judge Kalthom allowed Mr Riduan bail of RM15,000 (150,000 baht) and ordered one of the two sureties to be his first wife.

Mr Riduan, a father of four children aged between two and 17, was charged with raping the schoolgirl under Section 376 of the Penal Code, which provides for a jail term of up to 20 years.

Judge Kalthom convicted Mr Riduan of the offence on January 24 and he was supposed to be sentenced three days later. However, she issued a warrant for his arrest on January 27 after he failed to turn up for the sentencing.

In passing sentence on Monday, Judge Kalthom said she had to mete out a penalty that would serve as a deterrent to others.

"The fact that the maximum penalty for this offence is 20 years in jail reflects the seriousness of the offence," she said.

She noted that during the trial, it was ascertained that the girl met Mr Riduan through Facebook where he posed as a 24-year-old man and on the day they met, she and a friend were picked by the accused at Inanam town.

He then drove them to a waterfall, where he raped her in the car in the presence of the friend.

— *The Star*



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In brief...

Al Qaeda denies
Islamic group link

AL QAEDA'S general command on Monday denied any links with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). This rejection is likely to bolster a rival Islamist group, the Nusra Front, as al Qaeda's official proxy in Syria.

The shift in support is seen as an attempt to redirect the Islamist effort towards unseating President Bashar al-Assad rather than wasting resources fighting other rebels.

Amanda Knox to
appeal second
murder conviction

AMANDA Knox vowed on January 31 to fight her second conviction for the 2007 murder of Meredith Kercher. The 26-year-old American said she would never willingly return to Italy to serve the sentence.

"I'm going to fight this until the very end. And it's not right, and it's not fair and I'm going to do everything that I can," she told the "Good Morning America" program.

Barrel bombings
in Syria kill 83,
mostly civilians

SYRIAN military helicopters dropped more "barrel bombs" on the northern city of Aleppo last Sunday, a monitoring group said, bringing the death toll to at least 83 people in the latest episode of a campaign many consider a war crime.

Most victims killed have been civilians from the city's eastern districts, including women and children, according to the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Chinese so-called
'state secrets' to be
public knowledge

CHINA has unveiled new rules telling officials not to cover up what should be public information using the excuse it is a state secret.

This is one move towards greater government transparency, state media said.

El Salvador man found after a year lost at sea

AROUND THE world

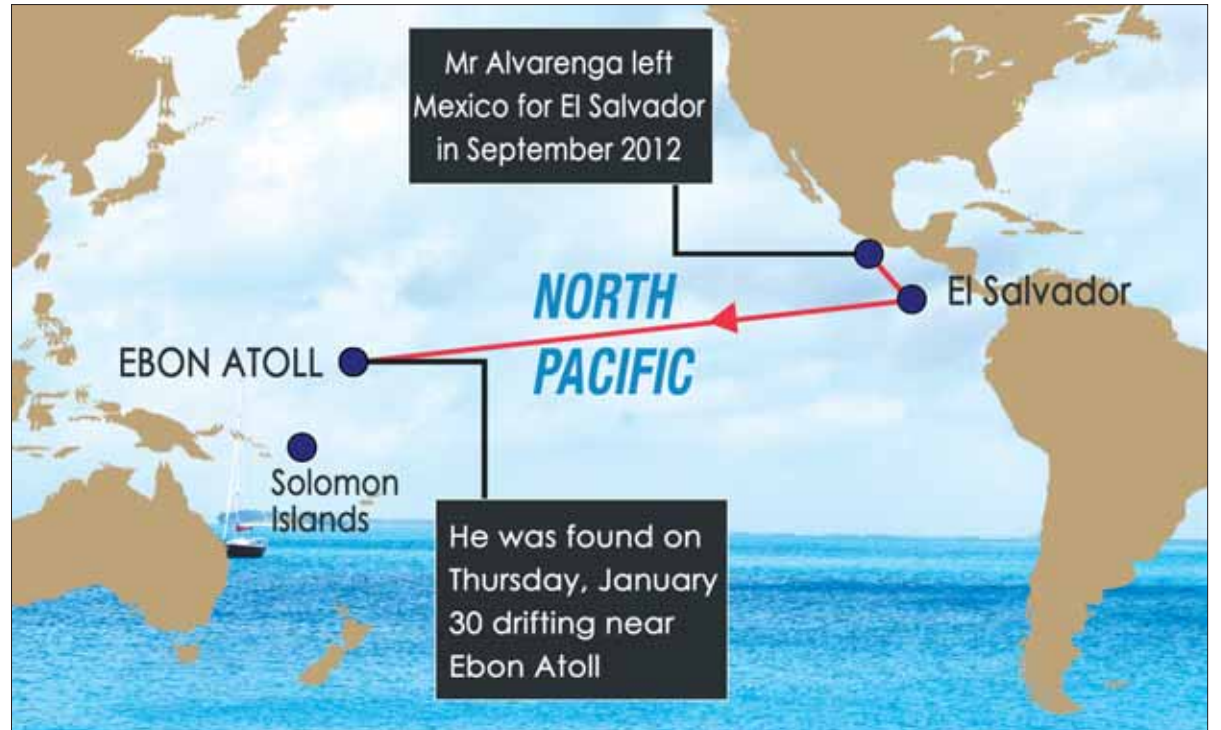
By Thuy Ong

A FISHERMAN thought to be from El Salvador who washed ashore on the Marshall Islands last Thursday said he survived more than a year adrift in the Pacific Ocean, drinking turtle blood and catching fish and birds with his bare hands.

Jose Salvador Alvarenga, 37, told officials he set sail from Mexico (some 10,000 kilometers away) on a shark fishing trip in late December 2012, but was blown out to sea.

He was found in a disoriented state on a remote coral atoll where he had been washed up over the weekend in his 7.3-meter fiberglass boat. A police patrol boat took him to Majuro, the capital of the islands.

"It was supposed to be a one-day fishing expedition, but they were blown off course by the northern winds," Thomas Armbruster, the US Ambassador



Jose Salvador Alvarenga travelled nearly 10,000 kilometers before washing ashore. Photo: Gazette Graphics/NASA

to the Marshall Islands, told the media.

"He got off the boat with a very bushy beard," Jack Niedenthal, a filmmaker based on Majuro, told Reuters by telephone.

"He's having trouble walking, his legs are very skinny. I'm not ready to call this a hoax; I think

this guy has done some serious time at sea," he said.

According to the authorities, Mr Alvarenga, who has been a fisherman for 15 years, said he set sail with another fisherman, aged 15 to 18, but the teenager died a month into their ordeal.

They also said they were still

gathering information and planned to contact his family in El Salvador and the United States.

In a statement, El Salvador's Foreign Ministry said it was working with Mexican authorities to return him to Mexico, and then on to El Salvador.

— Reuters

French protest 'family-phobia'

MORE than 100,000 conservative French marched through Paris and Lyon last Sunday accusing the government of "family-phobia" for legalizing gay marriage and other planned policies they say will harm traditional families.

The marchers, expressing growing frustration with the unpopular left-wing government, denounced new sex-equality lessons in schools.

Protesters also warned the government not to legalize assisted reproduction for lesbians or make surrogate motherhood an option for gay males who want genetically-related children.

French law currently allows assisted reproduction for married couples with infertility problems. Lesbian couples who want this

option can cross the borders to Belgium or Spain, where it is legal for them.

Most demonstrators were middle-class families, some pushing little children in strollers, posing no apparent risk of violent confrontation with the police.

The government of President Francois Hollande has delayed further social reforms until after next month's municipal elections following massive protests against legalizing same-sex marriage last year.

"We have the same message [as last year], we just want it to be heard," said protester Michel Girard. "It is the defence of children and the family."

Conservatives are also angry that the government eased abortion laws last week and plans to legalize assisted suicide. — Reuters



Conservatives protest same-sex marriage in Paris on February 2. Photo: Reuters

Beloved American actor dies of suspected drug overdose

PHILIP Seymour Hoffman, one of the leading actors of his generation and an Academy Award winner, was found dead in his apartment last Sunday in what a police source described as an apparent drug overdose.

Mr Hoffman, who is survived by three children with his partner Mimi O'Donnell, had detailed his struggles with substance abuse in the past.

"We are devastated by the loss of our beloved Phil and appreci-



Mr Hoffman died at 46. Photo: Reuters

ate the outpouring of love and support we have received from everyone," Mr Hoffman's family said in a statement issued through his publicist. — Reuters

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Siriroj doubling up

Phuket International Hospital invests more than B800mn on expansion



This artist's impression shows what the hospital along the bypass road will look like upon completion of 'phase three', aimed for the end of 2015. Photos: Supplied

THE Phuket International Hospital (PIH) – also commonly known as Siriroj Hospital – recently broke ground on an 800-million-baht expansion program that will see its facilities and capacity – for both inpatients and outpatients – double upon completion in 2015.

Construction of the hospital's third and largest phase to date, which will include a new building and increased parking spaces, began on December 4, last year and is expected to be completed by the fourth quarter of next year.

To find out more about the expansion, the *Phuket Gazette* queried PIH CEO Ekapol Tharasiriroj, and Hospital Director, Assistant Professor Doctor Suchat Areemit.

Asked about the reason for expanding, Dr Suchat remarked: "To enhance medical services, increase our state of the art medical technology and accommodate the increasing number of hospital patients, the new building has been designed to specifically improve and expand our medical centers and treatment areas."

At present, PIH has 151 beds for inpatients and has the capacity to serve 500-600 outpatients daily, and employs more than 600 clinical and non-clinical staff, Dr Suchat noted.

"As part of phase 3, the hospital will add an additional 175 inpatient beds to three inpatient wards, and our outpatient capacity will be doubled as will our personnel. We will have a new ICU, CCU and operating room as well as a specialized treatment



area and clinic. The additions include an emergency service center, one-stop health checkup center, general surgery, orthopedic and spine center, as well as a sinus and allergy center," he explained.

A new indoor car park will add 115 more spaces, bringing the total number of parking spaces – indoor and outdoor – to 300 upon completion, he added.

Asked to comment on the design and functionality of the new building, CEO Ekapol said: "In our new inpatient wards, patient rooms have been designed to specifically focus on the safety of patients and their relatives in the Phuket resort style," elaborating, "We are incorporating National Fire Protection Association's codes and standards to minimize the risk and effects of fire, such as an early fire detection system, smoke/fire compartment and [using specified] materials for the doors and ceilings."

"Furthermore, as a hospital is a complex system of interrelated functions requiring constant movement of people and goods, circulation should be controlled. Therefore, the design will also incorporate the CDC infectious control standard precautions."

"For example, connecting corridors have to support the outflow of trash, recyclables and



DOUBLE-TEAM: PIH Chief Executive, Ekapol Tharasiriroj (left) and Hospital Director, Dr Suchat Areemit.

soiled materials. It should be separated from the movement of food and clean supplies, and both should be separated from routes of patients and visitors."

The CEO went on to talk about the 'Phuket Resort-like' design concept of new inpatient rooms.

"The interior design theme will incorporate sand, sea and local Phuket designs. The inpatient ward room will have an open-air balcony but will be safe for incapacitated patients, relatives and unstable patients."

"Meanwhile, the outpatient service area will incorporate an increased use of natural light to reduce electric lighting and save energy."

CEO Ekapol's parents, Dr Anuroj and Dr Supanee Tharasiriroj, initially established a 35-bed hospital named the Siriroj Medical Center in old-town Phuket in 1982. Located on Krabi Road, it was relocated to the current site on Chalerm-prakiat Ror 9 (bypass) road in 1995 with an improved capacity of 92 beds (Phase 1).

In 2007, the hospital underwent a second phase of expansion that brought its bed count up to 151 currently.

The 800 million-baht budget for the current expansion program does not include the cost of new medical equipment.

– *Phuket Gazette*



The expansion of Siriroj Hospital will see its treatment capacity double.

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Trying to spark a dying fire

Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

FOR those of you who have tried to keep the flames rising on a dying fire, you know it's no easy task. In fact, all too often the credo do-or-die tends to end up with a bad case of the latter.

In the tourism business, legacy brands have never been more challenged than they are these days. Take airlines for example, where national air carriers have not only had to contend with Richard Branson, but with the transformer-like multiplication of low-cost airlines.

The battle lines are drawn in the sand at every corner, with a blanket being thrown over the entire shooting match. Hardware, software and human capital are all on the front lines. Just take a look at Thai International versus Air Asia – who is winning that one is fairly clear.

For hotel brands, much of the legacy ideology remains at the top end of the luxury market. Here in Asia, players such as Peninsula, Mandarin Oriental and Raffles are now seeing inroads by groups such as Rosewood. You even have born-again one-offs, which have gone institutional as in St Regis and Waldorf Astoria.

Individual hotels have a similar challenge. One nearby example would be the Grand Hyatt Erawan in Bangkok, which for years maintained a high profile upscale clientele ranking among the top of the city's hotels. With room size creeping up and physical constraints, the hotel will soon step aside in the brand pecking order to a new, posh Park Hyatt near Ploenchit in the Central Embassy complex.

Growing old is not easy for

people nor hotels, though one notable exception based on a single iconic location and reputation is Bangkok's Oriental Hotel. Though the CBD has shifted away from the property, the hotel has been able to maintain its mojo through thick and thin.

One option for hotels is the ability to change markets in chameleon style. Look no further than the Indigo Pearl who decreased rooms, took on an industrial chic theme and enlisted designer Bill Bensley to create an alternate reality. Smaller, in this case, has turned out to be better.

Here in Phuket, one redevelopment worth watching is the Royal Phuket Yacht Club which was the island's first luxury hotel. Its brand affinity included Mandarin Oriental and Le Meridien over the years.

As the hotel was sold last year, the industry is watching what the vision of tomorrow will be.

Another nearby hotel in Rawai, the former Evason has also traded and

will soon be an InterContinental. What a journey the property has taken, which started as one of the island's first international properties when it was tagged as the Phuket Island Resort.

Hotel owners continue to battle age in similar fashion to that of fading beauty queens. Botox and collagen only go so far, as does the nip and tuck ritual. At one point the battle is far too furious and the white flag has to be hoisted. Either head down the chain scale by choice or be driven by customer trends.

Staying on top for luxury hotel brands continues to be a vicious cycle. Phuket's Amanpuri has managed to retain its cache some 25 years into the market, but it remains entrenched in a rate game with the newer Trisara



Trisara remains entrenched in a rate game with Amanpuri. Photo: Gazette File



The Indigo Pearl enlisted designer Bill Bensley to create an alternate reality. Photo: Gazette File

for supremacy of the island's average-rate stakes.

Hotel brands of course ultimately have to look away from their age-old wives and court newer and younger mistresses who simply happen to have all those new bells and whistles that the grand old dames can't muster up anymore.

At the end of the day the true test of legacy hotels is not to traverse into the category of legends which most often applies to those dead, instead of the living in the here and now.



LEGACY: Bangkok's Mandarin Oriental. Photo: Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group

Property expo at Central

LOOKING to lease, buy and/or invest in Phuket and Phang Nga property? Don't sign that contract just yet! The Phuket Real Estate Association (PREA) launched the "Phuket Real Estate Show 2014" on Thursday (February 6).

Being held in the Grand Hall on the first floor of Central Festival Phuket, with the annual property exhibition to conclude on Wednesday, February 12.

This year's event features 30 booths representing properties – completed and in the pipeline – in Phuket, Phang Nga, as well as Chiang Mai, including condominium, duplexes, detached single homes, townhouses and shop-houses alike.

Also exhibiting at the show are a number of local and national businesses; namely, JD Pools, PD

House and American Standard (sanitary ware).

If the property by itself isn't reason enough to turn out, then JD Pools' bikini and one-piece bathing suite special show, taking place at 7pm each day of the exhibition, provides even more incentive to come.

– Phuket Gazette



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Emerging markets: Sri Lanka



Finance

By Don Freeman

IN A recent column, I discussed the current state of political affairs following the end of the bitter Sri Lankan civil war, and how infrastructure development, a strong education system and beautiful, natural and man-made attractions of the country bode well for its financial future. In this concluding column, I will examine the investment possibilities on offer in Sri Lanka in more depth.

For retail investors, investing in Sri Lanka will mean finding a way to invest in Sri Lankan stocks and bonds listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), the country's main stock exchange whose origins date back to 1896.

As of December 2013, the CSE had 288 listed companies, which account for approximately one third of the country's GDP – but the most important listed company (as it's often used for bench-marking purposes) would be John Keells Holdings Plc, a diversified conglomerate dating back to 1870 with interests in the transportation, leisure, property, consumer foods and retail, financial services, information technology and other sectors.

Locals, and especially tourists like myself, cannot escape the influence John Keells Holdings Plc has on the island, because its brands fill the local supermarkets and convenience stores (they also own the Ceylon Cold Stores supermarket chain) plus they own at least two hotel chains (Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts and Chaaya Hotels and Resorts), travel agencies and two local or regional airlines (Cinnamon Air and Mack Air). The stock also accounts for roughly 14% of the CSE's capitalization and it's the only Sri Lankan stock with an American Depository Receipt (ADR), which is listed in Luxembourg.

As for other potential Sri Lankan investment benchmarks, foreign investors should note that the All Share Price Index (ASPI) measures the movement of share prices for all listed companies on

the Colombo Stock Exchange and the S&P Sri Lanka 20 Index (S&P SL20) follows the performance of 20 leading publicly traded companies, plus there are also some 20 sector indices.

When you look at the performance of the All Share Price Index since the 1990s, you will see that an investor with a very high tolerance for risk could have made between 400 to 600% or more, had they invested in the All Share Price Index at least a decade ago when the country was still deeply mired in civil war. Moreover, the Index has gained some 170% since the official end of hostilities (the period from May 18, 2009 to December 2013) albeit its performance over the last year has been rather mixed as it's been under-performing the MSCI Frontier Markets 100 Index but out-performing the MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

Otherwise, investors should note that the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) is one of the most modern stock exchanges in South Asia as

“...Rebuilding the country's war shattered economy and improving its infrastructure to attract more tourists and further foreign investment will take time.”

it's equipped with a fully automated trading platform. Foreign investors are generally freely permitted to invest in investments listed on the exchange with the repatriation of proceeds taking place through Share Investment External Rupee Accounts (SIERA) opened with licensed commercial banks. Moreover, income from stock investments (such as interest, dividends and capital gains) is not subject to any Exchange Control Regulations by the Sri Lankan Government.

Investing directly in Sri Lanka

So how can a foreign retail investor invest in the Sri Lankan stock market? Unfortunately, there are very few ways right now to directly invest in Sri Lanka through ADRs, ETFs or funds listed on exchanges based in other countries.

A quick Google search does



SHOW ME THE GOODS: The port of Colombo commenced a large-scale expansion project at a cost of US\$1.2 billion, which is expected to dramatically increase the port's capacity and capabilities. Photo: jgmorard

come up with the Sri Lanka fund, a Cayman Islands domiciled fund, that is registered as a restricted foreign scheme with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. The Sri Lanka fund is an open ended fund denominated in US Dollars that primarily invests in equities and other equity linked securities with exposure to the Sri Lankan market. However, the Sri Lanka fund has a high minimum investment requirement of \$50,000 along with a subsequent investment of \$10,000, annual management fees of 1.5% and its unlisted – meaning it's not really suitable for most retail investors.

On the ETF front, Global X, a New York-based ETF issuer behind some of the most popular new ETFs of the last several years (including commodity and emerging market ETFs), did file plans with the SEC back in 2011 for a number of country-specific international equity ETFs, including ETFs targeting frontier markets like Bangladesh, Kazak-hstan, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. Their proposed FTSE Sri Lanka ETF would track the FTSE Sri Lanka Index by having at least 80% of its total assets in the securities of the Underlying Index and in ADRs or GDRs based on the securities in the Underlying Index – giving investors exposure to some of the biggest companies based in the country. However, as of late 2013,

the FTSE Sri Lanka ETF had yet to launch and there is no word on when or if it will actually be created.

Given the lack of a country ETF, more adventurous foreign investors could consider opening a brokerage account in Sri Lanka (again, there are few restrictions on foreigners doing so) to directly trade or invest in local stocks or Unit Investment Trusts (UITs) from important Sri Lanka based investment groups like Candor Asset Management, Ceybank and Ceylon Asset Management (who are all members of the Unit Trust Association of Sri Lanka). Sri Lankan UITs act just like open-ended mutual funds as they invest in baskets of both Sri Lankan equities and bonds.

Other ways to invest in frontier markets like Sri Lanka

Given the lack of easy ways for foreign retail investors to directly invest in Sri Lanka, the next best bet for exposure to individual emerging or frontier markets just like Sri Lanka would be the following mutual funds or ETFs which track important emerging or frontier market indices:

The Guggenheim Frontier Markets ETF (NYSEARCA: FRN). iShares MSCI Frontier 100 ETF (NYSEARCA: FM).

In addition, WisdomTree Funds and Invesco PowerShares Capital Management both have several emerging market focused ETFs

listed on US exchanges while both American and non-American investors might want to look at the large number of emerging market and frontier market products which may have exposure to Sri Lanka or similar frontier markets.

Some final words on Sri Lanka

The final defeat of the Tamil Tigers some five years ago means Sri Lanka has a chance to live up to its full potential, but rebuilding the country's war-shattered economy and improving its infrastructure to attract more tourists and further foreign investment will take time. Given the lack of easy ways to invest directly in Sri Lanka right now through internationally-listed ADRs or ETFs, most retail investors will probably want to keep the country on their watch lists while keeping in mind current frontier market ETF offerings. With that said, you should also put Sri Lanka on your list of potential holiday destinations in order to experience everything the country has to offer.

Don Freeman is president of Freeman Capital Management, a Registered Investment Advisor with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), based in Phuket, Thailand. He has over 15 years experience and provides personal financial planning and wealth management to expatriates. Specializing in UK and US pension transfers. Call 089-970-5795 or email: freemancapital@gmail.com.



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B240bn loss in GDP feared

A PROLONGED political conflict would dampen Thai economic growth, shaving up to 240 billion baht off gross domestic product (GDP) and causing the country to lag behind its neighbors, a private-sector group warned yesterday.

Meanwhile, other countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam and Cambodia are expected to enjoy GDP growth of 5-6% this year.

The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking said a political vacuum in the first half of this year due to the unresolved political conflict would have

a profound impact on the growth of Thailand's economy. This would be due to a lack of stimulation from the government, a slowdown of domestic investment and consumption, and decreased investor confidence due to higher risks, leading to missed opportunities for new investment.

The group, which includes members of the commerce, industry and banking sectors, convened its meeting yesterday.

Payungsak Chartsutipol, chairman of the Federation of Thai Industries, said the committee

estimated that if the political conflict is prolonged, the Thai economic growth rate would be 1.5 to 2 percentage points lower than the previous forecast of 5%. If it lasts for six months, the country's GDP would lose 120bn baht.

“The most worrisome aspect of a prolonged absence of government is the lack of public spending to help stimulate the economy, and the impact on the investment environment and investors' trust, which will have a negative effect on the economy in the long run,” he said.

– The Nation

Local pineapples get sweetened stimulus

By Saran Mitrarat

PHUKET Governor Maitri Inthasut has underlined his commitment to developing the island's pineapple industry, having confirmed a budget of 1.1 million baht to train local farmers and expand the available growing area in Thalang.

On January 31, Gov Maitri led officers on an inspection tour to harvest and sample pineapples from the plantation of Wichai Saetun at Baan Bang Roang in the Pa Khlok sub-district.

"Mr Wichai is the president of the local pineapple farmers' association and received the Geographical Indication (GI) certification from the Ministry of Commerce in November 2007, showing that his Phuket pineapples are uniquely different from other provinces," said Gov Maitri.

In the past few years, Phuket's pineapples, known as *yanut* in the Southern Thai tongue, have gained a reputation in the domestic market.

"Phuket's pineapple is distinct from those in other provinces. Our pineapple has its own unique smell and taste: sweet and fresh," said Gov Maitri. "The uniqueness is a result of ideal weather conditions and granite-infused soil."

Although there are already numerous pineapple farms on the island, there is not enough to meet the demand here. The government still has to import them from other provinces, he said.

"I decided to allocate 1.1mn baht from the provincial strategy budget on this project to support local farmers and increase the number of pineapples we produce on the island," Gov Maitri Inthasut explained.

Phuket has 2,530 rai of pineapple gardens that employ about 40 to 50 farmers and their families, he added. Gov Maitri clarified that the 1.1mn baht budget will be used to increase land allocated for pine-



HITS THE SPOT: Phuket Governor Maitri Inthasut (right) recently led an inspection tour of Wichai Saetun's pineapple plantation in Thalang.

apples as well as for organizing training courses to teach farmers how to improve the quality and value of their products.

The project will emphasize adding value to products and services; for example, producing pineapple jam and dried, pressed fruit rolls (*saparod kuan*), pineapple juice, as well as the facilitation of pineapple harvesting itineraries for tourists.

"Once the project is underway, I expect that more local farmers will become interested in pineapple farming. The pineapples take 15 months to grow and will be sold for 15 baht each," he added. "These plantations are one more way to generate money for farmers and for the island."

Governor Maitri is also exploring the prospect of developing Phuket's goat farming sector, which he plans to make a priority for the 2015 fiscal budget.

According to the governor, the Phuket provincial development strategy budget for the 2014 fiscal year of about 126 million-baht, will be allocated for a number of economic, infrastructure and agricultural projects.

In addition to pineapples, the government plans to subsidize similar projects this year to promote the rubber and rice (1.4mn baht) and lobster (1.96mn baht) sectors, working from a agricultural stimulus package totaling 4.46mn baht.

In brief...

Shutdown: tours, gems and food most affected

THE Industrial Promotion Department disclosed that tourism, gems and jewelry, and food industries had been the most affected industries by the political protest during the last three months.

Mrs. Atchaka Sibunruang, Director-General of Industrial Promotion Department said that the political demonstration in Bangkok during the last three months had already affected the industrial sector, especially the SME industry related to tourism.

The most affected businesses were gems and jewelry and One Tambon One Product (OTOP), while the food industry came second, stemming from the decreasing number of tourists, and thus lower demand. However, an assessment on the impact was being conducted to work out ways to help these businesses. - NNT

Trang's underwater wedlock still in demand

TRANG province will soon hold this year's underwater wedding festival, the 18th of its kind.

Somsak Parisuttho Hemmanon, the governor of Trang province, announced the holding of the underwater wedding festival on Tuesday. The events will take place between the 10 and 12 this month, and will be participated by 31 couples from Thailand and abroad.

The underwater wedding festival in Trang has become world renowned. Couples will dive in the Andaman Sea off the coast of Trang province to conduct registration of their marriage underwater. - NNT

Do you have an interesting property or business story lead or idea that deserves space on these pages? If so, please email us: features@phuketgazette.net

HK Express welcomes new execs

HK EXPRESS recently announced the appointment of two new senior executives, Zhi-min Ma as executive chairman and president, and Luke Lovegrove as commercial director of HK Express, with effect from January 13, 2014 and January 8, 2014 respectively.

In his role as executive chairman and president, Mr Ma is responsible for representing the interests of the various investors in HK Express, Hong Kong's only low fare airline. Mr Ma has significant experience in the aviation industry, having worked in a variety of senior positions for almost 16 years. Prior to joining HK Express, he served as president of West Air in China where he was responsible for guiding West Air through its transition into a low cost carrier.

He has also held numerous senior positions at several ma-



HK Express has nine flights per week to Hong Kong from Phuket.

jor airlines in mainland China and internationally, including HNA Aviation, Lucky Air and Hainan Airlines. Mr Ma graduated from Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics' College of Civil Aviation.

In his new position as commercial director, Mr Lovegrove will be responsible for HK Express' commercial activities, including sales, distribution, network, marketing, public relations and revenue management.

Mr Lovegrove brings with him 12 years' experience in the aviation industry, the majority of that earned at low cost carriers. He served previously as chief commercial officer of Peach Aviation in Japan and has also held several senior roles at Tiger Airways, including helping set up Tiger Australia, group business development for Tiger Singapore and commercial oversight for Tiger's LCC joint ventures across Asia.

HK Express has recently introduced nine weekly direct flights from Phuket International airport to Hong Kong. Tickets are approximately 7,500 baht return and 3,615 for one-way. Hong Kong Express currently offers air travel to nine destinations throughout Asia. See related article on page 44.

- Phuket Gazette



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Babes need to go aquatic

MUCH has been written about water safety in this space over the years. However, with a focus on maritime accidents and tourist drownings, we have neglected the troubling issue of the island's children not being properly taught to swim, as a series of heart-breaking tragedies in recent weeks indicates (see page 2-3).

As the only "naked ape", there can be little doubt that humankind's unique ability among primates to master swimming has been an important, yet often overlooked, element of our evolutionary success.

Swimming, along with a host of other advanced cognitive and physical abilities, is best developed from an early age. There is considerable evidence to indicate that our brains are "hardwired" to pick up swimming naturally at about the same age we learn to walk.

However, lack of natural exposure to water during these years often ends much the same as an eye deprived of light during formative years – it fails to develop.

Learning to swim is like learning a language, the longer it is put off the harder it is. Many organizations dedicated to child safety, such as the American Society of Pediatrics, now say that children as young as one year of age can benefit from informal swimming lessons. Studies cited show a decrease in the odds of drowning deaths, even in this age range.

However, the benefits do not stop there. Research led by Griffith University in Australia last year revealed that children who can swim also demonstrate more advanced cognitive and physical abilities than their non-swimming peers.

The children in the study were anywhere from six to 15 months ahead of the normal population when it came to problem solving in mathematics, counting, language and following instructions.

On Phuket, children are exposed to open water far more often than their counterparts in most other places in the world. In addition to our beaches, there are tin mine ponds, canals – not to mention thousands of swimming pools, few with lifeguards.

Unfortunately, there are only a handful of schools on the island that include swimming as part of their physical education program, and even in these cases the methods of instruction and time of exposure to water are often inadequate.

Most drowning deaths are the direct result of panic, so the key to avoiding them is confidence, which is the product of success over time. In fact, if people simply had the confidence to float in water over their heads, it would prevent the vast majority of drowning tragedies that are chronicled so often in these pages.

Parents need to consider the rewards of teaching their kids to swim from an early age. The cost can be as little as a weekly trip to a local beach, and in this regard we are truly spoiled for choice.



Obstacles in the path to safer roads

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Opinion: Safe Phuket roads still nowhere to be found, February 2

Nothing will change here: death is acceptable, ignorance is acceptable. What can you do when a police officer without a helmet drives through a red light? People do what they like here because they can!

Jim
Gazette forum

Phuket will lose a lot with new yacht law

Re: Gazette online, Phuket boat tracking system operational, February 1

Forget AIS, dredging the Boat Lagoon channel or any marina expansion plans.

Unless they repeal this ill-conceived two-month rule, there won't be any visiting yachts or any support businesses here. Just a lot of unemployment and a massive – yes, massive – loss to the Phuket economy. People will not import their boats into Thailand, just as they won't pay inflated prices for rice!

David Dobson
Gazette forum

International media not getting protest

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Gazette Thailand News: Election Special – How did we end up here? From Thaksin to today, February 2

Well done, Phuket Gazette. It has been plain to most expats here that "Thaksin orders, Pheu Thai acts", but this synopsis seems to be largely unreported in the international media, leaving many with the opinion that the democratically elected leader of the country is being usurped. Credit to you for printing the truth.

Pete
Gazette forum

Letters to the Editor

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

Messy pier disasters

Re: Gazette online, Phuket's one-stop yacht center to open next week, January 30

Two great examples of incompetence and perhaps corruption in projects built with substandard materials to increase profit for the builders in order to fund certain 'expenses' of civil servants are Chalong Bay Marina and Rawai Pier.

At Chalong Pier, getting tourists on and off boats is a mess, and the area is now extremely dangerous because of the invisible concrete blocks just below the surface. Rawai Pier is useless for boats.

Asterix
Gazette forum

Patong Hill ban fades

Re: Gazette online, Phuket bus ban trial date pushed back, limited to traffic-heavy hours, February 1

"We'll push it back, restrict it, then just let it fade away" is closer to what will really happen.

The last serious accident wasn't even during those peak hours. Driver education and serviceable vehicles are the answer – any competent driver can safely navigate the hill.

Mister Ree
Gazette forum

More than one way to get to Bangkok

Re: Gazette online, Rice farmer protest closes Phuket highway to Bangkok, February 3

Check the Google map for Ratchaburi. On either side of 004 (AH2) are several provincial num-

bered highways and even older arteries.

Consider using them a visual tour of older structures at a reduced speed and enjoy the opportunity.

Michael Maurice Arwin
Gazette forum

Not enough done to keep Nai Harn safe

Re: Gazette online, Girl in critical condition pulled from bottom of sea at Phuket beach, January 31

I was at the beach when this happened, and things didn't look good for that little girl.

Nai Harn is over-crowded at the moment. Minibuses are bringing people from Patong and the beach is jam-packed. How can the few lifeguards keep an eye out for everyone?

More money should be invested in beach safety, lifeguards and education for the kids here about strong currents.

Melanie Long
Facebook

Nonvoting boozers

Re: Gazette online, March 30 eyed for Phuket alcohol ban, February 4

I always buy my Scotch in good quantity (at the Boat Lagoon mini-mart) and keep it at home for these weird election festivals.

It's possible, I suppose, that whoever in Bangkok makes the no-booze rules forgets that resident foreigners and tourists cannot vote!

Art Anderson
Gazette forum

Keep hikers safe

Re: Gazette online, Video Report: German couple lost in Phuket jungle, found safe, January 30

The second "tourist got lost" story in about a month. Better put up some warning signs.

Felicity
Wichit

Phuket Gazette

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Taking the higher path to reporting

FIRST PERSON

THE field of reporting has changed a lot since I was young. It used to be that you didn't need a degree, you just needed to be able to communicate quickly, write well and know a lot of people.

Nowadays more universities are offering journalism courses, which is a good thing. Obviously, it's good for reporters to get formal training. Maybe not so obvious is how important it is that they are taught the value of integrity. This makes it harder for people to control them.

In the old days, news could be bought more easily. If someone was accused of corruption and didn't want the fact published, he could pay to kill a story. And reporters would sell information too. If they had access to government officers and police schedules, they could warn people ahead of time about raids or inspections.

Formal journalism education has helped minimize these habits, but reporters today still face financial temptations. They might be offered money to not report the truth or to write something bad about someone. Those who want an event covered might offer "gas money" to reporters to write about it. And some reporters might be lured into selling their stories out of house.

I want new reporters to know that the quality they should nurture most is honesty.

By bringing information to the public, we help create reality for our readers. This obligates us to do our best to find the truth and not add our own opinion or any slant to it when we report it. And



Boonrat Apiwanthanakorn, 56, from Haad Yai, is the new president of the Phuket Press Club. He has a BA from the Teacher College in Songkhla and over 20 years experience in journalism, working for *Kietibhumi* and *Chaotai* newspapers and Thai TV Channels 3 and 5. He now works for *Khaosod* newspaper and the *Phuket Andaman*, which he owns.

Here, he talks about the qualifications that reporters should have and the challenges they face.

it obligates us to report both sides to any conflict.

There's an interesting contradiction to reporting today. On the one hand, we have more training for journalists, so the field has become more restrictive. On the other hand, with the internet, everyone can be a reporter now.

Whoever encounters an unfolding event can ask questions, take photos and post it all online.

There's one thing these amateur reporters should keep in mind: people's privacy. This applies particularly to photos. There are some pictures that just shouldn't go online – explicit photos of victims of shootings, drownings or accidents. They should be blurred or cropped first. Names should be handled with sensitivity too, especially those of victims under 18 and women who have been raped.

If you were the victim, would you want to see your name and photo online?

One of the hardest things about

being a journalist is dealing with officers – government or police – who decline to comment or who won't clarify facts for us. We know that sometimes officers can't talk, but when they can but don't, it sometimes prevents justice from being served.

Officers can actually benefit by talking to us. For one thing, when they tell us what's going on, we know that they are working and not wasting our taxpayer money. Giving information is also a way to prevent corruption. If they are honest operators, they will not be afraid to reveal facts.

Reporting can be a dangerous job. When we investigate land encroachment, illegal logging, corruption and so on, we may make some people so unhappy that we put our own lives at risk. In these cases, we need government protection.

I don't mind if I die chasing the truth, but I worry about my family. How can they live after I am gone?



Wait for the third way, a motorcycle taxi driver advised. Photo: Eric Molina

All it takes is time

Island View

By Damian Evans

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

his phone after dropping a passenger off in Phuket Town.

We survived the War on Drugs, we watched as the Deep South spiralled further into violence, murder and mayhem, and we witnessed Thailand caught in the throes of democratic upheaval that led to the coup in 2006.

As for the country's latest state of affairs, he was as up to date as anyone could be. Even that Sunday morning he already knew of the American journalist who had been injured in the pre-election shootout in Bangkok. He even knew the extent of the injury.

I had to ask what he thought of the protests that had laid siege to Bangkok.

"Something had to happen. There's too much corruption. Everyone knows it. Too much."

But what about the protesters stopping people from exercising the right to vote?

He shook his head. "No one has the right to do that. Everyone has the right to vote."

So what should we do?

"This will take time, but it's not worth violence. Just give it time."

You see, in Thailand there is always another way.

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

Fixing the rest of the problem at Nai Harn

I was glad to see that the misleading lane lines at the intersection on the northeast corner of Nai Harn Lake had been repainted. Now it is clear which is the minor and which is the major road.

I saw that the stop sign was removed from Route 4233, the

major road, which was also good.

Only one problem remains: no stop sign was added to the minor road that goes along the north side of the lake.

This means that cars on neither road will stop at the intersection, a very dangerous state of affairs!

Do police plan to put up a stop sign there?

Beth
Rawai

Weerasak Rukleng, an officer at the Highways Department Phuket Office, replies:

Thank you for your concern. We installed a stop sign on the minor road on the north side of the lake on January 30.

Is Rawai beachfront parking public?

On the Rawai beachfront, is it legal for businesses to claim that the parking spots in front of their establishments are for their customers only?

Recently it has become prevalent for business operators, both foreigners and Thais, to adopt threatening and thuggish behavior should anyone park in front of their establishment but go to another.

Tom Ulmann
Rawai

Weerasak Rukleng, Highway officer responsible for Highway 4233 (Rawai Beach road) replies:

The road is for public use.

The highway department does not normally paint parking spots on highway roads, but in some cases, to better control traffic, the

municipality will take charge of parking management, including painting parking lines.

Supawat Srisuk, Rawai Municipality officer, replies:

Thank you for your question. The parking spots on the Rawai beachfront road are all available for the public to use. Business owners along the road may not claim that parking is for their customers only.

We are now in the process of creating signs in three languages: Thai, Chinese and English, to show everyone that the parking is public. We expect to complete the signs soon.

Public parking means whoever wants to park there may, but please park within the painted lines. If you do not, you will get a ticket from the police.

If you find a business that has blocked parking for their customers, you are within your rights to remove the block and park in the spot, if you are brave enough.

However, to avoid being threatened by business owners, as you described, it is probably better that you take a photo and bring it to our office on Moo 6 Wiset Road to file a complaint. Or you can call 076-613801, and I will come to the scene to inspect.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers



The new stop sign at Nai Harn. Photo: Weerasak Rukleng

YOUR Phuket

PHUKET MOURNS SUPREME PATRIARCH AFTER 100 DAYS

Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut participated in the 100-days Buddhist mourning rites for the late Supreme Patriarch Somdet Phra Yannasangwon, held in Phuket on January 30 in the Ordination Hall of Wat Khao Rang Samakitham in Talad Yai, Phuket Town.



NIKKI BEACH PHUKET IS NOW OPEN

Nikki Beach Worldwide expands its presence in Asia with the opening of Nikki Beach Phuket, the brand's second location in Thailand and tenth location across the globe.



Julie Thammavong, PR Manager at the restaurant of Diamond Beach Club (left) and Oranee Hildebrand, Managing Director of the Phuket Gazette.



Jon Staffas, Nikki Beach Koh Samui (left) and Pontus Lantz, Nikki Beach Thailand.

MEDIA FAM TRIP 2014

Hong Kong Express Airways and Osaka Government Tourist Bureau organized a Media Fam Trip for 2014 to Osaka and Hong Kong inviting journalists from Phuket and Chaingmai to join the tour.



SHANGHAI LOVE STORY THE MUSICAL

Central Festival Phuket celebrated Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day with a showing of the famous "Shanghai Love Story" musical, performed by Thai acting superstars.



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PROPERTY of the week



See page 23

JOB of the week

The PARADISE KOH YAO
Boutique Beach Resort & Spa

'Island hideaway near Phuket'

See page 26

EDUCATION of the week



Oak Meadow International School

See page 29

BOAT of the week



See page 32

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Properties For Sale

**NAI HARN
SANDS CONDO**

Bargain unit. Ground floor, 2-bed, 125sqm, fully furnished, only 6.6 million baht. Please call 089-652 1951 (English & Thai). Email: phuket.pn@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.myphuketproperties.com

**POOL VILLA
MISSION HEIGHTS**

3 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, huge living room, large swimming pool, priced 12 million baht or 15 million baht, depending on your needs. For more information, please call 076-528024, 087-060 8400 (English). Email: picharly@gmail.com

**2 PLOTS OF LAND FOR SALE
BAN KOH RAED, PHANG NGA PROVINCE**

1). 121 rai with Certificate of Utilization (N.S.3K), seaview and can see Sarasin Bridge. 1 million baht per rai.

2). 8.5 rai with Certificate of Utilization (N.S.3K), next to the pier of Raed Island. 7 million baht per rai.

The Certificate of Utilization can be changed to land title deed upon request. Tel: 089-471 0202 (Thai), 089-646 3533 (English)

**APARTMENT
FOR SALE**

Good for residential project or long-term stay. 2-apartment buildings with 84 rooms, including 2-storage buildings, good for restaurant business, total building area 2,135 sqm. Situated on residential big plot of land 3-3-23 Rai-Ngan-Wah (6,092 sqm) of land. 1.6km to Phuket FantaSea, 2km to Kamala Beach. 60 million baht only. Tel: 092-280 9938

FOR SALE SEA VIEW

1 bedroom apartment at Eden Resort Karon. Only 15 apartments in complex. Fully furnished, gym and 20x5m swimming pool. Please call 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.com

**SEAVIEW CONDO
RAWAI**

6.5 million baht, freehold, 120sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Tel: 090-408 3800. Email: adrian_troy@yahoo.com

A Luxury Villa REDUCED to 42 MB. from 48 MB.

This villa sits on 1.8 rai in Kathu, comprising 1 main villa, 1 detached apartment, 1 leisure building, fitted kitchen, 5 ensuite bedrooms, 9 bathrooms. Separate office/maids quarters. A large swimming pool and much more. 5-10 mins to shopping centers, Phuket Town, 4 golf courses, 15 mins to Patong. Secured by CCTV alarm system and electronically controlled gates. This villa has to be viewed to be appreciated. View online www.youtube.com: type in 'big house in Phuket'. Viewing by appointment only. CALL 084-293 7923 (Thai/Eng), 081-854 0061 (Eng). Email: mrgeoffcurry@yahoo.com

**HOME / OFFICE RAWAI
5.5MB ONO**

3 storeys, remote door, 3 bedrooms, aircon, front/rear terraces, sea view. Tel: 093-787 7212 (English & Thai), 082-285 6544. Email: mrs mummygift@gmail.com

**LAND CHANOTE
PHUKET**

1 to 5 rai, Sakoo, 10 mins south of airport. 5 mins to beach. 3.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 087-076 6016. Email: kanchanajit09@gmail.com

CHEAP LAND SALE

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

**CONDO AT
RATCHAPORN PLACE**

In Kathu for sale or rent. Near Phuket Country Club Golf Course. 36sqm furnished, aircon. 1 bedroom. Sale: 1.75 million baht. Rent: 13,000 baht per month with 1-year contract. Common area included. Tel: 089-472 9118

SALE DOWN PAYMENT

DCondo Campus Resort. Studio type 29.7sqm, 1 bed/bath. Move in March. Tel: 087-270 9093 (English & Thai). Email: sec@phuketawnings.com

**MODERN VILLA
KATHU WATERFALL**

3-bedroom, 4-bathroom, infinity pool, fully furnished. Email: cdgremy@gmail.com

THE SANDS, NAI HARN

2nd-floor unit, foreign freehold. 2-bed, 147sqm, fully furnished, very private with balcony, covered parking, pool, WiFi, security. 8.5 million baht. Please call 089-652 1951 (English & Thai). Email: phuket.pn@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.myphuketproperties.com

**CONDO(S) FOR SALE
IN KATHU**

DCondo Kathu, Patong, Sansiri Project, 13 different units to choose, swimming pool, gym, park, CCTV, 24hr security, key card access, car park, ready to furnished. Price: 1,173,550 baht reduced to 1,429,050 baht. Tel: 085-339 8272. Email: alpo@clubaonangbeach.com For further details, please see our website at www.sansiri.com/condominium/dcondo_kathu_patong/en/

**CONDO(S)
FOR SALE - KATHU**

Several condos for sale, 29 to 70sqm. Common pool, gym, garden, lift, car park, 24hr security. Starting price: 1,173,550 baht. Tel: 085-339 8272. Email: alpo@clubaonangbeach.com

**CHEAP LAND
FOR SALE**

Many plots. East Phuket, start from 500,000 baht, excellent terms. Contact owner. Tel: 095-068 1672, 081-970 4765 (Thai). Email: merv@indigore.com

Private Home For Sale 21 Million Baht

Private home in Kathu on 650sqm. 2 storeys, 3 ensuite bedrooms, 1 office, 4 bathrooms. Spacious living/dining area with access to a large pool and Jacuzzi. The kitchen is fully fitted, the house is 85% furnished. 5-10 mins to shopping centers, Phuket Town, 4 golf courses, 15 mins to Patong. Security 24hrs. View online www.youtube.com: type in 'pool house in Phuket'. Viewing by appointment only. CALL 084-293 7923 (Thai/Eng), 081-854 0061 (Eng). Email: mrgeoffcurry@yahoo.com

**KAMALA
APARTMENT**

Forest setting, 3 bedrooms, fully furnished, swimming pools, 3.5 million baht. Tel: 076-317914 or email dyhkt@hotmail.co.uk, www.phuketcondoforsale.com

**UK HOUSE
PROPERTY SWAP**

Permanent exchange offered of very spacious extended detached 4 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, garage, 3 reception rooms, etc. mortgage free, situated in UK, to swap for suitable property in good secure location in Phuket. Will also consider apartments. Tel: 080-046 2845. Email: Lynne.Morzeltangan@yahoo.co.uk

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PROPERTY FASTER**

Advertise with us – you get inquiries, sell and pay zero agent commissions. Save thousands of baht. Only 7,900 baht for online marketing, until sold. Tel: 076-383 796, 081-370 3181 (English & Thai). Email: info@1800-realty.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

5 bedrooms, swimming pool, large garden. Separate maid's quarter. US\$500,000. Please call 084-185 4746

PATONG FREEHOLD

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 100sqm. Please call 081-612 4187. Email: nicolaas5@yahoo.com

**SEA VIEW
TOWNHOME**

Four levels, swimming pool, jacuzzi, 600sqm built up area, hardwood floors, imported windows, Sneidero Italian kitchen, 3 ensuite bedrooms, 2 living areas. Fully furnished to high standards. 200 meters to the beach. 21 million baht. Tel: 090-156 2050 (English). Email: nickbatley79@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.facebook.com/TheEvaSeaView

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2-BEDROOM BEACH APARTMENTS

At Phuket's finest beach (3 minutes walk), great for families. Available now! Email: resortgm@gmail.com

RAWAI BEACH CONDO

One bedroom, good views, balcony, 8,500 baht per month. Tel: 086-057 7714

NEW MODERN TOWNHOUSE

New, fully furnished townhouses (completed in 2013) for rent. 3 bedrooms, water heater, 2 aircons, built-in kitchen, WiFi etc. 25,000 baht per month. From next month (March 2014). Tel: 085-055 9576. Email: intira.boon sith@gmail.com

SHARE SEAVIEW VILLA PHUKET

Offer to share rent out self-contained, furnished living and sleeping sections, I am German, recently widowed and looking for female live-in companion over 50. Email: azzuro2000@gmail.com

CHEAP RENT HOUSE

1 bedroom, furnished, WiFi, near Panwa view point. Rent: 7,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311. For further details, please see our website at <http://panwa.green.weebly.com>

POOL VILLA IN NAI HARN

3 bedrooms, available February 20. 80,000 baht per month. Short-term rent possible. Please ask price. Tel: 082-420 7052

HOUSE FOR RENT

Patong Beach, seaview, from Kalim, private beach, jacuzzi, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, American kitchen. Tel: 087-419 7712. Email: choosanehsumetra@gmx.fr

PATONG 1 + 2 BEDROOM APTS.

Modern units in quiet location. Free WiFi, pool, parking, maid. Short or long term. Tel: 080-052 8082. Email: phv condo@aol.com

LUXURY VILLAS FOR RENT KAMALA

2 villas in modern style, one of 3 bedrooms and one of 2 bedrooms, private swimming pool, big garden, jacuzzi. Contact Francesco. Tel: 085-790 7816. Email: francesco bonta@gmail.com See our website at www.villa.cheloni.com

PRIVATE RENTAL PATONG

1-bed apartment, fully furnished, washing machine, gym, swimming pool, WiFi, cable TV, parking, 800m to beach. Available March 1. Tel: 085-069 0938. Email: nnorthwo@hotmail.com

LOVELY APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Call 081-539 9612, 087-633 1472. Email: chrispalmer56@gmail.com, for further information, please see our website at <http://pukeyomfc2.web.fc2.com/phuketcondorent.htm>

BRAND-NEW STUDIO FOR RENT

Close to Patong Beach, free WiFi and cable. 12,000 baht monthly. Please call 081-878 2199, 081-396 0880 or email sumonmarn@phuketrealife.com

PARADISE FOR RENT

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool villa, very quiet, western standard, aircon, WiFi. Tel: 083-395 5330 (English), +41-07-9661 4061. Email: c.spleiss@robert-spleiss.ch Please visit our website at www.naiarn-villa.com

LOVELY TOWNHOUSE

Boat Lagoon, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, carport, long term: 30,000 baht per month. Car/house rental package available. Tel: 093-580 6778. Email: crystal eva1@hotmail.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

LUXURY POOL VILLA

Boat Lagoon, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, Western kitchen, established garden, fenced pool. 75,000 baht per month. Tel: 093-580 6778. Email: crystaleva1@hotmail.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 For further information, please see our website at www.phuket-condo.net

KATA SEAVIEW APARTMENT

Fully furnished, quiet, Kata Hill. Tel: 086-281 9311. Email: bao200@gmail.com

BEACHFRONT CHALONG

Furnished, 2-bedroom apartment, pool, WiFi, cable, quiet, secure. Long term: 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-470 6104

POOL VILLAS FOR RENT IN RAWAI

3 bedrooms, private pool, fully air-conditioned, maid staff, garden and pool services included. Great prices for long-term rentals. Tel: 087-893 8747

LUXURY POOL VILLA BY LAGUNA

Big discount, 8 months on lease, only 19,000 baht, extra for utilities. Has WiFi, lounge, cable, jacuzzi room and more. Live in a tropical garden. Tel: 089-594 4067

HOUSE IN KATHU FOR RENT

2-storey house, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms in Sabai Village Kathu, fully furnished. 18,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-185 5318 (English & Thai). Email: aood16@hotmail.com

CHALONG BUNGALOW LONG RENT

2/3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 aircons, some furniture; tiled yard, 1 car space. Chao Fa Thani, 15,000 baht per month. Email: uptonsm@hotmail.com

NICE HOUSE CHALONG

400sqm, furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, European kitchen, 4 aircons, swimming pool, jacuzzi. Rent: 20,000 baht. Sale: 4.9 million baht. Tel: 082-809 2873 (English & Thai)

NAI HARN 2-BED BEACH CONDOS

Spacious apartments for rent, kitchen, garden, shared pool, beach 3 minutes walk. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

RAWAI POOL STUDIO

1,000 baht per day, 25,000 baht per month. Available for 1,2,3,4,5 bed. Private Studio, each has bedroom, bathroom, aircon, LED TV, desk, fridge, kitchen, pool, parking. 200m to Rawai Beach pier. Please call 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

WALK TO KATA BEACH

2 bedrooms/3 bathrooms, furnished, new home. 500m to beach. Available January 2014 onwards. 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-472 1010 (English & Thai)

CONVENIENT STUDIO

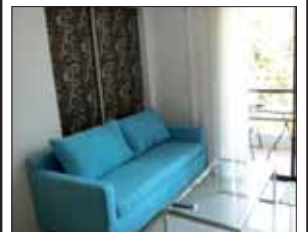
33sqm studio/apartment, furnished, kitchen, 10 minutes to Central. 6,000 baht per month. Email: paulistathai@hotmail.com

STUNNING KATA BEACH VIEW

Kata Beach villa, furnished, 3 beds, 3 baths. 70,000 baht per month, long term. Tel: 081-003 6902. Email: contact@purist.biz

PHUKET VILLA 5 FOR RENT

Comes with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 aircons, big living area. No furnished, built-in kitchen and car park. Located behind Kajonkiet School on Chao Fa West Road, just only 5 minutes to Central Festival. Available in January 2014. For short or long term rent. Please call to see and for more information: 087-270 9093

CONDO AT RATCHAPORN PLACE

In Kathu for rent or sale. Near Phuket Country Club Golf Course. 36 sqm, furnished, aircon. 1 bedroom. Rent: 13,000 baht per month with 1-year contract, common area included. Sale: 1.75 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118

FOR RENT RAWAI/NAI HARN

Vassana Residence and Palm Breeze Resort. Low season prices starting at 30,000 baht per month for long-term rent. Sea view rooftop deck and bar overlooking the Andaman Sea. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. LCD TV in every room, washing machine in every apartment, swimming pool. 160sqm in size, free WiFi. Tel: 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.com

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All you need for a professional kitchen: stainless steel work, gas system, air conditioner, security camera, wood-fired pizza oven and used equipment. Tel: 081-416 7475, 084-845 4743 (Thai). Please see our website at www.mrkkitchen.com

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**THAI BAR STAFF
REQUIRED**

Thai female bar staff needed. Salary starting from 8,000 baht. Earn more on top with tips + commissions. Includes free room and use of motorbike. Tel: 087-382 0764 (English & Thai), 089-650 7076 (English & Thai). Email: mail@phuketour guides.com

ADMIN HOTEL WANTED

Experience needed in Microsoft Excel and Word. Daily record on cash income, stocks, timecards, and booking vouchers. Good comments in English writing and speaking working under GM. Tel: 081-968 5963 (English). Email: c@bayshoreprojects.com

**EARN 30,000-
120,000 BAHT/
MONTH**

Cruise ship staff needed. Work 3-7 month shift. All expenses paid. Must speak English. Tel: 093-728 1003 (English). Send resume/photo to jobs@seastaffing.com

**RECEPTIONIST
WANTED**

For small guesthouse near the beach in Patong. Good salary and benefits. Some English spoken preferred, writing and computer skills. Contact John. Tel: 092-069 7408. Email: jmiles@inet.net.au

PHP PROGRAMMER

Seeking a PHP programmer with experience in Code Igniter for a long-term project. Tel: 094-316 6005 (English & Thai). Email: john@jpdigitaltech.com

**VILLA MANAGER
(LIVE IN)**

Manager of house team, House keeper, Food & Beverage, Re-pairs. Excellent spoken English, leadership, service-minded skills. Own car. Tel: 087-881 0003. Send CV to hr@luxuryvillasandhomes.com

CALL CENTER

Newly established call Center (outbound) in Chiang Mai looking for Dutch, French, German speaking agents. WP+ visa provided after trial period for relocations. Room provided in first month. Interested applicants, please apply with CV at jobs@cmmd-intl.com

**EUROPEAN
CHEF HIRE**

Best Western Premier Bangtao Beach Resort & Spa is looking for chef, sous chefs, bartenders, and service staff. We want both full time and part time. Good salary with work permit. Tel: 081-905 8353. Please call or send email to hrbangtao@oceanresortgroup.net

**Marketing Staff Wanted**

Staff required to join a marketing team to work at Central Festival. Thai female with good English communication skills.

Please call 089-594 6888. Email: info@arhouse.asia

DETOX STAFF

Thai national: experienced detox consultant, OR we can train you in detox. Must speak and write English. Tel: 085-783 0141. Email: info@phuketfit.com

**REAL ESTATE OFFICE
STAFF**

Siam Real Estate are opening new office in Laguna and require Thai staff with good English, computer and admin skills. Salary + commissions. Tel: 076-288908. Send CV to jobs@siamrealestate.com For further details, please see our website at www.siamrealestate.com

**MOUNTAIN BIKE
GUIDE**

Full-time bike guide. Must speak good English and provide excellent customer service. Also help in sales office. Tel: 087-263 2031 (English). Email: info@amazingbike toursthailand.asia. For further details, please see our website at www.Amazing Bike ToursThailand.asia

NANNY

Must be experienced with child care. Needed after school and weekends for two young boys. Thai only. Tel: 081-978 7756. Email: scot@paresaresorts.com

YACHT STEWARDESS

Thai national, 2 females, good English, salary+tips. Tel: 087-384 2743. Email: info@yacht-charter-thailand.com

**GERMAN CC
NEEDS STAFF**

We are seeking German-speaking people to work as a Call Agents, part and full time in our home office. Please contact us for further information. Send mail to: job@callcenteragent.at

**SENIOR & JUNIOR
COOK**

To assist Head Cook in maintaining a successful and profitable F&B Department - Degree in F&B Management or related degree, trained in traditional Thai and Western foods. Thai national, fluent in English. Starting salary 14,000 to 17,000 baht per month plus service charge. Position available now. Tel: 086-6041 333 (English). Please send CV to gm@ccshideaway.com

**The PARADISE KOH YAO
Boutique Beach Resort & Spa**

'Island hideaway near Phuket'

the paradise koh yao, a contemporary 70 room boutique resort is located on koh yao noi island, a 60 minute boat trip from phuket

our eco-chic environment is complemented by our 'conscious living' ethos of barefoot luxury philosophy - NOW complemented by a yoga and wellbeing center

we are looking for superb leaders to join our dynamic team

RESERVATION SUPERVISOR (1 position)

- 2-3 years experience in similar position

F&B/RESTAURANT MANAGER (1 position)

in charge of two restaurants / two bars - continuously working on further enhancing the service experience for our guests via team training programs and improved service procedures

- 3 - 5 years experience in equivalent property/position
- fluent in English language
- leader personality, creative with new product innovations
- Thai national

comprehensive remuneration/incentive package - we are looking for the best team leaders - please send your resume with picture to

gm@theparadisekohyao.com
www.theparadisekohyao.com **www.facebook.com/Paradise.KohYao.Boutique.Beach.Resort**

**WEBMASTER/
GRAPHIC/IT WORKER**

Knowledge in photo and video and good English skills required. Thai national only. Tel: 086-690 0444. Please contact rico@princessyachts thailand.com

**HOUSEKEEPER
NEEDED**

To manage and ensure the cleanliness of our operation. Must be a dynamic team worker with a pleasant personality. Contact us. Tel: 076-281227, 081-893 5492 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-281227. Email: jtissi er@aquamaster.net

**OFFICE MANAGER/
ACCOUNTANT**

Online company wants organized staff to manage office, accounting, inventory & orders. Tel: 082-276 1675. Email: jaisabai@gmail.com

**THAI EMPLOYEE -
OFFICE JOB**

Want an interesting job? New internet firm needs an employee, 20-35 years old, very good English and PC. CV in English only. Tel: 076-322663, 090-070 9633 (English & Thai). Email: massi mo.reve@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: 076-613173

KARON

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

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)**

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!

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

CLASSIFIEDS ADMINISTRATION 1 POSITION

Qualified candidates will be:

- ▶ Thai nationals, aged 22 years up
- ▶ Service-minded with an outgoing personality
- ▶ Able to work well with large numbers of advertisers, both foreign and Thai

and should have:

- ▶ A Bachelor's Degree from a recognizable university
- ▶ A good sense of organization and respect for details
- ▶ Knowledge of basic office software, InDesign and PageMaker would be a plus.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Khun Anna at Anna@PhuketGazette.Net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-273555, ext 102 Fax: 076-615240

SALES ASSISTANT NEEDED

Sales assistant needed to work at Lemongrass House Rawai Store. Sales experience and some English preferable. Tel: 089-443 6922 (English & Thai), 093-673 4409 (Thai). Email: aphart@gmail.com

FEMALE GUEST RELATIONS REP.

Female Guest Relations Representatives to work in night entertainment venue, must be able to speak 2 languages: either English, Russian, Chinese or Philippine. Please send resume or call. Tel: 093-007 8992 (English & Thai), 081-476 4700 (English & Thai). Email: redtoothgecko@yahoo.com

GUEST RELATIONS WANTED

Thai national: guest relations representative wanted, English speaking, afternoon shift, good pay + benefits! Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR WANTED

Qualified fitness instructor: work as instructor and co-ordinator (we provide work permit). Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

REPORTER

- ▶ Thai national (able to read, write, speak fluent Thai)
- ▶ Ability to communicate clearly in English
- ▶ Clear thinking in order to identify what makes a good news story
- ▶ Initiative and enthusiasm to track down a story
- ▶ Photography skills
- ▶ Able to manage own time effectively
- ▶ Knowledge of Burmese an advantage
- ▶ Driver's license

Good salary for the right candidate.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to Um@PhuketGazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-273555 Ext.402 Fax: 076-615240

WAITRESS WANTED

Thai national, English-speaking waitress wanted. Good salary + benefits! Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

RESORT STAFF WANTED

Urgently: night reception, housekeeping, restaurant and kitchen staff. Tel: 076-613903, 089-723 1128 (Thai), 085-227 8864. Email: yussies@gmail.com

EUROPEAN KITCHEN CHEF

Experience in European, mediterranean cuisine. Looking for job here in Phuket. Tel: 097-041 9481. Please call or send email to klaus.jkalisch@yahoo.com

MARKETING ASSISTANT WANTED

English-speaking Marketing Assistant with good computer and internet knowledge wanted. Tel: 086-690 0444. Please send CV to rico@Princessyachtsthailand.com

MARINA VIEW RESTAURANT



Phuket Boat Lagoon is looking for new restaurant operator. Contact Ple. Tel: 081-693 2791. Email: customercare@phuketboatlagoon.com

Sports & Entertainment Team Member

We are currently hiring a sports and entertainment team member to join our team in Khao Lak, Phang Nga. You will be responsible for participating in and animating all daily activities at the swimming pool, the beach or in our creative area. You must have knowledge of different sport activities such as aqua aerobics, zumba, yoga, volleyball, etc. English language skills are required. Good salary and work permit for the right candidate. If interested, please send a detailed CV, recent photograph and expected salary to



hrensimar@oceanresortgroup.net
Tel: 076-429800, 088-827 9329.

DIVE AND SURF SHOP

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

DANISH STAFF WANTED

Danish speaking, 20-30 years old, Send your CV and photo to naturejob13@gmail.com

SALES ASSISTANT (RETAIL)

To assist customers in finding items, provide excellent customer service at all times and build good guest relations. Good spoken English and pleasant personality is a must. Base salary 20,000 baht + commissions. Please send your resume to nina@tigermuaythai.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Thai national, female, 25-40 years old, self-motivated and attention to details, enthusiasm for learning new things, good communication skills in English and good computer literacy (Microsoft Office). Tel: 076-613680, 087-267 3747 (English). Fax: 076-613680. Send CV to helena@phuketabc.com

KARON CLIFF

Hostess, maid, engineer, waiter, and kitchen staff wanted. Tel: 087-265 6089.

3 WAITRESSES FOR RESTAURANT

Three English-speaking waitresses wanted for restaurant. Thai nationals only. Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

THAI OFFICE WORKER FOR GYM

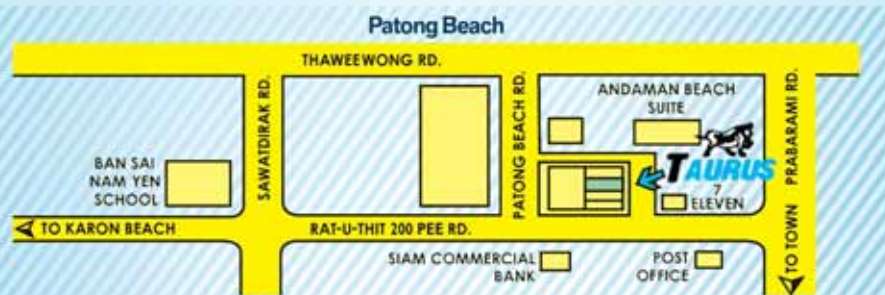
Muay Thai Gym. Wanting Thai office worker with good English. Tel: 080-613 3312 (English & Thai). Email: phuketopteam@gmail.com. Website: phuketopteam.com

STAFF NEEDED

New resort on island looking positions: Multilingual: 1) Manager - salary: 25,000 - 30,000 baht. 2) Barman - salary: 10,000 - 15,000 baht. English and Thai. 3) massage therapist - salary: 10,000 - 12,000 baht. 4) Housemaid - salary: 10,000 baht. meal and accomodation provided. Tel: 086-948 8559 (English), 088-447 9900 (English). Email: farangmd@gmail.com

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!**

Live in Karon?

Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at Euro style tailors



Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Anand: 076-396911 081-536 5550**

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!**

Looking for a **JOB?**

Looking for a better candidate?

Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PhuketGazette.Net!

Bar & Restaurant Equipment

GAS GRIDDLE

Never used, quick sale, stainless steel, free standing. For more information, please contact Joy. Tel: 089-970 6886

Bulletins

Alcoholics Anonymous

If you want to drink that is your business

If you want to stop that is ours

Daily Meetings

Patong, Phuket Town, Chalong, Surin, Karon

081-895 4763
084-307 7408

Email: phuketaa@yahoo.com

Google AA Phuket

Business Opportunities

INCREDIBLE PROJECT INVESTMENT

Luxury project for sale. 50% process done. Only 5 million baht. For more information, please call 080-891 1611. Email: aopoproject@gmail.com

RESTAURANT FOR SALE

Located Kamala, Phuket, near G-1 apartment. Price: 450,000 baht includes equipment. Tel: 086-007 3075

BEVERAGE BRAND

International beverage experts seeking investors for a new brand. From US\$ 10,000. Contact Mike. Tel: 086-057 7714

PATONG BEACH ROAD HOTEL

Rare. Only 50m from the beach, this well-known hotel is available immediately for lease on a long-term basis (3+3+3). Great Location in the heart of Patong Beach with 19 ensuite rooms and all hot water supplied free by solar panels on roof. Deal is 1.5 million baht key money, 150,000 monthly rent, and a guarantee 200,000 baht. Please call 081-468 6709 (English & Thai). Email: yonlada.collis@thegrandorchidinn.com

BOUTIQUE MASSAGE SHOP FOR SALE

Patong. Located on Nanai Road. 7 beds. Fully stocked. Equipped with high-end furniture. Well presented. Rent: 20,000 baht per month. Reluctant sale: 350,000 baht. Call 087-073 4233 or email: judgedread73@hotmail.com. Pics available.

BUILDING FOR RENT

1,000sqm, 50 rooms, 13 bathrooms, 2 kitchens. Commercial / residential. 4 rai of land, 7 minutes to airport. Very nice! Contact Merv. Tel: 081-970 4765. Email: merv@indigore.com

PATONG BAR FOR SALE

Busy OTOP market location, owner is going home, cheap price 950,000 baht. Tel: 082-816 8893

POPULAR EXPAT PUB SALE/LEASE

Popular profitable expat sports pub for sale / lease. Located on busy Sai Yuan Road in Rawai. Serious inquiries only. Tel: 088-752 4540 (English). Email: Pete.scustompins@aol.com

BAR FOR SALE

No key money, low rent, good stock, take on a new 1 year + 2 year extension (3-year contract). 1.3 million baht ono. Please call 090-067 3033. Email: lyntoncraig@gmail.com

PHI-PHI.COM FOR SALE

Koh Phi Phi's key travel portal http://phi-phi.com is for sale with or without the company that runs the travel website. Sale for personal reasons. Contact Phil. Tel: +44-019 8356 4289, +44-079 1513 5318. Email: pdr123@gmail.com

BRING GROUP TO MY SPA!

World-class spa for big group in Boat Lagoon. Big commission. Contact Waree Spa. Tel: 081-569 1661

DIVE CENTER FOR SALE

Once in a lifetime opportunity: Paradise Diving Asia Company Limited is selling its 12 years established 5-star dive center / retail shop at Nai Yang in Phuket, plus its unique location and connections. Tel: 081-891 5539 (English), 081-894 9517 (English). Email: paradisdiver@live.com

OPEN YOUR OWN PARTY STORE

High profit potential. Completely turnkey. Easy to run. Proven 20-year biz model. Full training provided. Please call 082-989 8280. Email: Funtasticmillionaire@gmail.com

BUSINESS SALE

Money making company of waterproofing, thermal insulation, construction chemicals, electrical materials and lights etc. For sale. Tel: 081-893 5717

SHOP FOR SALE

Inside Patong Promenade, fully stocked baby clothes, 3 year lease left. 2 million baht. Contact Tik. Tel: 084-746 4477

2 BARS FOR SALE

Bangla Road, Patong, 3 years lease. 2.5 million baht and 4.7 million baht. For more information, please call 087-184 6739.

RESTAURANT FOR SALE

3,800sqm with twin house, good lease, low rent, main Rawai Road. Sale: 1.3 million baht. Tel: 089-646 7176

INVEST IN SWISS STOCKS

The best Swiss stock fund for small and mid caps. Performance 2012+24%, 2013+30% in Swiss-France. www.swissactivealpha.ch or contact Niklaus Siegrist. Tel: 089-291 5437 (English & German). Email: niklaus.siegrist@invest-partners.ch

LAUNDRY FOR SALE

Established business for over 5 years. Good location. Tel: 083-105 9689

BAR FOR SALE

Good opportunity, Patong Beach, seaview, fully equipped, 4 big screen TVs, 30 seats, software cashier, popular location. For more information, please call 093-698 1921 (English), 087-205 2566 (Thai). Fax: 093-698 1921. Email: jeromearmand17@gmail.com

DUMPING

Soil, sand, construction, debris. Please call 081-893 5717

BAR & GRILL NAI YANG

160sqm with seating for 40. Only 70m from beach. Everything included. 900,000 baht. Offers considered. Tel: 084-852 4257. Email: bobcoppage@yahoo.com

Phuket Gazette

CLASSIFIED AD ORDER FORM

STANDARD AD (Text only): 140 baht/line

OPTIONS (NEWSPAPER ONLY - NOT WEB):

Special font / layout	250 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Box	250 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Box with red headline	350 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Box with black background	350 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Box with color background	500 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photo	650 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>

NUMBER OF INSERTIONS: issue(s)

ONLINE OPTIONS:

Web link	350 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photo	500 baht	<input type="checkbox"/>

All ads in the newspaper run online automatically and free charge.

TELEVISION OPTION:

Your ad with photo displayed by PGTV on 3 cable networks, 70 times a week 350 baht ☐

Total cost of your classified baht

Each line is 140 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (headline included). All ads must be paid in advance. The editors reserve the right not to publish any unsuitable material. In the event of non-publication of an advertisement for any reason, the publisher's liability shall be limited to the amount paid for the advertisement.

Please note: We are unable to offer refunds for any unused ads.

For more information, Please call 076-273555.
Email: Kookai@phuketgazette.net, or Diao@phuketgazette.net

PROMOTION PRICE

Your Ad on **PGTV**

SAMPLE ADS

TOYOTA HILUX HERO

Pick-up. 4-door. 2.4L diesel. Good condition. Stereo. Only 95,000 km. Carefully maintained, service record available. Quick sale at 120,000 baht. Tel Khun Noi on 076 668126/7.

Standard: 840 baht (incl VAT)

Standard + Special font/layout + Box: 1,340 baht (incl VAT) →

NATIVE TEACHER OF ENGLISH TO YOUNG CHILDREN SEEKS CHALLENGING POSITION IN PHUKET

I will move to Phuket soon. Three yrs teaching in Bangkok.

Phone Mr Reece
(02) 668-1268

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

.....	(Headline)
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	560 Baht
.....	700 Baht
.....	840 Baht
.....	980 Baht
.....	1,120 Baht
.....	1,260 Baht
.....	1,400 Baht

Business Products & Services

COWBOY SHOW

The art of the western cowboy rope tricks. For more information, please call 084-447 5257 or send email to mikeroper2003@hotmail.com

40FT SEA CONTAINER

For sale: secondhand sea container 40ft. I can send a photo. Please contact Rob for more information. Tel: 084-744 4648 (English). Email: vb331@hotmail.com

WHEATGRASS JUICE

Lumpoons Coffee House. At Chalong. For more information, please call 081-476 5808

MASSAGE THERAPY AT YOUR PLACE

Thai traditional massage: 500 baht per hour. Aromatherapy massage: 1,000 baht per hour. Call for reservations. Open daily 9am-10pm. Tel: 092-464 8471

TRANSLATION CENTER PHUKET

We translate all documents from and into English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Arabic, Russian and Thai. Please call 076-296029, 089-203 9270 (English & Thai). Email: aood16@hotmail.com

WORLDWIDE AIR TICKETS

Our service is for domestic and international flight tickets. Open daily from 8.30am to 9pm. Delivery service. For more information, please call 081-537 2655, 085-571 4489

NEW CARDIO TENNIS

Ditch the gym, grab your racket. Non stop 60-minute fun workout with music. Only 300 baht per person. Lessons hitups also available. For more information, please call 090-706 6674, 090-071 7163. Your court or ours. Please visit our website at www.tennisjuniorpro.com

STRESSED OVER PARTIES?

Plan your party for all your supplies at Party Always. We are located at Wana Park Cherng Talay. For more information, please call 076-620 166. Email: karen_leongsk@yahoo.com.sg

TATTOO REMOVAL

We remove your tattoo. For more information, please call 083-362 4144

HOTEL BOOKING LIST SERVICE

Hotel registration and monitoring on Agoda, Sawadee and Booking.com Tel: 083-394 5863. Email: tperke@googlemail.com



DINO DAYCARE CENTER

Accepting children 3 months old - 4 years old. 7am-7pm.

- Experienced nannies.
- Nutritious meals.
- Reasonable rates.
- Outdoor activities.
- Skill development activities

CALL NOW:
082-539 8252 (Thai).
081-868 7676 (English).

FREE ITALIAN ESPRESSO MACHINE

Coffee capsules machine on loan, good organic Italian coffee, fair prices, 6 blends available, direct import into Phuket. Tel: 076-374760, 088-768 1260. Email: fepigada@yahoo.it

Club Memberships Available

3 MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE

1) Blue Canyon GCC. Family Lite: 699,000 baht. 2) Loch Palm Family Lite: 499,000 baht. 3) Laguna GCC. 16 years: 399,000 baht. Contact Laura Lee. Tel: 095-040 4727 (English). Email: lauralee@gmail.com

LAGUNA GOLF 22 YEARS

Laguna Golf Club membership for sale: 600,000 baht, with 22 years remaining. Contact Dany. Tel: 092-261 5113 (English & Thai). Email: nathcoll88@gmail.com

LAGUNA GOLF CLUB

350,000 baht + transfer, expires 2024. Tel: 089-868 6842. Email: nagel.klaus@web.de

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Family full membership de-benture, including children aged up to 18. 525,000 baht, including transfer fee. No green fees payable. Includes all 27 holes. Email: alanwillett888@aol.com or send text to +44 78 7988 2125

Education



Oak Meadow International School

From 1 - 16 Years Old
Providing quality, affordable primary education
076 521 550
www.oakmeadowphuket.com

LEARN THAI + 1 YEAR ED VISA

Learn Thai at Brainy House. 200 hours + 1 year ED visa for only 24,900 baht. Tel: 076-522822, 080-907 7466. Email: info@brainyhouse.com

Dive Gear

SCUBA GEAR

Excellent condition cost over 60,000 baht. Aqua lungen regulator and tank attachment, hoses & gauges Aladin Tec Computer Markas power fins. Sea quest boy-ancy compensater. Contact Jim. Tel: 080-526 0409

Pets



ADOPT A DOG from Doggie Heaven

Visit **DOGGIE HEAVEN** & meet our gorgeous rescued dogs. All our dogs are **socialized in a home environment** & ready for loving families. Every dog is **healthy, sterilized, vaccinated.**

Contact Sherin
Ph 084-877 3566
www.doggieheaven.net
sherin.peace@gmail.com



Personals

PERSONAL COUNSELING

Phuket Mental Health Counseling. Experienced, licensed, US Counselor for children, teens & adults. Tel: 086-271 8153 (English). Email: parwgg@aol.com

BACKGAMMON

Players wanted. Tel: 081-577 8443. Email: phuketconnection@yahoo.com



Phuket today
Phuket Gazette

Hot deal!
Classified Ads on TV

Your Classified Ad will appear on the Phuket Today show, broadcast on 3 cable networks and running 24-hours a day via in-house TV in over 4,000 hotel rooms around the island.

Cable TV coverage – broadcast 68 times a week throughout Phuket.

Catch the show at these times

Phuket Cable Co (PC) - Covers all Phuket Channel 1, with 19 shows a week
Mon to Fri: 10.30am, 6.00pm, 9.00pm
Sat & Sun: 10.30am, 9.00pm.

Rawai Cable - Rawai and Chalong, Kata, Karon.
Channel 1, with 28 shows a week
Mon to Sun: 10.00am, 1.00pm, 7.00pm, and 10.00pm

KDTV (Kamala Cable TV) - Covers Patong, Kamala, Surin, Bangtao.
Channel 4, with 21 shows a week
Mon to Sun: 7.00am, 11.30am, 11.00pm

Now available in 4,222 premium hotel rooms around the island, all day every day.

- Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket: 254 rooms
- Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort: 470 rooms
- Kata Beach Resort & Spa: 275 rooms
- Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort & Villas: 77 rooms
- Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket: 262 rooms
- Millennium Resort: 418 rooms
- Holiday Inn Resort & Spa: 405 rooms
- Movenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach: 364 rooms
- Karon Beach Resort & Spa: 80 rooms
- Andara Beach Resort & Spa: 62 rooms
- Amari Coral Beach: 197 rooms
- Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa: 664 rooms
- Destination Patong: 390 rooms
- Serenity Terraces Resort: 68 rooms
- Dewa Naiyang Phuket: 96 rooms
- Regent Phuket Cape Panwa: 210 rooms

More Info? Please call 076-273555. Email: Kookai@phuketgazette.net or Diao@phuketgazette.net

On line: www.phuketgazette.net / tv | www.youtube.com / PGTVPhuket

Saloon Cars

YARIS 2010



Top, white color, automatic. For sale: 380,000 baht ono. Contact Tik. Tel: 084-746 4477

NISSAN TEANA
250 XV V6

Excellent condition! One owner from new. No accident, April 2010, 60,000km, all services done, registered, tax until August 2014. New price: 1.55 million baht. Now: 870,000 baht (negotiable). Car is in Hua Hin. Tel: 032-826152, 081-162 2951 (English). Email: roscha 4347@gmail.com

VOLVO V40 2.0 TURBO

2002, 160,000km, owned by Volvo until 2013 so well-maintained, perfect leather interior; 4 airbags. Big cargo space & licenced for 7. First-class insurance to November. 250,000 baht ono. Tel: 086-982 3844 (English), 086-982 3401 (English & Thai). Email: charlielanc@yahoo.co.uk

HONDA JAZZ

2009, 1.5L, 74,000km, 11 months first-class insurance, 4 new tyres, excellent condition. 450,000 baht. Tel: 094-019 0697 (English). Email: kl.kl@me.com

HONDA JAZZ

2009, 1.5L, 64,000km, full options, 8 months first-class insurance, excellent condition. 435,000 baht. Tel: 086-025 0604 (English). Email: hcumberlege@hotmail.com

NISSAN MARCH
FOR SALE

Nissan March for sale, top model, perfect condition, Price: 390,000 baht. Tel: 080-142 3141 (English). Email: mejuli@gmail.com

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SAGA 1.3

Year 2011, automatic, 1 owner, 15,000km with insurance. For sale: 300,000 baht. Tel: 086-476 9612

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WILDTRAK

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TOYOTA VIGO 4X4



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HILUX VIGO 3.0 D4D

89,000km, 1 owner, December 2006. Price: 585,000 baht. Tel: 089-723 4029

FORD RANGER
CAB 2006

For sale: 275,000 baht. Please call 081-894 6968

Motorbikes

KAWASAKI 900CC VN
BLACK

Kawasaki Vulcan, special edition, 22,000km. 28 months old. For sale: 300,000 baht. Email: my.vulcan.is.yours@gmail.com

HONDA FORZA 2013

Bike as new. 4 months old. 4,000km. Serviced. Green book. New: 165,000 baht. Sale: 140,000 baht. For more information please call 082-706 4177 (English) or email bennoreus@gmail.com

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HONDA PHANTOM
200CC GRAY

Year 2005, low mileage, excellent condition, no accident, Green book. 50,500 baht. For more information, please call 076-296231, 089-970 5265 (English). Email: info@wildkingdomtours.com

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Tel: 087-263 6706
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OCEANIS 48 (2013)

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375,000 baht. We also produce 18-37ft boats. SR Marine, Phuket and Pattaya. Tel: 081-782 0921. Email: samranmarine@live.com

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This 80-year-old solid teak boat is ideal as a Phang Nga Bay live aboard, or a land-based guest house. 1.5 million baht. Call John on 090-798 5605. Email: johne mango@yahoo.com For current pictures and finish out options, www.facebook.com/Teak Boat Phuket

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Epoxy Duracore Radical Bay for sale in Samui, hardly used, will take 1.4 million baht, includes trailer, perfect for charter or personal use, safe, light and fast. Tel: 081-894 0339 (English). Email: hilltribe@poppiessamui.com

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42' Flybridge, 2008. Excellent condition at an attractive price. Tel: 080-142 0420 (English). Email: jmi chellemonnier@orange.fr

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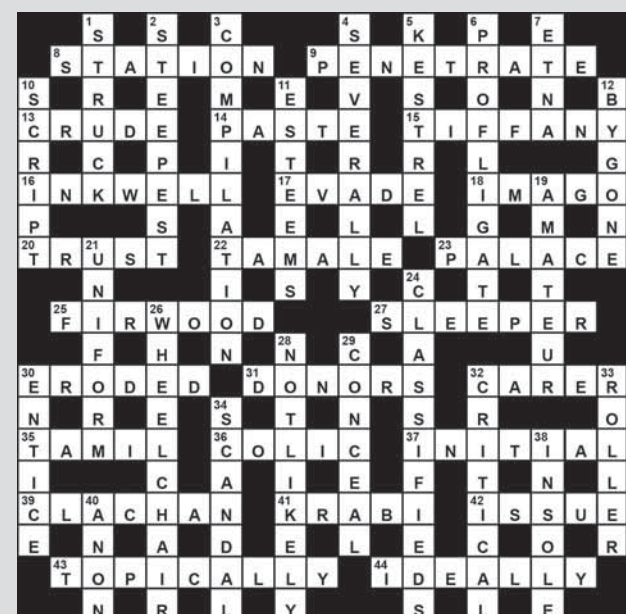
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SOLUTION TO THIS WEEK'S**Cryptic crossword****COFFEE break**

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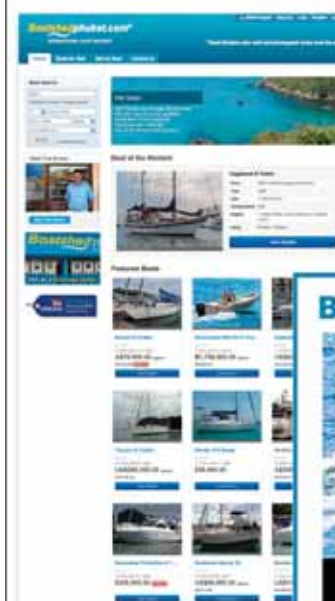
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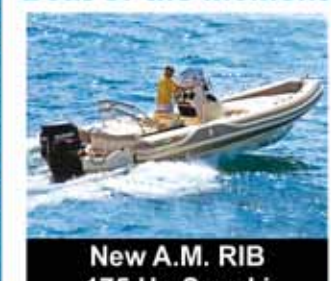
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Built: 1976

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Lycoming IO-540-T4B5D (1,300 hours, 700 hours to TBO). Prop: B3D32C419/82NHA-5. Overhauled Feb 2011 (7 years to TBO). C of A Due 11th November 2011. New 5-year Permit. 100 hour check completed 19 Feb 2011.

Specs:

Horsepower: 260
Top Speed: 166 kts
Cruise Speed: 157 kts
Stall Speed (dirty): 55 kts
Rate Of Climb: 1088 fpm
Ceiling: 17,400 ft

Gross Weight: 3140 lbs
Empty Weight: 2094 lbs
Fuel Capacity: 68.00 gal Usable
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Fuel Av Gas 100LL
1 crew plus 3 passengers

Radio and Navigation Configuration: Fully IFR equipped. 2 Garmin GNS430 VHF/COMM/NAV/GPS/TERRAIN. Garmin GI-106A VOR/LOC/GS/GPS CDI. King KN64 DME. Garmin GTX 320/327 Transponder with Mode C via Ameri-King AK350-30 Height Encoder. Garmin GMA 340 Audio Panel. Bendix King KR-87 ADF. Sandel SN 3308 EHSI. Century IIB Autopilot Dual Axis and S-Tec Altitude Hold. WX-500 Stormscope.

Price: 3.75 million baht. Located at Thai Flying Club, Bang Phra.

Contact Tony Scragg at 081-906 3250, or email tony_scragg@hotmail.com

HAVE A PASSION FOR AVIATION?

If you have an aircraft for sale or an interest in aviation and wish to learn how to fly or buy an aircraft or arrange a private flight, etc. Website: www.aeropromgr.com/ newsletter

TECNAM P-92

- Price: 1.5 million baht
- Registration: U-B08
- Year of Manufacture: 2002
- Equipment: Full standard equipment
- Engine: Rotax 912-80HP 350hrs. Tel: 081-840 8418.

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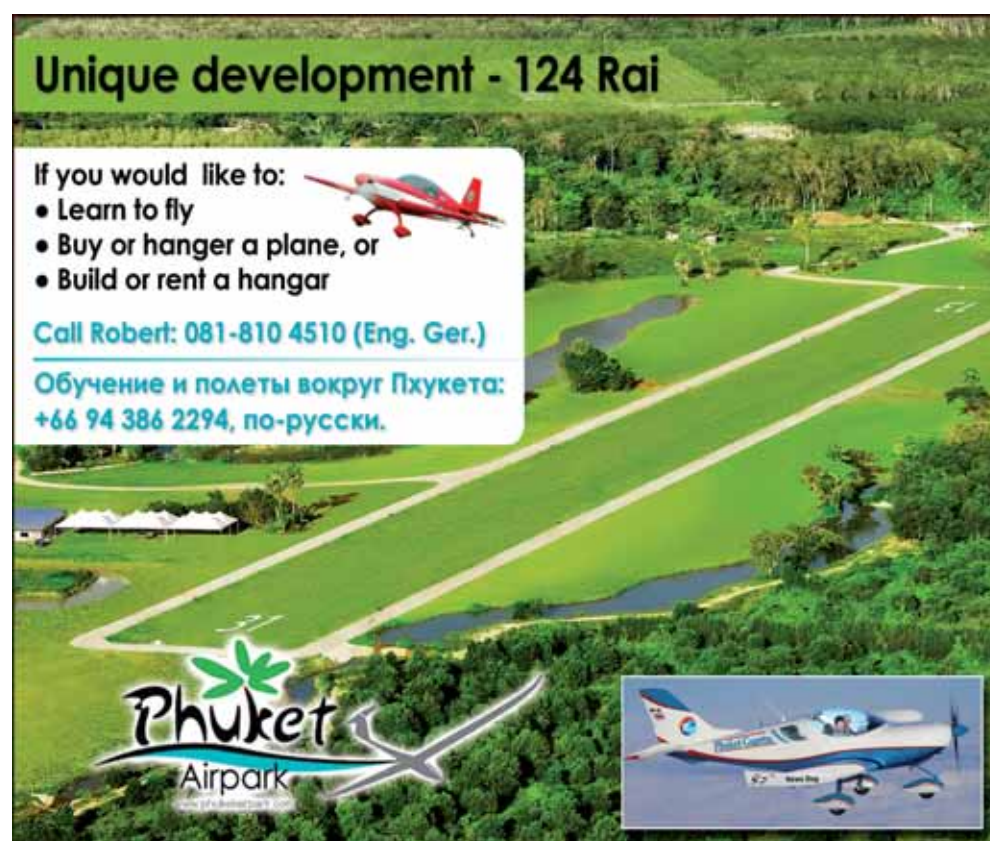
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RISING STARS WELCOMED



B-Lay Tong Phuket, MGallery Collection welcomed rising stars Xu Hao (center left) and Zhu Yuan Bing (center right) from RTA (Road To Asia) with B-Lay Tong's crew. The Chinese boy band members stayed at B-Lay Tong Phuket, MGallery Collection during the Chinese New Year week as they filmed their upcoming MV for their new album in Phuket.

SLEEP WITH ME



SLEEP WITH ME HOTEL design hotel @ Patong's Executive Assistant Manager, Mr Whittaya Sukhampha together with PR and Marketing Manager Ms Worrarn Noidadtee recently visited The Phuket Gazette to deliver the traditional New Year's gifts.

LOVELY EVENING, SMILING WITH FRIENDS

The British Business Association held a dinner at Rodizio Brazil Phuket Steakhouse and enjoyed a night of fine food and drink.



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Project owner: L.H. Muang Mai Co., Ltd. Managing Director: Pittaya Tantipiyakij Registered Capital: 900 Million Baht (Fully Paid). 88 Land and Houses Koh Kaew Phuket, Location: Thepkasatri Rd. Koh Kaew Sub-district, Amphur Muang, Phuket, The Deed No. 2848, 104515, etc. Project Area 53.58 Rai, Financial Institution: Siam Commercial Bank Public Co., Ltd. Construction Start: March 2013 Expected Completion: 2015 applying for Operation License. After full payment is completed, transference is made within 7 days.



An island alight: Feb 14

FEBRUARY 14 – it's that time of year again: a time to laugh and love for many, but certainly a time to live for all. That's cue to power down your tablets and smartphones, and slap on your mojo suits. This year, it's not just Valentine's Day we have to look forward to, but two more important, cultural holidays are also marked on the calendar for this coming Friday.

3-4-1

In addition to the international day of love, this Friday is also being observed as an important Buddhist holiday, Makha Bucha, commemorating the initial assembly of the Gautama Buddha's first 1,250 disciples some 2,500 years ago. Moreover, on the traditional Chinese lunar calendar, February 14 is the Lantern Festival, which marks the official end of the Spring Festival, signaled by the first full moon of the Lunar New Year or Chinese New Year (which began

on the New Moon of January 31).

For those who are still undecided on how best to spend this auspicious evening in Phuket, here's a list of itinerary suggestions and ideas for everyone – couples and singles, rich and poor, alike.

Romance 101

The moon will be bright and full on the evening of the 14, so it could just be your lucky night for love. Wooing is the name of the game, so be sure to remember the two (controllable) golden elements: food and mood. While a meaningful, mutual culinary affair is going to cost you one way or another – if not money, then certainly time – setting the right mood can be a little bit easier if not cheaper to facilitate.

For starters, bring your date on a pre-sunset stroll through King's Park or Saphan Hin Park in Phuket Town, for example, or along any



Makha Bucha candle processions at the temples symbolize Buddhism's triple gem. Photo: Tevaprapas Makklay

one of the many beaches across the island, chatting about the birds and the bees, waves crashing on the shore as the velvet dusk slowly engulfs a fiery horizon – you get the point.

Another walk for romance would be a promenade among the Chinese Lanterns strung throughout Phuket Town for Chinese New Year. The reflection of the moody red light cast from the paper lanterns glistening in each other's eyes could add a romantic twinkle to your evening.

And if your date's not up for the walk, two words (or one really) – viewpoint. Phuket has many of them, all along the west coast (near Kamala and Kata, for example), with some hidden gems along the virgin northeast coast, and definitely refreshing views from the two main hills in town, likewise.

Fingers interlocked, the sun has set, it's time for food. If you can afford to spend a little more on wining and dining, all the more conducive for... love love love... Phuket is certainly a culinary haven with just about everything on the menu. (Check out our what's on page on page 35 or food page on page 40 for a few ideas)

Important: before you make

reservations, find out if your date has any particular diet restrictions. Trust me, you don't want to pull off their blinds as you arrive to your favorite seafood restaurant only to find out he/she is a vegan. The less "fails" you have on the night, the better shot you have at getting the sparks flying. Do your homework!

Scratch the indoor, shopping center restaurants and try to pick somewhere open-air, or with huge windows or a skylight offering visual access to the cosmos. Viewpoint restaurants (such as those on Khao Rang, Tor Sae and Big Buddha hills, for example) are ideal. Allow the stars and moon beams to work their wonders.

For those of you (like the author) who aren't looking forward to any date on Friday night, treat yourself anyway. Most local eateries will be business as usual on Friday, and Valentine's Day is hardly more than a fad in Thailand anyway, so you won't really stand out eating by yourself on this day. But if you're shy still, plan on an early dinner to avoid the crowds. In addition to couples, many Chinese families will be out for a feast (some at home, some on outings) in observance of the initial moon after the spring festi-

val. Everyone should start to come out around 7 or 8pm.

Makha Bucha

Candles won't only be alight at dining tables this Friday evening, but at all the local Buddhist temples as well. Head to the nearest Wat for a candlelight procession that will take place on Friday night. There are three major Buddhist holidays in Thailand when the candle procession takes place: Makha Bucha Day, Visakha Bucha and Asalaha Bucha.

Each holiday falls on the night of a full moon and each commemorates an important event in Buddhist literature. Makha Bucha is to commemorate the first 1,250 enlightened disciples who came to learn the "Middle Path" and "Triple Gem" teachings of the Gautama Buddha in Northern India more than two and half melenia ago. The candle procession involves encircling the Ubosot or ordination hall three times, with a candle and three joss sticks – the number three symbolizing Buddhism's triple gem – the Buddha (enlightened one), the Dharma (teachings) and the Sangha (community of followers).

– Phuket Gazette



Phuket's beaches make celebrating Valentine's easy. Photo: Gazette file

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Combine beach with food and you'll end up with a perfect date. Photo: Gazette file

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

Feb 8, 9pm-2am, Miami Vice Party

A night of 80s glamor, tropical cocktails and Miami Vice mash-ups. Miami Vice is the US cop series that drew heavily upon 1980s New Wave culture and music. It is recognized as one of the most influential television series of all time. Entry to this event is free and those dressing up will receive a complimentary drink voucher. Contact Annabel Fox on 076-324101 or visit the website at: xanabeachclub.com

Feb 7-8, 7-11pm, The Fab Beatles

A tribute to the Fab Four! Dates: February 7 and 8, air-con tent, Boat Lagoon, from 7pm onwards. Ticket price: 1,100 baht. VIP tickets, with seating 1,500 baht. This is the third in the ongoing series of Gazette Headline Events, presented by Events International and supported by the Boat Lagoon, Laguna Phuket and Central Festival. For more information or bookings contact Sonu Kapoor at 091 326 0279, email indiafilmworks@gmail.com, or visit the company's website at events-international.com

Feb 11, 5:30-7pm. "Altruistic: Our True Nature?"

Dubbed the "world's happiest man", Buddhist monk and French humanitarian Matthieu Ricard returns to Thanyapura's Mind Center Hall to share his thoughts on the role of Altruism in modern society as detailed in his latest book *Plaidoyer pour l'altruisme (Advocacy for Altruism)*. Does true altruism really exist? Can we train our minds to be more caring and compassionate? What is the link between altruism and happiness? In our rapidly changing world, why is altruism no longer a luxury, but a necessity? In this discussion,

Dusit Thani Laguna Valentine dinner Feb 14, 6pm - 11pm



Ven. Matthieu Ricard will address these issues and explore the complex topic of altruism and its role in the modern world. 600 baht, includes seminar, food, juices, beer & Mojitos. Call 076 336 000 or email info@thanyapura.com and see story on page 39 for more details.

Feb 14, 10am Friday and Sunday, 2pm Saturday Davis Cup between Thailand and Hong Kong

Thanyapura Phuket is hosting the Davis Cup by BNP Paribas Group II, Zone Asia/Oceania, 1st Round 2014 between Thailand and Hong Kong organized by the Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand (LTAT). Thailand will be represented by the duo of Pruchya Isarow and Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul at the tie, with the home team enjoying a 4-1 advantage over Hong Kong in Davis Cup meetings. The other two Thai players are Warit Sornbutnark and Nuttanon Kadchapanan. Free admission. Call 076 336 000, email info@thanyapura.com or see the website: thanyapura.com

Feb 14, 6:30-10pm, Valentine's Day @ Centra Ashlee Hotel

Valentine's Day @ Air Rooftop Poolside. The search is over as we have just what you are looking for: The perfect spot to share with a special person in a romantic poolside setting with soft candles, stars on the horizon and beautiful tunes. Our chef will pull out all the stops to create mouthwatering dishes served in an elaborate four-course menu with one glass of red wine each and red rose for ladies. Where only you can find a special price for a very special person. February 14, 2014. Reservations: Call Pawita Pratumkaew on 081 171 0143 or mail saleschp@chr.co.th

Feb 14, 6 - 11pm, Valentine Dinner at Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket

Amore Dinner on Valentine's Day. Imagine a starry night, an ocean breeze off Bang Tao Bay, sand between the toes, and the most divine flavors plated by Chef Silvano with wine or bubbles to match, and the stage is laid for you and your loved one. Priced at 5,800++ baht per

couple for this four-course set dinner at our La Trattoria restaurant. Bookings essential; please dial 076 362 999, ext. 7303. All prices subject to 10% service charge and 7% government tax. More info at facebook.com/dusitthaniphuket

Feb 14, 7pm - 11pm, Indian Curry Buffet

All you can eat, authentic Indian Curry Buffet at 499 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 and mouthwatering Chicken Tikka, Samosas, freshly baked Naans and more. Location: Navrang Mahal in Karon Sea Sands Resort. Contact Jaspal Singh on 076 286 464 or email: info@navrangmahal.com

Feb 14, Makha Bucha Day

Makha Bucha Day, which falls on the full moon of the third lunar month, commemorates Buddha's ordaining of 1,250 monks who had arrived unannounced from afar only nine months after the Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment.

Feb 14, 5:30 - 11pm, Phuket Old Time Square

Phuket Old Time Square is the first local food center where you can taste a fantastic range of spicy, traditional local Phuket dishes. You can savor the taste, and learn the history of the legendary local recipes that have been passed down through generations for over 100 years. The food center is located in Phuket Town next to the old bus terminal. For more info call 92 265 0877, email info@phuketoldtimesquare.com or go to phuketoldtimesquare.com

Feb 15, 9pm - 1:30am, Ministry of Sound: Love on the Beach

Following the huge success of the first two parties with Ministry Of Sound XANA is excited to announce a third, and final event this season, with the world's biggest party brand. LOVE ON THE BEACH will have a special Valentine's Day theme and will feature Ministry's very own resident from London, Shane Patrick. Phuket Residents may enter for free. Please email info@xanabeachclub.com for guest list. For more info contact Annabel at 076 324 101, email annabel@xanabeachclub.com or go to xanabeachclub.com

Feb 20, 11:30am-2pm, Phuket International Women's Club February Lunch

February's PIWC lunch will be held at the beautiful regent Cape Panwa Hotel. All are welcome but prior booking is essential. Members: 500 baht; guests: 650 baht. For booking contact info@phuketiwc.com. The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV's 'Phuket Today' show, the island's only nationally broadcast television program (aired daily on True Vision's channels 89 and 58), are proud long term sponsors of The Phuket International Women's Club. Contact Carole Dux on 076 316711 or visit the website at: phuketiwc.com for more information or to make an advanced booking.

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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

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Online: www.phuketgazette.net/tv | www.youtube.com/PGTVPhuket
And in 4,600 hotel rooms around the island, international hospitals and Phuket Immigration Office.

การดำน้ำลึก

Language keeps potential dry

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

LOOKING at that graphic above... I still can't verify that it says "scuba diving", but I have it on good authority it does.

Now, many of us consider ourselves quite adventurous when we walk into an unknown restaurant and order something off an all-Thai-language menu – who knows what's going to happen. Extrapolate that to diving.

Imagine walking into a dive shop that's plastered with foreign letters, hoping to obtain a diving certification, something you can't just point at and have served up, but something you have to work for – now that's vastly intimidating. The anxiousness would no doubt cause you to burn through a 12-liter tank in 20 minutes while you are still at the surface.

The foreignness of the signage that dominates the dive shops in Phuket rarely strikes tourists and expats, because it is familiar – it's a language we understand with imagery we have grown to associate with the major dive certification agencies.

Local diving professional Tashatorn "Yui" Rattanapan, recently waded through the rather hefty English-language PADI instructor examination, and noted that the signs were a discouraging factor for aspiring Thai scuba divers.

"When Thai people look at the shops, they always see English. They don't know that many staff, like dive masters and instructors, who can speak Thai are available," said Yui, still exuberant from having passed the exam.

Yui had buckled down to work on her instructor course with Kevin Black and Vince Moy from Kiwi-diver, three years after having obtained her dive master qualifications, English was the tallest hurdle.

It was only with patience and repetition that Yui was able to slog through the course and understand the theory well enough that she could apply the technical terminology needed to pass the exam in a foreign language.

"I would love to see more Thai people diving. I think many people think that it's difficult and complicated," she explains. "If you don't have an instructor speaking Thai to you [assuming you're Thai], and it's your first time, you keep asking yourself, 'Am I right or am I wrong?'"

Without signs to usher Thais into dive shops or friends to push them, the reefs of the Andaman will remain stunning marine ecosystems for only the bold.

It takes a certain amount of courage to make it through the doors of a foreign world and find out that it isn't so foreign at all, and in fact, there are dive masters and instructors like Yui who speak your language.



Local diving professional Tashatorn 'Yui' Rattanapan, recently waded through the rather hefty English-language PADI instructor examination.

Diving gear sales grow in-line with disposable income

DISPOSABLE income in developing countries, such as Thailand, will play a key role in the growth of the dive gear industry, according to a new market research report by ResearchMoz.us.

The report, *Global Scuba Diving Equipment Market 2014-2018: Industry Size, Shares, Growth, Analysis, Trends And Forecast*, estimates a 3.68% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in the industry between 2013 and 2018.

"One of the key factors contributing to this market growth is the rise in disposable income levels of consumers. The increase in per capita income, especially in developing countries has led to an increase in the demand for recreational scuba diving equipment worldwide," the report reveals.

The diving market, combined with the snorkeling market, has seen solid growth in the Southeast Asian region over the past five years, confirmed Aqua Lung Southeast Asia General Manager Michael Wehrle.

Aqualung International SA was one of the key vendors cited in the report, along with American Underwater Products Inc, Johnson Outdoors, Mares SpA and Sherwood Scuba LLC.

"We feel that there's a growing middle class in Thailand that is more



Photo: Lili Vieira de Carvalho

and more interested in water sports. At the TDEX (Thailand Travel and Diving Expo) in Bangkok, we have seen a constant growth in the number of visitors and customers, and therefore believe that Thailand is among the countries that is experiencing an increase in the demand for recreational scuba diving equipment," Mr Wehrle said.

Mr Wehrle noted that the majority of growth is being seen in snorkeling, freediving, and technical diving market segments.

In line with the projected growth, Mr Wehrle highlighted the importance of sustainability to the entire dive industry.

"We, as well as all dive centers and retail shops, rely on healthy reefs, clean waters and sustainable tourism in the region. All of us in the industry need to keep in mind that our successful future depends on how we treat our 'playgrounds' today," he said.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli

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Rawai leads safety push

NAI HARN beach is renowned as the idyllic island destination that represents the wonderful beauty Phuket has to offer, but its charming exterior hides a lesser-known hazard. In the tourism high-season, it is a benign playground for swimmers and boaters alike, but in the summer months, with south-westerly winds, its rip currents can be a serious danger.

At a recent meeting, Rawai Municipality agreed to a full co-operation agreement with the new social enterprise, Safer Phuket and the Phuket Life Guard Club; this benchmark agreement will see Nai Harn become the standard bearer for the implementation of new international water safety standards.

Pisis Papakityotsaphat, Deputy Mayor Rawai Municipality explained: "We are proud to join and support Safer Phuket because we share their commitment for a world-beating [standard of] lifeguard service. This is what our visitors expect and deserve, so we will work closely with them to make this happen quickly".

Safer Phuket recently launched a campaign to build 50 lifeguard towers in Phuket. In addition they will support Phuket Lifeguard Club in sourcing the additional equipment and manpower to provide a world class service.

Prathaiyut "Nat" Chuayuan explained: "Working to Surf Life Saving Australia specifications, we have created a dedicated schedule for Nai Harn that can build on our current service. We will include an all-terrain vehicle, jet ski and shared ambulance, plus all the many essential lifesaving items. We want to be sure that we can take care of the situation, from

incident to treatment location".

Safer Phuket is a not-for-profit social enterprise that has received support from the British Embassy and the Phuket Governor Maitri Inthasut and their mission is to promote greater safety within Phuket's coastal waters by highlighting the issues, creating a voice, bringing stakeholders together and generating funding solutions.

Safer Phuket recently won the "Innovation of the Year 2013" award and Co-founder Duncan Stewart says, "We are in advanced stages of negotiation with numerous local and international sponsors to fund this transition within Nai Harn beach's lifeguard service. We are excited to see the

potential and believe that swimmers and boaters will be as safe and secure under the watchful eye and service of the Phuket Lifeguard Club. But the visionary support of the Rawai municipality and its leaders is essential and a credit to them and their support for the community. We thank them."

Work is projected to start within the next two months and this will be the first phase of a program that sees all Phuket beaches with an international standard lifeguard service.

Safer Phuket is a not for profit social enterprise established as a CSR initiative of Shoreline Splash (shorelinesplash.com) to campaign and highlight the issues, create a voice and bring all stakeholders together on coastal waters safety.

— *Phuket Gazette*

The Phuket Gazette and PGTV are founding sponsors and proud media partners of Safer Phuket. For more info, visit: saferphuket.org or www.facebook.com/saferphuket



Pisis Papakityotsaphat, Deputy Mayor Rawai Municipality (center); Safer Phuket co-founder Duncan Stewart (second from left); Prathaiyut "Nat" Chuayuan Managing Director of the Phuket Lifeguard Club (second from right) and Phuket Lifeguard Club managers Jula Nontree and Wirote Sawangphul. Photo: Supplied

Safer Phuket aims to provide:

- Safety standards will be defined for each sector/activity
- A national code of accreditation will be created
- Access to comprehensive training and education will be provided for all
- Safety management will be integrated into the day today activity of all organisations
- There will be a compliance and enforcement system and structure to ensure and maintain safety standards
- Incident reporting will demonstrate to the world our transparency and success



Phuket lifeguards participate in a training session. Photo: Gazette File

Mom Tri's Baan Kata Arts Festival Concert

Mom Tri Devakul has invited
H.E. Adm. M.L. Usni Pramroj

to perform at Villa Royale continuing the tradition
of the Baan Kata Arts Festival, a celebration of art and cultural

At Mom Tri's Villa Royale Phuket on 18 February 2014, Ticket THB 500.-
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For reservations or information please phone 076 333 568
or email: info@villaroyalephuket.com
Mom Tri's Villa Royale, 12 Kata Noi Road, Karon, Phuket 83100
www.villaroyalephuket.com / www.facebook.com/hotelphuket



Tortoise and the hare



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

THE festive season disgorged its usual glut of funny stories, and as a less than “golden oldie”, I took special note of jokes directed at what are pompously referred to as “senior citizens”. Here’s an example: Two old codgers are talking. One says sadly, “My memory is bad.” “How bad?” asks his companion. “How bad is what?” comes the reply. Rather more acerbic is a snippet of conversation between an elderly husband and his wife while they are sipping wine together. The wife declares, “I love you. I can’t live without you.” The husband tartly enquires, “Is that you or the wine talking?” To which she retorts, “No, it’s me talking to the wine.”

Which reminds me... expats in Phuket are mostly of a certain age, but I know from readers of this column that many of you take great pleasure in gardening. And while living here makes cultivating exotic plants relatively easy, a paradox resides in the fact that they are hares, and grow so rapidly, that in no time

at all a garden can start to resemble a jungle or a rainforest. I have now reached the point where, if Alzheimers has yet to strike, I do need a younger guy to do the menial tasks or back-aching work that having a tropical garden in a hot-house climate entails.

For a start, cutting back, trimming and pruning are key but energy-sapping activities, especially when you have made unwise decisions about initial plantings. I have six sizeable trees (apart from palms) in my patch including an alstonia, a michelia champaca, a mango, a fiddlewood (*citharexylum*), and an avocado (*persea*). They present a range of problems which have to be tackled, but all are too large for their environment. If I had inwardly digested available information about the size of mature trees, I would have long since realized that alstonias or devil trees, for example, can reach one hundred feet in ideal conditions. Gracefully tiered with attractive whorled foliage, my specimen is nonetheless due – at the very least – for drastic pruning. So too the avocado. Grown commercially in Southern Spain, the avocados there were



Cutting-back, trimming and pruning is an important part of tending plants such as the champaca. Photo: Vinayaraj

quite small, but my six-year-old tree is already eight meters tall. Pruning will involve removing most of the lower branches as well as lopping top growth. The fiddlewood is sufficiently slender and graceful to be left to its own fragrant devices and the champaca, though with much denser foliage, also has such beautifully scented flowers that I am loathe to trim it. And anyway, as a member of the magnolia clan, it is not going to reach outlandish proportions.

But here’s the point. If you are a slow-lane gardener, a tortoise rather than a hare, then plan for low-maintenance. In this context, moisture-loving plants are less suitable than drought resistant varieties, evergreen trees and shrubs are preferable to deciduous ones, and smaller flowering trees such as cordias,

cassias, tecoma stans, and bauhinias better than forest specimens. Of my trees, only the fiddlewood is deciduous, but since its foliage is sparse, leaf drop is not a problem. Perversely, and although they seem fully clothed, the ever-

your principal shrubs should have neat habits and evergreen foliage. Nothing looks sadder than a skeletal bush surrounded by springing lushness. Personal preferences would include the ever popular *jasmines*, *murrays*, *gardenias*, *plumerias*, *tabernae montanas*, and *wrightias* – all sweet smelling shrubs with white flowers. My garden also harbors, *inter alia*, orange *hamelias*, yellow *thevetias*, *bougainvilleas*, dark blue *thunbergias*, and a pink *strophanthus* (Indian rubber vine). This last shrub is not, strictly speaking a vine, but it brings me nicely to the topic of low maintenance climbers – part of a promised second installment on today’s theme.

‘But here’s the point. If you are a slow-lane gardener, a tortoise rather than a hare, then plan for low-maintenance.’

greens are shedding leaves by the bucket-load in the present dry season; the paucity of detritivores such as earthworms means more clearing up for the human tortoise.

Shrubs are, by definition, smaller than trees, so choice is less of an issue. Few will out-grow your garden or clutter your borders with a carpet of desiccated leaves. But, for low maintenance,

leas, dark blue *thunbergias*, and a pink *strophanthus* (Indian rubber vine). This last shrub is not, strictly speaking a vine, but it brings me nicely to the topic of low maintenance climbers – part of a promised second installment on today’s theme.

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured you can email me at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com



Bougainvilleas are a good choice of evergreen shrub. Photo: Carsten Niehaus

Tip of the week

Leaves and litter-fall

LEAVES tend to drop when there is less heat and light (winter in cool climates) or rainless conditions (dry season in the tropics). This means that deciduous plants generally lose foliage to better conserve water or to survive the cold. But they will need more energy when they begin to grow new leaves, so evergreen trees and shrubs (the majority in the tropics) have an advantage.

For the gardener, litter-fall (which may also contain twigs,

needles, bark, fruits and seeds) is a mixed blessing. It is a pain to clear up and it can harbor disease. On the other hand, as it decomposes, aided by many agents – from rain, bacteria and fungi to millipedes – it releases nutrients into the soil, especially nitrogen and phosphorus. Much is converted into valuable humus, though some is retained as organic carbon. If you have a compost heap – and you should have one – this valuable process of decomposition is accelerated.



Photo: Ananta Bhadra Lamichhane

Decomposing leaves and plant litter replenish the soil.



The fiddlewood is deciduous but leaf drop is not a problem. Photo: JM Garg

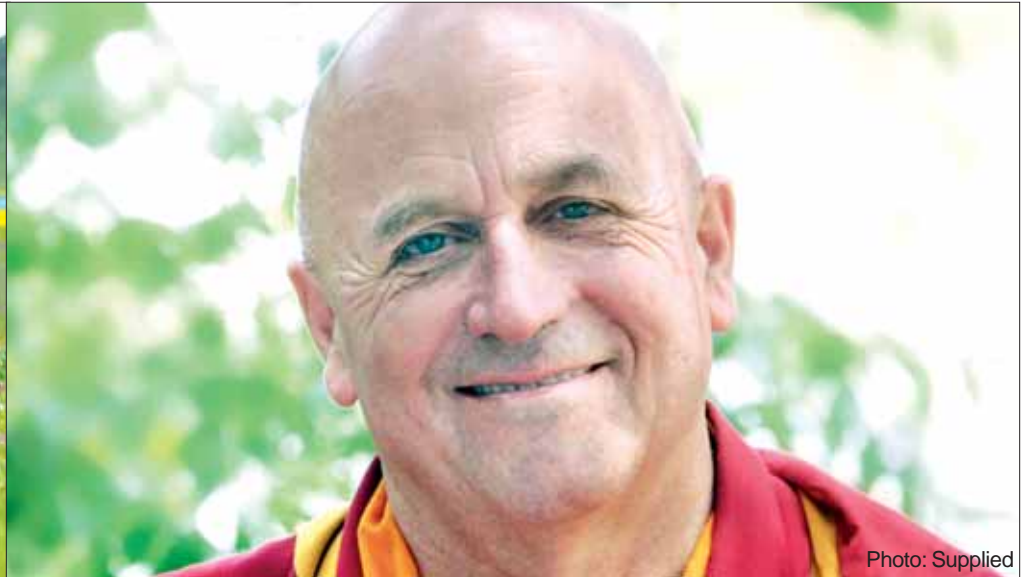
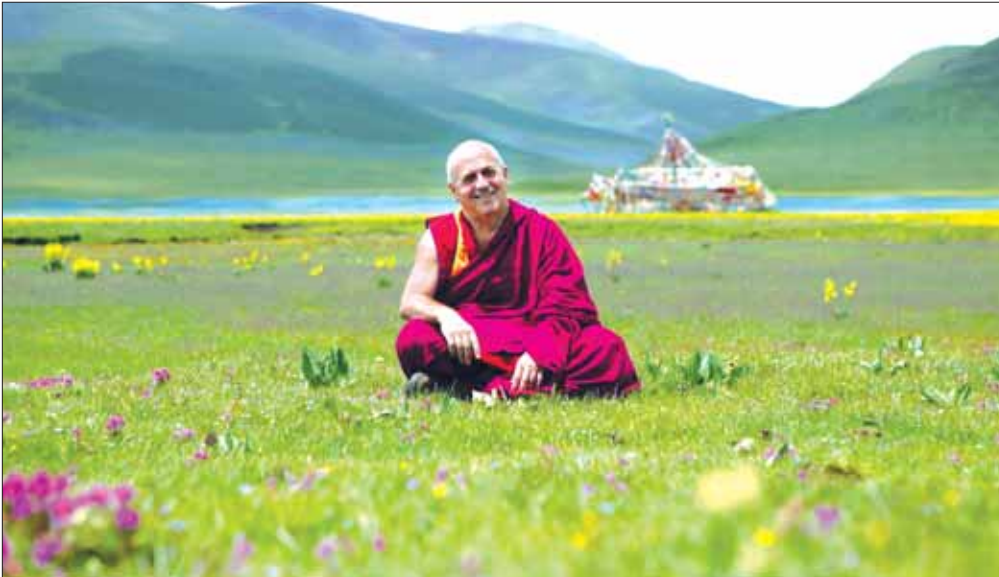


Photo: Supplied

Happiness is easy

DUBBED the “world’s happiest man”, Buddhist monk and French humanitarian Matthieu Ricard is returning to Than-yapura to share his secrets about how to make the world a happier place to live.

A few years earlier, Matthieu made headlines across the world when researchers wired him up with sensors to his skull and discovered that while he was meditating on compassion, his left prefrontal cortex suggested an unusually large capacity for happiness and decreased tendency toward negativity.

Matthieu believes that meditation can alter the brain and improve people's happiness in the same way that lifting weights puts on muscle.

For this year's seminar, Matthieu Ricard will be talking on the role of Altruism in modern society as detailed in his latest book *Plaidoyer pour l'altruisme (Advocacy for Altruism)* released in September 2013.

The seminar, entitled “Altruistic: Our True Nature?” is scheduled on Tuesday, February 11, from 5.30pm to 7pm at the Thanyapura Mind Center Hall. The



JUMP FOR JOY: Matthieu Ricard shares his secret, happiness is sharing. Photo: thephotographymuse

event will allow the audience to explore the complex topic of altruism and its role in the modern world, addressing numerous issues and searching for answers such as: does true altruism really exist, are we born compassionate, can we train our

minds to be more caring and compassionate and what is the link between altruism and happiness?

Matthieu recently attended the 2014 World Economic Forum in Davos where he taught attendees how to achieve happiness and peace

though mindfulness, led daily early morning meditation for delegates, participated in a panel on the importance of being happy and provided advice to world leaders. He is in high demand and is often approached by world leaders for his opinion on many topics.

He is the author of several books which have been translated into over twenty languages, including *The Monk and the Philosopher*, *The Quantum and the Lotus*, *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill*, and *Why Meditate? (The Art of Meditation in the UK)*.

Matthieu donates all proceeds from his books and much of his time to 110 humanitarian projects (clinics, schools, orphanages, elder care, bridges, vocational training) in Himalayan areas and to aid the preservation of the Tibetan cultural heritage

– *Phuket Gazette*

The tickets for the seminar are 500 baht and are inclusive of a post seminar cocktail reception (excluding alcoholic beverages which will be charged on consumption). For further information, please contact events@thanyapura.com call 076 336 000 Ext 5222 or go to thanyapura.com

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More than our daily bread

By Maciek Klimowicz

RICE for breakfast, lunch and dinner – sound familiar? Well, for many it does. But it doesn't have to be that way! Back in my home country we replace the word "rice" with the word "bread" to make our days complete. And now you can too, here in Phuket!

Karley's Bakery is like bread itself – unassuming and modest. It's easy to miss it when driving down Soi Pasak in Cherg Talay. But if you find it, you're in for a treat.

"I came to Phuket to work in the diving industry but once our daughter Karley came to this world, we decided we had to create a future for her, so we started the bakery," says the owner, David.

"Baking has been in my family since before I was born. My parents used to run a bakery and we learned baking when we were kids," he explains.

It's the bread that you judge a bakery by, so it's the first thing I try. And with every bite of the German sour dough bread, the heavy, satiating rye bread or the crunchy, white French bread, I'm transported thousands of kilometers away, to the land where bread is synonymous with food, like rice is in Thailand. All the sandwiches in Karley's Bakery are prepared with this homemade bread, order a full English breakfast and you'll get it on the side. Even the garlic bread you get with a generous serving of lasagna is made in-house,

just like the pasta used in the dish.

"We make no compromises, everything is made here and now, with fresh ingredients," stresses David.

However, there's much more to the bakery than what can be found on the chalk board menu on the wall. "We can pretty much make everything you want. If you have a special recipe, something from home that you miss, we will find the ingredients and make it for you," says David. "You can call us, you can send a message through Facebook. Just give us a call in the morning, tell us what you want and in the afternoon you can collect your meal."

And he'll really make whatever you ask for. Spaghetti with meatballs, savory pizza (also available



FAMILY BUSINESS: Dave and Toey bake to live... and live to bake.

gluten free, just like the bread), meat pies – you name it. Ordering at Karley's requires some imagination and planning, but if you're short for inspiration, just check Karley's Facebook profile for a constant supply of ideas.

Having tried the bread and sated my hunger with the lasagna, it's time for the dessert. In the sugary department, it's Toey, David's wife, who takes the lead, and it takes just a look at her creations to realize she's an artist. The chocolate pies, the blueberry cheesecake, the multicolored macaroons with fresh forest fruits – all look the way food looks in photographs from the best of food blogs and lifestyle magazines. The difference is they are real, within

a reach of my hand. And they taste the same way they look – perfect.

When I ask David if his daughter, two-year-old Karley, has more of a sweet tooth or if she prefers her daddy's savory delights, he replies, "she likes a bit of chocolate here and there but I think she prefers salty things – chicken, lasagne," adding, "she already likes to roll bread, she has her mixing equipment, she's really starting to learn."

So chances are she will continue the family baking tradition. I hope so – Phuket is a better island with a place like Karley's bakery.

Karley's Bakery address is 224/11 in Baandon Village, Thalang. To place an order call 08 6100 0817 or see: [facebook.com/Karleysbakery](https://www.facebook.com/Karleysbakery)



NO COMPROMISES: Both the quality of food and the size of portions are something Karley's can be proud of.

Fired up for perfect crust

By Leslie Porterfield

WHEN I got back from a visit to the US recently, a friend asked if I had missed Thai food. I had not. I love it, but what I hankered to eat in Phuket was pizza at "Crust", a stylish but welcoming little place in the Sino-Portuguese gallery next to Index Living Mall of the Bypass road.

Nattanee "Annabelle" Unsuen and her boyfriend Premin "Nut" Kamphee are the chef-owners of the restaurant, which opened last June. Their diplomas from Le Cordon Bleu and their stint at Amanpuri (he in the Italian restaurant and she in the bakery and cold kitchen) show in their consistently delicious and attractive dishes.

A place called "Crust" had better be able to produce the goods, and it does: the pizzas, baked in a handmade oven visible at the back of the restaurant, have crispy golden edges and thin chewy middles. Flavorful sauces and fresh toppings complement but don't overwhelm the crust, making these the best pizzas I've had in Phuket.

They've been a hit with everyone I've taken to the restaurant, from twenty-something colleagues to Thai grandmothers who proclaimed they didn't like bread or cheese as they tucked into another slice of the Capri – a perfect balance of savory Parma ham and olives, mild mozzarella and earthy artichoke and mushrooms.

Crust has the classic pies, but also creative twists, like those modelled after pasta sauces: the bolognese, puttanesca, and carbonara, and (who knew this was possible?) breakfast pizza, topped with tomato, mozzarella, ham, spinach and egg. White pizzas include smoked salmon and brie and the priciest on the menu, Mushrooms and white truffle paste. Each comes in two sizes: mini (more than enough for one person) and regular.

The pasta selection shows the same respect for tradition and ability to embellish on it. Besides a classic carbonara, there's a daily special version with Italian sausage, in which fat coins of sweet-salty sausage perk up the smooth creaminess of the dish. And traditional pesto gets redesigned in the Sicilian pesto, the bold one-note of basil amicably tempered by ricotta, sundried tomatoes, almonds, pine nuts, garlic and sweet chili.

But pizza and pasta alone do not make a meal, so order one of the excellent salads as well; perhaps the Parma, which expands the classic partnership of ham and melon by adding quarters of strawberry and tomatoes under a raspberry vinaigrette. Or the citrus arugula, with orange sections, shaved parmesan and almonds tossed in a slightly tart lemon dressing.

Whenever possible, the restaurant serves organic greens, in line with Annabelle's and Nut's desire to provide healthy food.



Crispy golden edges, thin chewy middles and creative toppings – pizza at its best.

That desire also means there are no soft drinks on the menu. Instead, Crust offers a wide assortment of fresh juice concoctions and smoothies, as well as wheatgrass shots, beer, wine and espresso drinks.

For diners who want heartier fare, check the daily specials: Australian strip loin with green pepper sauce, Herb-steamed, free-range chicken and lamb stew are among them. Annabelle chose mains that her Australian father likes to eat, and he stops by often, to the satisfaction of her mother, who now spends less time in the kitchen.

One of the restaurant's secret weapons is not even on the menu. Written at the top of the chalk board of specials is the simply-named soup of the day: split pea, carrot and sweet potato, lentil, pump-

kin. Appearing almost as an afterthought, these heavenly soups, slow-cooked on a *mirepoix* base, creamy without cream, decorated with a swirl of olive oil and little strips of bacon are so good, I call ahead to reserve a bowl.

Desserts are available for perusal in a small refrigerated case at the bar: tangy lemon tart, tiramisu, banoffi, and a creme caramel so perfectly poised between lightness and richness that my twenty-something colleagues ordered extra to take home.

Crust is open for lunch and dinner and is closed on Wednesdays. Pizzas: 140 - 350 baht, pastas: 160 - 280 baht, salads 120 - 265 baht, mains 350-580 baht, desserts: 15-120. Address: 46/7C Bangyai Road, Vichit, Muang Phuket 83000. For more info call 093-7630318.

Science behind sore throat

Tonsils, your throat's first line of defense against pathogens, are prone to infection

By Dr Yongyouth Wasinwong

SITUATED at both sides of the throat, at the base of the tongue, the tonsils have a vital role to play in preventing pathogens from penetrating the body.

When the body is attacked by an infection, the tonsils need to work harder to cope with the growing number of germs and become enlarged and painful.

The first signs of tonsillitis are similar to throat inflammation and include coughing, phlegm, and nasal mucus. The throat will be very painful on both sides and the tonsils red and enlarged. In serious cases, pus will be found on the tonsils and the lymph nodes at neck will be swollen.

In mild cases, the tonsillitis resolves itself without medication. The patient should rest, drink plenty of water and eat healthily. More serious cases require a visit to the doctor for a proper diagnosis. Antibiotics and possibly some analgesics and a gargle will be prescribed and the situation will resolve in three to seven days.

Certain pathogens, especially streptococcal tonsillitis, are dangerous and can cause pus around the tonsils that can spread and block the airways. In some

cases, the inflammation may have an effect on the blood circulation, causing malfunction of the heart and kidneys. Patients who frequently experience tonsillitis may have unusually narrow airways, which become easily blocked. Symptoms can be observed during sleeping, especially in children, and cause loud snoring and abrupt waking.

As the tonsils are the immune system's first line of defence against ingested or inhaled foreign pathogens, removing them surgically is usually only advised when the tonsils become so large that they block the respiratory system, peritonsillar abscesses develop or pus collects next to the tonsils and fails to respond to treatment and if there is any suspicion of cancer.

A doctor may also decide to have the tonsils removed in mild cases if a patient experiences six to seven bouts of tonsillitis a year, has bad breath resulting from chronic tonsillitis, or has streptococcal tonsillitis.

There is no limit on the ages at which tonsils may be removed and provided there are no conditions unfavorable to the surgery, the operation will be quick, safe and without major side effects. The



Removing tonsils is a simple surgery without major side effects.

tonsils are removed through the mouth under general anaesthetic though other newer methods such as radiofrequency and laser ablation can reduce the pain more effectively after surgery.

Patients may experience some

post-operative bleeding as well as mild pain resulting in difficulty swallowing so it is important that they stay in hospital overnight for observation. Other side effects that may possibly occur include fever, dehydration and a change

in voice. However, complications resulting in fatalities are very rare.

The day after surgery, patients should consume only very soft and cold food, such as sweetened drinks, ice cream, yoghurt or jelly in order to prevent any bloating of the wound or bleeding. Slightly more solid and warmer foods can be enjoyed two to five days after surgery with a return to the normal diet in a week. Examination by a doctor one week after the operation is recommended to make sure that the wound is completely healed and there is no bleeding.

Even after the tonsils have been removed and the immune system becomes weaker, the tissues of the tongue and throat can still function sufficiently well to provide immunity to disease.

Prevention of tonsillitis is the same as for most other disease: eating a healthy diet, drinking plenty of water and ensuring adequate rest and exercise.

— The Nation

Dr Yongyouth Wasinwong is an otolaryngologist at Samitivej Sukhumvit Hospital in Bangkok. Call the Ear, Nose, and Throat Clinic at (02) 711 8777-8 or email info@samitivej.co.th.



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Wise guy in Washington

Books

By James Eckardt

SNARKY, scornful, vitriolic and very funny, Mark Leibovich's *This Town* (Blue Rider Press, New York, 2013, 386pp) lays bare what is wrong with Washington: in a word, money. Corporations dump great heaping bushels of the stuff upon lobbyists, lawyers, consultants, strategists, media gurus and former government officials now devoted to high-priced influence peddling. This has produced a permanent and ridiculously overpaid gang that Leibovich calls "The Club". Included are a similarly elite group of journalists and TV newscasters, augmented now by a mob of bloggers from such websites as Politico and Huffington Post. All conspire in a sleazy cabal of profitable back scratching and mutual (phony) admiration.

The author writes, "They evoke

a time-warped sense of a political herd that never dies or grows older, only jowlier, richer, and more heavily made-up." They live by, "the capital commandments of self-interest, self-importance, self-enrichment and self-perpetuation."

With savage glee, Leibovich launches a set piece to introduce the major Washington players: the funeral of Tim Russett, the powerful host of the TV interview show *Meet the Press*. Here come Bill and Hillary Clinton, who despised Russett – and he despised them right back. There is the mega-lawyer Bob Barnett who arranged the astronomical book deals and speech fees that made the Clintons and countless others multimillionaires. There is Charles Schumer, New York Senator and shameless photo-hogger. A Senate colleague once compared the futility of sharing a media market with Schumer to sharing a banana with a monkey, "Take a little bite of it and he

will throw his own feces at you."

Also present is Terry "The Macker" McAuliffe, former Democratic National Committee chairman, fund raiser extraordinaire and slavish devotee of the Clintons, "To deprive McAuliffe of the words 'Bill Clinton' would be like depriving a mathematician of numbers."

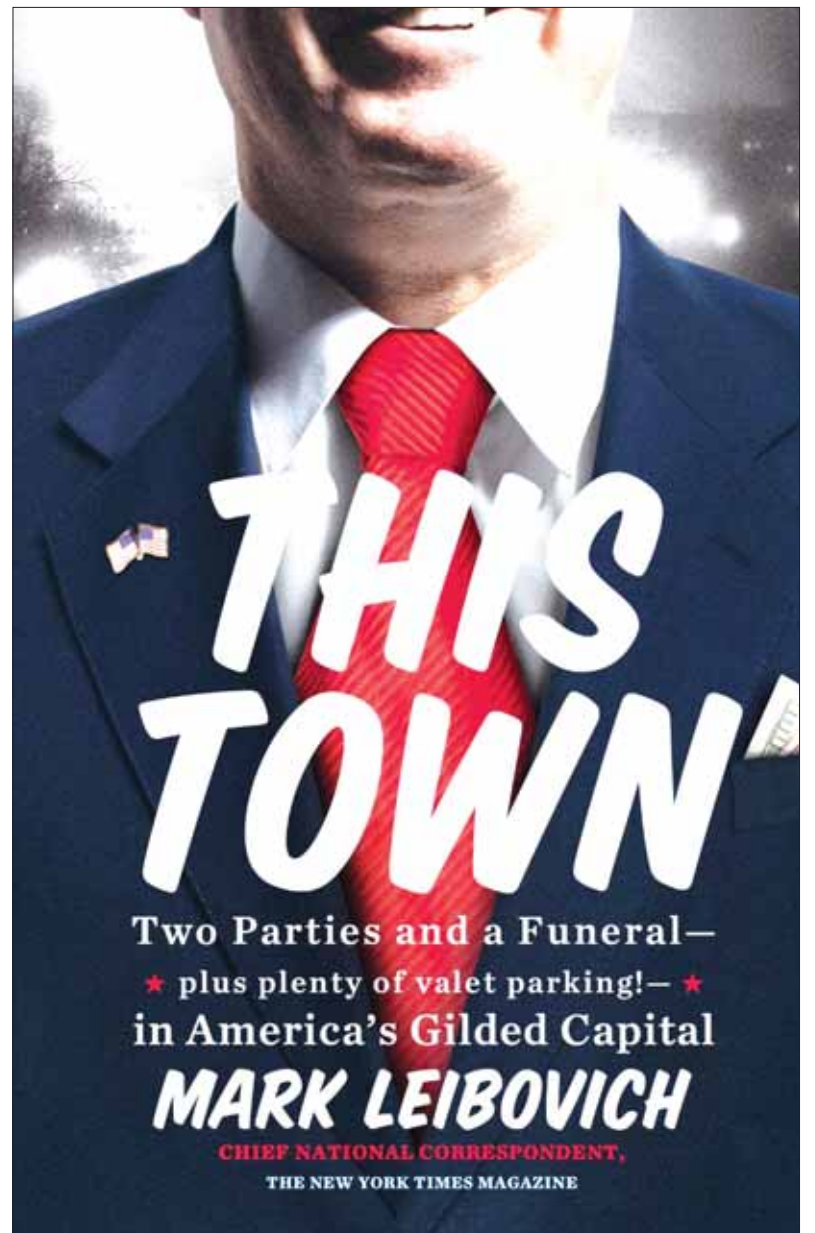
Towering over many attendees is Tammy "The Tamster" Haddad, former cable producer turned, "professional party host, event organizer, and full-service convener of the Washington A-list... a human ladle in the self-celebration buffet."

Also pilloried are mega-lobbyists Jack Quinn and Ed Gillespie, the Obama strategist David Axelrod and his McCain counterpart Mark Salter, former Fed chairman Alan Greenspan and photogenic NBC correspondent wife Andrea Mitchell, blog ferrets Mike Allen and John Harris, and many other players in "This Town", otherwise known as "Suck-up City".

Leibovich moves on to other preening gatherings of "The Gang" – the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner, dubbed "The Nerd Prom", the Democratic and Republican conventions of 2012, and various Obama parties and dinners, "Obama's victory in November 2008 opened a love spigot."

Along the way we are treated to thumbnail portraits of prominent Club members. Politico reporter Mike Allen "combines the rumpledness of an old-school print reporter with the sheen of a new-school "cross platform brand" who has become accustomed to performing on camera... He speaks in quick and certain cadences, on message, in sound bites, karate-chopping the table for emphasis."

Of former Mississippi governor and lifelong lobbyist Haley Barbour, he writes, "Barbour is a throwback to a time when politicians would tell dirty jokes, boast of all the cigars they smoked, and refer to their friends – on the record – as 'drinking buddies'. He speaks in a mud-mouthed Mis-



Politics behind the scenes is both funny... and scary.

issippi drawl and looks like a grown version of Spanky from the Little Rascals."

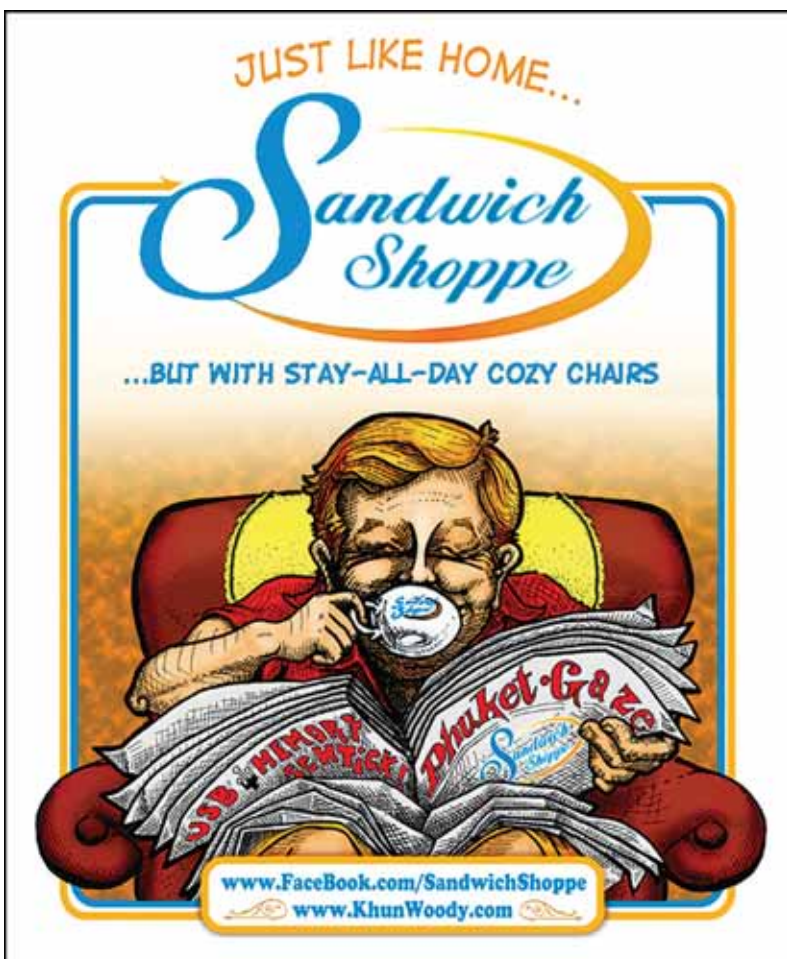
The author also details how such prominent senators as Trent Lott, Christopher Dodd, Bryon Dorgan and Evan Bayh promptly parlayed their government service into obscenely rich lobbyist sinecures. He's capable too of brilliant offhand asides. Of President Clinton's weight loss, he observes, "Encountering Clinton these days is like meeting a skinny older guy wearing an oversize rubber Bill Clinton head."

Along-time *Washington Post* and

New York Times correspondent in *This Town*, Mark Leibovich readily admits to being a member of the Club himself. Chunks of the book are culled from his own former reportage. One fears for his future. Will he ever be invited out again?

Still, he can console himself with many examples of Washington's forgetfulness, not to mention an aversion to actually reading a book like his. His back cover copy reads, "WARNING: This Town does not contain an index. Those players wishing to know how they came out will need to read the book."

Fat chance.



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Escaping just got easier

THERE always comes a time when you need a time-out. An inaudible beckoning call comes out of the ether when the pressure and daily grind of work, home life and the day-to-day routine wear on you and you just have to escape.

Escaping can be a chore in and of itself and you might find yourself in search of a hint or cue as to where to go and what to do. Being based out of Phuket can make it tricky, not for lack of amazing places to go, but on the contrary, we are surrounded by destinations that many only see on their bucket lists.

Low-cost airline, Hong Kong Express has recently provided a cue by launching nine weekly flights from Phuket to Hong Kong. Having initiated these new flights on October 28, 2013, the direct flights offer a strong incentive to escape Phuket and explore what Hong Kong has to offer. After all, with HK Express offering round trip tickets at just over 7,500 baht with tax included, that beckoning call just got easier to answer.

So, you just had a smooth flight to Hong Kong, now what? Taking a peek back in time to the ancient culture of Hong Kong with a visit to the Che Kung Temple should make it onto every savvy travellers' list. The temple was originally constructed about 300 years ago as a desperate attempt to stop a spreading epidemic. The temple paid homage to 13th century military commander Che Kung, who is said to have had an innate ability to curb rebellion and prevent plagues.

Many are familiar with the wise saying, "all that glitters is not gold". However, within the world-renowned jewelry factories in Hong Kong, that glitter actually is gold... and a myriad of other precious metals and stones. The

factories are certainly worth a visit but be prepared to lust after some beautiful pieces.

A trip to Hong Kong wouldn't be complete without getting a bird's eye view, from above. The 5.7km long Lantau cable car leads you out of the city on a 25 minute aerial journey across Tung Chung bay with sweeping views of the Ngong Ping plateau. You even have the option of reserving a standard car to have the experience all to yourself or the "crystal" car which sports a glass bottom for those who aren't afraid of heights.

Don't let your adventure stop in Hong Kong though. Take advantage of the fact that HK Express has also added 11 return flights a week to their itinerary

doubles as a museum. If you happen to be visiting the castle in winter you can also catch a two hour "3-D mapping and super illumination" light show in one of the castle's gardens.

Speaking of Osaka Castle, for a commanding view of it directly out the window of your room, book a stay at the New Otani Hotel. If this massive hotel doesn't offer it, you probably don't need it. There are 13 restaurants and bars to choose from serving Japanese, Chinese and Western foods as well as a patisserie to satiate your sweet tooth.

The world-class facilities include an outdoor pool, fitness club, massage and business center not to mention the host shops to peruse such as a beauty parlor, cigar shop and florist.

Children and adults alike will enjoy the Kaiyukan Aquarium at the Tempozan Harbor Village. One of the largest aquariums in the world, the Kaiyukan takes visitors through 18 exhibits themed after various natural

environments around the Pacific Ocean. The four seasons of the Japanese forest, the penguins of Antarctica and the loggerhead turtles of the Cook Strait are just a few of the recreated wonders.

You can find a little style from the west in the east at Universal Studios Japan. Take a spin on some Hollywood rides like Back To the Future, Jurassic Park and Jaws and enjoy dazzling show such as Magical Starlight Parade, Waterworld and Backdraft.

Change your perspective by hopping on the relaxing "aquabus" for a scenic boat tour on the Okawa river and maybe get off to stretch your legs at the Yodoyabashi bridge where you get a sweeping view of

servicing Hong Kong to Osaka for about 11,175 baht. Although if you are coming from Phuket you must make a connection, it is immediate so there is no waiting around.

Osaka is a vibrant city of over 2.5 million people located at the mouth of the Yodo River which empties into Osaka Bay. It is the third largest city in Japan steeped in a rich history and lively culture and there are practically never-ending opportunities for visitors to indulge in.

The idyllic Osaka Castle and surrounding 60,000sqm grounds are home to luscious gardens filled with plum groves and cherry blossoms. Built in 1583, the castle sports four turrets, is surrounded by moats and



The idyllic Osaka Castle surrounded by cherry blossoms. Photos: Supplied



Take a scenic tour aboard the aquabus on the Okawa River.



The view over Osaka from the New Otani Hotel.

metropolitan Osaka.

For a stunning example of serene Japanese form and cultural history, explore the 3rd century Sumiyoshi Taisha temple. Showcasing a pure Japanese architectural style called Sumiyoshi-zukuri, which is said to be uninfluenced from mainland Asia, the shrine represents the gods who protect fishermen, sailors and travellers.

Once you have left the tranquility of the Sumiyoshi Taisha temple, initiate yourself back into the 21st century with a visit to Grand Front Osaka, where garden greenery meets high-tech architecture, shopping, entertain-

ment and learning. You will find three towers which hold 266 shops and restaurants, the 272 room Intercontinental Osaka hotel and the Knowledge Capital – a place dedicated for people to check out exhibits of the latest technologies, glimpse what the future of corporations and universities might look like and enjoy stage performances and business seminars at the knowledge theater.

With the new promotions from HK Express and endless activities and entertainment options in Hong Kong and Osaka, there has never been a better time to escape.

– Phuket Gazette



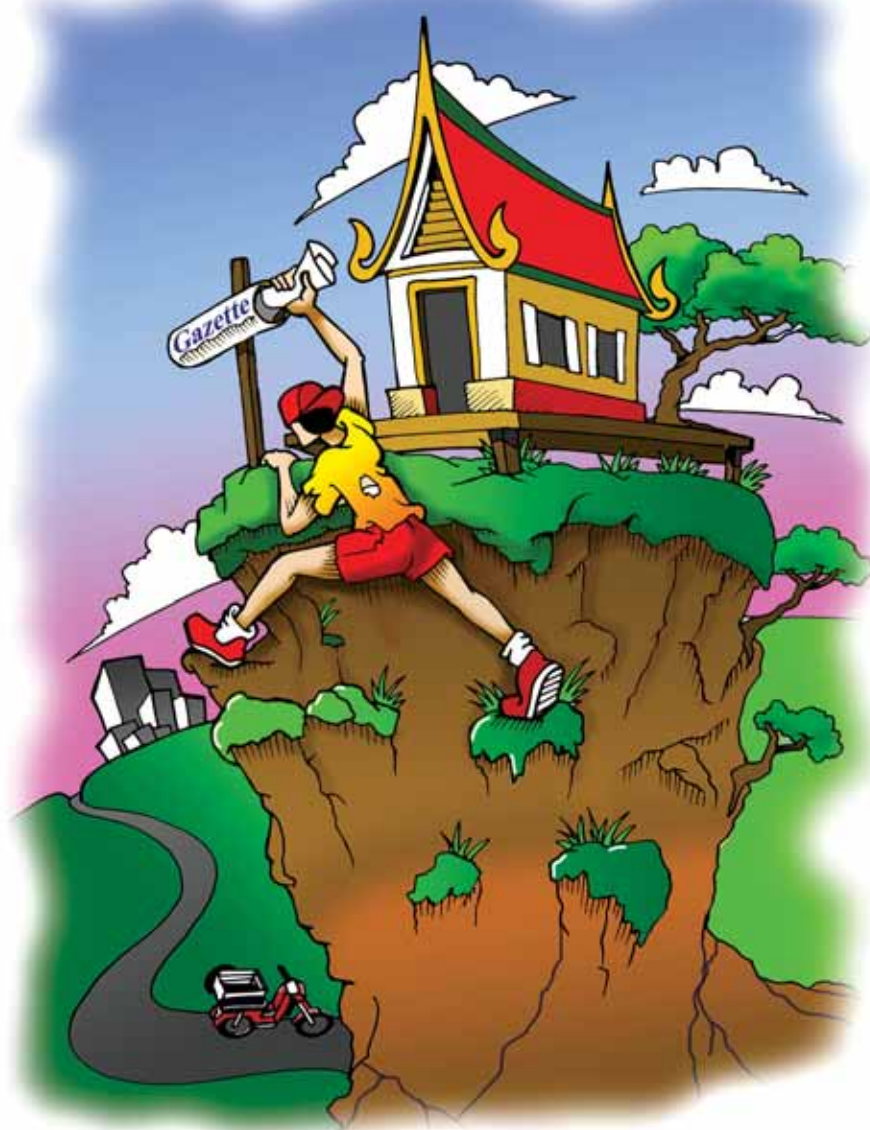
Media FAM group at Universal Studios in Osaka.



From left: Yukiyo Katsumura and Miyoko Imanaka from Osaka Government Tourism Bureau and Atthawut Kumpitak (Tony) GSA Manager and Sasateron Intarachai of HK Express.



Media FAM group exploring the sights of Osaka.



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

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Your weekly pith:

"Books, like friends, should be few and well chosen."
— Samuel Paterson

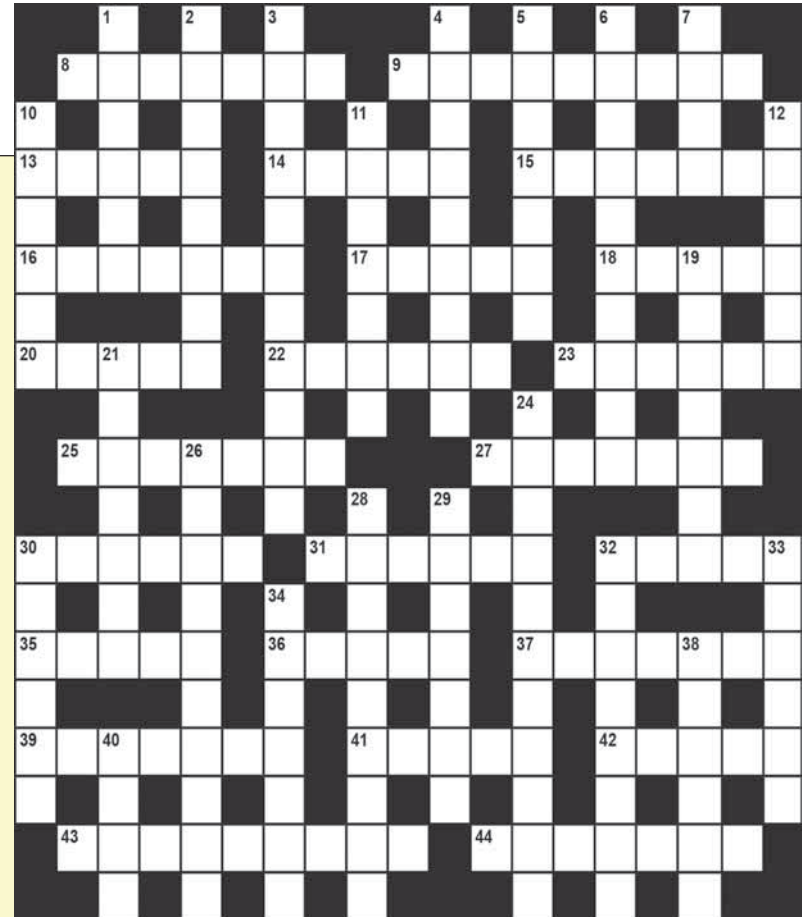
"A true friend is the most precious of all possessions and the one we take the least thought about acquiring." — La Rochefoucauld

Taken from Ian Hewitt's book 'QUOTES for PROSPERITY'

COFFEE break

Across

8. Standing, not as it shifted (7)
9. Gain access, write French, and tear out (9)
13. Unrefined, almost ill-mannered (5)
14. Fix taps out East (5)
15. Fight any fine material (7)
16. Crazy kin fit a container in a desk (7)
17. Dave went back East to dodge (5)
18. Aim off, turn to an adult insect (5)
20. Confidence in body legally holding property (5)
22. Am let a different Mexican dish (6)
23. Article in location of imposing building (6)
25. Conifer forest produces firewood out East (7)
27. Les, peer around at someone slumbering (7)
30. Ate away at cooked red doe (6)
31. Contributors to Spanish gentleman or son (6)
32. Career out East for a health professional (5)
35. South Indian M.A. lit out! (5)
36. Bellyache for Colonel in command (5)
37. Beginning in one tail wagging! (7)
39. Ach! Get the clan out of the Scottish hamlet (7)
41. One bark, back at a port across Phangna Bay (5)
42. Send out the children (5)
43. Subject, friend, to being currently of interest (9)
44. One deal left unknown for preference (7)



Down

1. Hit, stopped working (6)
2. Most expensive pet sets out East (8)
3. To complain, I arrange a collection (11)
4. Individually cut off associate (9)
5. Botched skeet outright left the bird (7)
6. Wasteful Professor left one opening (10)
7. Stake put up, up in volcano (4)
10. Writing of money certificate on time (6)
11. Respects two points, possibly meets (7)
12. Old time bogey moved round the North (6)
19. Layman met aura in confusion (7)

21. Always the same French one I document (7)
24. Small advertisements category dies if changed (11)
26. Swing round, preside over invalid transport (5,5)
28. Improbable, I refuse! (3,6)
29. Study what sounds like marine mammal in hide (7)
30. Arranged ten diamonds to tempt (6)
32. Vital to credit one old Siamese coin (8)
33. Left in role, Romeo got a big wave (6)
34. Caught in simple footwear, a disgrace (7)
38. Lions unusually note something found in shoe (6)
40. Presently unknown (4)

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



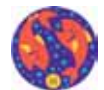
This is an auspicious time for Aquarians to throw caution to the wind and try something new. The stars hint that your energy will be more low-key in the second half of February, so you should make the most of cosmic support this week. Those celebrating a birthday during the coming days are forecast to find that romance is smoother sailing in the year ahead. Your lucky color this week is sunflower yellow.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):



There are hints that Pisceans could be aiming for a mission impossible this week. The astral atmosphere encourages slow, steady progress towards realistic goals and trying to rush projects is likely to backfire. Affairs of the heart are better starred as the middle of the month approaches – an earth sign should be impressed by a romantic gesture this weekend. Wear the color royal blue to attract good luck in money matters.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):



Energy is forecast to flow more freely until the middle of February and Arians should be able to accomplish tasks that have been difficult to face up to. The stars indi-

cate that clearing up your domestic environment will help you to feel more relaxed and ready to entertain at home. This could be a successful approach to winning an air sign's heart. Your lucky color this week is sunflower yellow.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):



Those born under the sign of Taurus are advised to work harder on letting go of past situations that are preventing them from moving on. If this relates to a bad experience in the world of work, the stars suggest that you have learned enough for mistakes not to be repeated. A new challenge could be just what you need to boost your confidence. Wear the color emerald green to attract inspiration.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



Planning is your keyword to an easier life for the remainder of February. The stars indicate that last minute developments in the world of work will demand extra effort from Geminis. It could be necessary to assert your authority where a fire sign colleague is concerned as allowing this person to have too much free rein is forecast to result in problems. Wear the color silver to encourage inner peace.

YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



The stars advise those born under the sign of Cancer to pay attention to small details until the middle of the month. There are hints that you may miss an important detail in a document or during a business related conversation. Some quality rest time is advisable this weekend, but friends are determined to include you in their plans to paint the town red. Your lucky color this week is bronze.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



Pushing yourself too hard is highlighted to affect Leos' well-being. Extra responsibilities should be put on hold until the middle of the month when your energy should be better balanced. The stars advise that a fire sign friend's request for help can be surprising this weekend. Paying back a favor is one thing, but going overboard should be avoided. Wear the color navy blue to encourage good luck this week.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



Spending too much time with people who are downbeat can affect Virgoans. The astral atmosphere remains cloudy until the middle of the month and you are advised to keep a positive focus. Collaboration with another earth sign can enhance your work opportunities, but an air sign's ideas are too different from yours. A water sign romantic partner's sudden desire to relocate puts pressure on a relationship. Your lucky color this week is purple.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Lack of inspiration gives way to a more creative mood for those born under the sign of Libra. The stars suggest that efforts made this week can pave the way for success towards the end of February. Personal relationships continue to bring enjoyment, with a new water sign friend ready to include you in some fun this weekend. Love with a fire sign becomes more intense. The color orange is lucky this week.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Relationships are tested, with a friend expecting you to drop everything and rush to their rescue. The stars show

that this is an auspicious occasion for those born under the sign of Scorpio to set some new limits. In your world of work, competition heats up and your plans should be fine tuned before you proceed. Dazzling days for romance are Sunday and Monday. The color sapphire blue is lucky this week.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



A flying start to the week puts Sagittarius ahead in the world of work. However, the stars suggest that it may be hard to keep up the pace after Wednesday. An earth sign is forecast to let you down where an agreement is concerned; this can cause some stress, but should turn out to be for the best in the long term. Wear the color mint green to encourage patience.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



Ask for the moon and you could be rewarded. If this relates to your world of work, the stars suggest that Capricorns take advantage of a supportive cosmic climate and apply for a job that is better suited to their skills. Where romance with a water sign is concerned, your doubts should prove to be unfounded. Fortunate days for finances are Wednesday and Thursday. The color crimson is lucky this week.

Seahawks crush the Broncos

By Somchai Huasaikul

FOLLOWING a bad snap that resulted in a safety on the first play from scrimmage, the outcome of Super Bowl XLVIII played last Monday morning was never in doubt: the Seattle Seahawks built on their 2-0 lead to dominate in every phase of the game, destroying the Denver Broncos 43-8.

To say there was a great deal of interest in this game would be an understatement: it was watched live by over 111 million people in the United States alone, making it the most viewed television broadcast in the history of that country, birthplace of the term "couch potato".

Unfortunately, all of the pre-game hype failed to deliver anything close to the exciting matchup many had anticipated. Indeed, the Vegas line going into the game favored the Seahawks by just 2.5 points. After it was all said and done, the lopsided result was the largest margin of victory in 21 years, when the then-mighty Dallas Cowboys trounced the Buffalo Bills by the same margin, running up the score to win 52-17.

Another first for Super XLVIII is that it was the first to be played in a "cold weather" city: East Rutherford New Jersey, home to both the New York Jets and the New York Giants – yes, neither team actually plays in the Big Apple. But the temperature at kickoff was not too bad, 9 C, and – while that may seem cold by Phuket standards – nobody was using the weather as an excuse after the hardcore beating the Seahawks dealt the Broncos.

Most Phuket fans who are into the National Football League (NFL) will have either watched the game live, seen a replay or at least read news about the final result, so we will not dwell on the details too much here. The game was hyped as a matchup between the league's statistically best offense, Denver, against its best defense, Seattle. Suffice it to say that Bronco's future Hall of Fame quarterback Peyton Manning never got the protection he needed in the pocket and, while he was only sacked once, succumbed to the pressure in an even worse way: throwing for two interceptions in the first half alone, including a "pick six" (interception returned for a touchdown for the layman).

The win was the first-ever for the Seahawks, who entered the league in 1976. In their only previous appearance, in 2005, they lost to the Pittsburgh Steelers 21-10.

The win should go down as a management lesson for other teams in the NFL, as the Seattle defense largely comprises a number of middle to late-round draft choices, as well as a number of undrafted free agents.

Most of the credit for putting together such a solid team, on both sides of the ball and even on special teams, is going to team general manager John Schneider and coach Pete Carroll.

Already people are talking about a possible "dynasty", as the Seahawks were not only the best in the NFL this year, with a 16-4 record, but also the youngest. Their average age, just under 26.5



Seattle Seahawks outside linebacker Malcolm Smith (53) and cornerback Byron Maxwell (41) celebrate a touchdown during the first half against the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XLVIII at MetLife Stadium.

years, also made them the fourth-youngest team to win a Super Bowl.

Coach Carroll said after the game that his players would indeed "be surprised" if they did not repeat next year.

"We really have an eye on what's coming, and we don't dwell on what just happened. We'll get going (with the) next challenge," he told a press conference after the game.

There is little reason to doubt that the Hawks will be full of swagger next year and that injuries might be

the only thing stopping them from more success next year in the NFC West, easily the NFL's toughest division in recent years.

Because of the teams young age they do not have many issued with the salary cap. Due to the young age of the roster, they only have three important players who will not remain under contract, meaning they can spend more in free agency than rival teams who have huge financial commitments to superstar players.

For example, young quarterback

Russell Wilson, who threw for three TDs in the game, will only make US\$817,302 next year. Manning, in contrast, is guaranteed US\$20 million over the same period, obviously a huge chunk that limits purchasing power for other positions.

At any rate, congratulations to the entire Seahawk organization and fans – and a farewell to readers of this column until next September, when we hope to begin all over again.

For questions or comments contact khabarphuket@gmail.com

Beckham to buy Miami football team

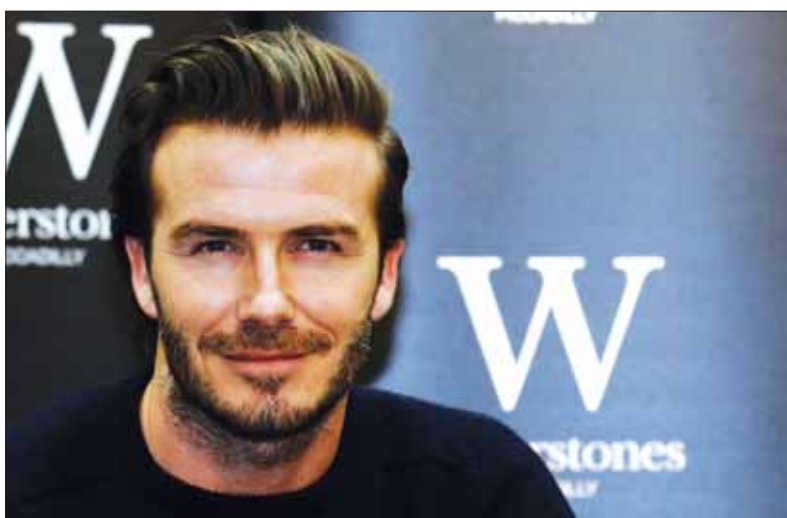
FORMER England football captain David Beckham and Major League Soccer announced on Wednesday that he is exercising his option to become the owner of a team in Miami, sources close to the negotiations said.

A final deal to grant the franchise to Beckham could be several months away though, with a stadium location and financing still required to win approval from the MLS board for his team to become the 22nd club of the top US professional football league.

"Beckham's announcement [marked] the culmination of the start phase," said Irwin Raij, a sports attorney at Foley & Lardner who has worked on numerous stadium deals, but is not involved in Beckham's plans. "He's committed and now the real negotiations can begin."

The international football star's investment group and MLS Commissioner Don Garber made the announcement on Wednesday morning at Miami's gleaming new bayfront art museum.

The former Manchester United and Real Madrid star, who also played for the Los Angeles



Pending funding and MLS approval, Beckham will become owner of a Miami football team. Photo: Luke MacGregor

Galaxy in MLS, retired as a player last May and holds US\$25 million option in his MLS contract to start a new franchise.

Beckham is already in discussions with Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez and the county commission to possibly lease county-owned land for a 25,000-seat stadium.

Beckham's investment group has narrowed its stadium search to five possible sites in

and around downtown Miami, officials say, including a 25-acre waterfront lot next to the port of Miami's cruise ship terminals, potentially putting the new team at the forefront of Miami's tourism landscape.

The port site is within walking distance of the National Basketball Association's Miami Heat arena and within easy reach of the Miami Beach hotel district.

—David Adams/Rueters

Euro clubs to play in US

LEADING European clubs including Real Madrid, Manchester United and AC Milan have been signed up to play a pre-season tournament in the United States in July, organizers said on Tuesday.

The English trio of United, local rivals Manchester City and Liverpool will join Real and Milan plus AS Roma, Inter Milan and Olympiakos Piraeus in the Guinness International Cup, which takes place from July 26-August 4.

The tournament, which is in its second edition, was won by Real last year when Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice in a 3-1 victory over Chelsea.

"Year one of the Guinness International Champions Cup set the new gold standard for football in the United States," Charlie Stillitano, Relevant Sports CEO, said at the tournament launch in Miami.

"Our only goal was to provide fans with the best football experience in their own backyards. We look forward to building on these successes in 2014."

The eight teams, who account for 150 domestic titles, 88 domestic cups and 27 European Cup/Champions League trophies, will be divided into two groups of four with the winners of Group A and Group B meeting in the final.

The showpiece match will be played at Miami's Sun Life Stadium on August 4. There will also be matches in Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Washington DC and two additional cities.

The participation of the English Premier League teams depends on games not affecting any European qualifying matches. — Reuters



Photo: Darren Staples

European football clubs set to play pre-season tournament in the US.

UN chief to go to Sochi opening

By Karolos Grohmann
and Michelle Nichols

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will attend the opening ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia on Friday and meet with other world leaders attending the event.

However, several key world leaders – US President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande and British Prime Minister David Cameron – will not be at the Sochi Games, which has been dogged by controversy over Russia's stance on gay rights.

Russia triggered criticism and boycott calls for the games in June, when it banned spreading “gay propaganda” to children. Critics denounced the law as discriminatory and said it is a curb on rights to free speech and assembly.

On Friday, Ban called on the participants of the Olympics to advocate equality and non-discrimination during the games.

“The participants in the Sochi Games may carry the flags of many nations, but they come together under the shared banner of equality, fair play, mutual respect and non-discrimination,” Ban stated.

In November, the 193-member UN General Assembly called for an international truce in armed conflicts during the Winter Olympics and urged Moscow “to promote social

inclusion without discrimination.”

Obama has made clear that his inclusion of three openly gay athletes in the official US delegation to the Sochi Games was intended to send a message to Russia. Britain is sending a government minister responsible for the country's same-sex marriage laws.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said everything was being done “so that participants and guests feel comfortable in Sochi, regardless of nationality, race or sexual orientation.”

He said there is no gay discrimination in Russia, which decriminalized homosexuality in 1993. But the mayor of Sochi said on Monday that homosexuality was not accepted in his Caucasus region, though gay visitors would be welcome at the games if they respected Russian laws.

During his visit to Russia, Ban will also become the first UN secretary-general to deliver a keynote speech at the International Olympic Committee session, which meets this week, IOC President Thomas Bach said on Monday. The IOC has observer status at the United Nations like the Vatican.

“The secretary general has accepted the invitation to attend the IOC session and deliver a keynote address,” Bach told reporters in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi.

– Reuters



Photo: Lukas Barth

Ban Ki-moon called on the participants of the Olympics to advocate non-discrimination during the games.



Many world leaders will not attend the Olympic games in Russia that were branded as “anti gay”. Photo: Mike Blake

Stray dogs fall victim to games preparations

By Timothy Heritage

AN outcry over the fate of stray animals being rounded up in Sochi is the latest problem to dog Russia's preparations for the Winter Olympics.

Already scrambling to get hotels ready on time, make the Games safe and convince the world Russians are not homophobic, the host nation is now trying

to shake off accusations that it is killing stray dogs.

It is hardly the showcase for modern Russia that President Vladimir Putin had hoped for at the Olympics.

Residents say thousands of dogs have disappeared from the streets of Sochi since a local business won a contract to catch stray animals before the Games, which open on Friday.

Although some can still be seen wandering the streets, including close to some of the sports venues, reporters and local residents say there have been fewer each day.

The Games' organizers are reluctant to discuss the dogs' fate, particularly whether they have been culled.

“There is a service that catches the dogs and the city authorities handle this. The city

has a special shelter for them,” said Alexandra Kosterina, a Games spokeswoman.

The city authorities did not immediately comment but the Basya Services pest control company said it had received a contract to catch and destroy the wild dogs roaming the Black Sea resort.

Residents say many of the dogs on the loose had been kept as pets or guard dogs by foreign workers

who helped build the Games venues but have now returned home. Some of the dogs, they say, have been found dead in the streets.

Tatyana Leshchenko, an animal activist, told local media, “The city authorities are paying for the murder of each animal but this does not solve the problem. This money should be provided for sterilizing animals and building shelters.”

– Reuters



Photo: Mark Blinch



Photo: Andrey

Local businesses are in charge of cleaning Sochi's streets of stray dogs, causing outcry from animal lovers who say the dogs should be cared for, not killed.

Laguna consolidates top spot

LAGUNA consolidated its spot at the top of the Jones Lang LaSalle Cricket league on Sunday February 2 by defeating The Village in a match that almost turned into the upset of the season at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG).

Laguna went into the match expected to win comfortably with The Village languishing at the bottom of the table. Laguna lost the toss and was forced to field – with Laguna having always preferred to bat first, this was perhaps a tactical move by The Village captain Craig Patterson which almost paid dividends.

The Village opened with Mark Whetton and Martin Foster getting off to an early flying start. However, things looked like they might be heading in the usual direction for the Village when Whetton was caught at square leg in the 5th over for 9 runs.

Peter Coceani was the next batsmen in and looking to steady the ship with The Village last batting collapse against TCT well and truly still in mind.

The partnership between Foster and Coceani turned into one of the best for The Village with Coceani accumulating 34 runs and Foster a very well played 61 runs.

Expectations were high from the next batsmen in Divan Mydeen – a recent signing by The Village from ICC. Divan never quite settled in, but managed to post 11 runs.

The Village managed to bat out their innings setting a respectable 173 runs with good batting performances from Simon Pettigrew (25 runs) and Mark Ashman (17 runs) and some uncharacteristic ‘sloppy’ fielding from Laguna with at least 7 missed easy opportunities.

Perhaps somewhat underestimating The Village, Laguna’s captain, Stuart Reading, elected to rotate his batting line up and opting to elevate some of his strike bowlers up the batting line up.

Roly Cooper and Manish Sadarangani opened the batting for Laguna with neither really managing to settle in. Sadarangani was dismissed for 4 runs in the 4th over and Cooper on 12 runs in the 13th over.

Things were looking in dire straits for Laguna when the next five batsmen (Bhatt, Sami, Rehman, Samaan and Youseff) only managed 60 runs between them leaving Laguna languishing on 7 for 90 after 22 overs and The Village sensing a major upset with even a few of their players commencing some early celebrations.

Laguna were now looking for some strong performances from their more renowned batsmen to salvage the game.

Next to the crease for Laguna were Shoeib Mushtaq and Stuart Reading. Mushtaq managed to survive a couple of early scares and started steadying things, accumulating some



Laguna stay on top of their game with another comfortable win. Photo: Supplied

good early runs. Reading, however was easily “man of the match” getting off to a flying start and setting Laguna’s highest batting score of 53 not-out from just 22 balls. Mushtaq finished undefeated on 30 runs with Laguna managing to hang on for a 3 wicket win in just over 31 overs and surviving a potentially embarrassing defeat.

Next Sunday (February 9) sees another top of the table clash between ICC and TCT with both teams looking to consolidate 2nd spot and a possible top spot with the bonus points.
– *Phuket Gazette*

For full scoreboard and more details please visit www.phuketcricketgroup.com

Tennis is a game of emergencies

IF you have read Peter Burwash’s *Tennis For Life* or if you’ve had a lesson from a PBI Professional at Thanyapura, or at another PBI location, you may have heard or felt this, but we really want the tennis player to understand that tennis is a game of emergencies. Other than the serve, all other tennis shots we hit throughout the course of a tennis match are shots that have us reacting to our opponent’s shots. How well we deal with those emergencies will determine how the match turns out.

It’s important players know, first and foremost, how to deal with and how to get out of an emergency situation when we are in a defensive state. Just like a driving instructor makes darn sure that the student knows where the brake is and how to use it, play-

ers need to know how they can get every ball back in the court. When we are in troublesome situations on the court, it is important to know how to control the racquet and to use the wrist to rescue ourselves and keep the ball going back to the opponent’s side of the court.

At that point, the game is certainly not about form or looking good, it’s about being practical. We all need a defensive foundation first, then your offense is built upon that.

Tennis Dimension # 1 is: getting the ball in.

Happy Hitting!

Tip provided by Thanyapura’s Tennis Head Coach, Roger Cochrane. To contact the coach send an email to tennis@thanyapura.com



Emergency out, ball in, this is how you win. Photo: StuSeeger

See you again at Thanyapura in 2015!



THANYAPURA Phuket’s Management presents a photo frame souvenir to the Royal Dutch Swimming Federation before they left their winter training base to return to their home last Sunday. The Dutch Team shall return to Thanyapura Phuket again next January till Rio Olympics 2016. From left: Thanyapura’s Director of Sports Academy, Craig Johns, CEO Michael Gilliam (MG), Aad Groningen, member of Olympic Committee and Team Manager of Elite Swimming, Royal Dutch Swimming Federation and Thanyapura Phuket Executive Chairman Chris McCormack (also four time triathlon world champion)

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Thanyapura to host Davis Cup

THANYAPURA Phuket's reputation as a revolutionary sports and active lifestyle destination is soaring higher than ever after it pulled off a major achievement to land the Davis Cup tie between Thailand and Hong Kong.

The Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand (LTAT) decided to move the February 14-16 Asia-Oceania round one clash from Bangkok, to Phuket's world-class megaplex due to the political unrest in the capital.

Shifting the event to Thanyapura was a no-brainer given its cutting-edge facilities and proven track record in hosting major tennis tournaments.

This is the highest profile event landed by the facility to date, which is enjoying a hugely successful push to export its active healthy lifestyle concept globally and acquire a world-class reputation as a complete sports events and training complex.

Thanyapura's executive chairman, four-time triathlon world champion Chris McCormack, said securing the Davis Cup tie further cemented the facility's reputation as Asia's leading active lifestyle destination.

Mr McCormack said it also built on the international reputation of the Thanyapura's Tennis Academy, which for the past two years had hosted a women's round of the prestigious International Tennis Federation Pro Circuit.

"The Davis Cup is one of the world's most prestigious sporting events. So to be entrusted with such a storied brand is a huge gift for us," he said. "Thanyapura's philosophy is 'get more out of life', which the elite athletes set to descend on Phuket perfectly illustrate. It is an ideal marriage."

Thailand will be spearheaded by Pruchya Isarow and Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul at the tie, with the home team enjoying a 4-1 advantage over Hong Kong in Davis Cup meetings. Two other Thai players include Warit Sornbutnark and Nuttanan Kadchapanan.

The players will be treated to the very best at the Tennis Academy, which has six indoor and outdoor Plexicushion courts – the same surface used at the Australian Open. Accommodation will be provided at the onsite Thanyapura Sports Hotel.

As well as hosting international

and regional tennis events, teams from around the world use the state-of-the-art academy as a training base.

The recently appointed Mr McCormack, who has already had a huge impact on enhancing Thanyapura's reputation, said, "We have established ourselves as a force to be reckoned with in the sports and active lifestyle space in Asia. We see landing the Davis Cup tie as another chance to showcase our brand and a springboard to greater success."

The Thanyapura Active Healthy Lifestyle concept begins with its renowned three-dimensional coaching approach that is aimed at people from all walks of life and utilises a blend of cutting edge training techniques and world-class coaches, consultants and facilities.

There is also a focus on the mental aspect of sport through the Thanyapura Mind Center, while overall health and wellness from the latest scientific perspective comes via its ground-breaking Thanyapura Integrative Health Center.

– *Phuket Gazette*



Due to political unrest in Bangkok, Thanyapura will host the Davis Cup tennis tournament on February 14-16. Photo: Draceane

Phuket looks to bag the CAT in season opener



February 15 and 16 mark the start of the FTPL season. Photo: Gazette File

IT'S official – the Futsal Thailand Premier League (FTPL) kicks off next weekend (February 15 and 16) with the island's pro five-a-side squad, Phuket United to play their season opener on Sunday against CAT FC.

Kickoff for Phuket's season opener will be 7pm at Saphan Hin's 4,000-seat Indoor Gynasium.

This will be 7th year that Thailand has organized a professional futsal league, this season – organized by new sponsors, Siam Multimedia – contested by 16 teams.

Three FTPL opening matches are scheduled on Saturday as follows: Uthaitani vs Pattaya Arena; Reigning champions Chonburi Bluewave vs last year's runners up Thai Port FC; and Si Pathum Si Saket vs Bangkok FC.

Other than Phuket's match, four other matches will take place on Sunday as follows: Royal Navy vs Nonthaburi; Ayuthaya City vs Suphanburi; Samut Sakhon vs Khon Kaen and Highways Department vs Chiang Mai.

Playing in the national league for the first time ever last year, Phuket United finished in an impressive fifth place.

General admission will be 100 baht, with season tickets available for only 1,300 baht, which includes admission to all 15 home matches and discounts on merchandise and match-day beverages.



– *Steven Layne*

PSS International Tournament a success



THANYAPURA hosted the Phuket Soccer Schools (PSS) 4th International Tournament on February 1 and 2. Thirty youth football teams arrived on Saturday to compete in four age groups (U8-U14) over ten hours of football. Several Phuket FC members were present as spectators and to present the awards to the winning teams.

All of the PSS teams performed well and PSS U10s shone brightest, winning their medal league and gaining the maximum points. The U10s then beat Arsenal Soccer Schools BKK in the semi-final of the U10 cup leading on to a final with island rivals, Samui Utd. PSS bossed the game and led 2-0 until three minutes to go when Samui scored and the momentum turned. Samui then scored one minute later with an exceptional half volley shot from well outside the penalty area which flashed past the goalkeeper. With a tie at the end of normal time, they went to penalty kicks where Samui Utd emerged 2-1 winners.

PSS Coach Martin Hill said, "I



Photos: Supplied

Thirty teams participated in Phuket Soccer School's International Tournament.

would like to thank everyone who helped make this event happen: QSI International School provided

facilities; Phuket FC for providing players and staff on a Sunday afternoon to make the awards presentation extra special for all the players who participated."

Coaches and players alike are already looking forward to the 5th International Tournament at Thanyapura. Dates for the tournament are yet to be announced.

Next up is the PSS 2nd National Tournament at Thanyapura which will take place sometime in September 2014.

– *Phuket Gazette*

eight volunteers who helped immensely; the sponsors of local Phuket teams; parents for providing transport for our players, PSS Staff who have been working for weeks prior; Thanyapura for their staff and their fantastic

Any players interested in our PSS Academy program can have a trial by request, please contact info@phuketsoccerschools.com for more information.



Phuket hold Sharks at bay



Phuket's goalkeeper Adisak Douangsri had to work overtime to keep Chonburi at bay. Photos: Jeremie Schatz



Phuket's Brazilian centerback Tales Dos Santos was ejected late in the game.

By Steven Layne

PHUKET FC conceded their first goal of the year, drawing Thai Premier League power-house, Chonburi FC 1-1 in an exciting friendly match last Saturday (February 1) evening in Phuket Town. Played in front of some 4,000 fans at Surakul Stadium, the match yielded the largest turnout of five pre-season matches thus far.

Among the spectators were dozens of travelling, blue-clad Chonburi supporters as well as the entire squad of the island's professional futsal club, Phuket United.

From the opening whistle, it was clear that Chonburi was the more experienced and composed side, controlling the flow of the game and demonstrating superior passing play.

Nonetheless, Phuket's attacking-game potential was showcased as they enjoyed a number of scoring opportunities, mostly on the counter-attack and on the end of rapid, fast-breaks.

Phuket's Brazilian midfielder, Henrique "Eber" De Bessa looked to open the scoring early on when on a breakaway, chipped the ball over Chonburi's keeper, Sinthaweechai Hathairattanakool, but only to rattle the crossbar.

However, it was the visitors who would draw first blood, mid-way through the first half, when Chonburi's Brazilian striker, Thiago Dos Santos Cunha headed in a free kick to instantly silence the home crowd.

Phuket fans were sent back into a frenzy only moments later when their own Brazilian striker Ney Fabiano lived up to the moment to beautifully head in his equalizer, converting a well-placed cross from Sokereya

Kolae on the right wing. Possession was evenly weighted in the second half, but neither side could find the back of the net. Phuket's goalkeeper Adisak Douangsri was made to earn his keep as Chonburi tried relentlessly to score the winner, but to no avail.

Phuket's third Brazilian starter, the towering centerback Tales Dos Santos, was ejected late in the game – for the second match in a row – following a questionable sliding-tackle take-down of Chonburi's Chonlatit Jantakam.

A replay of the highlights revealed that after the tackle, Chonlatit made a kicking gesture at the Brazilian while both were still on the ground, which prompted Dos Santos to try to head-butt Chonlatit, before players from both sides separated the two.

Phuket FC Head Coach, Stefano "Teco" Cuagarra, also a Brazilian, told the *Gazette* that he thought the red card was the right call.

"The challenge was too strong, and we still need to have a talk with him [Dos Santos] about keeping his cool in the match."

Overall, Coach Teco said he was satisfied with the match.

"I'm really happy that we were able to get one of Thailand's top three teams down here for a friendly. They are a really good team, tactically, and I think we all learned a lot from this game. It will prove important experience for us when we're up against stronger teams this season."

Phuket's first official match of the season will be on Saturday, February 22 at home against Pattaya United.

Kickoff will be at 6:30pm. Admission is 100 baht.

2014 YL1 Phuket Matches (1 st half)				
H	Feb 23	VS	Pattaya United	
A	Mar 08	VS	Angthong FC	
H	Mar 16	VS	TTM Customs	
A	Mar 22	VS	Krabi FC	
H	Mar 26	VS	Sri Racha FC	
A	Mar 29	VS	BBCU	
H	Apr 05	VS	Bangkok FC	
A	Apr 20	VS	Chiangmai FC	
H	Apr 26	VS	Nakhon Pathom Utd	
A	May 04	VS	Nakhon Ratchasima FC	
H	May 11	VS	Phitsanulok FC	
A	May 18	VS	Trat FC	
H	May 25	VS	Khon Kaen FC	
A	Jun 01	VS	Royal Navy	
H	Jun 07	VS	Roi Et Utd	
A	Jun 13	VS	Ayuthaya FC	
H	Jun 22	VS	Saraburi FC	

*dates subject to change



Phuket as well as Chonburi fans were well-represented.



Mizsy Phuket made a surprise appearance.

