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Police deny shakedown

Italian's extortion allegations written off as misunderstanding

By Gazette Reporters

THE chief of the Phuket Tourist Police has branded allegations that three of his officers extorted 20,000 baht from an Italian man in Patong as a "big misunderstanding".

The news follows protesters staging a blockade of the Patong beach road after word of the shakedown spread through the resort town.

"The case will not be pursued because a complaint was not filed," Phuket Tourist Police chief Urumporn Koondejsumrit said.

The allegations spread on January 31 after an Italian - who declined to be named - was stopped while helping a friend clean up his restaurant on the Patong beachfront road.

Three officers allegedly approached the foreigner and asked for his work permit, explained Patong Municipal Council chairman Tanin Arttasap.

He could not produce one.

"After negotiations, the foreigner agreed to pay..."

Continued on Page 8



Maj Urumporn rejected allegations that a deal was struck to protect the Tourist Police.

Water goes brown but is still safe, says expert

PATONG Bay water is safe and clean despite the color and smell, the Patong Municipality Sanitation Department chief said.

There is no reason to panic, as the brown color is due to plankton, he said.

The stench, however, is not from the sea, but the Pak Bang Canal at the south end of the beach, he added.

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Blood bank stocks hit critical low

A NORWEGIAN man's condition is now stable after blood donations poured in to save his life. However, the Phuket blood bank's stock remains at a historical low.

Full Story Page 8

Chief offers reward for oil-dumpers

THE Phuket Marine Office chief has promised a 10,000 baht reward for photos clearly identifying people dumping oil into the ocean.

Full Story Page 2

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paramount. **Page 13**



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B10k reward offered for images of oil-dumpers

By Saran Mitrarat

THE Phuket Marine Office is offering a 10,000 baht reward for photographs of people dumping oil into the sea.

It is illegal to release oil into the sea, said Phuket Marine Office chief Phuriphat Teerakulpisut.

"We can only arrest suspects if we have enough proof or catch them in action. In the past, we have been too late, and the only evidence of the crime was oil on the surface of the sea."

"We want to protect our waters from people who disrespect them. We cannot monitor the entire island all at once, so we urge the public to help us."

Photos can be taken to the Phuket Marine Office in Ao Makham at the entrance of the Deep Sea Port of Phuket.

"Please note that you must indicate the exact date, time and location of the crime, and have a clear picture of the suspect's face," said Chief Phuriphat.

"Once we have evidence, it is easier for us to pursue the suspect and proceed with the legal process."

The reward will be paid regardless of whether an arrest is made, provided the photo clearly shows the suspect's face, he said.



Phuket Marine Office chief Phuriphat Teerakulpisut says that his office will pay for the photos even if they don't make the arrest.

Those arrested for dumping oil into the sea are in violation of two different laws:

The Act on Navigation in Thai Waters BE 2456 Section 119, which carries a penalty of up to three years imprisonment, a 60,000 baht fine or both. Violators are also required to make payment toward treating or

rehabilitating the contaminated area.

The Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Act BE 2535, sections 96 and 97, in which violators must pay the cost of water treatment or pollution cleanup, and pay for any damages, whether to livelihood or health, of people affected.

Rubber tree tapper felled by large falling branch

A RUBBER farmer was struck and killed by a falling tree branch while tapping his trees early Monday in Thalang.

Jaroon Tankongkoy, 67, left for the rubber plantation at 3am, said his wife, Pranom Tankongkoy.

"I was waiting to have lunch with him, but he didn't come back. At 3pm, I went out to look for him," Mrs Pranom said.

She found her husband's body lying among the trees with injuries to his skull, nose and legs. A large tree branch lay nearby.

"We believe he had been dead for about five hours when she found him," said Lt Suporn



Mr Jaroon never returned home from the plantation for lunch.

Muangkhai of the Thalang Police.

Mr Jaroon's body was taken to Thalang Hospital to confirm cause of death.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

No explosion in flying boat crash

THE engine of the ultralight flying boat that crashed in the sea near Rawai on February 5, killing its pilot, did not explode, says an expat who took part in the recovery effort.

Early witness reports said that the aircraft, piloted by 64-year-old German Georg Erwin Bach, either plummeted or landed on the sea unexpectedly, suggesting a problem with the engine.

"There were no signs of explosive damage to the engine," Marshall Ong said.

Mr Ong saw the engine when he entered the water to turn it off. It was leaking fuel, so he and others sought to prevent accidental ignition, he explained.

"There was no damage to the engine block to suggest an explosion," Mr Ong wrote in an email.

The propeller was broken, he said. "[It] may have



Georg Erwin Bach died in the crash.

broken on impact... hence the loud sound."

Witnesses said the pilot then took off again before an "explosion" was heard and the craft crashed.

Mr Ong suggested that the "takeoff" may not have been an actual takeoff, but the boat bouncing back into the air after it struck the water.

"It's not clear if he was in control while taking off. The guy may have had a heart at-

tack while airborne," he suggested, offering an alternative to police speculation that Mr Bach drowned after the crash.

"His helmet had moved and was covering his face, but there were no signs of injuries on his body," Chalong Police Investigator Patiwat Yodkwan said.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



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Liveaboard fires spark safety awareness efforts

By Saran Mitrarat

THE revelation of the sinking of a third dive boat in the Andaman Sea within the last month has sparked concerns over fire safety on all Phuket tour boats.

On February 2, the *Bunmee I* sank in Koh Lanta National Park after an electrical short circuit caused a fire to erupt in the engine room. Less than two weeks later, the Phuket-based MV *Blue Star* sank in Myanmar waters under similar circumstances.

Everyone from both vessels was safely rescued before the burning liveaboards went under.

"Boat crew tried to control the fire, but they couldn't," said Krabi Marine Police Inspector Chaiyasit Kancharoen.

The failure of the crew on the *Bunmee I* and the *Blue Star* to contain and put out the fires has prompted Director of the Marine Office 5 Wichai Khamkong to raise the issue of adding fire fighting training to the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) annual training seminar.

"This would be done to ensure that boat crew are capable of putting out fires," Mr Wichai said.

"Engine fires are a well known hazard on any ship or yacht which is why any vessel that operates to international marine standards will have a fully automatic fire response system in the engine room," Safer Phuket founder Duncan Stewart explained. "The recent spate of incidents has highlighted the need for increased training, regulation and compliance and this is a core component



MV *Blue Star* was one of two liveaboard dive boats that sank within the last month in the Andaman Ocean after an electrical short circuit caused a fire in the engine room. Photo: Marc Mulloy

in the Safer Phuket project."

A dive shop manager who asked to remain anonymous agreed that though Phuket hasn't historically had fire problems on tour boats, the installation of fire safety systems, such as aerosol or carbon dioxide systems, in the engine room and fire extinguisher on other parts of the boat would be the best thing for reducing the risk of future incidents.

"It's not very expensive really

and there are several different systems that can be used. The carbon dioxide system which normally is released by pulling a lever kills the fire very fast. However, you have to make sure no people are in the machine room as it depletes all oxygen. You can also use an aerosol system, which can be used even if there are people in the engine room," he said.

"Look at the statistics. I don't remember when [a fire on a dive

boat] happened last time, and now it has happened a couple of times in a couple of weeks. It could have happened anywhere in the world actually, but unfortunately it happen right here and surely we have to deal with it."

In an incident unrelated to fire, the third dive boat to go down, the liveaboard MV *The Flying Carpet*, sank to a depth of 75 meters between Koh Bon and Koh Tachai in the Similans on January 29.



Health officials warned against using sex drugs without a prescription. Photo: Pixabay

German found dead in hotel with sex drug

THE discovery of a 70-year-old German man who appears to have died after taking a generic version of Viagra has prompted public health officials in Phuket to issue a warning about such drugs.

"People should take care when taking erectile dysfunction drugs, especially if they are older and have underlying medical conditions," said Orachorn Atthaveelarp of the Phuket Provincial Health Office.

"Follow prescription instructions no matter what medicine you take, but especially with drugs like these."

The German man was found on February 7 in a motel room in Phuket Town. A foil container of the erectile dysfunction drug Kamagra was found near him, with three of the four tablets missing.

The man had arrived at the motel alone at about 1:30pm and asked to rent a room for two hours, said motel staff. When his time was up, an employee knocked on his door to let him know. When he didn't open the door, staff entered the room and found his body.

"There were no signs of a struggle and the room had not been ransacked," said Phuket City Police Superintendent Sermphan Sirikong.

Doctors at Vachira Phuket Hospital are to determine the cause of death.

— Chutharat Plerin

Police secure arrest warrant in vicious murder of teen

WICHIT Police sought an arrest warrant last week for the prime suspect in the brutal murder of Phuket teenager Pawarisorn Sae-Ung.

The charred body of Mr Pawarisorn, 16, was found dumped beside Muang Chaofa Road on December 6.

He had been stabbed multiple times, his throat had been slashed and his body set alight.

"We now have information that

will lead us to the prime suspect. We will request that the court issue a warrant," Wichit Police Superintendent Chawalit Phetsipear said. He declined to name the suspect.

"We believe at least two people were involved," Col Chawalit said. "The motive was likely an argument with a friend. When we arrest the prime suspect, we will move to arrest others as well."

— Irfarn Jamdukor

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Tourist Police get tongue lashing

By Saran Mitrarat

TOURIST Police in Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Surat Thani have received a public tongue-lashing over a lack of patrols in tourist areas.

"I never see Tourist Police out on patrol when I visit – they are only working in their small police boxes," said Gen Wuthi Liptapallop, a top-flight Adviser to the Royal Thai Police Commissioner-General Adul Saengsingkaew.

"How are tourists supposed to feel safe if police are just in their booths?"

Speaking at a meeting of police commanders last week, Gen Wuthi demanded that Tourist Police increase the frequency of patrols in tourist areas.

"I would like to see officers patrolling at night until about 2am. If not, I will take action," he warned.



'How are tourists supposed to feel safe if police are just in their booths?'

– Gen Wuthi Liptapallop

The gravity of Gen Wuthi's disappointment was lessened by general praise for the positive work of the Royal Thai Police since August 2012.

"Phuket has only 1,500 police officers to handle criminal activity throughout the island. It's just not enough. This shortage is a problem in every province," Gen Wuthi said. "Despite this, officers are doing a great job protecting tourists."

Gen Wuthi made it clear that more boots on the ground in tourist areas is a priority with introduction of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) just around the corner, and a national goal of generating more than 2 trillion baht from tourism this year.

"I was assigned by Commissioner-General Adul to ensure tourist safety, which will support



Gen Wuthi (left) ordered officers to get their boots on the ground and patrol more often – or else.

the government in achieving its tourism goals," Gen Wuthi said.

Gen Wuthi also impressed upon the Royal Thai Police officers that being able to communicate clearly in English is becoming a funda-

mental requirement to working as an Immigration or Tourist Police officer.

"They will have to pass a language test. If they can't pass it, they will be moved to a different

position," he said.

After the meeting at Phuket Provincial Police Station, Gen Wuthi met with Immigration and Tourist Police officers separately. The media were not allowed to attend.



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In addition to marijuana, police found a handgun, ammunition and a grenade.

Two clipped in beauty salon with 92kg of pot

POLICE seized 92kg of marijuana at a beauty salon in Thalang on February 5 in a sting operation that netted two men who were also found in possession of a grenade, an illegal handgun and a cache of ammunition.

Netithorn Waddina, 49, and Suriya Chuayjuan, 34, were arrested at about 5pm after undercover police arranged to buy 30kg of marijuana from them for 150,000 baht.

A search of the beauty salon, located near the Baan Kian fresh market, turned up the huge drug stash, all pre-packed in one-kilogram bricks.

Officers also found an M67 grenade, a homemade handgun, 50 .22-caliber bullets, 50 9mm bullets, 29 .38-caliber bullets and two cartons of shotgun cartridges.

The drugs alone had an estimated value of 460,000 baht, said Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Col Arun Kaewwatee.

Both men were charged with possession of: a Category 5 drug with intent to sell, possession of

an illegal firearm and unlicensed ammunition.

"Mr Netithorn is also wanted by the Chiang Mai Police on an outstanding warrant for a drug-selling charge," Col Arun said.

"He is the boyfriend of the woman who owns the beauty salon. However, she had no part in the drugs and we have not charged her with anything."

The duo smuggled the marijuana from Laos, through Northern and Central Thailand to a depot in Chian Yai District in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Col Arun explained.

"From there it was brought to Phuket," he said. "We will investigate further to learn more about the narcotics network."

The 92kg seized is much smaller than the largest marijuana haul in Phuket's criminal history.

A total of 400 one-kilogram bricks of the processed plant with an estimated value of 20 million baht were seized in a raid in Rawai three years ago.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Patong Bay: brown but safe says sanitation chief

By Irfan Jamdukor

DESPITE its brown color and stench, Patong Bay is clean and safe, Patong Municipality Sanitation Department Chief Suppakorn Meekaew told the *Gazette* on Tuesday.

"People swimming and enjoying the beach should not panic about the color of the water. They can swim as usual – it will not affect their health," he said.

"The brown color doesn't mean the water is dirty," he explained. "It's due to the photosynthesis of plankton."

As for the bad smell, Mr Suppakorn said that it comes from the Pak Bang Canal when the sun heats the water there during low tide. The odor is not dangerous either, he added.

This is not the first time Patong has seen brown, smelly seawater. It has faced a similar problem with "big brown" water in previous years and as recently as last August.

"We hire a private company to conduct water quality testing in the area every other month," Mr Suppakorn said.

"The tests on January 23 showed that the quality of the water falls within the marine water quality standards of the Pollution Control Department (PCD). Water treatment reports from hotels also do not exceed the



Tourists play in the Patong Bay water. Photo: Gazette file

department's quality standards."

Nevertheless, the Regional Environmental Office 15 is planning further testing in Patong in two weeks to further assure that the seawater quality is at a healthy level, Mr Suppakorn added.

test results

Instead of posting the details of its seawater quality tests online, the center will publish only its self-determined star rating system, PMBC Director Ukkrit Satapoomin told the *Gazette* in December.

The star ratings reveal whether the PMBC considers the water at Phuket's famous beaches as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor.

In its most recent report, labelled "Marine water quality along the coastline of Phuket in 2013", the PMBC declared that the seawater at Patong Beach was in "good condition".

However, Dr Ukkrit explained that changes in the water quality were due to "seasonal variations".

"The improvement in the water quality is due to the fact there is less rain, which means fewer pollutants are being washed into the bay," he said.

The water in the northern and central areas of Patong Bay were declared to be in "fair" condition.

However, Dr Ukkrit declined to explain why the water quality was different in these areas.

Phuket Gov Maitri Inthutut ordered the PMBC to publically display its water quality ratings.

The move followed a meeting in Phuket with ambassadors from 17 European nations to raise awareness of beach safety issues.



Gov Maitri filled three trash bags during the cleanup. Photo: Phuket PR

Governor gets hands dirty for cleaner Phuket

PHUKET Governor Maitri Inthutut picked up trash on Thepkasattri Road on February 5 as part of a lead-up to Civil Defense Volunteer Day.

A group of about 200 people, including Vice Governor Chamroen Tippayapongtada and Phuket Provincial Employment Office Chief Yaowapa Pibulpol, as well as government officers and volunteers fanned out on both sides of the road in front of Big C to pitch in.

After walking north for 2km, the governor had filled three bags with rubbish, and was ready to urge local residents to keep the island clean.

"We want to promote Phuket tourism, but we have a lot of trash on this road, which is the main route into town from the airport. A lot of tourists are going to drive by and see the trash. That doesn't give us a positive image."

"We are the hosts in this province, and as such we must be ready to properly welcome tourists."

– Chutharat Plerin

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Police inspect the car after the men escaped. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Gun and roses left behind in speedy escape

A HIGH-SPEED chase through Phuket Town ended abruptly Monday morning when two suspects fled from their blocked-in car, leaving behind a handgun and two bouquets of roses.

Police at a checkpoint on Rassada Nisorn Road had motioned for an approaching black Toyota Yaris to stop, but it sped up, said Lt Col Kritsana Jannit of the Phuket City Police.

Officers took off, chasing the car past Phuket Provincial Court, Phuket Provincial Prison and onto Suthat Road. At Seng Ho Bookstore, the car turned right, and then made a left when it reached Thepkasattri Road, he said.

As witnesses on the street cheered him on, one motorbike officer cut the Yaris off in front of Namsilp Optical on Thepkasattri Road. The car quickly reversed, slamming into the car behind him.

"Trapped between the motorbike and Mr Nathapat's car, the suspects abandoned the car and fled on foot," said Lt Col Kritsana.

The driver was described as skinny with tattoos and the passenger as overweight.

When searching the car, police found two bouquets of red roses, a handgun, and a photo of the driver posing with a gun and a woman believed to be his girlfriend.

The car is registered to Wassana Pakdekit in Nakhon Sri Thammarat. Police intend to contact her as they pursue their investigation.

— Saran Mitratrat

Blocked rai with a view

Owners of abandoned Patong resort unwilling to give way

By Saran Mitratrat

OWNERS of an abandoned resort in the foothills of Patong have refused to take down part of their structure to re-open access to the land behind it.

The land in question, valued at 40 million baht per rai because of its panoramic view of Patong, cannot be developed without access, said landowner Utaiwan Van-Zandt, who has been fighting to re-open a pathway since 2009, when the resort was built.

There is no doubt that landowners are owed access to their property, said Kathu District Chief Sayan Chanachaiwong when he inspected The Crest Phuket resort on December 12.

"The pathway across the resort land was marked on the Chanote issued by the Land Office to the resort owners. This proves that the pathway was there before the owners built the resort," Mr Sayan explained.

"That means, by law, the resort owners must continue to provide access across their property for the people who own land behind it."

Kathu District officers had issued an order to the owners to give way once before, on September 7. However, as they were unable to determine where to send the order, they simply posted it at the entrance to the resort.



Utaiwan Van-Zandt continues to fight for access to her valuable land.

At some point after the December inspection, officials received a response from the Crest owners.

"They wrote that they are acting within their legal rights and

insisted they would not remove any structures," said Chief Administrative Officer (*palad*) of the Kathu District Office, Sukanda Huangrattanakorn.

"They are in the wrong. The Chanote shows that a portico on one building and a wall are blocking the public pathway. By refusing to remove these, they are making the land behind the resort essentially worthless."

At the inspection in December, Vice Governor Somkiat Sangkhaosutthirak promised results within three months.

"I thought that the story had disappeared. It's already been two months since the inspection," said Ms Utaiwan.

Kathu officials explained that the case was moving slowly because their office has been closed by protesters.

"We have the option of taking the case to court right now," said Ms Sukanda, "but that would be very time consuming. Negotiating could be faster, and I hope to have all parties at the table sometime this month."

However, if the three-month period given by V/Gov Somkiat expires and the owners still refuse to negotiate, "We will sue them," she said.

Handling radioactive materials hot topic in Phuket

REPRESENTATIVES of 15 countries met in Phuket this week to discuss the safe management of used radioactive materials and the potential threats they present if mishandled.

The United States, a producer and exporter of radioactive substances, sponsored the conference to discuss the handling of materials, Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP) Secretary General Suphan Seangthong said.

"Thailand and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region buy radioactive substances from the US, so the Americans want to make sure we handle them properly," Mr Suphan added.

Illustrating the need for secure handling of the hazardous materials, Brian Waud of the IAEA Office of Nuclear Security noted that

past accidents had killed people.

He also pointed to the theft in Mexico last December of a truck containing radioactive medical material that the United Nations said could provide the ingredients for a "dirty bomb".

The truck was quickly recovered by authorities, Mr Waud said, but "If you think of this [and the other events] in the context of Phuket or any other place in Thailand, you can immediately start to see what the potential impact would be, were an event to happen here."

The meeting, the Fourth Regional Review Meeting on Radioactive Source Security, started on Tuesday and lasted until Friday.

— Chutharat Plerin



Brian Reed (left) of the US Global Threat Reduction Initiative and Brian Waud (right) of IAEA.

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Two coconuts save life in Koh Samui



A MYANMAR national survived more than 12 hours alone in the sea by holding onto two coconuts.

The 21-year-old man, who identified himself as Poy, was pulled from the water by men on a longtail fishing boat at about noon on February 4 in Bo Phut, Koh Samui.

Mr Poy had been working on a construction site in Koh Pha Ngan. On Monday night, he and four friends were drinking on the beach.

"At about 11pm, my friend and I got into an argument. He started



Mr Poy was sent to Koh Samui hospital for an injured shoulder.

to attack me. He hit me hard on the shoulder with a three-inch wooden stick," said Mr Poy.

"I ran for my life toward the water because I did not know where else to go.

"Fortunately, I found two coconuts on the beach. I grabbed

them and held on tight as I knew I would not be able to swim with my injured arm. I had no idea where I was going," he said.

"I held on to the coconuts all night and into the morning before a longtail boat picked me up."

— Suchat Hankit

New rules for Chalong

By Saran Mitrarat and Chutharat Plerin

A PROTEST last Saturday against a ban on motorbike access to Chalong Pier forced officials and local boat handlers to reach a compromise on Monday that allows the handlers to take their motorbikes onto the pier – for a fee.

The fee is one of many in a newly revised list of mooring, parking and pier-use prices.

At the protest, the boat workers called for continued unrestricted access to boats moored along the pier. However, officials noted that access had long been prohibited, just not strictly enforced.

“The people who protested work at the pier; some of them are boat crew. These people have known for a long time that they cannot ride their personal vehicles onto the pier. That’s why we offer a shuttle service so people can get to their boats,” said Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) President Paiboon Upatising.

“The rules are in place to keep the pier clean and safe. If everyone drove their vehicles onto the pier, it would not present a good image for Phuket. Charging access fees is one way to prevent a lot of people from riding their motorbikes along the pier.”

Lt Col Sathit Noorij of the Chalong Police concurred.

“These people know they are not supposed to ride their personal vehicles along the pier, but when officials started to enforce the rules they did not want to accept it,” Lt Col Sathit said.

The group of local boat folk disbanded their protest after officials from the PPAO agreed to hold further discussions the following Monday.

Mr Paiboon suggested that the Marine Office was partly responsible for the problem.

“The Marine Office allowed people to drive on the pier as a temporary measure. Now they are



The new rules allow Thai boat workers to take their motorcycles down Chalong Pier. Photo: Saran Mitrarat

used to doing it, and they do not want a change,” he said.

The new fees will be collected by the PPAO.

The system gives both motorbikes and motorbikes with sidecars access to the pier, but the rules differ depending on whether the driver is a Thai who works on the pier, a Thai who lives in the area or a foreigner.

Only Thai nationals who work there will be able to take their motorbikes onto the pier, said PPAO Transportation Division Chief Prasit Yotharak.

They will be charged a 2-baht fee for parking less than three hours. Those parking more than three hours will be charged 10 baht plus an additional 10 baht per

night thereafter, said Mr Prasit.

“Anyone, including foreigners, will be allowed to drive a motorbike with a sidecar down the pier to drop off equipment, luggage or goods,” Mr Prasit said.

Access for sidecars to the pier will be 100 baht for everyone except Thai residents of Chalong and Rawai who are working at the pier. These local residents will be issued a special access card by the PPAO.

However, sidecars will not be allowed to park on the pier. Drivers must unload and leave immediately, Mr Prasit said.

All vehicles will be required to park in the parking lot in front of the pier, where motorbikes may park free of charge.

Car parking will be 20 baht for up to three hours. After that, car owners will be charged 40 baht plus an additional 40 baht per night.

Use of the local bus to travel down the pier will be 10 baht.

Mooring fees were also increased, from 100 baht to 150 baht, with the additional 50 baht to be used for garbage management in the area.

Thai-flagged vessels mooring overnight will be charged 100 baht per night. However, monthly contracts can be secured for 2,500 baht.

Foreign-flagged vessels will be charged 10 baht per foot per night, and no monthly contract option will be offered.

All other fees remain unchanged, Mr Prasit said.



Phuket Passport Office Chief Siriporn Tantipanyathep

Passports being issued again in Phuket, despite Hall closure

THE Phuket Passport Office opened its doors on February 10 despite the fact that Provincial Hall remains closed due to anti-government protests.

The office closed last month after the Passport Division in Bangkok terminated its server connection with provincial passport offices as a precaution during protests in the capital.

Many of the people who queued for service on Monday were turned away.

“My husband and I left Krabi at 3am to apply for a passport for our baby. We missed our chance, just like so many others,” said a woman waiting outside the office.

“We have a limited amount of time to get everything processed, so we can only see about 120 people per day,” said Phuket Passport Office Chief Siriporn Tantipanyathep.

“We have to get our work done by 3:30pm so we can send the information to Bangkok. The Department of Consular Affairs has to process everything by 5pm.”

Ms Siriporn apologized for the inconvenience.

“I know that many people arrived early to get in the queue.”

“I believe we have enough passports for everyone, but I would like to ask people who are not in immediate need to apply later. We would like to serve those in urgent need first.”

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Donors respond to urgent call for blood, save Norwegian

A CRITICALLY ill Norwegian man was saved when O-negative blood donors stepped up to provide the three units of blood he needed last week.

"He received the blood he needed and is stable now," Corporate Social Responsibility Project Manager for Bangkok Hospital Phuket Pareeya Jullaphong told the *Gazette* on February 11.

Five days earlier, the Phuket Regional Blood Center (PRBC) had put out an urgent call for donations to help the man, who was a patient in the intensive care unit.

"Bangkok Hospital Phuket said they needed three units of O-negative to save his life, but we have none in stock," PRBC Chief Pornthip Rattajak told the *Gazette* last week.

The man, 37, was suffering from anemia, Ms Pornthip explained, but added she knew no further details about him or what had caused him to be admitted to Bangkok Hospital Phuket's ICU.

Several donors responded immediately, but went to Bangkok Hospital Phuket instead of the PRBC and were turned away.

"We would like to thank them, but please

be informed that Bangkok Hospital Phuket does not collect blood donations – not even for emergencies," Ms Pareeya said.

"We rely on the PRBC and the Vachira Phuket Hospital blood bank to provide blood. We call them when we need it, so we advised the donors to go to one of those two places to make donations."

Ms Pareeya explained that blood donations require tests before they can be safely used to help a patient.

"The tests take time and require equipment that our hospital does not have," she said.

– **Chutharat Plerin**



Test tubes of donors' blood await testing at the PRBC. Photo: Gazette file



Gov Maitri (center), with Mrs Inthusut (left), V/Gov Sommai and volunteers. Photo: PR Dept

Civil Defense Volunteers rewarded for loyal service

A CELEBRATION marking the 60th anniversary of the foundation of Civil Defense Volunteers was hosted by Governor Maitri Inthusut last Monday.

Civil defence volunteers help law-enforcement officers fulfill a wide range of duties, such as manning checkpoints, monitoring election stations, administering urine drug tests and providing security for government buildings.

At the ceremony, volunteers took their yearly oath of office and received the warm thanks of the governor.

In appreciation for the volunteers' services, the governor distributed certificates of thanks, gift packages and scholarships.

Twenty-five scholarships were given to children of force members. Primary school children received 2,000 baht each; those in secondary school received 3,000 baht.

Gov Maitri concluded by urging the volunteers to continue as good role models. – **Chutharat Plerin**

PRBC stocks lowest in blood bank's history

By Chutharat Plerin

BLOOD stocks are the lowest they have been since the Phuket Regional Blood Center opened five years ago, PRBC Director Pornthip Rattajak told the *Gazette* last Friday.

"The current situation is the worst I have ever seen. We need donations of all blood types. Our stocks of types A, O and B are critically low," Ms Pornthip said.

"We have just two units of AB-negative and one unit of B-negative. We have none of O-negative and A-negative."

Stocks of Rhesus-positive blood are marginally better.

"We have 10 units each of A-positive and O-positive blood, but our minimum stock is set at 150 and 200 units, respectively," Ms Pornthip explained.

"We also have 80 units of B-positive blood, but our minimum stock is 150 units. Our stock of AB-positive is not as bad as others. We have 70 units, and our set minimum is 80 units."

Stocks at the much smaller blood bank at Vachira Phuket Hospital are also low.

"We have one unit of O-negative blood, and we are ready to hand that over to Bangkok Hospital as soon as their doctors say their patient is in critical need of it," said one Vachira blood bank staffer, who asked not to be named.

"Otherwise, we must keep one



The Phuket Regional Blood Center is calling for donations of every blood type. Photo: Gazette file

unit on hand just in case another patient comes in who needs that blood."

Ms Pornthip urged all potential donors to step forward and make donations, especially people with Rh-negative blood.

However, she pointed out that the PRBC receives donations only during specified hours.

"Although our blood stocks are available to hospitals 24 hours a day, we receive donations only

during certain hours at the PRBC," Ms Pornthip said.

"But we can make donations available [to patients] within 24 hours. Any blood donated today can be used in a transfusion tomorrow."

The blood center accepts donations at their headquarters on Rattanakosin 200 Year Road, next to Phuket Provincial Employment Office in Saphan Hin, as follows:
- Mondays, Wednesdays and

Fridays from 8:30am to 4:30pm
- Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 am to 8pm

- Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays from 9am to 3pm
For more information call 076-251178 ext 2 or 081-9588854.

Donations can be made at the Vachira Phuket Hospital blood bank from 8:30am to 8pm, Monday-Friday, or from 8:30am to 3pm on weekends and public holidays.

'No time' for extortion, say Tourist Police

From page 1

...20,000 baht. The police then [allegedly] told him they would arrest him if he did not pay them 5,000 baht every month," said Mr Tanin.

Patong residents heard of the alleged shakedown and staged a protest blockade of the beach road near the Tourist Police office.

"They accused the officers of illegally collecting money and

wanted them to come outside and apologize," Mr Tanin said.

Joined by police officers, Mr Tanin appealed to the protesters to re-open the road and arranged for the involved parties to meet at the station the following Monday.

"At the meeting, the officers returned the money in exchange for the foreigner not filing a formal complaint against them, and assured the foreigner this would never happen again," Mr Tanin said.

Maj Urumporn denied that a deal had been struck to protect Tourist Police officers from facing extortion charges.

"We have no time to illegally collect money from people. Our main duty is to take care of residents and tourists, not to cheat them," said Maj Urumporn.

He added that the blockade outside the station was not to protest the alleged shakedown, but to protest the national election.

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Newborn with birth defect saved

Highlights importance of prenatal health education for expectant mothers

By Saran Mitrarat

A BABY born in Phuket with her intestines protruding from her abdomen underscores the need for regular prenatal care and serves as a reminder of the limits of modern medicine, said Vachira Phuket Hospital Director Jessada Chungpaibulpatana.

"About 1 in 1,000 babies are born with gastroschisis. About 30 per cent of those cases cannot be detected on an ultrasound," Dr Jessada said.

"When the baby was born, we followed protocol and she went into surgery immediately. Everything went smoothly. The only concern is that she was born prematurely and had a low birth weight of 1,900 grams."

Dr Jessada urged all expectant mothers to schedule regular checkups with their obstetricians.

Ornpreeya "Ang-Sing" Saisrikosol's parents were shocked by the results of the birth defect in which the muscles of the abdominal wall did not form correctly, allowing the intestines to emerge from the body.

"The first thing I saw was her beautiful face, and I was so happy," said her mother, Phiphitsara Sangthong, 22. "A couple of seconds later, I got the shock of my life – I saw her intestines hanging out of her stomach."

"I couldn't believe my eyes. I was heartbroken."

The distraught parents sought to press charges against the prenatal clinic Ms

Phiphitsara had visited once, when she was five months pregnant.

"I talked with a doctor at the hospital and he told me this problem could be picked up on an ultrasound 3-5 months into the



Ang-Sing recovering from her emergency surgery.



Ang-Sing's father, Kriangkrai Saisrikosol, 26, holds up the normal ultrasound taken at five months.

pregnancy," said Kriangkrai Saisrikosol, 26, the baby's father.

"My girlfriend had an ultrasound at five months, and the doctor said the baby was healthy

and fine. Obviously, she wasn't."

The couple went to police to file a report, but were told that there was no case to pursue.

"The police made record of the

report, but they said there was no case. I don't know what to do now. I want justice. I feel like shouting as loud as I can," said Mr Kriangkrai, his voice shaking.

Checkpoint gunfight leaves one man dead



Police stand by the illegal weaponry, drugs and other seized items.

ONE suspect is still at large after a gunfight broke out between Krabi Police and two drug dealers last Saturday.

"Their car approached the Khao Phanom-Nua Khlong Road checkpoint at high speed just after midnight. We ordered them to stop, but instead of slowing down, they sped up and started shooting at officers," Sen Sgt Maj Krit Kaewsrion said.

"Police returned fire, hitting the car's rear tyre, which caused the driver to lose control. The vehicle flipped and crashed into a ditch." The gun battle raged on. Eventually, the suspects stopped shooting and officers were able to approach the vehicle.

"We arrested 29-year-old Sitthichai Krainara, who sustained serious injuries during the fight. The other suspect managed

to flee the scene," said Sgt Krit.

Inside the car, police found a .38 handgun, an assault rifle and ammunition for both weapons.

Also in the car were 793 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills, 361 grams of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine), over 60,000 baht in cash, two mobile phones and a book with a list of suspected customers.

Mr Sitthichai was charged with attempting to kill a police officer, possession of a war weapon and corresponding ammunition, illegal possession of firearms, resisting arrest and possession of Category 1 Drugs with intent to sell.

"He was taken to Krabi Hospital for treatment. We are still searching for the other suspect," Sgt Krit added.

– Kritisada Mueanhawong

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Officers make online appeal to ID gunman



Pictures of the shooter. Photo: The Nation

THREE photos have been uploaded to the National Police spokesman's Facebook page showing the face of a man suspected of using a war weapon concealed by a plastic popcorn bag during the bloody clash involving anti-government protesters at the Lak Si intersection on February 1.

The police spokesman asked that anyone with information on the man send the details to police via Facebook message, reported *The Nation*.

According to the Erawan Emergency Medical Service Centre of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, seven people were wounded during the exchange of fire at Lak Si, one of whom is still in the hospital.

The attack raised tensions following the February 2 snap general election, which was boycotted by the opposition Democrat Party and blocked by anti-government groups in Bangkok and much of the South.

Meanwhile, a police source said the Udon Thani Court has approved arrest warrants for six more men involved in the shooting last month of red-shirt leader Kwanchai Sarakham, also known as Kwanchai Praipana. One of them has already been detained.

Mr Kwanchai was seriously wounded and will need more surgery.

According to a member of the investigation team, the suspects are soldiers based in Kanchanaburi province.

"We will write to their agency. We expect the agency to hand them over in three to five days," the source said.

CMPO says 'gotcha' in first arrest of protest leader

SONTHIYARN Chuenruethai-naitham on Monday became the first anti-government protest leader to be arrested, reported *The Nation*.

Assistant police chief Lt Gen Winai Thongsong said Mr Sonthiyarn did not resist arrest when confronted by the police.

Mr Sonthiyarn, a former leader of the now defunct yellow-shirt movement, was charged with sedition and escorted to the Border Patrol Police Region 1 facility in Pathum Thani province, where he will be detained.

Arrest warrants have been issued for 19

protest rally leaders, including Suthep Thaugsuban, secretary-general of PDRC.

The other leaders have taken refuge at the protest sites, caretaker Labour Minister and Centre for Maintaining Peace and Order (CMPO) director Chalerm Yoobamrung said.

"I want to tell Mr Suthep that I will no longer tolerate what he has done, laying siege to many government offices and chasing away officials who wanted to work. That's unacceptable, and I will use the law to handle the situation," he said.



Sonthiyarn Chuenruethai-naitham. Photo: The Nation

Angry farmers vow to block rice stores from government



FRUSTRATED by the government's failure to find a solution for their debts – caused by the pledging scheme – rice farmers on Monday threatened to lay siege to state rice warehouses nationwide.

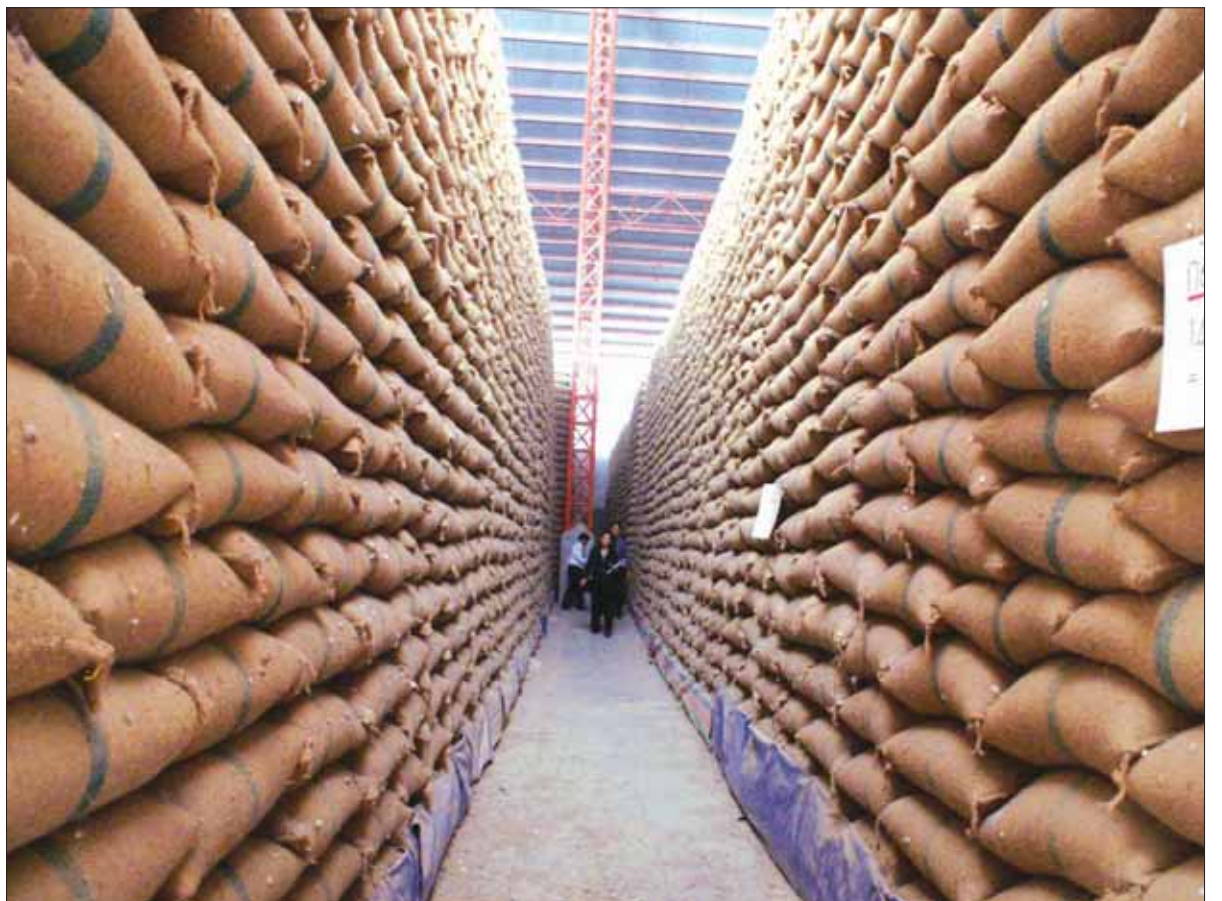
Kittisak Rattanawaraha, president of the northern farmers, said the siege would seek to prevent the government from doing anything with rice stores. He encouraged farmers across the country to join in the siege, reported *The Nation*.

The threat was made after a high-profile meeting between farmers' representatives from 20 provinces and senior government officials who could offer no solution for long-overdue payments owed to the farmers.

Farmers have also called for the seizure of assets from caretaker Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and ministers involved in the rice-pledging scheme to make up for their losses.

According to the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), as of February 5, the bank had paid 472,672 farmers under the pledging project 59.51 billion baht for 3.7 million tonnes of rice. The government still needs to pay 120bn baht for a further 7mn tonnes.

The meeting was held at the



Rice farmers vow to block access to rice stores in order to put pressure on the government. Photo: The Nation

Defence Ministry, and joined by three caretaker ministers – Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister Niwatthumrong Boonsongpaisan, Deputy Commerce Minister Natthawut Saikuar and PM's Office Minister Varataph Ratanakorn.

The farmers abandoned the meeting after Mr Niwatthumrong told them to ask the banks to release loans for the government so that it had money to pay the farmers for their rice. He said the caretaker government could not

borrow from the banks because protesters were blocking them.

As the farmers walked out, they said they would continue their demonstrations.

Rawee Rungreung, a protest leader, said that all the farmers wanted was to get payment under the pledging scheme from the government. The farmers had no political agenda to destroy the government.

"If we [farmers] can get our overdue payment within a short

period, we [will recommend] stopping the protest and going back home. But as the government [is not paying] us, we will continue our activities and pressure them to get out as [they do not have the] efficiency to administer the country," Mr Rawee said.

Meanwhile, the Public Warehouse Organisation (PWO) is negotiating with private companies overseas to buy rice from the government stocks.

Focus on fisheries in human-trafficking battle

THE Labour Ministry is compiling a report on the human-trafficking situation in Thailand in a bid to remove the country from a United States watch list.

Deputy Permanent Secretary for Labor ML Boontharik Samiti said the ministry had managed to get many immigrant workers in the fisheries sector to register with the authorities.

ML Boontharik said the report would cover Thailand's measures to stop human trafficking and its progress in combating forced labor in the fisheries sector and child labor.

In the fisheries sector, she said measures to check the background of workers were clearer, stricter and more actively participated in by related agencies, reported *The Nation*.

The ministry's Department of Labour Protection

and Welfare allocated a budget to examine some 38,000 fisheries' workers for signs of trafficking.

Immigrant workers now have better access to registering their names, with 6,188 registered so far. Of that number, 4,250 have obtained work permits.

ML Boontharik said the department would amend related laws such as changing the minimum age for boat crew members from 16 to 18, as fisheries work would be declared hazardous for minors.

"The ministry has been trying to solve the issue of alien workers by signing a memorandum of understanding with Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia to bring in workers from these countries legally at a reduced commission-fee rate between 2010 and 2013, which we succeeded in doing with 312,737 workers," she said.

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West denounces Vietnam

Criticism piles up over freedom of speech, religion violations

AROUND THE region

By Stephanie Nebehay

WESTERN countries last week denounced Vietnam's jailing of bloggers and curbs on the internet, and called on its Communist government to respect basic freedoms of worship and expression.

"Vietnam still harasses and detains those who exercise universal rights and freedoms, such as freedoms of expression and association," acting United States Ambassador Peter Mulrean said in a debate that was part of the 47-member forum's scrutiny of the record of all United Nations member states.

Vietnam should revise vague national security laws that are used to suppress universal rights and unconditionally release all political prisoners, he said.

"There is a worsening trend,



There is growing concern over the jailing of bloggers. Photo: Anthony Ryan

with much more violence and collateral reprisals when families or relatives of bloggers are also targeted in order to dissuade bloggers from discussing activities," Benjamin Ismail of Reporters

Without Borders said.

Two prominent Vietnamese under house arrest gave testimony in audio messages recorded in secret and aired at an event sponsored by major rights groups in Geneva on

Tuesday. However, Reuters could not verify their authenticity.

"I have spent the past three decades under different forms of detention – 10 years in internal exile, seven years in prison and the rest under house arrest without charge," said Thich Quang Do, patriarch of the banned Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam.

"What is my 'crime'? That of calling on Vietnam to respect its people's rights to freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, religion and belief."

Le Cong Cau, the head of a Buddhist youth movement, said he had been stopped by police at the airport near Hue on January 1.

"I am launching this message at the UN today as a cry of alarm," he said. "This may be my last opportunity to speak out, as I am told that I may be arrested in the coming days."

"In Vietnam today, planting a bomb or sending an e-mail abroad carries the same punishment," Vo Van Ai, president of the Paris-based exile group, told reporters.

– Reuters

In brief...

Malaysia boss due to retire, but retain plenty of influence

THE chief minister of Malaysia's Sarawak is expected to step down this weekend after 33 years in charge of the resource-rich state that has been key to keeping the national coalition in power, but marred by corruption allegations and deforestation. However, Taib Mahmud's influence over the Borneo island state is likely to remain strong.

– Reuters

Singapore angry at move to name navy ship for bombers

ANGER is mounting in Singapore over Indonesia's decision to name a new naval ship after two marines executed for a 1960s bombing in the city state's main shopping district.

"The two Indonesian marines were found guilty of the bombing, which killed three people and injured 33 others," said a spokesman for Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

– Reuters

Indonesia releases Aussie drug trafficker on parole



Schapelle Corby reacts in a courtroom in Bali in 2006. Photo: Reuters

INDONESIA released convicted Australian drug trafficker Schapelle Corby on parole on Monday after she had served nine years in prison on the resort island of Bali.

Ms Corby, 36, escorted from prison through a jostling crowd of reporters, must remain on the island under the conditions of her parole, and will not be allowed to return to Australia before 2017.

"She will be required to report every month," said Ketut Artha, head of Bali's correctional agency.

"To control the fulfillment of her parole, the authorities will occasionally visit her home here."

The former beauty student will live with her sister in Bali, according to media reports.

Ms Corby was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 2005 for trying to smuggle four kilograms of marijuana into Bali.

Drug trafficking usually carries the death penalty in Indonesia.

President Susilo Bambang

Yudhoyono granted Ms Corby's clemency plea in 2012, reducing her sentence by five years because of good behavior.

Ms Corby has maintained her innocence, saying she was unaware she was carrying the drugs.

Ms Corby was one of nearly 1,300 convicts approved for parole last week, the Justice Ministry said in a statement, because she "fulfilled substantive and administrative requirements as laid out by the law".

A small group of Indonesian lawmakers at a protest last weekend were against her early release, saying it went against efforts to establish a zero-tolerance policy for drugs.

"The government talks about tightening remissions for corruption, terrorism and drug suspects but actually for drug trafficking, this isn't the case, especially if you look at Ms Corby's parole," parliamentarian Eva Kusuma Sundari said.

– Reuters



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In brief...

Japan's re-start hits technical snags

THE Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) has four teams vetting reactors at nine nuclear power stations on a list of those seeking to re-start.

Nuclear regulators and staff from utility companies are ploughing through paperwork on the technical specifications of reactors and their vulnerability to natural disasters such as the earthquake and tsunami that knocked out the Fukushima Daiichi station in March 2011.

The 'Terminator' faces criminal charges in Congo

A CONGOLESE militia leader known as "the Terminator" led fighters, including child soldiers, in ethnically-motivated rapes and murders, the International Criminal Court was told on Monday.

Bosco Ntaganda is accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes including murder and rape, all allegedly committed during a 2002-03 conflict in the east of the country.

Spanish princess questioned in court over fraud charges

SPAIN'S Princess Cristina was questioned by a judge on Saturday in a corruption case that has deepened public anger and discontent with the royal family. It was the first time that a Spanish royal has been summoned in a criminal proceeding since the monarchy was restored in 1975.

The princess is facing preliminary charges of tax fraud and money laundering.

No happy endings in sight for sex trade in Chinese 'sin city'

AROUND THE world

By James Pomfret

CHINESE authorities have carried out a rare crackdown on the sex trade in the "sin city" of Dongguan following a candid report by the state broadcaster on the underground industry.

China outlawed prostitution after the Communist revolution in 1949, but it returned with a vengeance three decades ago, and has fuelled a rise in HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

While the government carries out periodic crackdowns, it is unusual for state media to cover them in such a high-profile way or for top officials to comment, underscoring worry about the explosion of the sex trade.

Media said 67 people were arrested and 12 venues were shut down in a sting operation involving thousands of police in the Dongguan region at the heart of China's Pearl River Delta industrial hub in the southern province of Guangdong.

Provincial Communist party boss Hu Chunhua, who has been tipped for future national leadership, stressed the need "to conduct an extensive trawling-style crackdown on the entire city", according to a report in the *Nanfang Daily*.

Two city police chiefs had been suspended, Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* reported. The official Xinhua news agency said a total of eight police officers had



A police raid, part of a crackdown on rampant prostitution, ends in the arrests of 67 people. Photo: Reuters

been suspended for failing to respond to public complaints about prostitution.

China's main state broadcaster, China Central Television (CCTV), aired a half-hour report last Sunday chronicling what appeared to be extensive and open prostitution in five towns in Dongguan.

Secretly shot footage showed scantily clad women parading on a stage and managers of venues speaking about prostitution services.

The CCTV report was widely watched throughout China and

sparked commentary on social media.

The Ministry of Public Security had sent a team to Guangdong to investigate the involvement of any police officials there and crack down on those who provide a "safety umbrella", Xinhua said.

The ministry will take "decisive measures" against those who run the sex trade, it added.

"Although no evidence has been provided, it is widely speculated by the public that local police offer protection for Dongguan's rampant prostitution," Xinhua said

in a commentary.

The Dongguan region has long been known as a hub for the sex industry.

While periodic sweeps against vice have been carried out, the industry has thrived. Law enforcement often appears to be lax.

Authorities said last month the city had seen a high incidence of HIV/AIDS amid rumors that more than 2,700 sex workers had been infected, according to the *Global Times*, a Chinese tabloid owned by the Chinese Communist Party's the *People's Daily*. — Reuters

Asylum-seeking survivors speak out on abuses at sea

ON NEW Year's day, 45 asylum seekers in a ramshackle wooden boat slid ashore on a small island off the Australian city of Darwin.

Four others had been swept overboard that morning in rough seas and were believed dead.

Within an hour, an Australian warship and other vessels arrived. Military personnel forced the asylum seekers back onto their boat and towed it toward Indonesia.

Interviews with five of the passengers reconstruct a journey they marked by physical and verbal abuse.

Their accounts highlight just how far the newly elected conservative government of Prime Minister Tony Abbott is going to

meet his election promise to "stop the boats" — a policy which involves towing vessels back to Indonesia, the main departure point for people-smuggling boats.

In separate interviews, the asylum seekers gave multiple accounts of military personnel using plastic zip ties and pepper spray in order to restrain them. Passengers were denied proper access to food, water, necessary

medical treatment and toilets, they added.

Five days after the Australian Navy towed them out to sea, on January 6, as the passengers dozed, the Australians slipped away leaving a small supply of food and water, and just enough fuel to reach Indonesia. — Reuters



One trip survivor, Bakil Abdul Hamid. Photo: Reuters

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When privacy is paramount

THE Onella Co, has launched sales for Priv 49 low-density residence in central Phuket with superior hospitality services catering to executive urban lifestyles.

Phuket-based developers The Onella Co launched the latest addition to central Phuket's residential property market on Friday, February 7. Investors are being introduced to an innovative urban living concept featuring resort-style hospitality services and facilities aimed at catering to global executive lifestyles.

Situated in the heart of Phuket's central business district, next to Makro on Wichit Songkhram Road, Priv 49 is a low-density development that is promising privacy and affordable exclusive appeal. Comprising just 49 private apartment-style living spaces distributed over seven floors, most of the units open onto a single corridor with no opposing neighbors to ensure additional privacy.

The design of the stylishly furnished units is a distinct departure from standard condo

units. Priv 49 residents will enjoy an extra large en-suite bathroom and cost savings from natural ventilation provided by the elongated layout.

Priv 49's communal facilities include a swimming pool, a fitness center and secure underground parking as well as Caf 49, housed in a separate building with a garden that doubles as a meeting place for residents and non-residents.

Exclusive services available to Priv 49 residents include a shuttle service to nearby destinations, reception, plus facilities for a maid service and high-tech security such as digital locks and keycard access to individual floors.

"Privacy and convenience are the main focus of Priv 49," said project president, Mr Sam Sethi, a Phuket native and board member of the Phuket Real Estate Association.

"Priv 49 is very much aimed at long-term investment in central Phuket. As the surrounding area transforms into a



The furnished 33sqm living spaces at Priv 49 are designed for executive urban living. Photos: Supplied

bustling Asian hub, we expect the tranquillity of the single-bedroom living spaces will be very attractive to investors and long-term rental tenants alike," said Mr Sethi, adding that investors can expect healthy rental returns. Rental rates in the area range from 12,000 to 15,000 baht per month.

With Initial Environmental Evaluation (IEE) approved and construction permit already issued, building work on Priv 49 is scheduled to begin within the next few months and expected to be completed by the end of 2015. Prices start at 2.28 million baht and are available freehold to foreign buyers. The fully-furnished spaces measure about 33sqm and include a compact fitted kitchen.

Priv 49 residents are expected to be a healthy mix of locals and foreigners, a number of them using Phuket as a base from which to work, relax and travel.

— *Phuket Gazette*



President of The Onella Co, Sam Sethi (right) with Thanan Tanpaibul (left) during the launch event for Priv 49 on February 7.



The low-rise Priv 49 consists of seven floors of seven residential units.

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A whole lotta lanta



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

AS Phuket continues its geared up development drive towards an increasingly urban resort landscape, travellers are looking further afield in a move to get out of the box.

One nearby set of island's, Koh Lanta, has all the makings of a classic resort destination. West coast sunsets, white sand beaches and the international airport within close proximity. Lanta is made up of a few small islands with a Yai and a Noi framing the story. For practical purposes most tourists know the bigger Koh Lanta Yai which is where the hotel scene is at the forefront.

From a hospitality perspective, two landmark hotel developments which are over a decade old – the luxury Pimalai Resort and Spa and Costa Lanta. The former was able to transpose a Phuket-like luxury pool villa element to the destination and was also able to sell hotel branded villas with great success. While the latter remains a strong design statement by leading Thai architect Duangrit Bunnag that has garnered global accolades for its simplistic yet innovative approach to a resort.

Traditionally, the tourism trade has similar characteristics to Khao Lak and Krabi in that it's a strong market for Scandinavian snowbirds who flock to the island for extended periods during the winter. There are even dedicated schools set up to accommodate these temporary residents. Of course the gap in seasons has created a very defined high and low season trading climate which is gradually starting to shift.

A key development is the bridge between Lanta Yai and Noi. In the past, travellers have had to take two sets of car ferries between the islands and mainland which has been a strong deterrent to development. In 2011, a bridge between

the two islands started development and is expected to complete by the middle part of this year – though a recent visit we took it appears that a delay may occur. Our course there is still one remaining short span to the mainland, but this broader connection is a significant improvement.

The peripheral area south of Krabi is also seeing infrastructure increase with the recent introduction of a new upgrade at Krabi Airport. Another lead indicator is the new Krabi Nakharin International Hospital recent opening which is a step up in medical care for both locals and overseas visitors.

With Phuket busting at the seams, an emerging marine scene is evolving which has been tapped into by Krabi Boat Lagoon who have just completed construction of their first condominium building, and more are on the way. Sales have been buoyant, spurred by an unlikely market – Thai investment buyers from the nearby Southern catchment areas. There is little large-scale property development in the surrounding areas so this sector has responded well to the offering.

By the middle of this year, a new clubhouse will be completed at the facility, and much like the associated Boat Lagoon in Phuket did for the market, the expectation is that a growing critical mass will attract broader interest given Phang Nga Bay's attractive year round access.

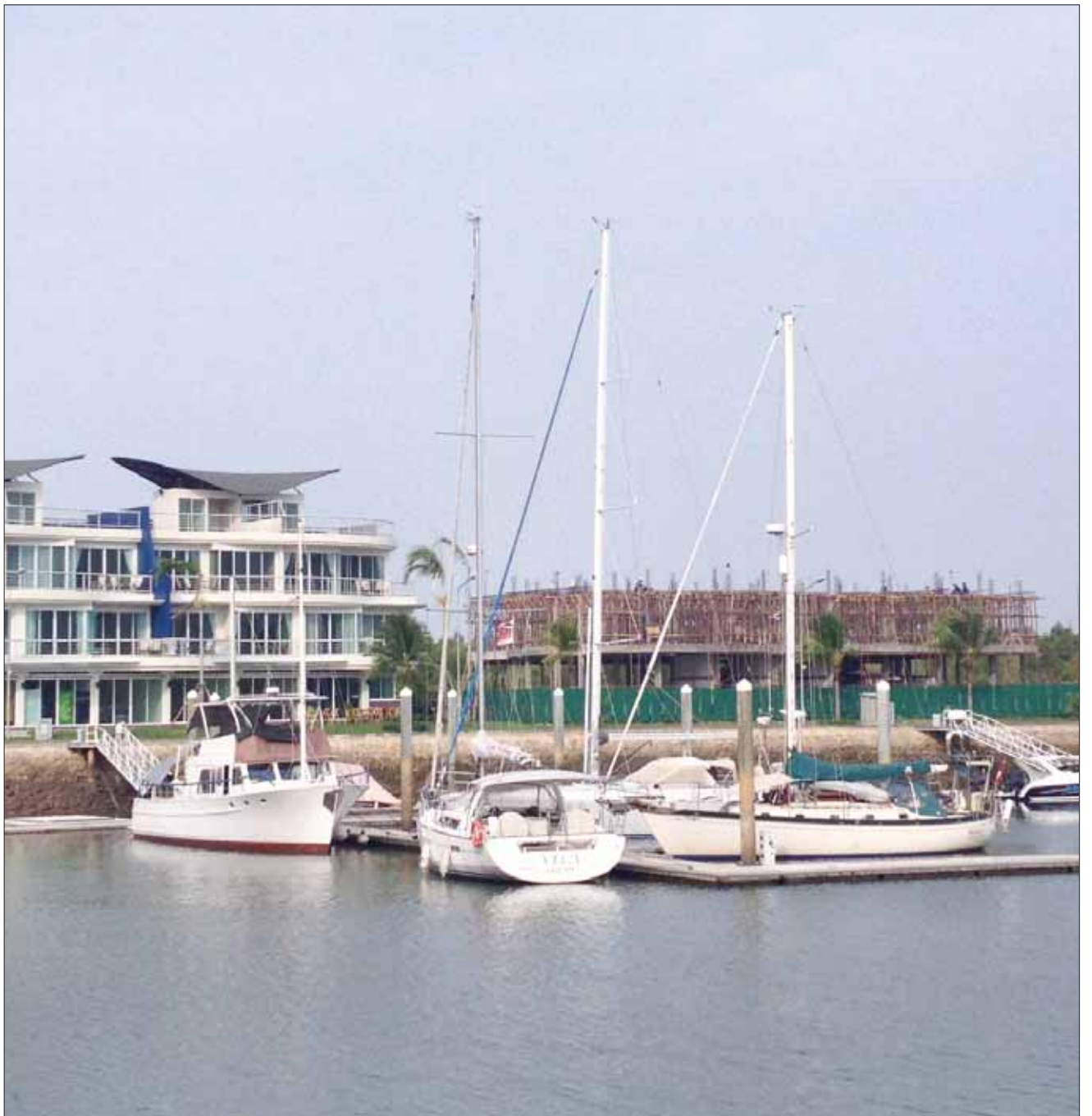
In terms of tourism, Koh Lanta and Krabi are also starting to feel the emerging markets with an onslaught of new direct international flights to the gateway Krabi Airport. Both Chinese and Eastern European travellers are rising and to date there are four Thai airline carriers who fly to the

destination domestically.

Speaking to hoteliers on Koh Lanta, for many the past decade has created a sense of speculation that things are not moving fast, but all we have to do is look north of Phuket at the rapid transformation in annual hotel occupancy in Khao Lak and the proof remains that the world is

changing. For real estate, there still remains limited offerings and, for now, tourism is the lead industry but again things will shift for the simple reason that the fundamentals of the destination remain strong.

While Koh Lanta may seem a world away, the truth is, it's getting closer and closer by the day.



Krabi Boat Lagoon's first condominium building has just been completed and more are on the way.

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Lanta's development can be seen with the naked eye.

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Banyan Tree appoints new sales and marketing director

BANYAN Tree Phuket and Angsana Laguna Phuket appointed Mr Gallerne Ludovic as area director of sales and marketing based at the two properties. Mr Ludovic assumed the role on January 27.

Reporting to Mr Sriram Kailasam, general manager of Banyan Tree Phuket and Mr Jerry John, general manager of Angsana Laguna Phuket, Mr Ludovic oversees all sales and marketing functions within the two properties. He is now leading the forty-two members of the two teams.

According to a company

spokesman, the appointment is part of Banyan Tree's strategic direction to adopt a more integrated approach to the flagship properties of the two brands' communications strategy. In order enhance their efforts to communicate more effectively with their global customer base and increase the brand awareness of both Banyan Tree and Angsana branded properties.

Mr Ludovic brings with him over 18 years of experience with leading luxury hotels. Before moving to Phuket, his last position was as director of sales and marketing at JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa and Anantara Bangkok

Riverside Resort & Spa based in Bangkok, Thailand. Ludovic also has tour operator experience, having been French department manager and executive manager product and contracting at Travex Co Ltd in Bangkok prior to joining the hospitality industry.

Born and raised in France, Mr Ludovic, who also speaks English, Thai and Spanish, holds a Masters in Marketing and International Business from Lincoln International Business School in Paris and a French Baccalaureat in Major Economics.

Banyan Tree Holdings Limited is a leading manager and developer of

premium resorts, hotels and spas in the Asia Pacific, with 36 resorts and hotels, 73 spas, 91 galleries and three golf courses. The group manages and/or has ownership interests in niche resorts and hotels. The resorts each typically have between 50 and 100 rooms and commands room rates at the high end of each property's particular market.

The Group's primary business is the management, development and ownership of resorts and hotels. This is centred around two award-winning brands: Banyan Tree and Angsana. Banyan Tree also operates the leading integrated resort in Thailand – Laguna Phuket, through



Gallerne Ludovic. Photo: Supplied
the group's subsidiary, Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Company Limited.

– Phuket Gazette

The changing face of FDI

THE theme of this year's Annual Investment Meeting (AIM), which will take place in Dubai from April 8 to 10, is Investment Partnerships for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Frontier and Emerging Markets. If representatives of 165 countries have been invited and a total of 10,000 visitors are expected, it is because this is a hot topic.

The opening day of the congress will see the presentation of the first AIM Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) report, with a special focus on FDI flows to and from frontier and emerging markets. Produced in conjunction with the FDI Intelligence unit of the Financial Times, the report will look at the key opportunities and challenges in these fast growth markets.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) World Investment Report 2013, global FDI inflows fell by 18% in 2012 to US\$ 1.35 trillion and their predictions for 2013 show little sign of a great increase with an upper range estimate of US\$ 1.4tn.

For the first time ever, developing countries absorbed more FDI than developed countries, with a 52% share, even if these inflows declined slightly by 4%.

According to Dr Karl P Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow at the Vale Columbia Center on Sustainable International Investment (VCCI) at

Columbia University, New York, and moderator of the ministerial roundtable and a plenary session on the evolving regulatory framework for FDI at this year's AIM congress, "The rise of the emerging markets requires us to revisit our perspective on global FDI. Whereas the pattern shifted some 20 years ago from bipolar (dominated by the US and the European Community) to tripolar (entrance of Japan into the world FDI market and the notion of the FDI Triad), we can no longer use this characterization. I am not sure however, whether emerging markets will be able to

Those emerging markets that are receiving most inward investment are those that participate in the manufacturing of global value chains (GVCs). These are to be found mostly in Asia.

maintain their share in world FDI flows in 2013. Their share, while remaining important, might drop as growth in developed economies continues to pick up."

Those emerging markets that are receiving most inward investment are those that participate in the manufacturing of global value chains (GVCs). These are to be found mostly in Asia.

GVCs have increasing importance in terms of global trade, representing 80% of the total value, according to UNCTAD. These

continue to represent a real opportunity for developing and emerging economies, contributing on average 30% to individual countries' GDP. It is not just an increase in GDP that participation in these GVCs can add, but they can also positively influence aspects such as skill building and industrial upgrading in the host countries.

If we take the subject of GVCs, it cannot be denied that participation in these value chains does not come without certain risks for emerging and developing economies. The risks lie in the host country capturing only a small proportion of the value within that chain, and this engendering a negative environmental and social impact in terms of working conditions, low wages, job security and health and safety.

In terms of these risks, although it will not eliminate them totally, Dr Sauvant believes that this crystallization of multiple FDI poles will more than likely influence international rule-making and will engender changes in the way that developed countries and emerging markets both see the responsibilities of host countries and multinationals. This will encourage them to be more aligned, particularly as these emerging markets are becoming significant outbound investors in their own right. He states, "The new players and established



Emerging markets need to anticipate future development and ensure that adequate telecom infrastructure is in place. Photo: Ken Banks

investors will have to understand that countries no longer look for more FDI, but sustainable FDI – investment contributing as much as possible to economic, environmental and social development in the framework of mechanisms that ensure a fair distribution of FDI benefits."

Dr Sauvant voices the opinion that the real growth for emerging markets will come from the service sector rather than manufacturing GVCs. This is not a surprise in the sense that the service sector is the largest worldwide. He opines, "Services have traditionally had to be produced when and where they are consumed. Information technology has however changed the rules of the game, and indeed continues to do so. Any product that has a high information content and can hence be computerized, can also be outsourced. GVCs in the service sector in emerging markets really are in their infancy but cost issues will push their development into these countries. These markets need to anticipate this future trend by ensuring that the adequate telecommunications infrastructure and the relevant skill sets are in place."

The experiences of other companies investing in the same markets can be helpful and that is why this year's AIM congress welcomes high-level, private sector representatives who will share with participants their views and experiences of investing in emerging markets, as well as their feedback as to what were the main drivers behind their investments, the interaction and support they had and how they mitigated the risks in investing in these markets.

Ultimately, any emerging market needs to make sure that the right economic determinants are in place: the market, the physical and virtual infrastructures and the right skills. These are the real drivers behind an investment decision. A simplified regulatory framework makes it easier, but if the economic determinants are in place, a company will find the way to invest.

– Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette and PGTV are proud media sponsors of the 10th International Property Show (IPS), which will coincide with the Annual Investment Meeting 2014, from April 8-10 in Dubai and is expected to attract 300 companies from 80 countries.



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Local tourism unfazed by Bkk turmoil

WANPRAPHA Suksomboon, acting director Tourism Authority of Thailand Phuket office said that the political turmoil in Bangkok has had minimal negative effects on local tourism.

There have been only “a few” booking cancellations, citing the fact that Phuket can be accessed by direct international flights that don’t need to connect in the Thai capital.

Since most of Phuket’s tourists now are coming from China and Russia, she said the province would have to wait until the Chinese New Year festive period was past to really see how the tourism industry has been affected, if at all.

She noted that Phuket’s tourist arrivals increase every year and that this is expected to be the case this year considering the recent expansion progress of the airport.

Deputy Mayor of Patong Municipality Chairat Sukban echoed the sentiments of Ms Wanprapha, saying that there have not been significant cancellations for tourists coming to Patong as a result of the political turmoil.

Many of the tourists had made reservations well in advance, he said, adding that if the problems in Bangkok persist for a long

time, there would definitely be a negative impact felt locally.

If anything, he pointed out that since many governments had issued warnings to their citizens not to travel to close to the protest areas, that many tourists had opted to come Phuket instead.

He went on to stress that Patong Municipality is prepared to look after the safety and welfare of tourists, citing the UN’s awarding it a “role-model city” for disaster management planning (in 2010).

In related news, Phuket Tourist Association Vice Chairman Phurit Maswongsa recently unveiled a new campaign targeting tourists in neighboring ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations – countries to come to Phuket for short holidays.

Anticipating the 2015 Asean Economic Community, the new campaign is being dubbed “Sanam Lung Baan” – literally the “garden in the backyard”.

With a target of bringing the number of arrivals to the island up to 15 million annually, the campaign will seek out and emphasize land, sea and air routes that avoid Bangkok.

He pointed out that the prime Asean



Photo: Steven Layne

Swathes of locals and tourists alike turned out for the recent Phuket Old Town Festival.

markets of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore already had direct flights to and from Phuket, and that tourists in Laos and Vietnam could easily access Phuket via AirAsia flights via Ubon Ratchathani.

He said key Asean markets with weaker links to Phuket such as the Philippines and Brunei would be addressed in the campaign, with an aim of increasing convenience for tourists there.

Mr Phurit explained that the new campaign will promote niche markets such as

spa, health and golf, with an emphasis on the 3-5 star hospitality sector.

On the topic of niche markets, Mr Phurit revealed that the TAT is also looking to increase the number of tourists coming from the Mediterranean region – namely Morocco, Algeria, Greece, Spain, Turkey, Georgia and Albania.

Currently, there are about 70,000-80,000 tourists coming from this region and the TATs three-year target will be 100,000 tourists. – *Phuket Gazette*

Southern blockades don't affect Phuket goods: DIT Chief

THE island’s market for consumer goods and fresh produce has not been affected by the political turmoil in and around Bangkok, the head of the Department of Internal Trade (DIT) Phuket office has assured.

“I’m not aware of any shortages on the island, so there should be no reason why goods in Phuket be any more expensive than usual,” affirmed Supap Jeenmoung, the DIT Phuket office’s newly-appointed chief.

Mr Supan recently transferred from the DIT’s Trang office to replace former DIT Phuket head, Supatcha Boonpalit, who went into retirement about a month ago.

The chief denied that Phuket’s supply and stock of goods have been affected by a recent blockade of the primary Southern-bound

highway at Wang Manao intersection in Ratchaburi – an hour west of Bangkok.

On February 3 the *Phuket Gazette* reported that a blockade of Rama 2 highway (route 35) by disgruntled rice farmers had caused delays in shipments to/from the capital and the Southern region.

However, according to Mr Supan, the supply, distribution and pricing of goods in Phuket and other neighboring Southern provinces continue to be unaffected by that or any other incident.

He added that there have been no other incidents or reports to suggest that any other Southern province has been affected.

“Inspections by our officers of local markets confirm that there



Photo: The Nation

Tires placed by protestors block the Southern-bound highway at Wang Manao intersection in Ratchaburi.

have been no shortages or delays in the delivery of goods to/from Phuket and other Southern provinces,” he said.

“Prices are starting to come back to normal now after the Chinese New Year, which saw the price of pork and some fruits slightly increase due to the higher demand during the festive time.”

Asked about his impressions and

thoughts thus far on Phuket’s relatively higher cost of living, Mr Supan said, “Phuket is a prominent tourism destination, so its cost of living is higher. There are other factors to consider. For example, although the national minimum wage was set at 300 baht, the lowest wage being paid to workers at local eateries in Phuket is 350 baht.”

Indeed, higher production costs (and transport costs) in Phuket equate to higher costs for the end-users, but it’s not to say that cheap food and goods cannot be found on the island.

The chief confirmed that the DIT Phuket office is planning to organize two “Blue Flag” cheap goods fairs this month – one in Thalung

and the other in Chalong.

The DIT office is issued a budget annually to address inflation and the rising cost of consumerism.

“We’re still waiting to confirm the exact dates with the two newer, big Tesco Lotus branches [in Thalung and Chalong], who are permitting us to use space for the fairs to be held in front of the supermarkets.”

Asked if the goods and produce sold at the fairs will be competing or clashing with those sold inside the supermarkets, Mr Supan assured that this would not be the case.

Chief Supap added, “If any unnecessary price gouging is inspected, you can report it by calling the Ministry of Commerce’s hotline number 1569.”

– *Steven Layne*

Phuket Gazette appoints new managing editor

THE *Phuket Gazette* is pleased to announce the recent promotion of Isaac Stone Simonelli to the position of Managing Editor.

Having spent his years at the *Gazette* in various roles, including PGTV news presenter, news editor and then head of both the news and reporters teams, Mr Simonelli is well versed in the major local, national and international issues that affect Phuket people most.

“We stand at an exciting point in time for the industry, as a wealth of new ways to deliver content continue to crop up,” he remarked.

“I’m excited to be part of the management team of the island’s leading newspaper and the *Gazette* Online, Google’s top-ranked website for Phuket,” he added.

Mr Simonelli is a graduate of Indiana University, with a double-



Isaac Stone Simonelli. Photo: S Mitarat major degree in Anthropology and Underwater Archeology.

In his new role, he will oversee editorial policy and content management for both the web and the newspaper, leading a team of eight foreign editors and the tasking of six Thai reporters.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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Clean up the Tourist Police

A RECENT protest in Patong against alleged corruption by Tourist Police officers (page 1) will likely go unnoticed nationally given the current state of affairs in the country, yet the issues the outcry raised offer valuable insight into the serious problems that confront us nationally, locally and individually.

The broader issue is how a democracy can function, let alone flourish, in the context of wide-scale corruption at every level of society. In Bangkok, self-styled whistle blowers are quick to cite corruption and cleverly brand it under the name "Shinawatra". Yet, for some reason, they seem more eager to engage in protest against the elusive "concept of corruption" than against those who actively take part in it, day-in and day-out, at the local level.

There are several aspects that make the protest against the Tourist Police in Patong more interesting than the ongoing demonstration in front of Phuket Provincial Hall.

The impromptu protest, against officers who allegedly extorted 20,000 baht from an Italian national they said was working without a permit, ended with the officers returning the money in exchange for a promise from the foreigner not to file a criminal complaint against them: case closed, back to business as usual.

A thorough investigation into this case, even if the injured party fails to lodge a criminal complaint, is of utmost importance.

There is little doubt that corruption is rampant throughout all branches of the national police force and that any real national reform will have to address this issue in a meaningful way. It is astonishing that corruption in the criminal justice system has so seldom entered into the current debate.

For an agency that has protection of foreigners as its stated primary objective, the Tourist Police have a somewhat checkered track record.

In 2006, some of their members orchestrated the arrest of 12 visa runners in Ranong for overstaying their permits-to-stay by just a few days.

Other more recent issues that have damaged the agency's reputation include the arrest of one of its former foreign volunteers on drug charges, its lack of patrols in popular tourist destinations (page 4), poor to non-existent foreign language skills and even a reported failure to pick up the phone when people call its emergency hotline number, 1155.

Helping out a stranger in distress is one of the most gratifying acts one can experience, and Tourist Police officers are fortunate to be in the unique position to do this as part of their daily routine. Officers tempted to go down the greedy "dark road" should consider the karmic implications of failing to take advantage of the golden opportunity they have been handed.



File a complaint or no lesson learnt

Re: Gazette online, Phuket honeymooner partially paralyzed as speedboat tackles rough waters, February 5

"I don't want to file any complaints or get anyone in trouble. I hope they consider this a lesson learned," [the injured woman said].

I actually laughed out loud and nearly spat out my tea at this comment. And I see most of the other posts are about this comment, too.

Instead of thinking "Thank God I'm still alive", start thinking, "Oh my god, I may never walk again because of this careless driver."

Make a police complaint now or he will do it again.

Chas
Gazette forum

Protect the kids as well as the turtles

Re: Gazette online, Illegal wildlife vendors netted at Phuket's Wat Chalong Fair, February 5

I think the effort by this group of officers is commendable.

Whether it's slow lorises on Bangla Road or jewelry made from Hawksbill turtles, they are out in the community searching for violators of the law.

Maybe the government should focus on the care and well being of the three-, four-, and five-year-old children being forced to sell roses in the Phuket Bars until 2am.

Me
Gazette forum

Self-reliance better than Tourist Police

Re: Gazette online, Special Report: If there's something strange and it don't look good... who ya gonna call?, February 9

The one-call tourist police number is such a joke.

Letters to the Editor

On three occasions in the past I have called. Two times there was no answer at all, and one time the call was answered by someone saying he could not speak English.

Advice to tourists: call your hotel and let them assist. To expats: call Thai friends.

Expat
Gazette forum

Bikes are the least of Chalong's woes

Re: Gazette online, Phuket boat crews protest after access denied to Chalong Pier, February 8

The least of the problems is the bikes. What about the broken floating pontoons, rusting main pontoons, garbage everywhere, exposed electrical wiring everywhere, missing concrete covers over pier electrical wiring and so forth?

And dangerous access ramps to the so-called "marina" are now breaking up.

The list is long and the bikes all park carefully out of the way at the area near the still-not-open Immigration/Customs/Harbour Office.

Lizardofoz
Gazette forum

Play hardball with wrongful owner

Re: Gazette online, Owners of abandoned Phuket resort refuse to give way, February 9

Why not just get a demolition company to start tearing down the structure that is illegally blocking access to her land?

Then bill the owners of the resort, as they are the ones who have

done wrong.

Or, the council could appropriate the resort and sell it to another developer who is willing to obey the law. They could then compensate the land owner and charge their own fees and pay the demolition crew too.

Tez
Gazette forum

Good news stories just as important

Re: Gazette online, Phuket songtaew driver returns ticket home to forgetful Finnish tourist, February 3

I love that you guys post all these stories about honest taxi and songtaew drivers. So often the good deed stories are overlooked in favor of the sensational, bad deed ones.

Nick Mallett
Facebook

PRBC risk-assessing needs an overhaul

Re: Gazette online, Urgent call for O-negative blood to save Norwegian man, February 6

I have O-negative blood. I am 181cm tall, weigh 85kg, and can do push-ups and walk 3km five days a week. But I am 71 years old.

So he dies because they don't want to take the risk that I might faint?

Michael Maurice Arvin
Gazette forum

Managing trash

Re: Gazette online, Governor picks up trash, pushes for cleaner Phuket, February 6

Placing trash bins in public areas – beaches, sidewalks, and so on – would help a lot, because there aren't any.

Ling
Gazette forum

Phuket Gazette

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Leading the way for women in the force

FIRST PERSON

ONE of the main issues with not having enough female officers on the force is that it is easier for female drug smugglers to operate on the island.

Male officers are not allowed to do frisk searches of female suspects. This often causes delays, as the officer has to look around for a woman who can search the suspect. With more female officers, we would be better able to crackdown on drug smuggling.

Female officers are also essential to handling of rape and sexual assault cases. They are more effective in dealing with these cases because female victims are usually more willing to talk with them. This has become increasingly important, as the number of these kinds of cases is on the rise.

Even though I can make these contributions, it has been very difficult to prove to male officers that I am just as capable as they are in performing my duties. Being a police officer is a tough job that demands a lot of respect, and our society is not really open to females holding such a position.

In the law, it is written that everyone is equal. However, that is not the reality within our society. Even when women prove that we are able to do anything male officers do, it's difficult for some of them to accept us.

To preserve our image as police officers, we have to act both tough and respectable at all times, both on and off duty.



Chollada Chokdeesrijun, 23, graduated from the Royal Police Cadet Academy last year and started working at the Chalong Police Station on November 1. Originally from Bangkok, she and her family moved to Phang Nga when she was 13 years old.

Here Lt Chollada talks about why it is important to have women on the police force, and the challenges she has faced as one of the first Thai female officers.

When I first started working here, I had the feeling that some of my colleagues did not have any confidence in me. Maybe they thought I was there to make coffee and take care of them. However, since they have seen the quality of my work, I think they accept me as a fellow member of the team who can fulfill my responsibilities.

I believe that by giving trust and respect first, I can gain the trust and respect of those around me.

Still, I have to prove every day that I can do this job. I have to be self-disciplined and most of all, I have to control my temper.

I spent four years training for this, and the hardest part of my training was controlling my temper. My seniors would often try to get me to fly off, but as an officer of the law I can't allow that to happen; I have to keep a cool head.

When I was growing up, I didn't expect to become a police officer – I wanted to be an engineer. But when I saw that the

Royal Police Cadet Academy had opened its gates to women for the first time, I wanted to join. It's an honorable job, something my parents can be proud that I am doing.

I have changed a lot since becoming a police officer. Because of my position and the uniform I wear, people expect a lot from me. Part of my job is deciding when people are right and wrong, and because my decision will have repercussions on their lives and those of others, I have to be very certain and can't make a mistake.

I know a lot of people don't like the police, but I deeply believe in HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who said that if we fulfill our duties and abide by the law, our society will move forward. I do the best I can at my job.

I would like to thank Chalong Police Superintendent Kittapas Det-intarasorn, seniors officers and my other colleagues for recognizing me as an essential member of the team.



Whether what you see is pleasing or not may depend on your attitude. Photo: Andrew Morrell; Dale Chihuly's Fiore di Como, Bellagio, Las Vegas.

Navigating the hump

Island View

By Mauri Grant

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

I OPENLY admit that I had no idea what I was walking into when I decided to move to Phuket last August. Not only had I never been to Thailand, but I had never even left my vacuum-sealed bubble of a home country: America.

The gravity of my move became immediately apparent as I left the airport. The sights zooming past my taxi window were unlike anything I had ever seen before.

My initial experiences on Phuket, living in Patong, resulted in a two-month-long sensory overload, despite it being low season.

I came home to my room every night, completely brain-dead and exhausted from the sights, smells and experiences of the day. I have never slept so hard in my life.

I saw in those first months, and still see, magic in everyday island things: the beaches, street vendors, traffic, music, festivals, motorbikes, markets, mountains and even the tuk-tuks.

I believe my blindly positive attitude that everything will work out for the best is perhaps hard to find in Phuket expats who have hit what my friends and I like to call the "cynical hump".

This term came up in two separate conversations recently, one with a friend who has been here for two years and one who has been here for five.

I am told that during the hump, the magic of the first two years –

otherwise known as the "honeymoon period" – wears off and the things you might have once found charming about Phuket culture start to become bothersome.

For example, the apparent lack of structure on the island might, in the beginning, play into a childhood fantasy of a world with no adult supervision. But after several years, this lack starts to annoy some seasoned Phuket veterans.

For others, the quality of restaurant service might start to chip away at a once calm and accepting attitude, as when an order of *pad see ew moo* somehow comes out as *pak boong fai daeng* for the thousandth time, and the only acknowledgment of the mishap is a shrug.

How expats weather this cynical hump may lay the foundation for their long-term experience in Phuket.

Adopting the positive attitude of newcomers like myself could help my friends and other expats get over the hump in the best way. Seeing the island as a rookie does, full of magic and new experiences, could allow them to come out on the other side with a new appreciation for it.

Issues & Answers...

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

Perilous intersection at new Boat Avenue

There is a new development called Boat Avenue in Cherg Talay located at the three-way intersection at the entrance to Laguna.

The new exit and entrance of Boat Avenue effectively makes it a four-way intersection, but there are no traffic lights to help people leave the development.

Anyone who wants to drive out of the parking lot and head straight across to Don Chom Tao Road (Road 4030) or turn right has to take a gamble and just go when there is no traffic, which is very dangerous.

Are there plans to fix this?

Resident
Cherng Talay

We understand your concern about the danger of the intersection, and we will do our best to address it as quickly as possible.

We already have a budget of 600,000 baht to install traffic lights there, and are in the process of finding a construction company. We will install the traffic lights as soon as we do. The installation should take no longer than a week.

The lights should be in place by the end of April at the very latest, but I hope much sooner than that.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Tripoom Musikarat, Director of Mechanical Department, Cherng Talay Municipality, replies:

Logic of Soi Baanzan parking

Can you explain why there is alternate-side parking for motorbikes on Soi Baanzan?

I can see that it may help traders at the bottom end [near Jungceylon], but at the Nanai Road end it is a nightmare, as there is an unfinished building jutting into the road.

Surely, for the Nanai Road end of Soi Baanzan, the sensible thing would be to let people park their motorbikes on the south side only.

Curious,
Baan Lipon

Maj Ekkarat Plaiduang, Inspector, Patong Traffic Police, replies:

The road beside Baanzan Market is a private road, so police have no authority to manage the traffic

there. The owner can set his own rules for parking along that street, and contact us if he needs help.

As for the unfinished building that juts out on the road, that is at the center of an ongoing legal battle. The landowner filed an encroachment suit against the owner of the building three years ago.

We don't know what the current status of the lawsuit is as we are not involved. The landowner never filed a complaint to the police about it.

Please keep in mind that alternate-side street parking is common in Patong, and in force along Thaweewong Road (the beach road),

Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road and many minor streets.

We consider the width of the road and the volume of traffic on it when determining whether or not to introduce alternate-side parking.

On streets where alternate-side parking is in effect, you will see signs indicating where parking is legal on which days.



Soi Baanzan is a private road. Image: Google maps

YOUR Phuket



VIP guest Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut (2nd right), in picture with Poonsri Pichayaphanich (1st left), Chairman, Montara Hospitality; Narong Pattamasaevi (2^d left), Chairman, Montara Hospitality; Marie-Laure Fleury (1st right), General Manager of BoatHouse by Montara.



TIGER KINGDOM

Customer Relations Team (from left to right) Porsiri Yaonun; Supap Madyun; Waritsara Gunphonngam; Monthita Sangpetch; Kwanchanok Hiran; Thapanintr Sarasophon; Sutavadee Chailerd and Paiyathip Ratthanaburee.

KIDS' CLUB PHUKET BY ST JAMES

Grand opening of The Kids' Club Phuket by St James Properties at Promenade Patong.

Anthony Reynolds (center), owner of JoobJoob Cupcakes; Esa Huovila (right), Managing Director of St James Properties.

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WHEELS & MORTARS of the week

PROTON SAVVY 2011

See page 30

JOB of the week



See page 27

INVESTMENT of the week



**Profitable Hotel / Restaurant
in Patong**

See page 28

BOAT of the week



Happiness is a Choice

See page 31

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IN NAI HARN**

2 bedrooms plus expandable roof. Only 5.5 million baht. Tel: 082-420 7052

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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.Morzelangar@yahoo.co.uk

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

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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

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HOUSE AT SAI YUAN

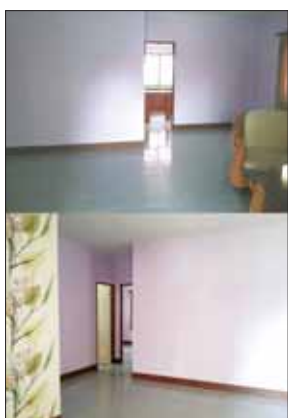
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POOL VILLA IN NAI HARN

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

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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

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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

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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: jmls@iinet.net.au

STAFF WANTED

Thai Basil Restaurant, new opened restaurant is looking for waitresses: 15,000 baht. Bar staff: 15,000 baht. Manager: 20,000 baht. Located on 58/7-8 Soi Bangla, 5-8pm. Email: office@thaibasilphuket.com

3 WAITRESSES FOR RESTAURANT

Three English-speaking waitresses wanted for restaurant. Thai nationals only. 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

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

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@phuketourguides.com

**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@arthouse.asia

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

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

DIVE AND SURF SHOP

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

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

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

HotelTravel.com

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We work. We create. We play. We innovate. Join us!

We invite you to challenge yourself to work with the most talented and passionate people in the online travel industry. HotelTravel.com is one of the fastest growing hotel booking websites on the Internet and part of MakeMyTrip Limited (NASDAQ:MMYT), India's most popular travel portal and the largest ecommerce business in the country. HotelTravel.com provides like-minded individuals the opportunity to share their new ideas and fresh thoughts with the best and brightest minds in online travel.

Qualified individuals are encouraged to apply for the following position currently available with HotelTravel.com. All applications are treated in the strictest confidence; only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Operations Executive Night**Responsibilities (including but not limited to)**

- ▶ Respond to inquiries received via email, fax, telephone and live chat regarding hotel bookings. Provide customers with area-specific travel information
- ▶ Listen and respond to voice mails received from customers and call them back at appropriate hours depending on time zones
- ▶ Process online bookings for customers when they are unable to use the system. Provide procedural and/or system advice to customers when needed
- ▶ Research and suggest hotels of similar quality, price and location which have accommodation available when wholesalers return "Fully Booked" notices
- ▶ Ensure that credit/payment procedures are adhered to and are passed to the Credit Department in a timely manner for approval
- ▶ Communicate with customers by telephone when email messages are returned by the server because of incorrect addresses or an agent needs to obtain a facsimile number in order to send confirmations

Qualifications

- ▶ Able to work at night from 11.00pm until 7.00am
- ▶ Fluent in English and able to speak at least one other foreign language
- ▶ Able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing
- ▶ Able to respond to common inquiries or complaints from customers
- ▶ Able to deal with problems involving several concrete variables in standardised situations
- ▶ Proficient in MS Office software (Word, Excel and Outlook)
- ▶ Enthusiastic, hard-working and team player

Real People | Real Service | Real Choice

Please send current résumé or CV listing complete employment experience, a recent photograph, references and current remuneration package or salary expectations to jobs@hoteltravel.com Or call 076-282808 and ask for HotelTravel.com's Director of Administration and HR Operations, Khun Arnupab Satakorn, for further information.

THAI OFFICE WORKER FOR GYM

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

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

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

KARON CLIFF

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

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR WANTED

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

MARINA VIEW RESTAURANT

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

LATITUDE 1 MARITIME

Latitude 1 Maritime Co., Ltd

Position: Secretary

1. Fluent in English written and verbal
2. Service minded and negotiation skill
3. Able to work under pressure & independently with good communication skills

Location: Boat Lagoon
Tel.: 076-239820
bee@latitude1maritime.com

www.latitude1maritime.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

British International School, Phuket

British International School, Phuket is looking for candidates to fill positions in the following areas:

• PE and SPORTS Administrative Officer

Qualifications

- Thai national
- Bachelor Degree
- Excellent English, Computer literacy and good people skills
- Able to coordinate with other departments
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills
- Interest in Sports & PE may be an advantage

Interested candidates please submit your cv and recent photo to
kojchapant@bisphuket.ac.th, sirirats@bisphuket.ac.th



British International School, Phuket (BISP)
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Road, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200
Tel: 076-335555 # 2113, 2110 Fax: 076-335573



Translator / Admin assistant

Key Responsibilities and demand qualifications:

- Male or Female
- Thai nationality
- Bachelor's Degree in English
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Translating legal materials and documents from English to Thai and Thai to English
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Self-motivated and able to work under pressure
- Perfect enthusiasm in learning new things.
- Proficient in computer skills Microsoft Office
- Performing other administrative tasks as required

Salary : Competitive

Location: Hughes Krupica Consulting Company Limited (Phuket)

Job Type: 9:00 - 18:00 / Mon.- Fri.
Full Time, Permanent

Please send your CV in English to email: Chidchanok@hugheskrupica.com
or tel: +66 86 9606609

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.AmazingBikeToursThailand.asia

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

VILLA MANAGER (LIVE IN)

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



ANDARA SIGNATURE
resort • villas

The new high-end Andara Signature Resort Villas located at Kamala Beach Phuket is looking for qualified, energetic people to fill these positions:

SALES & MARKETING MANAGER 1 POSITION

Candidates should have proven management experience in similar positions:

Qualifications:

- Female.
- Bachelor's Degree in Sales and Marketing, Business Administration or related field.
- At least 5 years experience in Sales and Marketing Administration, Secretarial Work and Office Management.
- Positive attitude, pleasant personality, attentive to detail, service-minded.
- Good command of written and spoken English.

ACCOUNTANT 1 POSITION

Qualifications:

- Male or Female.
- Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.
- At least 3-5 years and experience in accounting, preferably in a real estate business.
- Establish and maintain an effective accounting system.
- Monitor payment voucher, taxes, accounts payable and account receivable.
- Knowledge in Quick Book Program.
- Responsible for Budget Control, Costing and Fixed Assets Control.

Interested candidates, please send full resume, expected salary & a recent photo by Fax or Email to **PARADISE GROUP**:

The Plaza Surin 5/50 Moo 3, Cherg Talay, Thalung, Phuket 83110
Tel: 076-271241. Fax: 076-271242. Email: hr@paradisephuket.com



NUMBER TWELVE

NO.12 CO.,LTD. SEEKS TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

SALES 2 POSITIONS

QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ MALE / FEMALE, AGE BETWEEN 25-40 YEARS
- ◆ THAI/FOREIGNER
- ◆ HAVING AT LEAST 3-5 YEARS EXPERIENCE
- ◆ SERVICE-MIND, AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE IN THIS JOB WILL BE AN ADVANTAGE
- ◆ PLEASANT PERSONALITY, SERVICE-MINDED, TEAM PLAYED AND HARD WORKING
- ◆ ABLE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY IN WRITTEN AND SPOKEN ENGLISH
- ◆ COMPUTER LITERACY IS A MUST (MS EXCEL, WORD, POWER POINT)

MARKETING MANAGER 1 POSITION

QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ BACHELOR'S DEGREE
- ◆ MALE / FEMALE, AGE BETWEEN 28-40 YEARS
- ◆ AT LEAST 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN MARKETING, MARKETING COMMUNICATION
- ◆ EXPERIENCE IN REAL ESTATE (CONDOMINIUM OR HOUSING PROJECT) SPECIALLY OVERSEAS MARKET WOULD BE AN ADVANTAGE
- ◆ GOOD COMMAND OF ENGLISH
- ◆ STRONG ANALYTICAL THINKING, MANAGEMENT AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
- ◆ GOOD PERSONALITY, POSITIVE ATTITUDE, PROACTIVE AND ENERGETIC

PLEASE SEND YOUR RESUME WITH RECENT PHOTOGRAPH
TO : HR@NO12COMPANY.COM
NO.12 COMPANY LIMITED 101/547 MOO 5, RASADA, MUANG, PHUKET 83000
TEL: 076-610232. FAX : 076-610233.

DANISH STAFF WANTED

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

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

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

RAW FOOD CHEF WANTED

Thai national: raw food chef, good salary + benefits! Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@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 web site at www.siamrealestate.com

ENGLISH SPEAKING GUIDES

Phi Phi Island. We are looking for 2 English-speaking guides for our overnight boat tour which leaves from Phi Phi Don. The job is to entertain and keep our customers safe. If you look after our customers well, we will look after you. Contact Siripan. Tel: 087-382 9163.

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

WAITRESS WANTED

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

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

Bulletins

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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

BOUTIQUE HOTEL FOR SALE

12 modern rooms of a high standard, 2 big apartments, swimming pool, fitness, fully-equipped commercial stainless steel kitchen for 32 seats, indoor and outdoor dining. Open and running business, includes land. 40 million baht. Proof of funds will be needed for further information. Email: patongboutiquehotelsale@gmail.com

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

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.

DUMPING

Soil, sand, construction, debris. For more information, please call 081-893 5717

GUESTHOUSE / BAR / RESTAURANT

2 minutes to Jungceylon, 10 minutes to Bangla Road. Six rooms all tenanted. Outgoings: 70,000 baht a month; Revenues: 145,000 baht a month. Tour desk. Nothing to spend, 2 years left on lease. Cheap at just 1.1 million baht. Owner has new venture, quick sale required. Tel: 087-896 5219 (English), 084-053 4365 (English). Email: striker_1957@hotmail.com

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

RESTAURANT

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

HAPPY SAPPER BAR FOR SALE

This is fantastic opportunity to own a successful and profitable business in the ever-expanding and popular international tourist resort of Khao Lak. The sale also includes the Happy Snapper website and Facebook page. Website: www.happysnapperbar.com. The directors wish to sell the name "Happy Snapper Bar", the lease and entire contents as a going concern with full assistance. For more information, please contact Pitak. Tel: 084-760 0123 (Thai), 081-836 0661 (Thai). Email: happydrink99@yahoo.com

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

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

PROFITABLE HOTEL/RESTAURANT IN PATONG



30 rooms, 40 seats with Thai company and 3 work permits. Lease contract valid until 9/2020. Yearly profit around 30%. In last 3 months, sales increased 11% from last season! Option to include car in deal. Directly from European owner. 5.2 million baht ono. Tel: +66 (0)87 498 3407 (English)

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. For more information, please contact Phil. Tel: +44-019 8356 4289, +44-079 1513 5318. Email: pdr123@gmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

Good opportunity, Patong Beach, seaview, fully equip-ped, 4 big screen TVs, 30 seats, software cashier, popular location. Please call 093-698 1921 (English), 087-205 2566 (Thai). Email: jeromearmand17@gmail.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.

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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 Dia@phuketgazette.net

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Standard: 840 baht (incl VAT)

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.....	840 Baht
.....	980 Baht
.....	1,120 Baht
.....	1,260 Baht
.....	1,400 Baht

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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

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LAGUNA GOLF MEMBERSHIP

Expires 2024. 300,000 baht + transfer fee. Please contact Mike for more information. Tel: +44-074-0771 0042 (English). Email: mike.mcaravey@btinternet.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

3 GOLF MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR SALE

1) Blue Canyon GCC. Family Life: 699,000 baht. 2) Loch Palm Family Life: 499,000 baht. 3) Laguna GCC. 16 years: 399,000 baht. Contact Laura Lee. Tel: 095-040 4727 (English). Email: lauralee1120@gmail.com

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Family full membership debuture, including children aged up to 18. 525,000 baht, including transfer fee. No green fees payable. Includes all 27 holes. Email: alanwilllett888@aol.com or send text to +44 78 7988 2125

LAGUNA GOLF CLUB

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

Dive Gear

SCUBA GEAR

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

Personal Services

PERSONAL COUNSELING

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

Personals

BACKGAMMON

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

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Requires person to take care of a foreign elder 24hr. Speak English. Tel: 081-085 0801.

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Phuket Gazette

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

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Phuket Cable Co (PC) - Covers all Phuket Channel 1, with 19 shows a week
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Now available in 4,222 premium hotel rooms around the island, all day every day.

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- 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

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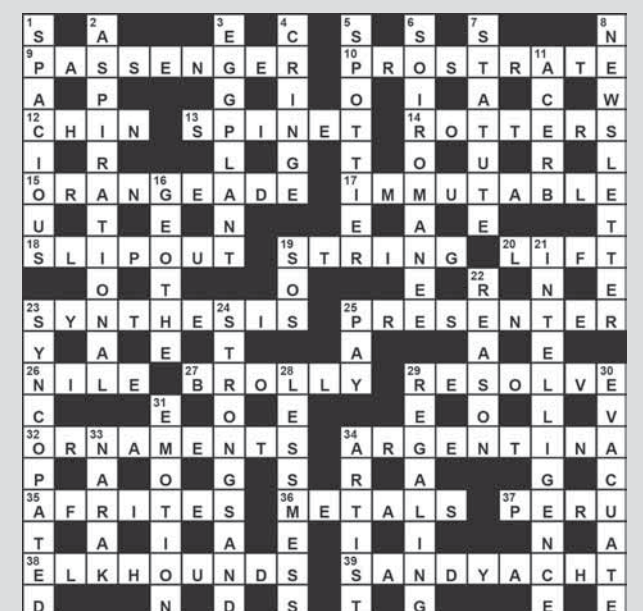
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GRAND OPENING

Royal Phuket Marina has now opened new hotspots to drink and dine



From left: Kanittha Prasopsirikul, Associate Director; John Magee, Phuket Gazette, GuluFrom left: Dr Orawan Kitchawengkul, Owner of Dr Orawan Holistic Institute; Zoran Lalvani, Director of Business Development; Kanittha Prasopsirikul, Associate Director.

PET LOVER FAIR



"Pet Lover Fair" was held at the Phuket Indy Market on February 7, and included a pet fashion show competition, pet shop and many other activities for your best friend.

PHUKET SUPERSTARS
SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP 2014



From left: Manoon Kheawkhram, KritphanatPatwarasit, Pramukphisit Atchariyachay, Sarot Angkhanaphilas, Wirat Phathee, Kriangsak Suksomboon.

I-LEAF TOWN PHUKET



Hassakorn Boonyung (center), Managing Director of I-Leaf Town Phuket presented his project at the Phuket Real Estate show at Central Festival.

CONSULAR THANK YOU PARTY



Movenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket hosted a "Thank You Party" at The Sand Bar for the Honorary Consulates of Phuket who supported the hotel and Phuket province throughout 2013. The party was hosted by Mr Hansruedi Frutiger, General Manager, along with his management team.



Sunday Samba Brunch @ Rodizio

HERE'S tradition that's fun to celebrate – in Brazil, Sundays are the time for large family lunches that start late morning and sometimes last until late evening. It's an opportunity for the hosts to demonstrate their BBQ and Caipirinha mixing skills and for the lady of the house to show off her secret Feijoada (Brazilian national dish) recipes. And now you don't have to go to Brazil to enjoy a traditional brunch, just pay a visit to Rodizio restaurant in Patong.

The new "Sunday Samba Brunch" is a chance to try Rodizio's full grill menu with all meats and seafood, salad bar, the warm buffet with Feijoada plus every Sunday a new, special regional dish from Brazil will be served. All this accompanied by wine and live music.

The price of 990 baht ++ includes one bottle of wine for two guests. Brunch without the wine costs 790 baht ++. Kids up to 1.2 meters tall eat at half price. The brunch starts on Sundays at noon and lasts until around 3pm.

– *Phuket Gazette*



Baan Kata Arts Fest 2014



A photographic exhibition, featuring the black and white images of four of the Southern region's most noted photographers will be held as part of the Baan Kata Arts Fest (see details below). Photo: Supplied

CELEBRATING 20 years of bringing international music and art to Phuket, Mom Tri's Villa Royale at the headland above Kata Noi Beach, will be presenting the 2014 Baan Kata Arts Fest on February 18.

Mom Tri Devakul is the celebrated Harvard educated architect who developed many of the island's distinctive resorts including Boathouse at Kata Beach, Le Meridien Phuket and the Phuket Yacht Club at Nai Harn. His home base was a mountain top location between Kata and Kata Noi beaches where he built his home which today is one of Phuket's most elegant boutique resorts. He is a sculptor and designer known for using Thai design motifs in public buildings and private villas.

For the past twenty years, he has invited a variety of local and national artists to his Villa Royale for a celebration of the arts. No two Baan Kata Arts Fests are the same, as he wants to promote fresh talent and new ideas.

For the February 18 festival, he has invited HE Admiral Mom Luang Usni Pramroj to bring his string quartet to perform an original composition as well as a program of Mendelssohn's String Quartet in E minor which premiered in Leipzig in 1837 in honor of the Crown Prince of Sweden.

"The E Minor is regarded as Mendelssohn's finest string quartet, where his originality developed. From the player's point of view, the toil is well worth the effort," explained ML Usni.

Mom Luang Usni trained as a lawyer in England but his

passion is for music. He was a pioneer in the establishment of the Bangkok Symphony and serves as a Privy Councilor to the King. He is a welcoming presence at Phuket's annual King's Cup Regatta where he presides as an Admiral in the Royal Navy.

This year's Baan Kata Arts Fest also features the black and white images of four of the Southern

region's most noted photographers. Their exhibition opens February 15 at the Villa Royale Gallery on the road to Kata Noi Beach.

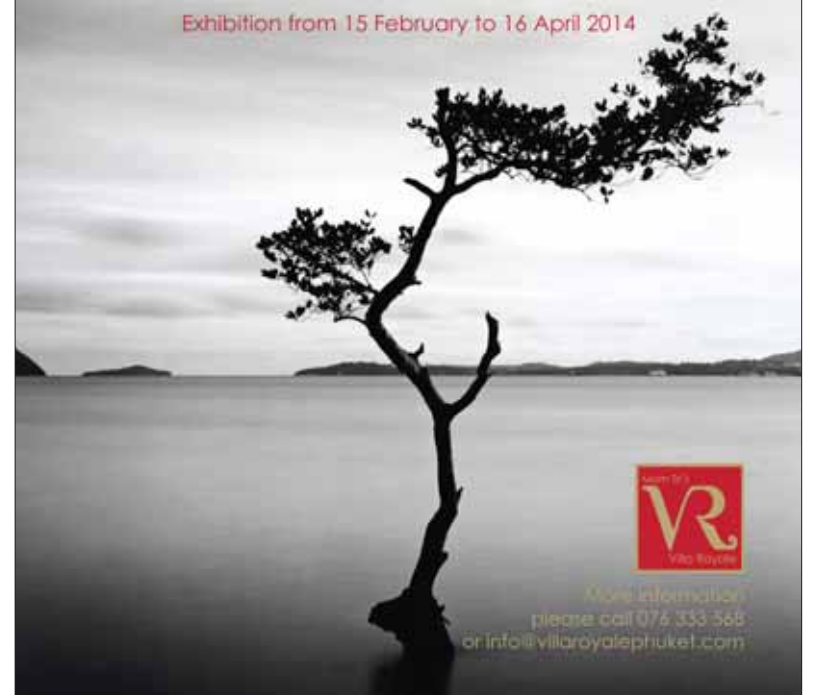
– *Phuket Gazette*

The 2014 Baan Kata Arts Fest opens with a cocktail reception at 6pm with the concert at 7pm. Tickets are 500 Baht and can be reserved by calling 076 333 568 or by email at info@villaroyalephuket.com

Photo Exhibition "The Quiet Beauty" at VR Gallery

By
Achirawit Churmung
Danai Plikomol
Sitt Polcharoen
Tawatchai Tumrongkiatikul

Exhibition from 15 February to 16 April 2014



More information,
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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

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. For more info contact Annabel at 076-324101, email annabel@xanabeachclub.com or go to xanabeachclub.com

Feb 15-20, 6-10:30 pm, Weekly Buffet Promotions @ Dusit Thani Laguna

Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket offers weekly buffet promotions from Southeast Asia with a buffet dinner every Tuesday. THB 998++ per person (food only). BBQ & Seafood buffet dinner THB 1,420++ per person (food only); and Italian buffet dinner THB 1,320++ per person (food only). 50% off for children aged 6-12 years. Bookings are essential. Contact food and beverage department on 076-362999, email dtlfb@dusit.com or go to facebook.com/dusitthaniphuket

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



**Run for health
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Official US Navy Imagery

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.

Feb 21, 7-11pm. Indian Curry Buffet at Navrang Mahal in Karon Sea Sands Resort

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 mouth-watering chicken tikka, samosas, freshly baked naans and more. Contact Jaspal Singh on 076-286464 or visit the website at: navrangmahal.com

Feb 23, 2014, 4-9am. Run for Health, Run for Charity
Phuket International Hospital is presenting this "Mini Marathon"

to raise funds for charity and to win HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Royal Trophies. This event is proudly sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV. For more info call 076-249400 or email chutinan@siriroj.com

Feb 28, 7-11pm. Indian Curry Buffet at Navrang Mahal in Karon Sea Sands Resort

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 mouth-watering chicken tikka, samosas, freshly baked naans and more. Contact Jaspal Singh on 076-286464 or visit the website at: navrangmahal.com

Mar 20, 2014 10am-2pm, Phuket International Women's Club AGM and lunch
The AGM of the Phuket Interna-

tional Women's Club will start at 10am, where coffee will be served, followed by our monthly lunch. Come to one or both. Members 500 baht, guests 650. Location: Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort. Contact Carole Dux on 076-316711 email info@phuketiwc.com or go to phuketiwc.com

Apr 6, 2014. Chakri Memorial Day

Chakri Day commemorates the origins of the Chakri dynasty, founded by Rama I, who established Bangkok as the nation's capital. HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty.

Apr 7, 2014. Substitute Holiday for Chakri Day
A public holiday in Thailand.

Apr 13-15, 2014. Songkran Festival
Songkran is the Thai New Year Festival, also known as the Wa-

ter Festival. Held during the hottest month in Thailand, Songkran is celebrated by Thais throughout the country, who pour water – traditionally only a little, but these days a lot – on other people to wish them good luck for the new year.

May 1, 2014. Labor Day
Public holiday for all commercial workers, but government offices will remain open.

May 5, 2014. Coronation Day
Coronation Day commemorates the accession to the throne of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej on May 5, 1950.

May 24, 2014. Visakha Bucha Day
Visakha Bucha Day is observed on the day of the full moon during the 6th lunar month, which usually falls in either May or early June. It is a day to commemorate three important incidents: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha. These events are believed to have fallen on the same lunar day and month (but on different years).

Jul 11, 2014. Arsarnha Bucha Day

This full-moon day of the eighth lunar month commemorates the Buddha's first sermon to his first five disciples after attaining Enlightenment more than 2,500 years ago. Evening candlelit processions are staged at all Thai Buddhist temples.

Aug 12, 2014, Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday

Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday. Also marked as Mother's Day in Thailand.

Oct 23, 2014. Chulalongkorn Memorial Day

Chulalongkorn Day commemorates the passing and reign of King Rama V, who is best remembered for abolishing slavery in Thailand.



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Phuket today
Phuket Gazette

Phuket Today is a 30-minute lifestyle show about Phuket. The show features resorts, villas, restaurants, yachts, private aircraft, nightlife, sports, leisure activities and events.

Produced by PGTV, the television arm of the Phuket Gazette, the show is designed to promote Phuket to tourists and the international community resident in Thailand.

Catch the show at these times

TrueVisions HD Channel 85 8 shows a week - MCOT World	True Freeview Channel 59 8 shows a week - MCOT World	Rawai Cable Covers Rawai, Chalong, Kata, Karon.
Monday: 05:10am	Monday: 05:10am	Channel 1 - 28 shows a week Monday - Sunday: 10:00am, 1:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm.
Tuesday: 11:10pm	Tuesday: 11:10pm	Channel 43 - 8 shows a week
Wednesday: 10:10am	Wednesday: 10:10am	Monday: 05:10am
Thursday: 01:10pm	Thursday: 01:10pm	Tuesday: 11:10pm
Friday: 04:10am & 07:10pm	Friday: 04:10am & 07:10pm	Wednesday: 10:10am
Saturday: 01:10pm	Saturday: 01:10pm	Thursday: 01:10pm
Sunday: 06:10pm	Sunday: 06:10pm	Friday: 04:10am & 07:10pm
		Saturday: 01:10pm
		Sunday: 06:10pm

Phuket Cable Company (PC) >> Channel 1 - 19 shows a week
Covers all Phuket.
Monday - Friday: 10:30am, 6:00pm, 9:00pm.
Saturday & Sunday: 10:30am, 9:10pm.

Online: www.phuketgazette.net/tv | www.youtube.com/PGTVPhuket
And in 4,600 hotel rooms around the island, international hospitals and Phuket Immigration Office.

Camp like a champ

Glimpse a sliver of paradise across the bridge

ESCAPE



By Isaac Stone Simonelli

IN HIGH season everyone is attempting the paradise-island cliché of beating the crowds.

So standing on the beachfront of Khao Lampi-Hat Thai Mueang National Park it's time for an umbrella count. Nothing on the right, nothing on the left – that was easy enough. But perhaps it's unfair to compare a pristine national park beach area with the umbrella forested beaches of Phuket.

It's Saturday, two hours before sunset, a person count was unequivocally more fair.

A quick estimate of density per estimated 100 meters of beach for the several kilometers of off-white sand stretching out in both directions left a total of zero. With a friend still back at the tent, the beach was mine – all mine!

Despite the stunning, deserted beach landscape that fades into the horizon unobstructed by anyone and water that runs flat to the horizon with only a few lazy boats to break it's surface, these aren't the park's selling points.

Khao Lampi-Hat Thai Mueang National Park is the weekend getaway for a family camping trip – that's right camping – or just a fresh breath away from Phuket for expats in need.

Broken up into two main sections, the Lam Pi range, which comprises a stretch of mountains composed of mostly igneous rock and Hat Thai Mueang the nearly deserted beach, there is more than enough to explore.

GETTING THERE

Pile into the car, jump onto the

motorbike, or take the inter-provincial bus from Terminal 1 toward Khao Lak, and cross the Sarasin Bridge to the mainland. Hold true to Highway 4 when 402 splits off a few kilometers past the bridge and ride it out to Thai Muang – following the signs to Khao Lak.

Anywhere between 30 minutes and an hour later, depending on your observance of speed limits, the road slides into the sleepy little town of Thai Muang and then takes a jagged 90 degree turn toward Khao Lak... let it go. Head straight under the arch. A couple kilometers farther, and you are on the beachfront road with nowhere to go but the park.

CAMPING LIKE A PRO

The park's facilities would make a US National Park Service Ranger chirp like a chipmunk if he ever had a chance to visit.

The campground, shaded by large sparsely distributed pine trees, stretches out across the road from the beach. Inside the Park Headquarters, book one of the tents, which easily fit four people, probably making it a 12-person tent by industry standards. Once you've paid, a couple officers come out to set up the tent and hand over your pillow, sleeping bag and bed mat.

Lights (hidden in concrete tree stumps) remain on throughout the night, making it easy for those with small bladders to make it to the bathroom facilities. Though there aren't hot showers, the facilities are spotless and cleaned regularly.

TURTLE TIME

When the kids, husband or friends start to become a bit of a bore and the sounds of the waves lapping against the beach become too much, pile back in the car.

Halfway down the beachroad on your left is a must-see side-show treat: the Phang Nga Coastal Fisheries Research and Development Center.

Though clearly a research center, with its concrete tanks of marine life, Director Suparp Pripanapong has left the gates open for curious tourists and hundreds of school children eager to learn about the marine life just over the other side of the road.

The main draw for most people is the sea turtle conservation project. The project offers visitors the chance to see baby sea turtles and juveniles, as well as full grown turtles that are being mated in an attempt to have them use an artificial beach at the facility to lay eggs.

Additionally, there are giant clams, a variety of reef fish, a few giant groupers and even a two-meter-long freshwater crocodile.

One of Dr Suparp's many projects is seaweed, which isn't so fascinating to look at, but is tasty. The quick growing variety clusters of pinhead sized "berries".

EATING THE SEA GREENS

To get a real taste, however, it's best to leave research center and head back towards Thai Mung.

About 200 meters after the road bends away from the beach, there is a small restaurant that is doing some big things with what they are pulling out of the ocean.

I See Seafood Restaurant is hard to miss, as it appears they hired the Easter Bunny to decorate the place. Stripes of pastel pinks, yellows, blues and greens run across the interior of the open air establishment with matching chairs and tables.

The only must-have dish is the seaweed salad, which is the seaweed berry clusters served with the traditional dressings for *som tom* – warning, don't put all the dressing on top as it will "melt" the seaweed clusters, just add a little at a time.

The whole-fish dishes are well above standard, with the fish in boiling plum and pork sauce, as well as the fish buried in a forest of fresh herbs, both stand out from the crowd. The shrimp and the softshell crab dishes, well... perhaps it's best to leave some tasty surprises for those making the trip.

Back from a late lunch at I See Seafood Restaurant, it's time to drive until the road ends in the white sands of the 1,000 rai Thung Samet forest (a cajuput forest) to begin a hike, take a trip up to Lampi Waterfall, tackle the 622 meter peak of Yot Khao Khamin or maybe just wander back down to the beach and bask in the glory of having beaten the crowds.



Seaweed berry served with the traditional dressings for som tum.



Marine research center director Dr Suparp Pripanapong.

Trip at a glance

Park fees: Foreigners 100 baht, Thais 20 baht

Food: Cheap: 40 – 150 baht a plate

Tent: 150 baht a night

Sleeping gear (sleeping bag, pillow, bed mat): 60 baht per person

Activities: Beach-going, hiking and bird watching – free

Distance from Phuket: 28k from Sarasin Bridge

Phone: 076 417206 or 025 62076

Advice: Call ahead to make sure school groups aren't booked for the same weekend if you want to ensure screaming and shrieking is kept at a minimum.



A great year for language

By Professor Grammar Dork

YE OLDE Curmudgeon is currently indisposed, so he has asked me to write a column on the innovations wrought upon the English language in 2013. 2013 was a great year for innovative language, and I'm continuing the trend by starting off a sentence with a number. Orthodox practice says you can't do that – you have to write the number out, as twenty-thirteen – but I ask, "Why not?" and boldly tread where no grammarian hath ever trodden before.

Everybody agrees that the new word of the year was "selfie," meaning a photo you take of yourself with a smartphone. The runner-up was "twerking," a provocative (some will say disgusting) dance move pioneered by Miley Cyrus. (Miley's father, Billy-Ray, who is famous for writing and singing the country-western hit "Achy Breaky Heart," was once asked why he named his daughter Miley. His answer, reasonably enough, was "Because Kilometry would sound fairly strange.")

But there were other linguistic innovations. The transformation of "impact" from a noun into every imaginable part of speech continued to steamroll on its remorseless course. The verb form ("How did that impact you?") has now become accepted usage, relegating "affect" ("How did that affect you?") to the dustbin of history. Both Leonardo DiCaprio and Christiane Amanpour have used the

adjective form "impactful" on TV. ("How impactful was that?" "Oh, it impacted me very impactfully.")

It has been prophesied (by me) that the teenyboppers' superlative of choice, "awesome," will soon undergo a similar transformation. "Awesome" sounds abrupt, truncated, incomplete. Fox Movies has attempted to rectify this shortcoming with its motto "Catch the awesomeness." But we need a longer

adjective form that exudes gravitas and pomposity. I favor "awesomeful," followed by a new noun form, "awesomefulness." ("The awesome-

fulness of the explosion impacted his eardrums awesomefully." Following the pattern of "impact," too, there is no reason why "awesome" cannot be used as a verb. ("He was awesomed by her beauty.") The meaning, of course, would be "struck dumb by the awesomefulness."

Technology has given us a wealth of new media that promote narcissism. I refer, of course, to Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is based on the assumption that everybody in the world is dying to see your photos; Twitter, on the assumption that everybody is dying to know your opinions on just about everything. These delusions ignore the rude fact that I don't give a rap about your

photos, I just want you to look at mine; and I couldn't care less what your opinions are, I just want you to listen to mine.

Thus, technology, ever eager to milk the human ego for the greater profit of large corporations, has spawned a quantum leap in narcissism that will soon infect our entire species. The inevitable result will be a proliferation of new word-forms:

"narcissify," meaning to make narcissistic; "narcissification," the process of becoming narcissistic; "narcissiful," full of narcissism; and "narcissiffulness," the state of being full of narcissism.

Professor Grammar Dork, who swears that he is not on drugs, can be scolded for his pedantry c/o s.tsow@outlook.com. But why bother?



You have a lot to learn as new words impact our lives impactfully. Photo: CollegeDegrees360



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Pineapple: fruit for all seasons



The world's favorite fruit, second only to bananas. Photo: courtney_80



A pineapple field, not an uncommon view in Phuket. Photo: hiyori13

WHEN I was growing up in war-torn Britain, pineapples were the ultimate gastronomic luxury. Always canned, and invariably from the Dole company in Hawaii, they were like gold dust – to be opened only on special occasions.

Nowadays, pineapples (*ananas comosus*) are everywhere – and big business – with 14 million tons produced annually. The world's second favorite fruit – after the banana – they are sold in cartons as refreshing juice or mixed in pina colada cocktails; whole pineapples are displayed fresh in European supermarkets, or piled high on open-air stalls here in Phuket. Even the discarded tops – also used for paper fiber – can be seen winging their way on trucks to elephant camps on the island – the tethered mammals' main source of food.

There are other changes. Today, and despite the bromeliad's origins in southern Brazil; Thailand, along with the Philippines, has become the world's largest producer, where they are grown mainly in the coastal regions of the provinces east and west of the Gulf. Dole, for example, has canneries in Hua Hin and an enormous 3,200 acre plantation in Ratchaburi.

About 95 per cent of the Kingdom's crop, however, is produced on small-holdings of less than ten rai, with the farmers selling their pineapples direct to processing plants. You can observe a modification of this practice

at work in Phuket. Drive north on the airport road and you will encounter dual purpose cultivation: plantations of young rubber trees with pineapples planted in rows beneath the saplings. The pineapples are harvested long before the rubber trees mature (about seven years) so that they can enjoy plenty of sunshine, a pre-requisite for their successful growth.

Most people think that pineapple fruit grow just above the ground, but in fact the plant, an herbaceous perennial, has a thick stem about a meter or more tall with long, waxy leaves. These leaves have sharp spines along the margins, so care needs to be taken when harvesting the fruit. As the plant develops over a period of about two years, it forms an inflorescence at the top of the stout stem consisting of up to 200 small flowers. These red or lavender flowers then fuse together to create the multi-segmented fruit we call a pineapple, so christened by European explorers, due to its resemblance to a pine cone. The suffix "apple" presumably refers to its delectable edibility.

Hybridists, especially in America, have been very active in developing the pineapple. Early flowering varieties can produce a second crop, so successful attempts have been made to



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

speed up the growth process. Farmers also remove the smaller fruiting stems called slips that develop on the sides of the central shoot and replant these. Even the discarded top of the fruit can be transplanted just below the surface in fertile soil where it will develop into a new plant – an easy way for the Phuket gardener to cultivate his own fruit. Just remember that the new plant will require plenty of space

However, most hybridists have concentrated on improving the texture, flavor and size of the fruit. For example, the large variety "Smooth Cayenne" has smooth leaves – which makes harvesting less arduous, and "Kona Sugarloaf" has white flesh and no typically woody center. "Red Spanish", a smaller cultivar with pale flesh, is especially well-adapted for shipping to far-off markets. Some varieties are grown as decorative plants: this is hardly surprising when one considers that

many bromeliads (there are more than 3000 in the genus) are cultivated for their unusually decorative appearance and their ability to withstand dry conditions.

Many are in fact epiphytes, which means they can exist on inhospitable outcrops of rocks, or clinging to the bark of trees, having developed an adaptation known as the "tank habit", whereby the rosette of leaves

is able to capture water and nutrients in the absence of a well developed root system. To a limited extent, the pineapple shares this propensity.

One last observation about the ubiquitous *ananas*. It is not just delicious: it contains bromelain,

which is used as a meat tenderizer and, more important, as an anti-inflammatory and even in the treatment of various cancers. Some fruit....

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured, you can email me anytime at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com



A flowering pineapple. Photo:

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Dog of the week

LITTLE Nelson got his moniker in tribute to the great Nelson Mandela because he was rescued on the day he died. Sadly, he lost his mother to a nasty killing, so he's been an orphan most of his short life, but this has not slowed him down at all, he's still strong and healthy, even though he didn't get any mother's milk and spent his new born days sipping milk out of a syringe every two to three hours a day.

Now, he is three months old, running around and into everything like most puppies, but more than anything, he is ready to find a real home where he can get loads of love. He gets along well with other dogs and would love nothing more than a play mate to grow up with. Nelson is fully vaccinated, healthy and cute as a button – please call Doggie Heaven on 0848773566 if you would like to adopt Nelson, or any dog, or visit: doggieheaven.net



Want a puppie? Nelson is waiting.

The dangers of dependency

INCOMNIA, anxiety and phobias are frequently treated with psychoactive medications, drugs that can lead to the problem of dependency.

"Patients should always ask their doctor about a medication's side-effects," says Ruediger Holzbach, a German addiction specialist.

"With medications that have a rapid psychological effect, there is always the risk of dependency," he says, advising patients also to consult the literature that accompanies all medication packaging, which will contain information on side-effects.

Sleeping pills, tranquillisers and anti-depressants are all psychoactive medications. Women are much more likely to be prescribed medications of this kind than are men, according to a recent study in Germany.

The study's author, Gerd Glaeske, concludes that the use of these medications is risky and he has issued a warning against creating an "army of medication dependants". Rather than prescribing psychoactive medication, patient and doctor should look more deeply into symptoms like

insomnia or phobias and ask: "Is medication on its own a solution?"

While this is sometimes the case, "In many cases the point is to change living patterns in order to improve matters," Holzbach says.

Self-help is worth considering, and one option to consider is psychotherapy, although there is still considerable reluctance in society to taking this step. "People would rather take tablets than try to deal with their own lifestyles." But he cautions that the body soon grows accustomed to psychoactive medications, like the benzodiazepines and non-benzodiazepines. Both groups target the same area in the brain and have the potential to cause dependency.

The desired effects in the form of less anxiety and greater peace of mind soon wear off, and after a few weeks the old symptoms reappear. If the patient then stops the medication, the symptoms increase, and the patient starts taking the medication again.

"This leads to prolonged medication," Holzbach says, although he acknowledges that "only a small proportion of those affected develop dependency in the narrow sense of the word"



There are alternatives to medication with less side effects and no risk of dependency. Photo: Tom Varco

and start upping the dosage.

Most other patients, many of them women in their later years, stick to the therapy and to the dosage for long periods. "The doctor doesn't perceive any problem. The

patients are not dependent, as they are not increasing the dosage," Holzbach says.

And any psychological changes, such as a lack of interest in life, less physical energy and declining abili-

ties to concentrate are less noticeable. "These are not perceived as typical side-effects of the medication, but rather as typical signs of ageing," Holzbach says.

— The Nation

Avoiding that jet lagged feeling

TO avoid jet lag, air travellers should adapt to the local time immediately upon arrival at their destination.

This is the advice of Alexandra Schaetzle, an illness prevention expert for the Hesse state branch of the Techniker Krankenkasse, a German public health insurance company.

She advises resetting your wristwatch while still in the

plane. People who have travelled west should stay up even if they are tired from the long flight, while those who have travelled east should force themselves to go to bed.

Schaetzle adds that air travellers could take action to minimise jet lag even before leaving home. Those heading east should go to bed earlier than usual, and the westward bound should stay up

longer. This helps the body's internal clock to pre-adapt to the time at the destination.

It is also important that air travellers take it easy for a while after arriving at their destination.

Schaetzle notes, adding that a rest period of two days is advisable after a long-distance flight and that the traveller should spend much of this time outdoors because sunlight counteracts tiredness.

Time shifts can not only mix up the body, but also the use of medications. If the shift exceeds two hours, patients should con-

sult with their doctor about how to adjust the time they take their medications.

— The Nation



Travelling comes with a price, but there are ways to fight against the infamous jet lag. Photo: leoplus

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Cycling to Happiness


Blazing Saddles
By Baz Daniel

IN 2006 the United Nations announced that more than half the world's population was now living in urban areas and that by 2030 almost five billion of us will be urbanized.

Like most areas of rapid urbanization, Phuket has been deeply wounded by the rush to develop. Firstly, the island has become progressively reoriented around motorized traffic and secondly many public spaces and resources have been privatized. This reorganization of our island is unfair and cruel as the urbanized residents of Phuket are increasingly denied the opportunity to enjoy simple daily pleasures such as walking on convivial streets, sitting around in public areas, or just playing together. Children have largely disappeared from Phuket's streets which have been rendered dangerous and polluted by traffic volume.

Phuket's rapid urbanization is driven by people seeking a better life for themselves through increased prosperity. Tourism workers, developers, hoteliers,

restaurateurs, noodle vendors, yacht brokers and media types all share this common desire, and yet Phuket seems to be making people more miserable and stressed through this pursuit of prosperity. The sad thing is that the more people flock to Phuket for the good life – money, opportunity, novelty – the more crowded, expensive, polluted and congested the island becomes. The result? Surveys show that Phuketians rate themselves as among the least happy people in Thailand, despite living in one of the richest regions in the country.

Is Phuket's urban design really powerful enough to make or break our happiness? The question deserves consideration, because the most dynamic economies of the 20th century have produced the most miserable cities according to the World Health Organization. Surely not what we are trying to do here?

If one was to judge by sheer wealth, the last half-century should have been an ecstatically happy time for people in the US and other rich nations such as Canada, Japan and Great Britain. And yet the boom decades of the late 20th century were not accompanied by a boom in wellbeing. Indeed the British got richer by



While the search for happiness continues, chances are you'll get there on a bike. Photo: Suriya Donavanik

more than 40 per cent between 1993 and 2012, but the rate of psychiatric disorders and neuroses grew exponentially.

Sadly an unintended consequence of Phuket's urbanization and traffic density is that our human networks and the interactions are becoming degraded. People just don't want to engage with the traffic to go out and see friends and relatives like they used to. Upon returning from the daily commute to work, many Phuketians collapse in a deranged heap in front of the TV and hibernate.

Much as we complain about other people, there is nothing worse for mental health than a social desert. The more connected we are to family and community the less likely we are to experience heart attacks, strokes, cancer and depression. Connected people sleep better at night. They live longer. They consistently report being happier.

There is a clear connection between social deficit and the shape of urbanization. A Swedish study found that people who endure more than a 45-minute commute were 40 per cent more likely to divorce. People who live in mono-functional, car dependent neighborhoods are much less trusting of other people than people who live in walkable neighborhoods where housing is mixed with shops, services and work places.

However, one particular group of commuters report enjoying themselves. These are people who travel to work under their own steam...they walk, run, or ride bicycles.

Why would travelling more slowly and using more effort offer more satisfaction than driving? Part of the answer exists in our basic human physiology. We were born to move. Immobility is to the human body what rust is to a car. Stop mov-

ing long enough and your muscles will atrophy. Bones will weaken. Blood will clot. You will find it harder to concentrate and solve problems. Immobility is not merely a state that is closer to death... it actually hastens it.

Cycling gives even a lazy rider the ability to travel three or four times faster than someone walking, while using less than a quarter the energy. Cyclists report feeling connected to the world around them in a way that is simply not possible in the sealed environment of a car, bus or train. Their journeys are both sensual and kinesthetic.

So if we really care about freedom for everyone, we need to plan Phuket's urbanization for everyone, not just the brave or foolhardy who are currently willing to risk their lives in order to cycle.

The TAT recently saw fit to try and capitalize on the global passion for cycling by declaring the

country a cyclist's paradise. This is of course pure hype, with no tangible initiatives to support the rhetoric.

But Phuket could quite easily be made more of a cyclists' paradise by constructing cycling and walking pathways around perimeter areas such as Cape Panwa, the Nai Harn headland, Chalong Bay or through the central mountain peaks. The investment costs would be minimal and could be readily amortized by charging a small fee to cycle or walk the pathways. Bike hire and cycle-friendly cafes along the way would offer locals employment and business opportunities.

Will any of this happen? While holding your breath is probably wise while cycling along Phuket's main arteries, doing so in anticipation of such positive cycling initiatives appearing here is probably a fast track to asphyxiation!



Drop the car and fall in love, scientists say. Photo: mikebaird



People who walk, run or cycle to work are happier. Photo: Lorena Cupcake

Beatles rock Boat Lagoon

"WE ALL live in a yellow submarine, a yellow submarine, a yellow submarine..." There are songs that make your head rock, your fingers click and your feet stomp. There are days when you can't get a tune out of your head; it follows you around, you keep whistling it, you catch yourself singing it out loud under the shower or in the car on your way to work.

If you've recently met someone showing these symptoms, chances are that he or she was at one of the two Fab Beatles concerts at the Boat

Lagoon over the weekend – featuring the renowned cover band the Counterfeit Beatles, direct from Liverpool.

The Beatles may have been counterfeit but the music was for real. And so was the fun. It's been a while since Phuket has seen and heard so many people singing and dancing their hearts out. Partly it was the songs. With tunes like *Help*, *Drive my car* or *Please Mr Postman* in their catalog, the Counterfeit Beatles' task seemed easy.

After all, we know the lyrics and few of

us can stop ourselves from singing and moving in rhythm at the very first notes of *Love me do* or *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da*. but there is something magical in seeing and hearing these songs performed live – and boy did the Counterfeit Beatles deliver!

All the harmonics were there, all sung in tune and with plenty of passion. The combination of the band's fabulous stagecraft and musical talents, served up with knockout costumes and authentic instruments, resulted in a lethal and unforgettable show.

If you were lucky enough to have been there, you know what I'm talking about. And if you weren't – well, you missed one of the greatest nights of entertainment this island has seen in a long time!

As was the case with ABBA Forever and Alice and Wonderland, the Beatles gigs were organized by Events International, which is rapidly becoming synonymous with world-class, imported entertainment for Phuket, an important slice of life that has long been missing here.

– Maciek Klimowicz



Cycling: the spice of life



Renowned Irish cyclist joins SpiceRoads Cycle Tours from Bangkok to Phuket

By Jeremie Schatz

WITH surprising speed given the temperature, the amorphous speck approaching in the distance gradually revealed itself to be a group of 14 cyclists. Maybe it was the promise of a cold beer and big plate of food at Bill Bentley's Pub and Restaurant in Mai Khao that provided the final surge of energy, or maybe they were downright tough and unfazed by the stifling midday heat. Either way, the sweat-drenched group was all smiles and high-fives as they dismounted their bicycles and congratulated each other on a successful ride.

Having left a week prior, the group, riding with SpiceRoads Cycle Tours, had just completed a Bangkok to Phuket trip of some 900 kilometers. Although the route is a fairly common one for the company, this particular trip had an uncommon element – the participation of former professional road cyclist Sean Kelly.

In case you aren't familiar with him, Ireland-born Kelly was a big deal in the cycling world. During his official career, spanning from 1977 to 1994, he won 193 races all over the world. In the 57-year-old's post cycling life, he has established the Sean Kelly Cycling Academy in Belgium and holds a position as an English language commentator for the European television sports network Eurosport.

Although he is retired, Kelly is still a prominent figure in the cycling world, participating in charity events and rides and associating himself with companies that he believes in. "I was approached last year by SpiceRoads

to come along and put my name to the tour and create a little more interest," recalls Kelly. He was not only impressed by the better-than-expected road conditions, "The local guides we had were really good – they know what they're doing."

When asked why he chose to get involved with Spiceroads, he said, "When you do things like this, you can look about, see the countryside. When you're competing and doing a lot of events in America, Colombia and Europe, of course you don't get any occasion to see the countryside – when you're racing, it's not for pleasure."

Also joining on the ride was long-time SpiceRoads CEO, Struan Robertson. Robertson joined SpiceRoads when they first rooted down in Bangkok eleven years ago as a fledgling company. Back then, they were blazing their own trail, "Nobody went biking in Cambodia ten years ago, but we did."

SpiceRoads now has another office in Chiang Mai and has expanded to offer scheduled trips to 26 locations throughout Asia and Europe. "We just expanded into Europe last year, so we do six destinations in Europe and we will add several more. It's been growing steadily every year despite the various setbacks we've had in this part of the world," says Robertson optimistically.

In addition to the broad selection of scheduled trips, SpiceRoads offers can cater any

When you're competing and doing a lot of events in America, Colombia and Europe, of course, you don't get any occasion to see the countryside – when you're racing it's not for pleasure.



Sean Kelly was happy to reach their destination at Bill Bentley's Pub in Mai Khao.

of their trips to suit a group's needs. Robertson explains, "They like the trip but they can't do the dates, or they want to upgrade

the accommodation, or they want to shorten it, so we have a team that will take those trips and customize them for groups." With 44 full-time staff on hand, a collection of hand-picked, English

speaking guides available in all the countries they offer rides in and over 400 bikes ready to roll, Spiceroads certainly has the resources ready for whatever two-wheeled adventure you may be contemplating.

The company has no qualms with getting off the beaten track, demonstrated by their off-road mountain biking excursions in Bali and Bhutan, and even into Mongolia and Pakistan. Long-time friend of Robertson's and

participant in the Bangkok to Phuket ride, David Ertle, told the *Gazette* of his history of cycling adventures with SpiceRoads, "I've done loads [of cycling trips] but mainly mountain biking. I've done Thailand, Bali and Vietnam, and Kazakhstan is next." Ertle will join Robertson for a ride through Kazakhstan next year in celebration of Robertson's 50th birthday.

The group was quite obviously relieved to be sitting in the shade on the second-floor porch at Bill Bentley's, holding frosty mugs of bubbly brews to their foreheads, but the metaphorical wheels were still turning, scheming about the next ride.



REMEMBERING ROOTS: The Phuket Old Town Festival was ushered in with a vivid and lively parade that brought traffic to a complete stop. Photos: Steven Layne

New life in Old Town

TENS of thousands of people hit the streets of Phuket Town last weekend, all united by a worthy and righteous cause –

culture, identity, heritage and above all, fun!

Unlike recent mass rallies seen elsewhere in the Kingdom, Phuket's street crowds last week weren't out to protest, but to celebrate. Indeed, this year's Phuket Old Town Festival, held from February 7-9 was notably bigger and busier than editions in recent memory, with everyone and their grandma – literally – spotted out and about for an evening stroll to join in on all the liveliness to be had along Phang Nga and Thalang Roads in Phuket's historic district.

It was that cherished time of year, in which gas-guzzling automobiles took the back seat to make way for local sweets, eats and performance treats – Chinese and Thai style opera, concerts, acrobats, mimes, puppetry and all the fixings. If one thing is clear, the Veg Fest is not the only street festival tourists – domestic and international alike – have to look forward to in town.

See you there next year!



HOT DATE: Something to see, do for everyone Photo: Jeremie Schatz



WHAT CRISIS? Phuket is enjoying its bubble from the political turmoil. Photo: Jeremie Schatz



Phuket certainly is proud of its Chinese heritage. Photos: Jeremie Schatz

Eat for old times



THE days of contemplating and debating where is best to grab a bite to eat in town are over – Phuket Old Time Square, the first food center in town has officially opened to the hungry public.

Being dubbed “the soul of Phuket's cuisine”, Phuket Old Time Square is a place you can taste plenty of spice from local dishes, and get to know the history and experience the legend of several tra-

ditional recipes passed down through the generations for more than a century.

Located right in the heart of Phuket Town, the new food center is in front of Bukita hotel on Phang Nga Road, inside the area which used to be the busy Phuket bus station (BorKorSor Gao). Phuket's new location for top delicious local dishes is open from 5-11pm daily.

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Not just another chef

By Maciek Klimowicz

"IT WAS quite stressful," replies Angsana's Executive Sous Chef Yi-fan Chu when I ask him about his recent appearance on the ever popular "Iron Chef" series on Thai TV.

No wonder – with limited time to impress the judges, a special ingredient kept a secret to the very last moment (this time it was a snow crab from Japan) and reputation at stake, participating in the cooking show must be an exciting and stressful experience. And one to enjoy.

"I like a challenge, whatever you try to present, everything you do – everybody is watching. I had to tell myself not to pay attention to the cameras and just do what I always do which is very hard. You think hard not to make any mistakes but the more you think, the more mistakes you make."

Chef's Yi-fan Chu made one mistake too many and lost the competition by a single point. And some comments on the show's Facebook page didn't fail to notice that he lost to a woman. Chef Yi-fan sees no shame in it. "For me, in the kitchen setting, there are no men or women, there're chefs. To be an

Iron Chef you have to have the skills and that's it. We're there to cook."

And cook they did. Just reading the list of dishes on the "Four Seasons Menu" prepared by team Angsana that night, featuring such delicacies as open-faced ravioli with black (foie gras) and white (truffle) sauces, or lemon-saffron sorbet inspired by the flavors from Chef's Yi-fan Chu hometown in Taiwan, is a boost for my imagination and taste buds.

However, what marks a great chef is not only the dishes on the menu, it's their hunger. Hunger for knowledge. And "Iron Chef" was just another lesson for Chef Yi-fan. "The whole experience helped me build confidence. After the show, I was nitpicking on my own mistakes but when I reviewed the video, I realized that I actually did good and it was a big boost for my self-confidence," he says.

Chef Yi-fan believes it's the same appetite for knowledge that the whole popularity of cooking shows and the great careers some celebrity chefs make, is based on. "Every chef has a different talent. Jamie Oliver created a menu anyone can do at home so people can actually learn something.



Photo: Maciek Klimowicz

Chef Yi-fan Chu's career led him from Taiwan through California, Germany and Phuket and onto a popular TV show.

Gordon Ramsay shows what's happening behind the scenes, the stress, the pressure, so again people can learn something and that's the reason they watch." And it doesn't stop with the TV.

The restaurant kitchen of the present is often an open space,

plainly visible to the customers. "Guests are curious about what's happening behind the scenes and watching the chef cook is a form of entertainment. Also, working out in the open forces, chefs to push the standards even higher," explains Chef Yi-fan Chu.

With already high standards of Angsana's restaurants, be it Bodega & Grill, Market Place or Baan Talay – pushing them even higher seems like a hard task. Well, hard it might be, but certainly not impossible for Yi-fan Chu. After all – he is an Iron Chef.

Brunch with a difference

By Mark Knowles

WITH so many resorts around the island offering Sunday brunch, it can be hard to find one that stands out from the pack. Regent Cape Panwa has stepped up to the challenge, however, by offering a Sunday brunch with a difference, well, several differences actually.

Firstly, it's the location, the tranquil surroundings of the Regent Club restaurant. Usually reserved for guests alone, the Regent Club has been opened up to the public and it's easy to see why they've kept it a secret.

The stunning view of the Andaman

Sea and nearby Koh Tapao Yai is only occasionally broken by the sight of a cruise ship meandering its way across your line of sight, so close that it almost looks like a toy boat floating across the infinity pool that frames the bottom of the scene.

Secondly, with room for only about 50 diners, the Regent's brunch is an intimate affair, allowing staff to serve plates of appetizers to guests as they mingle, enjoying their welcome drinks, before finding their tables. This service continues throughout the day, as waitstaff visit your table to offer bite-sized morsels to devour between trips to the buffet table.

Thirdly, for the buffet, the Regent has kept it simple yet opulent. A mouth-watering display of seafood – half-lobsters, giant crab claws and legs, freshly shucked oysters, mussels and more – forms the centerpiece. Further tables featuring excellent antipasto, artisan breads, gourmet cheeses and a selection of divine, bite-sized desserts round out the selection.

Finally, and this is where the Regent really steps off the beaten track, in addition to the table served appetizers and the buffet, there is an impressive a la carte menu. The menu invites you to choose from Head Chef Justin Baziuk's take on Sunday favorites: Eggs (Black truffle Benedict or lobster and marscapone); Roasts (pork, beef, lamb or chicken – all melt in the mouth, so take your pick); Grilled seafood (sea bass, lobster thermidor or king prawns); and a range of delectable hot desserts, such as Belgian waffles and buttermilk pancakes.

The a la carte dishes are served in sensible portions, making sure you have plenty of room left to graze at the buffet and sample appetizers such as muesli with fresh fruit, creamed eggs with chorizo sausage or mini-pancakes with caviar and cream cheese.

With all this on offer, it pays to pace yourself, so sit back, soak up the view, and settle in for a relaxing afternoon of fine food and wine at this secluded slice of paradise at Cape Panwa.



Keep some space for the desserts.



Photos: Mark Knowles

Simply fresh and refreshingly simple – The Brunch by Regent is all about pure flavor.

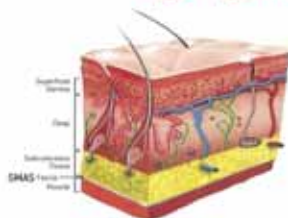
The Brunch by Regent, with a free flow of soft drinks, is priced at 1,900++ baht per person. Or 2,400++ baht per person – including a bottle of white, red, rose wine or Chandon per couple. Children aged 4-12 eat half-price and have free access to the Regent's Kid's Club. Top off your wonderful Sunday with

special prices for an overnight Sunday stay. Room rates start at 4,000+++ baht per night, rates are subject to 10% service charge, 7% government tax and 1% provincial tax, inclusive of breakfast for two persons. For more information or bookings call 076 200800.

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What's happening in the aging face?



The visible signs of facial aging include not only surface irregularities, such as dyspigmentation, numerous fine

lines, but also coarser textural changes, such as sagging, drooping and wrinkling of the skin. Most people concern only how to rejuvenate skin. However, six layers of the face: other skin layer or epidermis, inner skin layer or dermis, fat, SMAS, muscles and bone have been totally affected. As a result, the keys to approach and reverse facial aging must be universally addressed layer by layer and choose the right targeted devices and procedural dermatology to correct the defect layers.

Outer skin layer or epidermis

Epidermis is the most outer part of the skin composing cell layers that are responsible for skin texture, moisture and skin color. Thinning of the skin, dyspigmentation such as sun spots, age spots and melasma, skin dullness as well as roughness are the aesthetic complaints from epidermal aging.

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Medlite C6 laser is the US FDA graded laser targeting melanin pigment chromophore for spot removal, improving skin tone, and brightening skin color. Patients will not have any

downtime after Medlite laser treatment. Intense pulse light or IPL is a non-laser light source employing multiple wavelengths for different purposes. Facial rejuvenation, vascular rosacea and red spot including acne are the common indications can be treated with IPL.

Inner skin layer or dermis

Dermis lies between the epidermis and subcutaneous with collagen, elastin, nerves, vessels and glands. It plays an important role for skin thickness and cosmetic appearance of the skin. As a result of collagen and elastin reduction, sagging jowl, larger pore, increasing fine lines, static lines, deep folds and more prominent acne scars occur. Various measures such as dermal filler, laser, and other light sources



Our options – ST reframe, e-Matrix, Ulthera, Thermage, Med lite C6 laser, botox, dermal filler, IPL, thread lifting. e-Matrix is the latest resurfacing device producing unique pyramidal column of fractional



RF energy Smoothen skin, soften lines, pore reduction, acne scar removal, skin tightening, d collagen production, improving discoloration are all the benefits of the treatment.

Fat

Fat is the layer below dermis. The aging face generally shows fat reduction. Losing volume of fat pockets resulting eye hollow deep nasolabial folds, and loss of jaw line including neck definition is also the consequent of fat atrophy. Autologous fat augmentation and filler injection are methods to replace the volume loss. However, submental fat pocket enlarged creating double chin is the reverse scenario which needs the different approach.

Our recommendation – filler injection for fat loss/fat dissolve for fat excess, bio-cone lifting

SMAS (superficial musculoaponeurotic system)

Superficial musculoaponeurotic system or SMAS is a particular layer consisting of collagen and elastic fiber meshwork above the muscles. From the morphology of cadavers, not every muscle has this layer. However, when we are ages, this unique layer is composed of variable decreasing in strength and elasticity causing drooping skin and eyes. Therefore, SMAS layer plays a major role for surgeons to manipulate during surgical face and neck lifting. Nowadays non-surgical devices try to target SMAS in order to recover skin aging more effectively rather than focusing on treating and rejuvenating skin alone.

Our recommendation- Ulthera (focused /Ulthera and e-Matrix



Non-invasive focused ultrasound (ulthera) is currently the only device that US FDA approved for facial lifting. Combining ulthera with subablative skin resurfacing (e-Matrix) can produce significant collagen synthesis and can delay the use of more invasive surgical techniques which may associate with longer downtime, side effects and complications.

Muscle

Dynamic wrinkles or wrinkles in motion such as smile lines, frown lines, bunny lines, and forehead line are the consequence of facial aging related to the muscles. Prominent masseter muscle from both aging and inherited structure can create the square face appearance.



Our recommendation- botox injection

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This document is provided by Dr. Panadda Aswanetmanee, skin and laser surgery specialist at Laser Premium Clinic (only for our staffs.)

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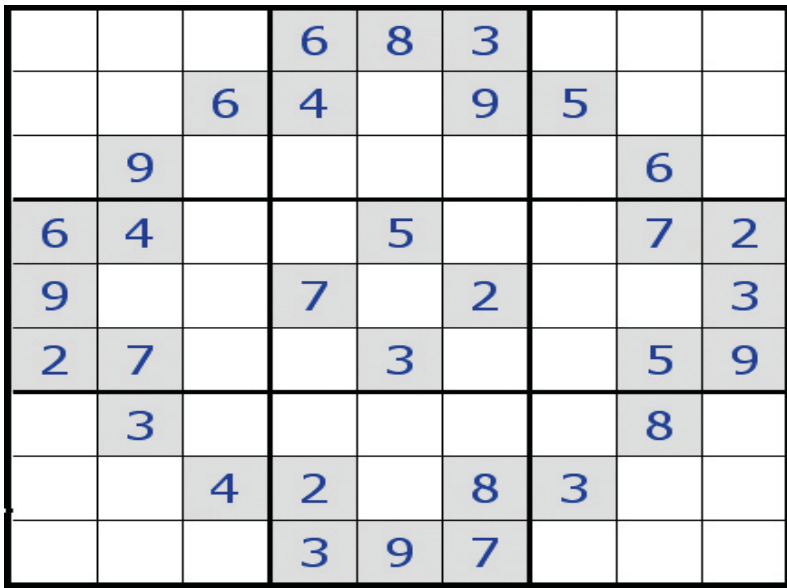
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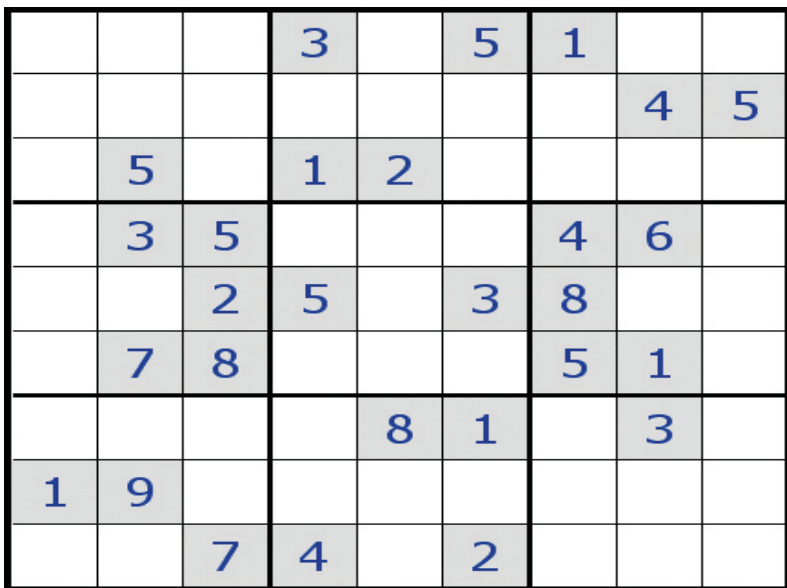
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SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)



The philosopher's corner

"When I die, I want to go peacefully like my grandfather did—in his sleep. Not yelling and screaming like the passengers in his car."
— Bob Monkhouse

"Patience is something you admire in the driver behind you, but not in one ahead." — Sophocles

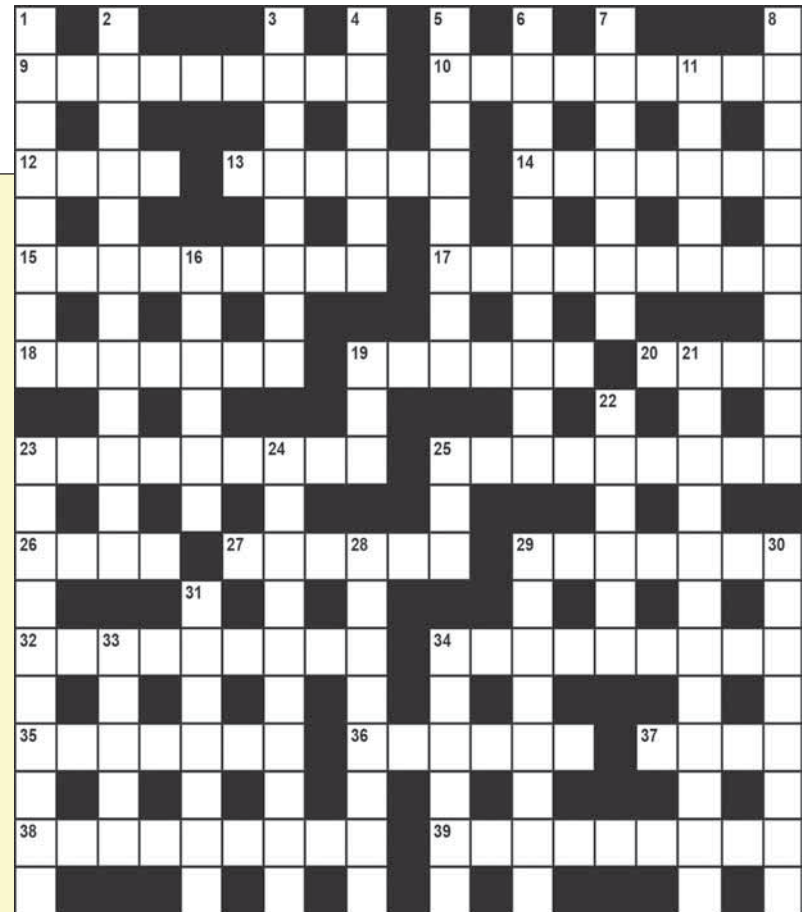
COFFEE break

Across

9. Overtake possible green traveler (9)
10. Prone to rate sport badly (9)
12. China without a facial feature (4)
13. I spent wildly for a keyboard instrument (6)
14. River aquatic mammals are objectionable creatures (7)
15. Color, nowadays note, of a soft drink (9)
17. But I'm lame unfortunately, cannot be changed (9)
18. Puts oil around to go quietly (4,3)
19. Chain can outright sting (6)
20. Raise up, if lieutenant out (4)
23. Shiny sets arranged in artificial production (9)
25. Public Relations echo unusual resent of television announcer (9)
26. New line for major river (4)
27. Roll by out of weather protection (6)
29. Determine to sort out (7)
32. Norman set out decorations (9)
34. Range it an unusual country (9)
35. Stare if bad Arabian devils (7)
36. Melt as different elements (6)
37. Pure new nation (4)
38. Hole dunks wild Norwegian dogs (9)
39. Chants 'Day off for land sailors!' (4,5)

Down


1. Resort caught proofs of debt being extensive (8)




2. Wanting to achieve like drawing in one's breath? (12)
3. Encourage factory to produce vegetable (8)
4. Church of England ring covered shrink (6)
5. Sprite to go wild, suffering more from acne (8)
6. More noise a disturbance in street in Phuket Old Town (10)
7. Law for sculpted figure, about time! (7)
8. Regular periodical up to date information on character (10)
11. Maybe brace for the bitter (5)
16. Little George, the German writer and politician (6)
19. Call for help going up and coming down (3)
21. Mental capacity for confiden-

- tial information (12)
22. Right, each son has cause (6)
23. With unexpected rhythm copy Dante's working (10)
24. Molders material is tough, son, also (6,4)
25. Remuneration per annum unknown (3)
28. Not as much untidiness under the forces canteen (4,4)
29. Wining and dining as royal fashionable gourmet beginning (8)
30. To move out, vacate E.U. carefully (8)
31. Note proposal causes passionate feeling (7)
33. An ark opened up, cute to Thais (5)
34. I start to become a painter (6)

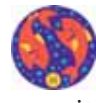
AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):

 Aquarians' talents for spotting a business opportunity that others have missed will bring interesting results during the second half of February. In the realm of romance, success with a fire sign puts you in an optimistic mood. Those whose birthday is due in the coming days are predicted to put friends and family ahead of other concerns in the year ahead. The number one is lucky this week.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):


 Spiritual matters assume greater importance for Pisceans. This is an auspicious time to learn meditation and put practical matters on hold – the stars show that developing more peace of mind will enable you to make better decisions regarding important personal issues. An earth sign is likely to let you down over travel plans, which could come as a blessing in disguise. Number eight can attract good fortune this week.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):


 The stars indicate that turning a blind eye to tedious, but necessary commitments will lead to more complications. Tuesday is the most auspicious day to take action.

Where finances are concerned, the urge to splurge is strong this weekend, particularly for those keen to impress an earth sign partner. A romantic connection with an air sign is forecast to become more serious. Number seven stands out this week for Arians.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):

 A cloud that has been hovering over Taureans' heads is forecast to disperse during the second half of February. If this relates to a money matter, the stars show that an investment opportunity that seemed too good to be true will turn out to be worthwhile. Those keen to make changes in their lifestyle receive motivation from an air sign friend this weekend. Your lucky number this week is five.


GEMINI (May 22-June 21):

 Where finances are concerned, this is an auspicious week for negotiations. If money issues have been getting in the way of a friendship with another air sign, the stars are ready to back your efforts to come to an agreement. Those Geminis who have taken on more debt than was wise should find a solution to this situation. The number four could open the door to luck this week.


YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

CANCER (June 22-July 23):

 It will be worth paying more attention to long term plans during the second half of February. The stars show that support comes from a source you hadn't considered, but Cancerians will have to strike while the iron is hot. On a social level, the cosmic climate enhances your charisma and there should be no shortage to go out and have some fun this weekend. Number seven is highlighted to be lucky.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):

 You will be on the same wavelength as people who have influence in your working environment. The stars indicate that you should take advantage of this astral backing to go out and get what you want. The second half of February is a positive time for Leos to attain goals set out at the start of the year. Dreams this weekend give food for thought. Number two appears important this week.


VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):

 Finances fall under the spotlight during the coming days. Virgoans will have to juggle carefully to meet all their monetary responsibilities. If you are involved with another earth sign, heated discussions may be unavoidable. The stars advise that Monday and Tuesday are the most auspicious days to make new agreements. If you are single and seeking, a water sign's charisma is attractive this weekend. Your lucky number this week is six.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):

 A tactful approach will get Librans further when trying to solve issues in the world of work. There are hints that a fire sign's tendency to act on their own initiative can cause problems with shared projects. The social scene is sparkling this weekend, but the stars advise that surrounding yourself with like-minded friends is preferable to being around people you have little in common with. The number nine can shine this week.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):

 Where work is concerned, the stars show that not everyone will be honest with you this week, with fire signs highlighted to be especially

economical with the truth. Your social zone is better starred, and an adventure lies ahead for those born under the sign of Scorpio. The second half of February finally brings some spice to your romantic life after a non-eventful time. Your lucky number this week is four.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):

 Your learning curve becomes steeper, with a last minute change in the world of work highlighted. Sagittarians who are involved with something they have little experience with will need to relay on others' support. An air sign shows they are on your side, but putting too much trust in another fire sign is inadvisable. Best days for money matters are Wednesday and Thursday. Number eight is special this week.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):

 In your personal zone, generosity comes at the right moment. The stars show that Capricorns caught in a tricky situation will benefit from an unfamiliar source. Branching out in the world of work is supported by the cosmic climate during the second half of February, particularly for those embarking on a new business adventure. Number three is forecast to be fortunate this week.

Chelsea, Albion break even

By Toby Davis

PREMIER League leaders Chelsea were hit by an 87th-minute sucker punch as they were held to a 1-1 draw by lowly West Bromwich Albion on Tuesday, handing the title race initiative back to Arsenal and Manchester City.

It looked like Jose Mourinho's side would move four points clear after defender Branislav Ivanovic, who got the winner in Chelsea's 1-0 triumph at Manchester City last week, smashed the ball home in first-half injury time to put the visitors ahead.

However, Victor Anichebe grabbed a precious point for the hosts when he headed in Saido Berahino's cross, leaving Chelsea in pole position in the table but possibly for only 24 hours.

Chelsea now have 57 points from 26 matches, two ahead of Arsenal, who host Manchester United on Wednesday, and three in front of City, who are at home to Sunderland.

At the other end of the table, West Ham United again showed they can win without suspended striker Andy Carroll as they beat Norwich City 2-0 to ease their relegation fears with a third successive victory and fourth straight clean sheet.

Second-bottom Cardiff City missed the chance to move out of the drop zone when they were held 0-0 at home to Aston Villa while Southampton jumped to eighth with a 1-0 win at Hull City.

Chelsea have found The Hawthorns an unappealing prospect in recent seasons, having lost on

their previous two visits.

With Mourinho's side having scooped 26 points from the last 30 on offer and West Brom winless in four matches under new manager Pepe Mel, few predicted anything other than a win that would see Chelsea's title challenge marching on relentlessly.

Chelsea had kept six clean sheets in their last eight games, so the writing appeared to be on the wall for the hosts when visiting Serbian defender Ivanovic blasted home from a corner.

But with the clock ticking down, Chelsea's defence was disrupted by an injury to Gary Cahill, who left the pitch with a calf problem, only to return seconds before Anichebe rose to flick his header into the net off the foot of the post.

TOO COMFORTABLE

The point moved West Brom out of the relegation zone above Sunderland on goal difference and left Mourinho trying to put a positive spin on a result that could have a decisive impact on the title race.

"We were comfortable in the game, maybe too comfortable. We didn't kill the game when we had the chance," Mourinho was quoted as saying by the BBC.

"In this moment we have one more point than before. If Arsenal and City win tomorrow they go above us but that is their job. Every game is difficult and every team needs points."

West Ham and Norwich had identical records coming into their clash but the momentum of recent results was with the Hammers.

Their third straight win came



Chelsea's Gary Cahill (left) and Petr Cech (center) challenge West Bromwich Albion's Thievy Bifouma during their Premier League match on February 11, 2014. Photo: Darren Staples/Reuters

courtesy of two late goals, with James Collins giving them the lead after 84 minutes when he beat Norwich keeper John Ruddy to a Mohamed Drame cross and flicked a header home.

Drame made the game safe in added time, latching on to a clearance, running the length of the pitch and dispatching the ball into the net with the help of a deflection.

West Ham, whose defence

was the butt of jokes following some heavy defeats in January, have now kept four clean sheets in the league for the first time since 1985.

"I had the chairman ringing me up to say we had not won under lights this season or last and that was in my mind," manager Sam Allardyce said.

"Our goalkeeper kept us in the game and we scored late, when it is hard for anybody to come

back into it. It's a great end to an important run of fixtures."

Jose Fonte scored the only goal as Southampton improved their prospects of securing European football by winning a tight encounter against Hull at the KC Stadium.

Fonte's effort in the 69th minute was adjudged to have crossed the line by goalline technology and left Hull three points above the relegation zone.

— Reuters

Media partnership signed for Raceweek

THE ORGANIZERS of the award-winning Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek have signed a two-year media partnership agreement with the *Phuket Gazette* who will provide editorial and advertising support across their print, online and TV media channels.

Speaking at the signing, Byron Jones, managing director of Media Business Services (MBS) and rights holder of Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek, said, "The *Phuket Gazette* has a huge reach through its partnership with *The Nation* and its diverse media platforms, and this will help to carry the event's message throughout Thailand and beyond. We're delighted to continue our relationship with the *The Nation/Gazette* Group and to have formalized an agreement for 2014 and 2015."

"We have been a media partner of Phuket Raceweek since the first event in 2004. A new two year agreement under-



From left: Kanjana Sriboonsom, events manager for the *Phuket Gazette*; Oranee Hildebrand, managing director of the *Phuket Gazette*; and Kanyarat Jones, director of Media Business Services Co Ltd (MBS).

scores our commitment to the event, which is a great one, and through our multi-media platforms, we will continue to promote the regatta to a local, national and international audience," said John Magee, publisher of the *Gazette*.

The eleventh edition of the

award-winning Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek will take place from July 16 to 20 off Phuket's southeast coast, headquartered at the five-star Cape Panwa Hotel.

For more information, visit: phuketraceweek.com

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Olympics get cold shoulder

By Mike Collett-White

WESTERN criticism of Russia's Winter Olympics was reminiscent of Cold War ambitions to hold the Soviet Union back, President Vladimir Putin said on Monday, despite signs that the world was warming to the most expensive Games ever held.

The buildup to the Olympics in Sochi on the Black Sea coast has been overshadowed by threats of Islamist militant violence, an international outcry over a contentious "anti-gay propaganda" law and allegations of widespread corruption and profligacy.

As the third full day of competition drew to a close, that hostility had begun to melt away and the thrills and spills on snow and ice, and a hugely popular Russian gold in the team figure skating on Sunday, began to win the critics around.

Monday's biggest drama was undoubtedly in the men's 500 meter speed skating at the Adler Arena, where, in a Dutch sweep of the medals, Michel Mulder beat Jan Smekens by one hundredth of a second, having initially been announced as second.

"It was a kick in the gut," said Smekens, who thought he had won for about "two or three minutes" before the scoreboard adjusted his time. "I was so ecstatic that I won, I can't describe it."

Mulder's twin brother Ronald grabbed bronze as the Dutch continued their dominance of the sport.

The excitement did not stop Putin, who has staked his personal and political prestige on a successful Games, from taking a swipe at his detractors, suggesting he was still smarting from criticism he always maintained was unfair.

"Back in Cold War times the theory of containment was created," he told a televised public meeting in Sochi.

"This theory and its practice were aimed at restraining the development of the Soviet Union... what we see now are echoes of this containment theory. This, unfortunately, has also applied to the Olympic project."

Putin also said the Olympics were playing a "positive role" in relations between Russia and its 2008 war foe Georgia, emphasizing that he believed



Photo: Lucy Nicholson

Vladimir Putin applauds the gold medal-winning Russian figure skating team.

flights set up between Sochi and the Georgian capital Tbilisi should continue after the Games.

A day earlier, the 61-year-old had been all smiles, as state television captured him congratulating the victorious Russian skaters, "high fiving" with young volunteers, drinking beer and urging the home team to greater sporting glory.

On the team was diminutive 15-year-

old Julia Lipnitskaya, whose breathtaking performance melted hearts and had commentators in the United States, as well as Russia, gushing over a superstar in the making.

"Good job guys, my congratulations to you all," Putin said, addressing the winning team crowded around him. "You have a lot of work ahead of you here, so don't relax."

— Reuters



Photo: Marko Djurica

Irene Wust takes the gold in the 3,000 meter women's speedskating.

Wust takes down Sablikova

IRENE Wust upset defending champion Martina Sablikova of the Czech Republic to win the women's 3,000 meter Olympic title on Sunday and hand the Dutch their second speedskating gold of the Sochi Games.

Wust clocked four minutes, 0.34 seconds over the seven-and-a-half laps at the Adler Arena in the 13th of 14 heats to eclipse the previous best mark set by Sablikova by 1.6 seconds.

Olga Graf, skating in the 10th heat and roared on by a passionate home crowd, finished a surprise third with a time of 4:03.47 to give hosts Russia their first medal of the Sochi Games.

Graf punched the air in delight upon realizing her time but her expression turned to slight embarrassment shortly after as she unzipped her suit to the waist before suddenly realising and grabbing the zip edges to protect her modesty.

That mark was first beaten by Sablikova, wearing eye catching gold blades, and the slight Czech threw her hands in the air upon crossing the line with a strong finish.

Wust, with her finger nails painted red, blue and white in the colour of the Dutch flag, made a blistering start in the next heat to move almost three

seconds under Sablikova's time before hanging on in the closing stages.

It was her third Olympic gold medal following her success at the event in the 2006 Turin Games. She also won gold in the shorter 1500m race in Vancouver four years ago.

Wust's victory followed that of compatriot Sven Kramer in the opening speedskating event of the Sochi Games, the men's 5,000m on Saturday.

Germany's Claudia Pechstein, 41, finished fourth and failed to add to her record nine speedskating Olympic medals.

— Patrick Johnston/Reuters

Britain claims first medal on snow

JENNY Jones's breakthrough Olympic slopestyle snowboarding bronze medal may be the start of something big for Britain, the country that can claim to have invented ski racing without ever being much good at it.

Sarah Lewis, the general secretary of the Swiss-based International Ski Federation and herself a Brit, believes the first Olympic medal by a British athlete on snow could be contagious.

"Australia has shown the way for many other nations, that it's possible to be a non-traditional ski and snowboard nation in terms of infrastructure and facilities and history," the former Olympic Alpine racer told Reuters on Sunday.

"For Britain to get their first

ever snow medal is very exciting for FIS.

"The media attention for snowsports in general (in Britain) will be higher and hopefully also the interest and enthusiasm, not just in the media but from youngsters when it comes to participating," she added.

The closest Britain has come to a medal on snow before Jones's exploits in Sochi was when Alain Baxter finished an astonishing third in the Alpine skiing slalom in the 2002 Salt Lake City Games, only to be stripped of the medal after failing a drug test.

Other medals have been on ice, in events such as figure skating, bobsleigh and skeleton. On snow, it has long been more a case of taking part than winning.

But tens of thousands of British skiers flock to Alpine resorts every year, following in the footsteps of Sir Arnold Lunn who in 1922 staged the first proper slalom race in the Swiss resort of Murren, high in the Bernese Oberland, and the potential is there.

Slopestyle is new to the Olympics and is particularly attractive to those from non-snowy nations because tricks and techniques can be honed on artificial slopes and indoors.

Britons' love of winter sports is already evident and now Jones, from the port city of Bristol in western England, has shown that Olympic success does not have to go to those raised on skis or snowboards.

"Britain as a tourist market is



Photo: Marko Djurica

Jenny Jones is the first athlete on snow to claim a medal for Britain.

one of the most important for many, many European resorts. And some resorts in North America too count very heavily on British visitors," said Lewis.

"I think what will happen is that more youngsters will participate when there is increasing interest and there will be a bigger pool to

choose from.

"Slopestyle and half pipe, aeri-als... these tend to be athletes who could also be coming from trampolining and gymnastics and diving and surfing. And Britain is very good at those sports as well," she added.

— Alan Baldwin/Reuters

BISP attracts future triathlon, swim star

THE British International School, Phuket (BISP) is continuing to strengthen its status as a leading international school powerhouse by accepting more sporting youth stars who wish to study for their final four years pre-university/college at BISP (two year IGCSE and two year IB Diploma) – thereby combining both academic and sporting excellence.

The latest addition is young Hendrik Faber, 14, who comes to BISP from the Alice Smith School, Malaysia, and has joined BISP's Flying Fish High Performance Swim Academy trained by High Performance Team (HPT) coach Simon Jones, not only as a national ranked swimmer, but with the potential to break into the ITU's (International Triathlon Union's) International Youth Series of races that will assist in paving his way on to the Dutch Youth Triathlon team.

Dutch born Faber explains what inspires him and how he came to be living at BISP as a full-time boarding student: "I have



From left: BISP Athletics Director Jeff LaMantia, 14-year-old BISP Triathlete Hendrik Faber and BISP Flying Fish High Performance Swim Coach Simon Jones.

been swimming since I was six years old and was initially inspired by Pieter van Den Hoogenband and George Bovell III with their swim performances at the world and Olympic level. I have been competing in swimming competitions since I was seven years old and participating in triathlons for only three years.

"I have only been at BISP for four weeks now, however I could not be more impressed with how it assists in striking the perfect balance between academics and sporting ambitions. The facilities at

BISP are outstanding and I feel very comfortable that I am on my way to realising my true goals."

Faber, who is currently studying in year 10 (first year IGCSE) at BISP, combines the rigors of his IGCSE school schedule with a gruelling 18 hours in the pool with the BISP HPT training swim group, completing 40-50kms a week of swimming, three hours a week of strength and conditioning with Ignite

Athletics coaches George Grecia and Eddie Thompson, and a running session every Wednesday with the newly formed "Youth Sports Performance" track session, which is already attracting around 30 young, aspiring BISP athletes from a variety of sports looking to gain athletic conditioning.

In the pool, Faber recently posted 56.9 seconds for the 100m freestyle and 17 minutes 35 seconds for the 1,500m freestyle, a time that very few triathletes several years his elder can master. Having only competed in triathlon

Bowls knockout championship



KAMALA Lawn Bowls Club will host the 2014 Phuket Lawn Bowls Individual Knockout Championship on Saturday, February 22. The championship will be sponsored by Kamala Beer Gardens. Entry fee is 200 baht and the competition is open to all residents and visitors to Phuket. Bowls will be provided, however, shoes are optional and shirts are mandatory. Entries close February 18. To enter, contact Kamala Lawn bowls on 089-592-6059 or Rob 095-074-8396 or email: wilson4640@yahoo.com or nid14bowling@hotmail.com

for a few years, his promise as an up-and-coming young standout is very evident given his race results around Asia. Just last year, Faber placed third at the ITU Asian Cup World Championship Series where he finished just 20 seconds behind the first place finisher who was two years his senior.

Faber's future will surely be exciting but he is keeping his options open: "My ultimate goal as a sportsman is not fully understood yet as I am keen to keep my options open, however I would ultimately like to

make the Olympics in either swimming or triathlon and win a medal."

His sights for now are set on attending the Singapore National Age Group Championships in March with his fellow BISP Flying Fish swimming teammates, where positions on their home country's Youth Olympic Games team in the summer are up for grabs.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Queries are welcome about BISP's High Performance Team Swim Academy. Contact Head Coach Simon Jones: aquatics@bisphuket.ac.th

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THREE IN A ROW: Ney Fabiano scored on one of his early touches for the third straight match. Photo: Steven Layne

Ronins give local expats a lickin'

By Steven Layne

OFF the back of an epic 1-1 draw with Thai Premier League powerhouse Chonburi FC last weekend, Phuket FC had a much easier pre-season friendly work-out this past weekend, squashing local expat team Pluto Ice Cream in a 5-1 drubbing at Surakul Stadium.

With only several scattered pockets of supporters turning out, the late Saturday afternoon match-up was a low-profile consolation match for the canceling of a Southern showdown with the TPL's Songkhla United, initially scheduled for Sunday night.

Nonetheless, Phuket FC were careful not to underestimate their opponents, comprising of many Italians, some Frenchmen, Myanmar players and a handful of Thais.

For the third match in a row, it was Ney Fabiano to break the ice, scoring on one of his early touches,

this time with his right foot, from just top of the box after charging through the line.

Phuket's lead was soon doubled by attacking midfielder Arthit Wisetsin, with the expat-boys able to ward off numerous Phuket attacks through to the half-time whistle.

The Italian-blue clad players looked a little more confident in the second half; however, Phuket had too much to lose and prove, the pressure eased a bit after a brilliant header by defender Yusuke Sato put his side up 3-0.

But, the Pluto Ice Cream outfit (sponsored by a local business of the same name) had some fight left in them, and charged on. Their diligent efforts finally found fruition when Thai footballer, Makkan "Dew" Dongdeng penetrated Phuket's defenses, jumping on a lovely through pass from comrade Jumroong "Noom"

Kaewiet, to net the ball and bring his team back into contention, at least in theory.

Giving Ney and Eber a break in the second half, Brazilian midfielder Cristian Alex was fielded for the first time this year. Eager to shine, Cristian proved to be comfortable in his original position of midfield, skillfully feeding the ball to Eakar-tit Somjit, Pyne So and Anon Yangkham on the flanks.

And it would be Alex to score the next goal, chipping the ball over and out of reach of the advancing keeper. At this point, it was all Phuket who dominated the attack, eager for another goal.

Great evasive passing was exactly how the Ronins would break down their defenses for the fifth and final time of the match, when Anon easily found the back of the net from just in front of the goal line.

The 5-1 score would be unaltered through to the final whistle.

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 Superstars Soccer

LOOKING ahead to their season opener against Pattaya United on February 22, Phuket FC have one more pre-season friendly match on the cards – next Saturday, February 15, against Southern Thai division 2 upstarts, Surat Thani FC.

That match will conclude a double-header evening for the inaugural “Phuket Superstars Soccer Championship 2014” event.

With the opening ceremony to commence at 5:30pm, the first match of the event will be contested between a VIP Phuket All Star squad and Manport Lorkloen – comprising a number of famous Thai celebrities and TV personalities.

The match will be broadcast live nationally on NBT (Thai Channel 11), and is set to kickoff at 6:50pm following a “Pom Pom Cheerleader” show courtesy of Daorung Wittaya School.

The 35-minute match will be followed by a meet-and-greet session with the celebrities, while Phuket's friendly match with Surat Thani kicks off 7:45pm, with the night to wrap up around 9:30pm.

Tickets are available for 200, 500 and 1,000 baht. For more information, contact organizers Chor Changkid Chor Changtham Co Ltd, by calling 076-241114 or 086-470-6649 and 081-607-6177.

Among the confirmed superstars include Saksit Thangthong, Kongaparn Sangsuriya, Hatsanai Kraibutr, Somjate Payakaso, Thiti Leelarod, Wiphop Bangyeekhan, Thanchet Meesom, Apis Jesadaporn, Sorakrit Suraikimhant, Pasakorn Apiragsawong, Chatinan Naksomboon, Thanachai Kajornjarukun, Chanrit Pranprasert, Suramon Simon Larhou, Puchong Yothapithak, Teera Suwannawin, Kiattisak Udomnak, Supakit Tungtatsawat, Suvitcha Supaweera, Passanapas Boonkiatbutr, Kullarat Boonyanan and Nattawat Plangsiriwat.

A portion of the net proceeds of the event will go towards local sports development and student scholarships. – *Phuket Gazette*

The Phuket Gazette is a proud media sponsor of this event.

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Phuket soon United

Andaman Pearl take on CAT in Futsal Thailand Premier League opener

By Steven Layne

FOOTY fans – get ready for one of the most exciting indoor team sports in the country if not the world – the Futsal Thailand Premier League (FTPL) kicks off this weekend, with the island's pro five-a-side squad, Phuket United to host CAT FC in their season opener on Sunday night.

To be played at Saphan Hin's two-year-new 4,000-seat indoor gymnasium, the match will kick off at 7pm. This will be 7th year that Thailand has organized a professional futsal league – five-a-side indoor soccer – with this season's 16-team league organized by Siam Multimedia or SMM.

On February 9, the "Andaman Pearl" held a press conference at the Senses Resort overlooking Patong, formally announcing their readiness to compete in the 2014 FTPL, presenting to the media its players, staff and sponsors for the 2014 season.

The conference was presided over by Phuket Vice Governor

Somkiat Sangkhaosutthirak and attended by sponsor representatives, media, fan-club members and a number of VIP sporting representatives including Phuket FC Manager Priyawit Achiriyachai, players and staff from both Phuket FC and Phuket United.

In an interview prior to the press conference, Phuket United President Preechawut "Prap" Keesin revealed that the club's budget for the entire season will be about 7 million baht.

Asked if the futsal league schedule will clash with the football schedule, considering that both leagues commence around the same time this year, Mr Preechawut assured that both Phuket clubs are working closely together to ensure that there will be minimal if any home match scheduling conflicts.

To help with match organization and training,



UNITED WE STAND: The Andaman Pearl aim for a 5 place finish or better. Photos: Steven Layne

FTPL organizers SMM have given all of the 16 teams 300,000 baht (4.8 million baht in all) in addition to 15 futsal balls per team.

Playing in the national league for the first time ever last year, Phuket United finished in an impressive fifth place, and their season goal is to finish in fifth

place again, if not better.

General admission for Sunday's match 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.

FUTSAL THAILAND PREMIER LEAGUE 2014

FTPL WEEK 1

> February 15

	Si Pathum Si Saket 3pm	Bangkok FC
@ Rajabhat Si Saket		
	Uthai Thani FC 4pm	Pattaya Arena FC
@ Phonbodee Gym Uthai Thani		
	Chonburi Blue Wave 4pm	Thai Port FC
@ Tesaban Chonburi gymnasium		

> February 16

	Royal Navy 4pm	Nonthaburi
@ Puthi-Anan Bangna		
	Ayuthaya City 4pm	Suphanburi FC
@ Ayuthaya Wittaya School		
	Samut Sakhon 4pm	Khon Kaen
@ Bamrasnaradura (Bamraat Na-radoon) sports building		
	Highways Department 6pm	Chiangmai FC
@ Bamrasnaradura (Bamraat Na-radoon) sports building		
	Phuket United 7pm	CAT FC
@ Saphan Hin gymnasium Phuket		

Fixtures in February

H	Feb 18 VS Si Pathum Si Saket	
@ Saphan Hin gymnasium Phuket		
A	Feb 23 VS Chonburi BlueWave	
@ Tesaban Chonburi gymnasium		

Home matches will kickoff at 7pm at Phuket's brand new 4,000-seat Indoor Sports Complex in Saphan Hin.

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