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INSIDE TODAY

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25 Baht

■ 'IT WAS ONLY TO DEFUSE THE TENSION, AVOID VIOLENCE'

Power play

■ Tuk-tuk cartel stands firm, forces police chief out

By **Chutharat Plerin**

THE nine-hour siege of Patong's busiest roads late Monday night – including the three main roads leading into the town – resulted in the immediate transfer of Patong Police Chief Chiraphat Pochanaphan.

The removal of Col Chiraphat from office was among the four demands listed by 200 tuk-tuk drivers who blockaded the beach road and Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road from about 11pm.

"Col Chiraphat is helping us here at Phuket Provincial Police headquarters for now. It is a temporary transfer only," Phuket Provincial Police Commander Ong-art Phiwrungnont assured.

"He will return to Patong as superintendent soon."

Maj Gen Ong-art, Phuket's top-ranking policeman, explained that he ordered the transfer only as a means of defusing the rising tension among the tuk-tuk drivers in Patong.

"We do not want any violence in Phuket. Transferring him allowed us to end the problem peacefully," he said.

Gen Ong-art denied accusations that the transfer was an admission that Patong's...

Continued on Page 7



Tuk-tuks blockaded major Patong roads, refusing to budge until their demands were met.

Swedish killer to appeal life sentence

TOMMY Soderlund, convicted of the 2011 stabbing murder of fellow Swede Maxim Schantz and sentenced to life in prison, will appeal the decision, his lawyer confirmed.

Johan Sebastian Ljung was also sentenced to life in prison earlier this year for his role in the murder.

Full story Page 3

Safer Phuket initiative saves life with AED

A PUBLICITY handover of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) to Nai Harn lifeguards turned into a life-saving event.

During the ceremony, guards spotted a teenager struggling in the water, and rushed out to him. Once on shore, they were able to put to use the AED presented to them by marine safety initiative Safer Phuket.

Full story Page 6

Five volunteers quit over cop graft claims

AT LEAST five long-term Phuket expats who have spent years assisting police as volunteers in Patong have resigned over allegations that police officers have extorted money from tourists.

Full story Page 2



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This Week



Property
Emerald Central Condo, affordable luxury in the heart of Phuket. **Page 13**



Business
Thai tourists soon to be exempt from Myanmar visas. **Page 16**



Events
Fire up your engine for the Phuket Invitational Rally 2014. **Page 37**



Events
Phuket Gazette turns 20 and celebrates birthday in style. **Page 40-41**



In Focus
Swedish men on epic bike journey for a Phuket charity. **Page 42-43**



Sport
Phuket's own Triathlete scores high in Challenge Philippines. **Page 50**

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Volunteers resign over police graft allegations

By Gazette Reporters

AT LEAST five long-term Phuket expats who have spent years assisting police as volunteers in Patong have resigned over allegations that police officers have extorted money from tourists.

The Region 8 International Volunteers who work out of Patong Police Station met on Wednesday to discuss their concerns about working with tourists and police.

"The volunteers had a problem where a tourist was ordered to pay 20,000 baht more than the original compensation for damage to a room because he asked for assistance from a volunteer," explained Wal Brown, head co-ordinator of the Royal Thai Police Region 8 volunteers on the island.

"The tourist was also threatened with a greater fine and jail if he were to talk with the volunteer again..."

This is one of a number of issues where the international volunteers have been used against tourists."

Five of the 26 expat police



Wal Brown (center) joins a night patrol on Soi Bangla. Photo: Mark Knowles

volunteers – a group that is not part of the Tourist Police – have already resigned because of the incident and because the future of the expat police volunteer program is in doubt, Mr Brown said.

"The remaining volunteers hope to meet at Kathu Police Station Thursday next week [March 13] with senior officials to discuss their problems," Mr Brown said.

Some of the police volunteers

have been working in Phuket, and some specifically in Patong, for more than eight years.

"They have a lot of experience dealing with situations on the street. These volunteers have been working more closely with the Royal Thai Police over the past four years and have worked hard to break the barrier that used to exist between foreigners and police," Mr Brown noted.

Police save woman from angry mob

RESCUE workers saved a woman from the wrath of an angry mob in Pa Khlok early Monday evening after her car struck a local man and dragged him to his death.

The accident occurred in Baan Bangla, about two kilometers east of the Heroines' Monument, at about 6:30pm, Lt Chatree Chuwichian of the Thalang Police told the Gazette.

Witnesses reported seeing a Toyota Vios being driven at high speed toward the Heroines' Monument when it struck a motorcycle



The mob of villagers surround the wrecked car and bike.

in front of it, driven by 28-year-old Panthep Suebsode, Lt Chatree said.

The car dragged Mr Panthep and his motorcycle across the oncoming lane for 100 meters before his body flew into a ditch. The car,

with the motorbike still attached, crashed into the same ditch.

"Villagers were furious when they saw Treesukon Lohprodpai, 24, get out of her car holding a mobile phone. Local rescue workers sped her to Thalang Hospital to prevent the crowd from attacking her," Lt Chatree said.

Ms Treesukon told police at the scene that she was not talking on the phone when the accident occurred, but admitted that she was reaching under the seat at the time of the collision.

– Thawit Bilabduddar

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Swede to appeal life

By Saran Mitrarat

TOMMY Viktor Soderlund, convicted of the 2011 stabbing murder of fellow Swede Maxim Schantz and sentenced to life in prison, will appeal the decision, his lawyer confirmed on Monday.

The life sentence was handed down earlier that morning.

Mr Soderlund, 28, stood accused of the murder along with Johan Sebastian Ljung, also 28. On January 24, Mr Ljung was also sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Mr Schantz. He too is appealing the decision.

Mr Soderlund has 30 days to file an appeal, said his lawyer, Prachaya Thidpasawong.

During the trial, Mr Soderlund consistently denied any intention to kill Mr Schantz, but accepted a charge of stealing the motorbike that was used to escape the crime scene.

"Mr Soderlund was actually sentenced to the death penalty for killing Maxim Schantz and nine years in prison for stealing the motorbike. But because he was cooperative, and his statements



Mr Soderlund (center) was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Maxim Schantz. Photo: Gazette File

were useful, the penalty decreased to life in prison," Mr Prachaya explained.

"The sentencing documents do not mention compensation payment, so Mr Soderlund doesn't have to pay anything," he added.

Mr Ljung, in contrast, was ordered to pay 12.5 million baht in

compensation to Mr Schantz's family.

Because his prison sentence is longer than 15 years, Mr Soderlund will be transferred to Nakhon Sri Thammarat Prison to serve out the term.

"I will file an appeal at Phuket Appeal Court for Mr Soderlund,

then the case will be moved to Nakhon Sri Thammarat Appeal Court as the suspect will be there when the trial starts," Mr Prachaya said.

Mr Soderlund is expected to remain at the Phuket Provincial Prison for a month before the transfer.



DJ Ezelle in December. Photo: Facebook

Island shocked by second DJ death this year

A FORMER resident DJ at Diamond Beach Club, 42-year-old Josh Christian Ezelle, was killed in a motorbike accident after an encounter with a Phuket tour bus on Srisoonthorn Road on the morning of February 28.

"We believe Mr Ezelle struck his head on the ground and died from head trauma. There was no helmet found at the scene," said Kittipoom Tinthalang of the Thalang Police.

Not far from the scene was a white Somsak Transport tour bus carrying passengers from Cherng Talay to Phuket Town.

"The foreigner was driving his motorbike in front of me, going very fast. When I passed him on the curve, he lost control of the motorbike and fell," said Itsara Lalamkon, the bus driver.

Police seized Mr Itsara's licence and brought him to the station for more questioning, as they believe he side-swept the victim.

"We all at Diamond Beach Club are very saddened and shocked by the news of Josh Christian Ezelle's recent passing," Diamond Beach Club posted on Facebook after the accident. "Our deepest condolences are with his family and friends during this extremely difficult time. During his time here, he was a very happy & kind soul. He will be missed by many. Rest in peace Josh Christian Ezelle."

DJ Ezelle is the second well-known Phuket DJ to die in a motorbike crash within the last two months. On January 12, the island lost Paul Norris, better known as DJ Doris.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

Police bust drug dealers, seize B3.7mn in property

PHUKET police seized more than 3.7 million baht worth of property after a drug dealer identified his suppliers on Tuesday night.

"We first arrested Kiatipoom 'Tak' Rangubwong, 34, who was in possession of 338 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills, 1.8 grams of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) and drug paraphernalia at about 11pm at his house on Thung Thong Road," said Jarun Bangprasert of the Phuket Provincial Police.

Mr Kiatipoom, after being questioned by officers, revealed the names and location of his suppliers, Chaowarit 'Chao' Sukma, 38, and Kwanmuang 'Nuch' Jantapook, 47.

"We then arrested Mr Chaowarit and Ms Kwanmuang at their Rassada home in possession of 1,318 *ya bah* pills," Col Jarun said.

"We seized their house with a Chanote value of 3.1 million baht,



Ms Kwanmuang and Mr Chaowarit.

a Honda Civic valued at about 600,000 baht and a Samsung mobile phone valued at about 10,000 baht, as we believe the properties were paid for with drug money."

All three suspects were charged for possession of a Category 1 drug with intent to sell, said Col Jarun.

Mr Kiatipoom's case was transferred to Thung Thong Police, while Mr Chaowarit and Ms Kwanmuang's cases were transferred to Phuket City Police, he added.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

Final Dokset prosecution witnesses give testimonies

THE prosecutor in the Stein Harvard Dokset case concluded his arguments on February 26 after asking the confessed killer's girlfriend and the case investigator to take the stand.

The long-term Norwegian expat is accused of murdering his ex-girlfriend Rungnapa Suktong, concealing the evidence of the crime and illegal possession of a firearm.

"During her testimony, Rungthiwa Namchana explained that she was living with Mr Dokset in Kata when the remains of Ms Rungnapa were found by police," the case prosecutor told the Gazette.

"She told the judge that she was unaware of Mr Dokset's previous relationship with Ms Rungnapa."

The Chalong police investigator, whom the prosecution declined to name, presented the DNA test results of the human remains found decomposing in an acid-filled trash bin at Mr Dokset's home.

"Based on the test results, the investigator identified the remains as those of Ms Rungnapa," the prosecutor said.

The court is expected to hear the defence's case early in June.

The prosecutor declined to reveal any further information about the hearing.

— Irfan Jamdukor

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Police inspect tour boats for safety.
Photo: Phuket Marine Police

Marine Police stress safety

THE Phuket Marine Office conducted safety inspections of speedboats, dive boats and other vessels geared toward tourism at Chalong Pier on Tuesday.

"It is our responsibility to check on the boats and enforce regulations to ensure the safety of passengers," Inspector Chatchai Sakdee of the Phuket Marine Police said.

Police confirmed the boats were not carrying more than the maximum capacity of passengers, were being serviced regularly and had enough life jackets available for everyone on board.

"Tourists feel safe when they see police monitoring the boats. They can be confident that they will have a fun, safe trip. It will make them think positively about Phuket," Lt Col Chatchai said.

— Chutharat Plerin

Big Five stand strong against election obstruction charges

By Chutharat Plerin

FIVE Phuket anti-government protest leaders responded to a police summons on February 27 and denied charges of obstructing the national election last month and obstructing law enforcement officers.

Suratin Lian-udom, Thepkasattri Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) President Sompop Konkeaw, former Rassada Municipality council member Chartchai Chuachit, Saman Krohlek, and Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) council member Sanya Srimuang presented themselves at Thalang police station at 10am, surrounded by supporters who handed out red roses and offered words of encouragement.

"We will be there with no fear," said Mr Suratin after receiving the summons. "We are pure in our intentions not to harm anyone except the corrupt government body."



The five accused protest leaders band together in front of the station.

Lt Col Yongyuth Krongmalai of the Thalang Police, joined by Thalang Police Superintendent Sirisak Wasasiri, read out the charges to the suspects at the station.

"On February 1 at 4pm and February 2 at 3pm, the protest leaders led about 300 people to

block the entrance of Thalang Police Station. Their intention was to prevent officers from transferring election equipment out of the station. The protesters also did not allow the Phuket Election Commission (PEC) officers to effectively perform their duties."

"The suspects are charged

with obstructing the election and obstructing law enforcement officers. They have denied the charges," said Lt Col Yongyuth.

The complaint that led to the election obstruction charge came not from the PEC but from Jirayus Songyos, the only candidate able to penetrate the anti-government blockade to register as an MP candidate in Phuket.

He authorized his assistant, Withiwat Kulsiriitthikorn, to file a complaint against the accused on his behalf.

All five men were allowed to return home yesterday.

"All five have a permanent address, job and show no signs of planning to flee or interfere with evidence. Therefore, the investigation team has agreed to release them without posting collateral," he added.

The protest leaders must appear at the station again on March 18 at 10am, when the case will be handed from the police to the public prosecutor.



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Provincial Hall still silenced by rally site

PHUKET Provincial Hall did not re-open on Monday as anticipated after People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) leader Suthep Thaugsuban announced the end of the Bangkok Shutdown.

"As I told you on Saturday, the stage in front of Provincial Hall will remain standing until I receive word from Bangkok to dismantle it," said Phuket protest coordinator Amnuay Kumban.

"It is not possible for us to allow the building to open, as the Bangkok government complex in Chaengwattana is still shut down," said Mr Amnuay.

Although Mr Suthep called for all protesters to centralize their efforts at Lumpini Park, the supervisor of the protest site at the Government Complex on Chaeng Wattana Road did not dismantle his stages.

Mr Amnuay confirmed that he and other protesters are continuing to monitor the situation in Bangkok.

"If they close all the stages to allow officers to go back to work, we will do the same."

However, the situation could change any time, Mr Amnuay said.

"We will keep track of the news and orders handed down from Bangkok on a day-by-day basis," he said.

The next target of the PDRC campaign will be to deprive businesses connected with Thaksin Shinawatra of income, Mr Amnuay explained.



Mr Amnuay awaits orders from Bangkok. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

"We will not block their offices, but we will try to convince protesters and supporters to stop using their products and services."

Despite the closure of Provincial Hall, officers confirmed on Monday that they are still performing their duties as normal.

"Provincial Hall is closed due to the protesters' request, but officers are still doing their jobs outside the office," said Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada.

"Many meetings are planned to go ahead as scheduled, but will take place in other government offices."

Provincial Hall shut its doors on January 13 after anti-government protesters rallied outside in support of the Bangkok Shutdown, an attempt to reform the government and topple what Mr Suthep calls the "Thaksin regime".

— Saran Mitrarat



Three tourists who had just arrived were among the injured.

Tourist van crash leaves six injured

TWO tourist vans collided on Sunday night near the main Tesco Lotus in Samkong, injuring six.

A Maikhao Sakoo Co Ltd van driven by Sulaiman Udom had picked up tourists at the airport and was headed west on Phra Phuket Kaew Road to Patong when a Tez Tour Thailand van heading east lost control, crossed the median and slammed into it.

The Tez Tour van was carrying just the driver and a tour guide.

Police were called to the scene at about 11:30pm; by then, uninjured passengers had been picked up and taken to their hotels.

Both drivers, the tour guide and three injured tourists were rushed to hospital.

Two tourists were discharged that day. One remained in hospital over night. However, her condition was not serious, said a Bangkok Hospital Phuket staffer on Monday.

At Vachira Phuket Hospital, Mr Sulaiman underwent treatment and observation in the neurosurgery department and Sittichai Udom, the Tez Tour Thailand driver, was treated in the orthopedic department. The tour guide was released from the hospital Sunday night, said a hospital employee.

— **Thawit Bilabdullar**

Burning rubber in dry grass leads to flaming car

A MAN trying to free his girlfriend's new car from the sand of a Phuket beach on Monday sent it up in flames instead.

"My boyfriend tried for 30 minutes to drive out of the sand, but it wasn't working, so we kept increasing our speed. Then the engine suddenly caught fire," said Nutcharee Madkatap, 37. "I only bought the car 15 days ago."

Police believe the fire was started from the heat of the wheels spinning on the exceptionally dry grass near Nai Yang Beach.

"The fire spread from the grass to the tyre, then to the engine," said Sarit Butnongsang of the Tah Chat Chai Police.

Villagers notified Kusoldharm rescue workers of the fire at about 6:30pm.

"We rushed to the scene and found the car burning near the officers' houses in Sirinart National Park," said Natthawut Plukmaidee, a rescue worker.

"We contacted Phuket International Airport officers for help, as they were the closest to the scene. Their fire truck arrived at 7pm."

It took firefighters 15 minutes to subdue the flames. Tah Chat Chai Police officers arrived at the scene at 7:30pm after the fire was under control.

— **Thawit Bilabdullar**



The car was bought 15 days prior to the fire.

AED handed to lifeguards in nick of time, saves a life

By Phuket Gazette

LARGE swells and changing seas at Nai Harn Beach have led to a recent spate of rescues, said Prathaiyut Chuayuan of the Phuket Lifeguards.

"The swell is big and people need to be careful," he said.

One of the recent rescues in the rough seas at the popular Phuket beach occurred at the same time the marine safety initiative Safer Phuket was handing over an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) to Nai Harn lifeguards. A representative of one of the world's leading defibrillator manufacturers, Zoll, who supplied the AED, was on hand and assisted in the rescue.

The victim, a teenager who was in trouble after a collision with his surfboard, was spotted by lifeguards.

'The Phuket Lifeguard Club was involved in around 1,000 incidents in 2013, but it continues to need support and aid.'

— **Safer Phuket founder Duncan Stewart**

Within seconds, he was ashore and receiving treatment from Zoll's representative, Ryan Cooper, an American firefighter and trained paramedic, a media release stated.

"We are very happy that our efforts had such a quick impact. We will soon be announcing sponsorship deals with Quiksilver and Bangkok Hospital so we believe that soon Phuket Lifeguards will be able to be much more effective," Safer Phuket founder Duncan Stewart said.

"The Phuket Lifeguard Club was involved in around 1,000 incidents in 2013, but it continues to need support and aid. Safer Phuket is a social enterprise that is supporting their transition into a lifesaving force that is the equal of any in the world," the statement said.

The support of local lifeguards is only one of many Safer Phuket



The boy was saved by Nai Harn lifeguards and a new AED. Photo: Supplied

Projects. The other projects focus on beach management; the development of a coastal waters safety summit; training and regulations; water quality; and search and rescue.

The Phuket Gazette and PGTV are founding sponsors and proud media partners of Safer Phuket. For more information, visit saferphuket.org or [facebook.com/saferphuket](https://www.facebook.com/saferphuket).

Milk shtick used by armed robber

POLICE believe that two convenience stores held up at gunpoint within an hour of each other on February 27 were robbed by the same suspect.

Patong Police were notified of the first robbery at about 4:40am.

"The man came in to buy a bottle of milk. While he was waiting to pay, he pulled out a gun and told us to hand over all the money in the cash register," said a staffer at the Phisit Koranee Road Family Mart.

"We only had change at the time, so he took 1,000 baht in coins and left on a black Honda Scoopy-i toward Wat Suwankirirong."

About 30 minutes later, the Phuket City Police were notified of an armed robbery at the Pracha Uthit 7-Eleven store.

"He came inside to buy milk. While he was waiting for change, he took a gun from his pants and pointed it at me, demanding money," said the



The suspect reaches for some milk before going for his gun and robbing the store.

7-Eleven staffer.

This time the man made off with 13,000 baht.

"Based on the descriptions given by both staffers, we believe that the robberies were carried out by the same man. Both of them said the suspect was about 165 centimeters tall with dark skin, wearing a black T-shirt, black shorts and black canvas shoes. The only difference is that the first staffer saw him wearing a white helmet and the second staffer saw a red one," said Somsak Thongklai of the Phuket City Police.

Police have obtained an arrest warrant for the suspect.

"Everything was captured on CCTV footage. Patong and Phuket City Police are working together to examine the images so an arrest can be made," Lt Col Somsak said.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

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Police under pressure

From page 1

...powerful tuk-tuk cartels have the final say in matters regarding public transport in Phuket's key resort town.

"Accepting the tuk-tuk drivers' demands does not mean we are under their control. We have the law in our hands and we have the authority to arrest anyone who breaks the law," he said.

"We are now sorting things out, including drawing up future plans of how to handle tuk-tuk drivers."

The blockades followed an incident late Monday afternoon when four tuk-tuk drivers saw private cars parked in public parking spaces on the Patong beach road, explained Mardlee Sawangpon, patriarch spokesperson for one of the largest tuk-tuk driver cartels in Patong.

"The cars had removable taxi signs placed on top of them, leading the tuk-tuk drivers to believe the men parked in the public parking bays were illegal taxi drivers," he said.

"They were breaking the new rule banning all taxis and tuk-tuk drivers from parking in spots reserved for the public."

The tuk-tuk drivers asked the drivers to vacate the public parking spaces.

"They went to talk with them 'as brothers'. They told the taxi drivers they couldn't park their cars there," Mr Mardlee said.

That's when the taxi drivers said they were aware of that fact - then revealed they were not illegal taxi drivers at all. In fact, they were undercover police.

The officers arrested the four tuk-tuk drivers and took them to Patong Police Station to charge them with threatening behavior, an act that sparked an angry reaction



After shutting down Patong for nine hours, the tuk-tuk drivers returned to work. Photo: Jeremie Schatz

from tuk-tuk drivers throughout Patong.

By about 11pm on Monday, the tuk-tuk drivers massed to disrupt traffic along Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road where it intersects Baan Sai Nam Yen and Soi Bangla, and at the intersection on Thaweewong Road at the Laem Petch football field.

"There were no leaders for the protesters who blocked the roads. The police are picking on us and we cannot take it anymore," Mr Mardlee said.

"The drivers knew it was wrong, but there was nothing else they could do."

They presented four demands: remove Col Chiraphat, get rid of illegal taxi drivers, do not charge drivers for participating in the blockade and stop arrests of tuk-

tuk drivers who prevent taxis from parking in public areas.

At about 2am, Col Chiraphat negotiated with the drivers for 20 minutes without success.

"We've talked with Col Chiraphat many times, but nothing has been fixed. We will continue blocking the road until the police accept our demands," said Sakol Srisompoch, president of the Patong tuk-tuk drivers club.

At 2:30am, the blockade reconfigured and the tuk-tuks moved to block main access routes to Patong, stopping traffic on Phra Barami Road in front of Sea Pearl Villas, on Sirirat Road in front of Simon Cabaret and at the circle which connects Thaweewong Road to the Kalim Road.

Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Sakchai Limcharoen was called to the scene, and by 4:30am the drivers had agreed to open the roads while negotiations were under way.

"I told them to open the road first, and then we would consider their suggestions. The tuk-tuk drivers relocated to Patong Police Station and closed it down instead," Col Sakchai said.

At 6am, Phuket Provincial Police Commander Ong-art arrived at the station, and by 8am, police had agreed to all the tuk-tuk drivers' demands.

Col Sakchai was named acting superintendent of Patong Police and Col Chiraphat was temporarily transferred to Phuket Provincial Police Station.



Ugly signs are one of many marketing issues. Photo: Gazette file

Airport bus continues to stay in red

THE Airport Express Bus lost 800,000 baht in its first seven months of service due to taxi drivers poaching customers and lack of support from the Airports of Thailand (AoT), the owner of the transport business has told the Gazette.

The much-heralded inaugural run of the service, which offers rides between the airport and Patong for 120 baht, was on July 19 last year.

By early October, a lack of customers led the owner, Prakob Panyawai, to report a loss of 400,000 baht for the same reasons he stated on February 26.

"We have two problems: underhanded tactics of other transport operators, and lack of support from the AoT," he said.

Taxi and van drivers, as well as their agents, sometimes board the buses to try to steal passengers, Mr Prakob said.

However, Mr Prakob hasn't thrown in the towel yet.

"We want to be the transportation of choice for passengers who want to save money on their trip to and from the airport," he said.

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Kamala restaurant owner returns money left in wrong motorcycle basket

A restaurant owner saved the day for a woman who left behind her entire month's living allowance in a motorcycle basket last Sunday morning.

The 47-year-old Kamala restaurant owner found 6,620 baht and an identification card outside CP Fresh Mart in Cherng Talay, said Lt Peerasit Noopayan of the Cherng Talay Police.

"Pradit Samohthong came immediately to the station and left the wallet, so it could be returned to its owner," said Lt Peerasit.

Police located the wallet's owner, Mukda Klongklaew, at her home at about 10:45am. "I went to the store at about 9:30am to

buy some food. I put my wallet in another basket to organize my things and left without thinking about picking up my wallet," she said.

"I came back to look for it once I realized it was gone, but couldn't find it. I didn't know what to do. I started crying – it was all the money I had left for the month."

Ms Mukda was delighted when police told her that her wallet was at the station.

Mr Pradit had already left when she got there, but police gave her his number and the name of his restaurant.

"I am going to see him there and thank him in person," said Ms Mukda.

– *Thawit Bilbdullar*



Mr Pradit (left) and Ms Mukda (right) getting her wallet and her money back.

Thirsty sea gypsies get a little help from friends



The Marine Police contacted the DDPM, which sent two water trucks. Photo: Phuket Marine Police

KOH Sireh sea gypsies received 6,000 liters of water on Tuesday after they told Phuket Marine Police they had a water shortage.

"It is not our job to do this, but we have a good relationship with the sea gypsies," said Marine Police Inspector Chatchai Sakdee.

"We contacted the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Phuket Office, and they took over two truckfuls of water."

Pisak Chonlayut, manager of the Phuket Water Authority (PWA), said that there is not a water shortage, but that Koh Sireh has low water pressure because it is hard for water to travel over the Baan Kuku hill in Rassada, leaving areas like Koh Sireh with low water pressure.

Once the PWA receives a requested 5mn baht budget to do so, they will build a booster pump to improve water pressure, he said.

– *Saran Mitrarat*

Poor spelling lands man with fake bills in prison

By Kraitsada Mueanhawong

PHUKET Tourist Police last Sunday night arrested a man who tried to exchange counterfeit US\$10,000 banknotes that read "Nan Francisco" and totaled more than 157 million baht.

Wachirawich Janjaroenchaisin, 40, was arrested during a sting operation after police received a tip-off that someone was trying to exchange US\$10,000 bank notes on the island.

"Officers pretended to be exchange brokers and made an appointment with the suspect at Black Canyon in Central Festival Phuket," said Deputy National Commander Supaset Chokchai of the Tourist Police.

After the suspect presented 482 US\$10,000 banknotes, the police revealed themselves and examined the notes. They quickly noticed that the bills named the Northern California city of "San Francisco" as "Nan Francisco".

"We contacted the United States embassy for additional help. The embassy confirmed that the notes were counterfeit and that the US\$10,000 bill had not been produced for public use since 1936. It's only use today is for bank-to-bank transactions," explained Col Supaset.

Mr Wachirawich said he was exchanging the money for some-



Real US\$10,000 bills do exist, but they are used for bank-to-bank transactions and are not in general circulation.

one else for a fee of three baht per dollar.

"This is the first time we have found US\$10,000 bills in Thai-

land," said Col Supaset.

The suspect was charged with possession and use of counterfeit US dollar banknotes. Police are

now searching for more suspects.

The case was transferred to Wichit Police Station, said Col Supaset.

Yellow python drops in for breakfast

A PHUKET restaurant owner heard a two-meter python noisily working its way over the roof of his establishment as he was preparing to open on February 26.

"The owner explained that he was cleaning when he heard a strange noise coming from the roof.

When he took a peek to find the source of the noise he spotted a big yellow python," Rawai Municipality officer Chuyawat

Kaewphul told the *Gazette*.

Rawai Municipality officers were contacted at about 8am. They scrambled to organize a team and rushed to the restaurant.

With a little finagling, the officers were able to lift the snake from the roof with a large metal bar and then place it into a bag.

"We released the snake in a forested area in Chalong that is far from any communities," he said.

– *Irfarn Jamdukor*



The two-meter snake was nabbed and bagged by Rawai rescue workers. Photo: Rawai Municipality

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Police warn of passport scam

By Saran Mitratat

PATONG Police warned vehicle operators in Phuket to carefully scrutinize renters' passports following a report from Samui that a rented bike had been stolen in a passport scam.

Krabi restaurant owner Jurgen Weber reported that two foreigners used a third party's passport to rent a motorbike from his sister-in-law's shop in Samui. They never returned it.

"I always tell rental operators that when they rent out a car or motorbike, the person renting must be the person identified by the passport," said Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Akanit Danpitaksat.

"I tell them not to rent out the bike if the passport picture doesn't match the person who wants to rent it. If they're in doubt, they should ask for another form of ID."

The contract is very important too, he said. "In case of theft, it is important evidence to present to the police."

He offered advice for renters as well. "Read the contract care-



The theft of a rented motorbike on Koh Samui led Phuket Police to remind operators to ensure passports match renters. Photo: Jeremie Schatz

fully. Make sure you understand the conditions and all the fine print. If something happens later and you are liable, and your signature is on the contract, you can't say

you didn't know."

In the Samui case, which occurred in early February, two people allegedly claimed that they were renting the motorbike for a

friend and left their friend's passport as collateral. After the bike wasn't returned, the operator learned from Krabi Immigration that the person named in the pass-

port had left Thailand in 2012.

Col Akanit noted that rental operators could photocopy renters' passports, but were not permitted to hold them.

Russians unhurt as resort burns down



The fire (left) turned 35 bamboo bungalows like that top right to ash (bottom right) within two hours and cost the owners 10mn baht.

FLAMES engulfed a resort in Krabi last Tuesday night, dislodging 60 Russian tourists as it burned 35 bamboo bungalows to the ground. Damages were estimated at 10 million baht.

Koh Sriboya villagers informed Subdistrict Chief (Kamnan) Samran Raden of the fire at about 8pm.

He rushed to the scene, where he found villagers and resort staff filling buckets with sea water to throw on the flames.

"It took two hours to put the fire out," he said.

"Koh Sriboya is a small island and there are no vehicles or fire trucks there," explained Kawee Khunsongaksorn, Chief Administrative Officer of the Nua Klong District Office.

A group of Russian tourists who had come from Phuket were staying in 37 of the resort's 40 bungalows.

"Fortunately, everyone was safe. No injuries were reported and the agent took the tourists back to Phuket the same night," said Kamnan Samran.

An inspection of the resort, which occupied two rai of the island, showed that only five bungalows remained intact.

"The bungalows' roofs were made of thatch and very dry, so they caught fire easily," said Mr Kawee.

It's believed that a short circuit started the fire. However, the cause of the blaze has yet to be officially verified.

— **Krisada Mueanhawong**

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER





EC lets government borrow money for rice payments. Photo: The Nation

Rice farmers see payday on horizon

FARMERS who hold pledging receipts issued under the government's rice-pledging scheme last November are expected to be paid next week.

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday approved the government's plan to use 20 billion baht from the central fund to pay farmers who joined the pledging scheme, EC member Somchai Srisutthiyakorn announced.

The EC will require the government to refund the central budget of the entire sum through rice sales revenue by May 31, reported *The Nation*.

The EC allowed the government to use the money in the form of a loan between the Foreign Trade Department and the Finance Ministry, Mr Somchai explained.

He said the Budget Bureau director also affirmed to the EC that if the caretaker government returned 20 billion baht to the fund by the end of May, the central fund would not be affected.

The government has been unloading its stockpiles of rice to raise funds to gradually pay its debt of 130 billion baht to farmers who pledged their rice under the pledging scheme.

PM, Army calm after red-shirt secession remarks

A MEETING of the Defence Council on Tuesday comprising government figures and top military brass went smoothly, after initial fears of a confrontation between the Army and pro-government red shirts regarding possible legal action over secession remarks.

Some of those in Chiang Mai and Phayao advocating partition from the rest of the country were charged with sedition under legal action launched by Army Chief Prayuth Chan-ocha, *The Nation* reported.

Since the announcement, leadership from

the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), Rak Chiang Mai 51 and Sor Por Por Lanna have said there was no serious talk about secession.

They said the issue had been exploited unfairly by the anti-government movement.

General Prayuth defended himself against criticism of his alleged favoritism of the anti-government movement.

He faced claims of Army inaction toward the activities and protests of the People's Democratic Reform Commission (PDRC), while legal

action was taken against pro-government red shirts after their alleged calls for secession.

Gen Prayuth said the caretaker government and anti-protest command had already dealt with the PDRC when the Army initiated legal action dealing with the secession call – which he said represented “clear and present danger”.

After the meeting, Defence Ministry spokesman Paphathip Sawangsaeng quoted caretaker PM Yingluck Shinawatra as vowing not to allow secession or any violation of the Constitution.

Bangkok Shutdown closes shop, but battle continues

IN WHAT he called a strategy readjustment to bring down the “Thaksin Regime” and return traffic space for Bangkokians, People's Democratic for Reform Committee (PDRC) leader Suthep Thaugsuban on February 28 declared the end of the Bangkok Shutdown.

The following Monday saw rally sites Pathumwan, Rajprasong, Silom and Asoke dissolved, and the protesters efforts combined at Lumpini Park, where there are buildings and meeting rooms, reported *The Nation*.

The only exception is the PDRC demonstration site at the Government Complex on Chang Wattana road, which is still preventing officers from returning to work.

The pressure on Shinawatra businesses will be increased, Mr Suthep said.

“We will stop closing Bangkok and give every intersection back to Bangkokians,” Mr Suthep said.

Mr Suthep explained that he hoped that after all roads are returned, Bangkokians will re-think the importance of what the PDRC



Protest leader Suthep Thaugsuban has moved all but one Bangkok rally site to Lumpini Park. Photo: Reuters

is doing for the country, and join the cause.

“We will escalate our shutdown of government ministries and Shinawatra businesses. I do personally hope the game will be over by March,” Mr Suthep said.

The decision comes after a series of deadly attacks on rally sites.

As a safety measure, many protesters at the Lumpini Park rally site were issued a “PDRC ID card”, which allows them to walk around comfortably and safely in that area.

The pro-government red shirts also issued ID cards during their protests in 2010.

Despite the safety measures

implemented by the PDRC and their move to Lumpini Park, the emergency decree cannot be revoked at this point, said caretaker Deputy Prime Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul.

The Bangkok Shutdown started on January 13 in an attempt to oust the caretaker government.

Illegal animal trade tough to beat

MORE than 10,000 wild animals have been rounded up from illegal trade during the past year, the national wildlife protection agency said on Monday.

Sunda pangolins, squirrels, elephants, tigers and gibbons became the most frequently seized mammals in Thailand's illegal wildlife trade last year, said Tiradej Palasuwan of the Wildlife Conservation Office.

The department confiscated about 10,700 live animals, 1,348 carcasses and 3,293 kilograms of animal parts from traffickers, Mr Tiradej said during a seminar titled “Legal Revisions to Stop Wildlife Crime” organized by the Freeland Foundation and its allies.

The department also arrested 642 people allegedly involved in illegal wildlife trade in 2013.

“It was very difficult to arrest wildlife traffickers,” Mr Tiradej said.

They used many vehicles to transfer animals and parts, especially Sunda pangolins and tigers



A frozen tiger that was confiscated in 2012 gets weighed. Photo: The Nation

AROUND THE
nation

from Malaysia, across the borders of Thailand, Laos and Vietnam.

Mr Tiradej accepted that it was very hard to catch influential people behind wildlife trafficking because

of loopholes in the law, and many traffickers refused to provide any details about the people who hired them to smuggle wildlife.

The wildlife watch agency also found that Bangkok was a hub of wildlife trafficking, as many storehouses to keep the animals were set up there. Most of those arrested in the past year were based in Bangkok, followed by Nonthaburi and Samut Prakan, which were used for illegal exporting of the wild animals.

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Jakarta to phase haze

AROUND THE region

By Wahyudi Soeriaatmadja

INDONESIA's parliament is set to agree to ratify a decade-old regional haze treaty, as pollutant levels in parts of Riau remained hazardous for a second month and thick haze continued to spread across much of Sumatra.

A parliamentary committee comprising MPs from eight parties in office met Environment Minister Balthasar Kambuaya and senior officials on Monday. Six of the parties – which together hold 363 of the 560 MPs in the House – were in favor of ratifying the Asean Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution.

The pact commits member countries to preventing open burning, monitoring prevention efforts, sharing information, and helping



The World Trade Center in Kuala Lumpur stands shrouded in haze in the midday sun on Monday. Photo: Reuters

one another in combatting haze.

A draft bill on ratification will be tabled before a full session of parliament, likely after the general election on April 9.

Jakarta's earlier efforts to get

parliament to ratify the pact, which was signed in 2002, were thwarted by objections that it infringed on Indonesia's sovereignty.

The move to sign the treaty comes as pollutant levels reach

record highs Singapore and in Malaysia, which is also suffering from drought.

Indonesia remains the only Asean country yet to ratify the treaty. – *The Straits Times*

In brief...

Philippines ratifies extradition treaties with the UK, Spain

THE Philippines Senate on Tuesday ratified separate extradition treaties between the Philippines and the governments of the United Kingdom, India and Spain.

"Criminals will have fewer places to run and hide once these treaties become effective," said Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago, head of the committee on foreign affairs.

All three treaties are effective retroactively, Senator Santiago added. – *Philippine Inquirer*

Singapore crowned most expensive city in the world

THE city-state of Singapore is now the most expensive city in the world, according to the latest study by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

The ranking is mainly due to the strong Singapore dollar and the high cost of cars, utilities and clothes, the firm said in its report on Tuesday. – *The Star*



MSF provide critical aid to Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Photo: Reuters

Myanmar allows MSF to operate, but not in Rakhine

MYANMAR Presidential Spokesperson Ye Htut has confirmed that the international humanitarian group Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) may still be able to operate in other areas of the country, but not in Rakhine State.

The news followed an MSF statement last Friday night that the government had accused the group of violating their memorandum of understanding (MoU) and requested they cease their operations throughout the country.

Known internationally as Doctors Without Borders, MSF said in a statement that they were "extremely concerned about the fate of tens of thousands of patients currently under our care across the country."

"Today for the first time in MSF's history of operations in the country, HIV/AIDS clinics in Rakhine, Shan and Kachin states, as well as Yangon division, were closed and patients were unable to receive the treatment they needed," the statement said.

The move by the government

to allow MSF to continue providing aid in Myanmar follows senior officials accusing "certain staff" of "biased activities" in Rakhine State, where they claim MSF breached certain rules.

The main objection relates to an MSF statement earlier confirming that its staff had treated 22 Muslims who were wounded in an attack in Du Chee Yar Tan village on January 13. The statement prompted an angry reaction from the government, which accused international media and aid groups of misreporting the events and meddling in the internal affairs of the country.

"If it is unable to correct its mistakes, the existence of MSF in the Rakhine State would have more disadvantages than benefits so the state government has to give the order..."

"Based on the incidents in the Rakhine State, the Ministry of Health is now discussing with it to prevent similar events from happening in the new MoU," Ye Htut said. – *Eleven Media*



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In brief...

Protesters forsake
Carnival in order to
carry on with quest

GOVERNMENT leaders have urged Venezuelans trying to oust President Nicolas Maduro to skip the protests and make their traditional trips to the beach during the Carnival holiday.

"We have nothing to celebrate at the beach," said Carlos Torres, 34, an engineer. "Going on vacation would give credence to the government's version that there's nothing going on."

Polish official deals
with aftermath of
public Hitler rant

POLAND'S Prime Minister Donald Tusk said last Thursday he is considering the future of Jacek Protasiewicz, vice-president of the European parliament, who is alleged to have drunkenly shouted "Heil Hitler!" at a German airport official.

Blade Runner trial
has dramatic start

THE first witness at Oscar Pistorius's murder trial told the court on Monday she heard "blood-curdling screams" from a woman followed by shots, providing a dramatic opening to a case that could see one of global sport's most admired role models jailed for life.

The Paralympic and Olympic star pleaded not guilty to murdering his girlfriend, model Reeva Steenkamp, on Valentine's Day last year.

Ireland's adopted
put heat on state

ADOPTED people in Ireland have no automatic right to their birth records, and no legal right to tracing services. Pressure to change this has risen since "Philomena", an Oscar-nominated movie, was released last year.

Ireland's system of compelling unwed mothers to give up their babies to secret adoptions ended in the 1980s, but thousands of mothers and children are still being kept apart.

Putin war declaration ushers in bear market

By Natalia Zinets
and Alissa de Carbonnel

UKRAINE mobilized for war last Sunday and Washington threatened to isolate Russia economically after President Vladimir Putin declared he had the right to invade his neighbor in Moscow's biggest confrontation with the West since the Cold War.

"This is not a threat: this is actually the declaration of war to my country," Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk said. Mr Yatseniuk heads a pro-Western government that took power when the Moscow-backed Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich, was ousted late last month.

Russian forces have already bloodlessly seized Crimea, an isolated Black Sea peninsula where Moscow has a naval base.

Financial markets reacted to the escalating tensions when trading opened in Asia on Monday, with oil and wheat futures jumping and stock indexes falling.

Finance ministers from the G7 said they were ready to offer "strong financial backing" to Ukraine, provided the new government in Kiev agreed to pursue economic reforms sought by the International Monetary Fund.

Analysts said United States economic sanctions would likely have



Ukraine supporters rally in Times Square in New York City to protest the Putin invasion in Crimea. Photo: Reuters

AROUND THE world

little impact on Russia unless they were paired with measures by major European nations, which have deeper trade ties with Moscow.

But European Union officials said

the EU was hesitant to match the US in threatening sanctions against Russia when its foreign ministers met to discuss Ukraine on Monday because of European reliance on Russia for oil and gas.

Wheat futures spiked more than four per cent on Monday on fears of disruption to shipments from one of the world's key exporting regions. Oil rose as much as two per cent, while US stocks futures fell one per cent.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said Moscow still had a "right set of choices" to defuse the crisis. Otherwise, G8 countries and other nations were prepared "to go to the hilt to isolate Russia".

"They are prepared to isolate Russia economically. The ruble is already going down. Russia has major economic challenges," he said. Mr Kerry mentioned visa bans, asset freezes and trade isolation as possible steps. — Reuters

'Terrorist' mass stabbing shocks China

A GROUP of knife-wielding "terrorists" from the restive Xinjiang region launched a premeditated attack at the Kunming Railway Station in China's southwest last Saturday night, officials say. Twenty-nine people died and more than 130 people were wounded.

Armed riot police stood guard as people streamed into the railway station on Sunday only hours after the attack, one of the worst of its kind in China in recent memory.

Police shot four of the attackers dead and captured one, state news agency Xinhua reported. About five others were on the run.

Xinhua quoted the Kunming city government as saying evidence at the crime scene

showed the attack was carried out by Xinjiang separatist forces.

The attack comes at a sensitive time as China gears up for the annual meeting of its largely rubber-stamp parliament, which is normally accompanied by a tightening of security across the country.

Word of the violence spread quickly, with graphic pictures that showed bodies covered in blood that were later deleted by government censors.

Shop and restaurant workers said people had fled into their stores seeking refuge.

"I was terrified. They were killing people. How could I not be scared?" said supermarket worker Ren Guangqin. — Reuters



Police stand in the baggage area of the train station after the attacks. Photo: Reuters

Bin Laden son-in-law faces court on terrorism charges

SULEIMAN Abu Ghaith, a son-in-law of Osama bin Laden, went on trial in New York on Monday, becoming one of the highest-profile defendants to face terrorism charges in the United States.

Prosecutors have accused Mr Abu Ghaith, 48, of recording videos in Afghanistan on behalf of al Qaeda immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001 which threatened further violence against Americans.

Defence lawyers argue that the

government cannot prove that Mr Abu Ghaith had any involvement in or knowledge of plots to kill US citizens.

Mr Abu Ghaith, who could receive life in prison if convicted, sat quietly during the morning, listening to an interpreter translate the proceedings into Arabic.

He faces charges of conspiring to kill Americans, providing material support and resources to terrorists and conspiring to provide such support. — Reuters

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An emerald on the isle

PROPERTY Gazette

LOCATED in the heart of the rapidly developing Phuket Central Business district, Emerald Central Condo has matched quality design with a prime location to create an excellent opportunity for investors and owner-occupiers alike.

The developers behind Emerald Central, Phuket Future Development Co Ltd, say the project was created with the three guiding principals of "quality, design, and functionality".

Managing Director of Emerald Central Mr Sawit Kateroj says the project is aimed at those seeking a luxury condo at an affordable price.

"There is strong competition in the condominium industry of Phuket, with many entry-level condos having a start price from one million baht, we want to focus on the higher-income segment, those who want more privacy and luxury," he said.

With this in mind, Emerald Central will be a complete community with "trees, art, entertainment, shopping, fitness, restaurants and more".

Mr Kateroj says that to achieve

this community feel, they have reduced the density of buildings to be constructed on the project's three rai of land.

"On about three rai (4,800sqm) of our land, we have only 180 units. It is possible that 300 units could be built, but we have reduced the number to create more public space as well as provide more privacy for the individual units," he said.

Unit prices begin at 2.58 million baht (for 31sqm units), but the much sought after luxury penthouse pool villas are the premium offering and start at 12 million baht – there are only three still available so interested parties will have to move quick.

"Our special 145 to 189sqm pool villas will be on the top of the condominium (7th floor) and will be accessed by a personal lift from the car park," said Mr Kateroj.

Conveniently located on the island, near Central Festival, Big C and Phuket International Hospital, Emerald Central Condo is poised to grow in value as the area continues to develop at a rapid pace.

"The location is in the center of Phuket, which is expected to have a convention hall and another shopping mall [added] making the area similar to Sukhumvit-Thonglor in Bangkok. Emerald Central is located on Vichitsongkarm Road and connects with Soi Tida, which is a



The luxury penthouse pool villas are the premium offering, prices start from 12 million baht. Photos: Supplied

shortcut to Bypass Road," he explained.

Continuing to set the standard for condominium and property development, Emerald Central Condo will be architecturally unique with a modern feel and flowing organic lines.

For more information about Emerald Central, visit the sales gallery opposite Makro between 9am and 6pm, drop by the sales booth on the second floor of Central Festival in the financial zone, or call 082-333-3416.



The pool villas will be accessed via a personal lift.



Emerald Central Condo will be architecturally unique with a modern feel and flowing organic lines.

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- Golf course view
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3 Allamanda 2 Bedroom Duplex THB 12 M



- 2 beds 2 baths Condominium
- Lagoon view
- Thai Freehold
- Fully furnished



4 Laguna Village Townhomes IV THB 19.5 M



- 3 beds 2.5 baths Townhome
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Lost in the belly of the beast

Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

IT'S never easy working off the heels of your feet. Take Usain Bolt for example, toe to heel in lightning millisecond perfection. Forward momentum and fly like the wind. These days, unfortunately, Thailand has missed the sprint session entirely and ended up dazed and confused like a skid-row drunk in a dumpster.

Despite my sheet fact that I in no way physically resemble a Thai or will be mistaken for an Asian, my recent life has taken a decided turn to the absurd. The mantle of Thailand's political crisis has

been cast upon my sagging shoulders and suddenly wherever and whenever I travel outside of the country, the expectation is that I can somehow explain, in graphic detail, to outsiders in pinpoint terms exactly what ails the beast of the country's political scene.

My inner demons cry out in agony, and no, my business card does not make reference to Wikipedia, BBC, CNN, or the New York Times. The last few months of the Bangkok shut-down have thrust me into the imaginary drink mixer, with the switch turned to high. Welcome to the belly of the beast, which is where darkness lives. The experience can best be summed up as akin to walking into the wrong bar in Glasgow on a Saturday night. There might be blood.

Perhaps I'm overreacting here,

as a long time resident of Phuket the dimming memories of SARS, tsunami, global financial crisis and more shirt colors than I can even keep track of have left me somewhat comfortably numb, in a black t-shirt, shorts and flip flops.

Can I, just one single solitary soul, living far from the epicenter of the chaos that we know as Bangkok, explain what is happening? Today my biggest pending decision is what sandwich to have for lunch, so the fate of democracy in a teeming nation might just be a stretch.

There remains the easy exit, my passport is blue, and like it or not, I am a foreigner who has no real skin in the game. Except of course a business that is based here, a Thai wife, house and two children, and

a dog – let's not forget the three of those. Angst or no angst, Thai life has come into a period of sustained volatility as in no other time during the past three decades or more.

Life has been catapulted into a two-room existence where the room with the questions is SRO (standing room only), while the answer room finds only a weeping Dick Cheney, wondering what did happen to the weapons of mass destruction. I take a brief moment to hand Dick a Kleenex and realize just how fitting his first name is to his debacle.

Call me a fool but I'm pretty sure that the future of Thailand is not going to be decided within the confines of this small island on the Andaman Sea. Will the stress of the moment continue to haunt me, leading to rage and moments of self questioning? Yes, of course these

‘Call me a fool but I’m pretty sure that the future of Thailand is not going to be decided within the confines of this small island on the Andaman Sea.’



Possession of a foreign passport gives you the power to delve in and out of the political chaos that has characterized Thailand of late. Photo: Swimparallel

will come and they will go, just as the groups of Russian and Chinese tourists will come and go.

More than ten years have passed since I bought the ticket and took the Phuket ride. Jimmy Buffet once summed up in a song, “some of it’s magic, some it’s tragic but I’ve had a good life along the way”. Life in a Forest Gump sort of way.

The beast of politics has been a great bane to any generation since the dawn of time. Put two people in a room and the likelihood of a disagreement mounts with each tick of the clock. As I write this on Monday, there is no telling what Friday may bring. My mission today, as it is most days, is just staying one step ahead of the charging beast and clear of the danger that surrounds the simple act of living simply.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9Hotelworks. He can be contacted through: c9hotelworks.com



It's hard to navigate the confusing corridors of Thai politics as fast as Usain Bolt navigates the running track. Photo: Steven Zwerink

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Bkk office vacancies lowest in 20 years

GROWTH in demand for office space in Bangkok during 2013, combined with limited new supply, resulted in vacancy rates falling below 10% for the first time in 20 years, according to CBRE Thailand, an international real estate advisor.

"The total office stock in

Bangkok was 8.1 million square meters at the end of 2013 and the occupancy rate was 90.4%. Occupancy improved in all locations and all grades. Rents rose between 5% to 9% year-on-year, depending on quality and location of the building," said Mr James Pitchon, executive director – head of CBRE

research and consulting.

The total amount of occupied office space rose by 220,000 square meters in 2013 which was the best performance since 2005. There is only 450,000 square meters of new office space under construction due to be completed between now and 2016. Some of



The total amount of occupied office space in Bangkok rose by 220,000 square meters in 2013. Photo: Diliff

this new space will be owner-occupied and not available for rent.

High occupancy and limited new supply means that office rents in Bangkok are likely to rise further and that tenants will have limited choice. The shortage of space, especially for larger requirements, has meant that tenants have been pre-letting in buildings under construction.

Only two new grade-A buildings will be completed in 2014. AIA Capital Center, a LEED Gold building on Ratchadapisek Road will be completed in Q3 2014. Bhiraaj Tower at EmQuartier located opposite to Emporium on Sukhumvit at the Phrom Phong BTS station will be completed in Q4 2014. Both of these two buildings already have tenants who have committed to lease space.

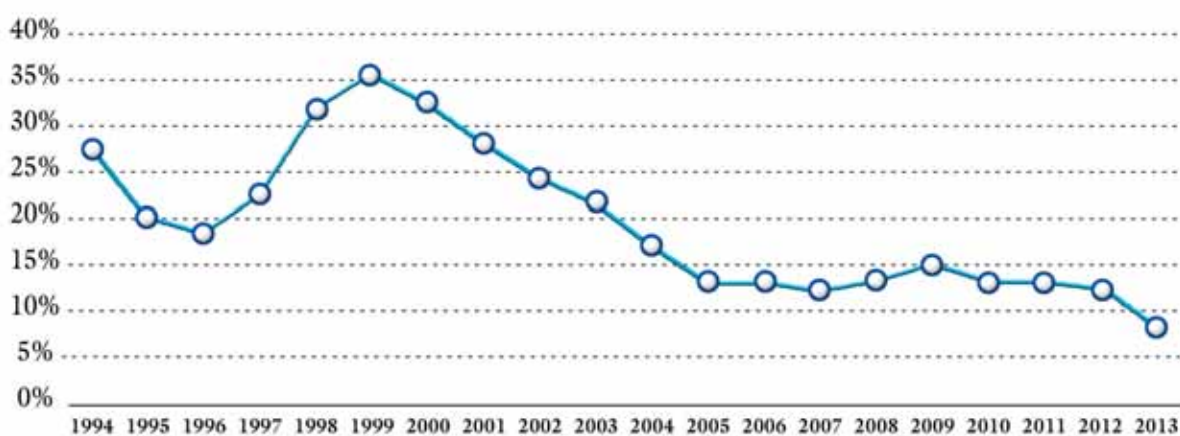
Bangkok is still competitive and it remains one of the cheapest of-

fice locations in the region; only Manila, Wellington and Canberra are cheaper. Core central Hong Kong office rents are six-times more expensive than the best offices in Bangkok. Park Ventures, on the corner of Wireless and Ploenchit Roads, retained its position as the most expensive office building in Bangkok with rents of 1,000 baht per square metre.

The outlook for demand in 2014 is more uncertain because of the political situation. "To date, we have seen no companies closing and no delays in ongoing leasing transactions, but we have seen a drop in enquiries," said Mr. Nithipat Tongpun, executive director – head of office services at CBRE Thailand.

"Even if 2014 office demand is weak, rents are unlikely to fall because of the high occupancy levels and limited new supply". –

Bangkok Office Vacancy Rates in Past 20 Years



Source | CBRE Research

Retail property industry must take into account changing preferences

SINCE consumers nowadays list convenience as their top priority, Thailand's retail property industry still has a long way, a shopping mall consultant said. Despite the mushrooming of community malls and other retail outlets over the past few years, consumers still choose convenience over prices owing to traffic congestion and other such problems, Veena Arunyakasem, managing director and founder of One Click, a shopping mall and property development consulting company, said last week.

This presents a vast opportunity for developers of commercial property such as condominiums and office buildings to incorporate retail shops and service facilities into their projects to serve their occupants and tenants.

"They should ride on this new trend that will help them reap more revenue, especially with projects that are located far away from existing shops," she said.

Many office building owners still have not made full use of their available space on the ground level to accommodate retail shops, food courts and service facilities.

Leading hospitals such as Bangkok Hospital are stepping into the commercial property business by leasing out space to Starbucks, Au Bon Pain and other shops.

"Interestingly, it also has a hotel offering packages bundled with healthcare treatments."

Even universities are now running their own malls. Bangkok

University has already opened one while Thammasat is planning one.

"They have 40,000 to 50,000 students who have purchasing power and are ready to spend all they have," she said.

Flea markets are also booming and the trend will continue as long as new housing estates and communities continue popping up. A flea market operator in Bangkok said he earned 1.6 million baht a month from utilizing his 3.5 rai of land.

On the demand side, many retailers are still expanding, including newcomers like Lawson and existing operators like 7-Eleven. Commercial rents in major cities such as Phuket, Chiang Mai and Samui are also continuing to rise.

Internal rates of return for commercial property projects are normally higher than 10% and can go even up to 50% in some cases. Zeer Rangsit, for instance, reports 50% EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization) on sales of 400 million to 500mn baht per year.

Developing commercial property projects is more complicated and requires longer commitment than residential projects because many more issues have to be dealt with including construction permits, public hearings, mall operations and management, as well as pre and post-marketing.

"But after reaching the break even point, it can be a cash cow. Millionaires can be made from a vacant space," she said. – The Nation

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Thai travellers to Myanmar may soon be exempt from needing tourist visas

SOME time this year, Thai tourists may not require visas to visit Myanmar, as the exemption process has started, according to the neighboring country's tourism minister. Hotels and Tourism Minister Htay Aung told *The Nation* in an exclusive interview that his ministry was currently processing the review of visa exemptions for Thai nationals.

Most visitors to Myanmar are from Thailand, followed by China, Japan and South Korea. Myanmar is also popular among visitors from the United States, France, Germany and Italy. Htay Aung said the visa exemption might happen this year as Myanmar is taking the Asean chairmanship and Asean economic integration is coming at the end of 2015. Myanmar has already abolished visa requirements for nationals from Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines.

"The next will be the Kingdom of Thailand. This is what I am thinking, but I cannot say exactly when it will happen," the minister said on the sidelines of Myanmar Hospitality and Tourism Conference 2014.

Last year, Myanmar received an all-time high number of 2.04 million tourist arrivals, which was a 93% rise from the previous year. Tourism revenue reached US\$926 million (about 30 billion baht), compared

with \$534 million in 2012. The country is expecting to welcome three million tourists this year, mostly from neighboring countries such as Thailand and China.

Htay Aung admitted that Myanmar was yet to tackle some bottlenecks that might hinder the growth of the tourism industry, which is a major source of foreign income. Complaints are growing about airport congestion, the lack of English-speaking guides, and hotel rooms and prices.

"In terms of the bottleneck at the [Yangon] airport, you see we divert some of the airlines to go to other international airports [in] Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw," he said.

To cope with the huge demand for hotels that has led to skyrocketing room rates, the ministry is encouraging investment in new hotels. The Myanmar Tourism Master Plan 2013-2020 was launched as a guideline. The ministry is also reviewing its tourism laws together with the World Tourism Organization, to update it and make them more effective.

At the end of 2013, there were 923 hotels with 34,834 rooms in Myanmar. Foreign companies have been involved in the development of 39 projects with 8,029 rooms, and 30 projects with 5,207 rooms have been completed. The other six projects



Last year, Myanmar received an all-time high number of 2.04 million tourist arrivals, which was a 93% rise from the previous year. Photo: Mark Knowles

with 1,979 rooms are under construction and three new projects have just received approval.

Htay Aung is most concerned with the development of human resources for the industry. An undergraduate program in tourism was initiated in 2012 at the National Management College in Yangon and Mandalay. The first lot of students will graduate in 2016.

"Now we have about 400 students taking the courses. We have also been implementing scholarship programs for tourism students to pursue further learning with assistance of development partner countries and educational institutions," he said.

Aside from university-level education,

there is some vocational training. Short courses have been introduced. Htay Aung said Myanmar had to make a tremendous effort to harness tourism for poverty alleviation, preservation of cultural assets, and conservation of the natural environment.

To ensure a multi-stakeholder commitment to address the challenges in the tourism industry, the ministry has developed a "Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism" to grow community-based tourism systematically.

"There will be a lot of work down the road for Myanmar in tourism development and the country cannot do it alone. It still needs experience and expertise from international partners," he concluded.

— *The Nation*

Etihad Airways plan daily Abu Dhabi to Phuket flight



Etihad Airways pearl business class seating. Photo: Konstantin Von Wedelstaedt



Etihad Airways coral economy seating. Photo: Konstantin Von Wedelstaedt



Etihad will use an Airways Airbus A330-200's to ply the route between Abu-Dhabi and Phuket. Photo: Aero Icarus

ETIHAD Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, will expand its network in Southeast Asia with the launch of a non-stop daily service between Abu Dhabi and Phuket.

The new route will launch on October 26, 2014, using a two-class configuration Airbus A330-200 aircraft, with 22 Pearl Business seats and 240 Coral Economy seats. The flight will arrive at Phuket International Airport daily at 6pm and depart at 8:25pm.

The flights have been scheduled to provide optimal connectivity between Phuket and key markets across Europe and countries in the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC).

Phuket will become the second

destination in Thailand to be served by Etihad Airways, and the seventh in Southeast Asia, alongside Bangkok, Singapore, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City and Jakarta.

James Hogan, president and chief executive officer of Etihad Airways, said, "We have a very successful track record in Thailand. The capital city, Bangkok, has ranked as our most popular route for the past four years, with 742,759 passengers flown in 2013 alone. Expanding our reach in the country with a daily service to Phuket is therefore natural progression."

"The island is a strong addition to Etihad Airways' leisure portfolio and we will offer attractive arrival and departure times, with seamless

connections to 25 European and GCC cities. This includes daily connections from London, Manchester, Berlin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Munich and Paris, in addition to key GCC markets such as Bahrain, Doha, Muscat, Kuwait and Riyadh."

Phuket is the ninth route to be announced by Etihad Airways in 2014. Services commenced to Medina on February 1, and will be followed by Jaipur (April 1), Los Angeles (June 1), Zurich (June 1), Yerevan (July 2), Rome (July 15), Perth (July 15), Phuket (October 26) and Dallas (December 3).

Flights to Phuket can be booked starting today at etihad.com; through Etihad Airways Contact Centers; or via travel agents.

— *Phuket Gazette*



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Inflation hits 7-month high

By Petchanet Pratuangkrai

THE Consumer Price Index (CPI) is likely to grow continuously in the following months because of the higher cost of raw materials and fresh foods amid rising concern over drought. The Commerce Ministry reported this week that February inflation had edged up to the highest figure in seven months at 1.96% year on year, mainly from rising food prices.

"The drought problem has created more concern over a rise in the prices of some foods, mainly fresh fruits and vegetables, rice and meat. Some goods prices may also increase as the weakening baht drives up the cost of some raw materials," said Srirat Rastapana, permanent secretary of the ministry.

Inflation in February was up slightly, by 0.23%, from the Janu-

ary figure. Combined inflation in the first two months was up 1.95% year on year.

Last month, among the 450 goods and service in the ministry's inflation basket, the prices of 199 items increased, while 75 items decreased in price and 176 were unchanged. Prices in the food and beverage sector were up by 4.26% on average compared with January's figure, while those outside that sector increased only slightly, by 0.77%, amid a slight drop in fuel prices.

Despite the rising trend of the CPI, the ministry is confident that annualized inflation will be within this year's target of 2-2.8%, in accordance with slowing economic growth, which is projected at 3-5%.

Srirat said prices were expected to grow continuously in the remaining months, but should not be too high given the slowing

economy, while the government had maintained its price-control policies.

The cap on the retail price of diesel fuel is due to expire next month, but she expects that the government will continue to subsidize the price. Otherwise, a higher pump price for diesel could increase inflation by 0.5-1 percentage points this year.

The Commerce Ministry also notes that an increase in ticket prices of Bangkok's MRT subway system, scheduled for July, will mark up inflation by 0.002 percentage points this year.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile food and fuel prices, firmed up slightly to 1.22% year-on-year and 0.27% month-on-month. Core inflation in the first two months was 1.13% year-on-year, well within the Bank of Thailand's target range of 0.5-3%. – *The Nation*



Photo: Rick

Fresh food prices are increasing amid rising concern over drought.

Amcham to host MICE tourism conference

THE island's growing MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) market is a key segment which can help Phuket attract quality visitors. On Friday March 14 the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) has organized a tourism event at Angsana Laguna Phuket focusing on how to sustainably grow MICE business along with the British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT) and the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce (AustCham).

A series of presentations from the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) and the private sector will lead on into an open session during which the audience will be able to exchange ideas with the speakers and other tourism industry members in attendance.

Speakers at the event will include:

Supawan Teerarat, Director – vice president strategic and business development, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB); Welf Ebeling, vice president, APAC – Global Business Travel Association (GBTA); and Mark Simmons, vice president sales and marketing, Asia-Pacific – Outrigger Hotels and Resorts.

Shine PR's Natasha Eldred will serve as moderator. The event is open to the public and presents a tremendous opportunity for those associated with hotels, tourism and the service industry to learn more about Phuket's MICE sector and how this important segment can contribute to the island's focus in generating quality visitors versus quantity. – *Phuket Gazette*

Registration for the event begins at 4pm, presentations start at 4:30pm and at 6pm there will be networking drinks. Entry costs 100 baht.



Welf Ebeling.



Mark Simmons.



Supawan Teerarat.

La Gritta welcomes new chef

ONE of the island's most respected fine-dining establishments, Amari's La Gritta Italian restaurant in Patong has a new Chef de Cuisine at the helm. Hailing from Italy, Patrizia Battolu brings a wealth of experience in the kitchen to her new role, having worked at many top hotels and restaurants in Europe and Asia for over 20 years, including Forays in Italy.

"My main challenge and goal in this new role is pushing La Gritta to be the best Italian restaurant in Phuket," said Chef Patrizia.

In her new role she will be tasked with creating new dishes, overseeing food production, and interacting with guests, and she welcomes the challenge of working in a new country.

"I worked in a restaurant with Forays in Italy and

thought I would like to move to Asia to find new inspiration and challenges.

"I like to interact with other people and work in a team so I enjoy working in the service industry. I used to work at the Watermark Phuket before starting my new position at Amari Phuket," she said.

With its extensive and discerning wine list, beachside dining terrace overlooking Patong Bay and tasteful decor, La Gritta is known as one of the most romantic places to eat in Phuket. The traditional Italian restaurant also has a contemporary flair, the menu is highlighted by a selection of gourmet pizzas, handmade pastas and desserts. Chef Patrizia says she wants to continue to build on the restaurant's excellent reputation and also create innovative dishes of the day to ensure variety and provide a memorable dining experience for all her guests. – *Phuket Gazette*



Patrizia Battolu has worked extensively in Europe and Asia. Photo: Supplied

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Online woes of airport bus

THE operators of the airport bus service linking Phuket International Airport with Patong need to improve their marketing approach as quickly as possible if they hope to turn around the service's slow start before the high season draws to a close.

It came as somewhat of a surprise that the service, launched with considerable fanfare in July last year, has not turned out to be as popular as expected, especially given the widespread dissatisfaction with the woeful public transport options on the island.

Unfortunately, and despite perhaps legitimate claims by the operator that Airports of Thailand (AoT) and other forces with vested interests at the airport are largely to blame, the sad fact remains that nine months after starting, the service still has no discernible English-language presence on the internet to inform would-be riders that it even exists.

After complaints last year that the information on the website was only in Thai, the owner promised to add English during a revamping of the site due to be completed in October. A recent web search yielded discouraging results.

The domain name that had been clearly shown on the side of buses [phuketairportbusexpress.com] yielded a "No Result" message. Subsequent research in Thai for contact information turned up two telephone numbers, for a landline and a mobile. Several attempts to reach both over the course of a weekday morning proved fruitless: both numbers worked, but nobody picked up the phone – making information about the service unavailable to any and all callers, regardless of what language they speak.

The airport express bus operators could take a page out of the playbook of the bus that links the airport with Phuket Town. That service also had problems gaining traction after their launch in 2005, but now seems to have emerged as a fairly reliable and legitimate transport option.

Not surprisingly, that service has an informative website and staff who are typically ready to provide additional information over the phone.

The express bus operators need to put themselves in the shoes of their target market. For many, the first impulse will be to fire up a smart phone and try to get basic information about how to reach their final destination quickly, safely and at a reasonable cost. When such information is nowhere to be found, they will need to settle for what appears to be the next best alternative, given the information at hand.

The airport express bus operators need to address marketing as a top priority, both for their own future success and also to help turn the tide in Phuket's battle to free itself from being known as a "tourist trap" destination.



It's a pity no one can help Mr Prakop

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Airport Express Bus still in the red, February 27

Three cheers to Khun Prakop for not giving up and facing the entire transport mafia, starting with the AoT right down to the Patong boys.

It's a crying shame that not even the Phuket Governor is in a position to clean up these scams. No wonder so many tourists who arrive at Phuket airport now prefer to head to destinations on the mainland – just look at the way Khao Lak is growing.

Kamala Resident
Gazette Forum

...but he must be able to deliver the goods

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Airport Express Bus still in the red, February 27

I tried hard to use this service, but they always leave earlier than the scheduled time from Patong.

The third time I tried to use them, I rang the day before. "Be there at 2:30pm," they said. The next day at 12:30 they rang me and asked, "Could I be there at 1:20?" I rushed there, arriving at 1:15. No bus. I rang, and was told they were already at Tesco Lotus, airport bound, having left at 1pm.

Blame others? Ha! The taxi then cost me 750 baht.

Ga
Gazette Forum

Compensate the bars

It is the law that alcohol cannot be sold on the night prior to any elections and during the day and the night of the election day. Phuket will see four weekend alcohol bans during March and April.

When is the law going to be amended to allow for the fact that tourists and foreigners have been sold a holiday under false

Letters to the Editor

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

pretences? Elections here have nothing to do with tourists or foreigners, all bars are closed without consideration of the massive cost to the entertainment and tourism industry, which should be compensated by the powers that be.

With the cost probably around 150 million baht per election, that could see the law change fast.

The Philippines does not close the bars and ban tourists and foreigners from buying a drink. They just tell the bars not to serve eligible voters.

Thailand has to decide whether it wants the tourists. If not, just close the doors, turn off the lights and have elections every weekend for fun.

Graham Doven
Thalang

Target the minivans

Re: Gazette online, Two Phuket tourist vans collide, injuring six, March 3

The minibus drivers are a menace. I wish the police would man major intersections more often and ticket them. I see their selfish, dangerous driving all day, every day.

Rick Menlove
Facebook

AED at every beach

Re: Gazette online, Safer Phuket initiative saves a life at Nai Harn Beach, February 28

It really is about time lifeguards all over Phuket are given AEDs. They are amazingly simple devices to use and could save so many lives.

David Sexton
Facebook

Are the cops on top?

Re: Gazette online, Phuket tuk-tuk blockade ousts Patong Police superintendent, March 4

Who is in charge in Phuket? Is it the police or is it the tuk-tuk drivers?

All I can say is that when groups like these tuk-tuk drivers or the green/black plate taxi drivers start demanding that the police do this and that, well this is when law and order disintegrates and mob rule takes over.

Peter Logan
South Africa

We need enforcers, not citizen deputies

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Opinion: Deputizing the masses, March 2

I think people might be too scared of the "protection" to post pictures of violators.

Many divers have taken photos of blatant violations to law enforcement but no action was taken.

There are hours of video of dumping, reef destruction and illegal fishing already. Law enforcement refuses to act.

Ryan Cooper
Facebook

Honesty of Kamala residents exceptional

Re: Gazette online, Phuket restaurant owner saves the month for woman in Cherng Talay, March 4

They are a lot more honest people in Kamala than where I come from.

That's the third time I've heard of people losing something there, and the person who finds it taking it straight to the police. The valuables would have been long gone in my neck of the woods.

Ricky Black
Facebook

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Creating unity in a time of discord

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

AS WE face ongoing political instability, protests and even violence, it is reassuring to hear of generous charitable acts, of people who feel moved to help others without asking for anything in return.

This is particularly so when the people involved come from different countries. It reminds us that regardless of our differences, we are all human beings and it helps us feel united in a fundamental way, in our hearts.

I'd like to thank and warmly praise Derek Clarkson from Australia and Delyse Gibson from New Zealand for helping two Phuket residents [reported in the *Gazette* last week].

Mr Clarkson helped put Wilaiwan Damnuai, a cigarette vendor who was born with a deformed leg and no hands, on the path to getting a new prosthetic leg.

He said he was inspired by her independence – despite her handicaps, for years he saw her working every day to support herself on Bangla Road in Patong.

When he realized that she needed a new leg, he stepped forward to help and contacted the *Gazette* for assistance in communicating with Ms Wilaiwan.

In Ms Gibson's case, it was a disaster that motivated her to come to the aid of mini-crepe seller Prayoon Inpuang, someone she had never met.

Even though she wasn't in Phuket, when she read that his sole source of income, his crepe cart,



Maitri Inthusut arrived on the island to take up the position of Governor of Phuket in October 2012. With a master's degree in political science from Thammasat University, he joined the National Security Council, rising to the position of NSC Secretary-General, before taking up the position of Chief Secretary for Secretariat

of the Cabinet. He has also served as Governor for the provinces of Trang and Phayao.

Here, in his third 'Letter from the Governor', he thanks two foreigners who helped Phuket residents in need.

had been destroyed in a fire, she was moved to contact the *Phuket Gazette* to find a way to help him.

A lot of people feel moved when they read stories such as Ms Wilaiwan's and Mr Prayoon's, but not many people take action. Mr Clarkson and Ms Gibson are excellent examples for all of us. If we reach out, if we take the time to make the effort, we can make a difference.

I'd also like to praise the *Gazette* for their role in making these good things happen. What they did reminds us that the media is one of the most important elements to building a better society. Sometimes they can even make dreams come true.

Without diminishing the kindness of the donors, I'd also like to remind everyone that the government has subsidies and services to provide for those who need them.

I was told that Ms Wilaiwan had already received one prosthetic leg and wasn't aware that she was eligible for another one.

There are foundations and organizations to help all Thai people. I'd like to encourage anyone who might be in a similar position to seek out help with your local government office. If you fail to get the help you need there, come to us and we will connect you with the appropriate group.

There are also subsidies available for disabled people in Phuket. Those people who are eligible will receive a monthly allowance after they register with the government. It is not a lot of money, but we hope that it will help you when you need it.

If all other avenues fail, come to see me in person to tell me what trouble you are in. It is my job to make sure the government is taking care of you.



Sometimes natural beauty is better than mod cons. Photo: Jon Sullivan

Recalling the dream

Island View

By Mark Knowles

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

WITH the seemingly endless parade of new condo developments springing up like mushrooms all over the island, it's clear that quite soon, the majority of Phuket's residents will be living in high density housing.

When I first moved here, I too found it convenient to move into a modest, reasonably priced apartment block. I considered it a stop-gap measure. The rather dark, sparsely furnished place was just off a main road and certainly didn't fit my imagined ideal of tropical island living – there were no palm trees swaying in the breeze in the foreground of a magnificent ocean view.

I had the vague notion that once I had settled in I could hunt for my dream island home. But, as is often the case, time got away from me and I had all but forgotten that I didn't fly halfway around the world to an island paradise to live in a shoebox apartment.

Then, one day as I was flicking through this very publication, through sheer serendipity, I came across a small advertisement in the classified section offering a basic house at a ridiculously cheap rent. I couldn't resist the urge to check it out. I met the landlord at the house and was bowled over that such a place could be so cheap – it had a huge garden, filled with mango, banana and papaya trees and a large balcony overlooking

the water. True, my sea view was blocked by mangrove trees, but this didn't faze me, I was still only 100 meters from the waters of Phang Nga Bay. Smitten, I asked the landlord about the two things I thought essential to a civilized lifestyle in the tropics: does it have aircon and WiFi? Nope.

I was shattered... as nice as it was, how could I possibly live without these two necessities of modern life? Sure the rent was cheap, but no aircon and no Wifi? I used the two mod cons every day in my current apartment and couldn't possibly imagine life without them. As I slunk back home dejected, I mulled over the decision facing me: could I forsake the trappings of modern urban living and move into my island dream house? After several days, I had made up my mind... I could, and I would.

And now, as I watch my mangoes and bananas slowly turn ever deeper shades of golden yellow, listen to the local rooster crowing and the gentle sound of the ocean lapping the shore in the distance, I know I made the right decision.

Issues & Answers...

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

Burning mad in Kata

I am a chanote property owner living in Kata. There is excessive burning of rubbish in a bungalow estate next to Kata Fire Station that is causing me distress. Hot ashes and pollution are coming onto my property.

I read somewhere that rubbish can be burned only at certain times on certain days. However, they are burning it every day at any time. Can I file a complaint, and if so, with whom?

Quin
Kata

Nivit Aroonra, Karon Municipality Chief Administrative Officer (Palad), replies:

Please come to file your complaint at our office. We are available Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. We are located at 1 Kata Road in Karon.

Burning trash is not allowed in

Karon. It is potentially harmful and may also be bothersome to nearby residents.

Once you file the complaint, I will send officers to check out the situation and talk with the owner of the bungalow estate. We will let him know that trash burning is not allowed. We have a trash pick-up service that he can use, for a fee.

If the trash burning continues after we inform them not to do so, they are liable to a fine of 2,000 baht.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Is there a helmet law double standard?

I have observed on more than one occasion that only non-Thais are summoned to pull over while riding motorbikes with no helmet.

Today I watched two policemen for an hour pull over every non-Thai, and ignore every Thai person who passed not wearing a helmet. Do two different laws apply here?

Dave
Patong

Sarayuth Meeboon, Thalang Police Deputy Superintendent, replies:

Anyone who breaks the law by not wearing a helmet is liable to be stopped. The same law applies to both Thais and foreigners.

If you see any officer enforcing the law with a double standard, please note his name or make a video record and let us know. This

kind of behavior is not allowed and if repeated could get an officer expelled from the police force.

There are a couple of reasons why it might seem like the police are overlooking some but stopping others.

First, some people who are not wearing helmets wait until all the officers are busy giving out tickets before they pass the checkpoint. Unfortunately, we can't do anything about this because we have limited manpower.

Second, although Land Traffic Act BE 2522,

Section 122 requires both drivers and passengers on motorcycles to wear helmets, some people are exempted from the law. This includes monks, novice monks, those under Ministerial Regulation and those who practice a religion that requires wearing a turban.

We strongly urge everyone who rides a motorbike to wear a helmet. If you are caught not wearing one, you are subject to a fine of up to 500 baht.

But most importantly, helmets keep you safe.



Photo:
Harkanwal
Singh

YOUR Phuket

AMARI CSR FUND-RAISING FAIR

Amari Phuket held a fund-raising CSR fair for the ‘Baht for a Better Life’ project. The highlight of the event was the auction of some of the management team’s favorite belongings. All revenue generated from the event will be used to fund the purchase of 252 new stationary sets for the students of Baan Huay Muang Border School in Chumporn province and 110 new uniforms for students at Baan Bang Doong School in Phang Nga province.



THANYAPURA PHUKET



Thanyapura Phuket staff recently visited students of Yaowawit School in Phang Nga.



A meet and greet session with sports media from Bangkok was led by World Travel Joy Company. From left: Chris McCormack, Thanyapura executive chairman; Nathaphat Asavathanachart, Thanyapura marketing communication manager; ML Kalyakorn Kasemsri, managing director of World Travel Joy; Nantida Thongjua, senior brand manager Singha Drinking Water; Parisuth Khotchakhot, brand manager Purra Natural Mineral Water; Debbie Dionysius, Thanyapura marketing director; and Michael Gilliam, CEO of Thanyapura Phuket.

DARASAMUT SCHOOL

Darasamut School teachers and students held a blessing ceremony for the school’s new sports hall. Parents and carers donated money to the school to assist with the cost of building the new multi-purpose sports building.



→ → → →

The Phuket Gazette's weekly

ISLAND TRADER

PULL
ME
OUT!

Phuket's **LARGEST CLASSIFIEDS** Marketplace – in Print and Online*

March 8 - 14, 2014 | PhuketGazette.Net

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

PROPERTY of the week



See page 23

JOB of the week



Joob Joob
designer
cupcakes

See page 26

EDUCATION of the week



Oak Meadow International School

See page 29

BOAT of the week



See page 30

All Property, Boat and Business Ads are **PAID!**

– your assurance that whatever's advertised here is seriously for sale.
Gazette Classifieds – they work! Because they're **REAL**.

Properties For Sale

MAI KHAO LAND

5.1 rai, very quiet, 1km to sea, for now building or investment, full Chanote. Price: 2.75 million baht per rai. Tel: 083-635 2414 (English), 082-812 3486 (Thai)

KATA BEACH CENTER 135SQM

Kata view apartment, luxury and brand-new furnished, 2 spacious bedrooms with ensuite, beautiful great living on the 6th floor. Facilities: elevator, sauna, pool, gym, car park. Price: 8.5 million baht (190,000 euro). Contact Charles. Tel: 084-441 3871 (English), 090-163 2140 (Thai)

APARTMENT FOR SALE IN BOAT LAGOON (1)

2-bedroom marina apartment for sale in Boat Lagoon, north of Phuket Town, in a residential maritime township surrounded by commercial plaza and sporting facilities. Fully furnished, private carport, large swimming pool available for residents. Living area: 147sqm, freehold. Price: 6.5 million baht. Tel: 080-789 4500 (English & French). Email: Chris tophe.soula@hotmail.fr

APARTMENT FOR SALE IN BOAT LAGOON (2)

2-bedroom, marina apartment for sale in Boat Lagoon, north of Phuket Town, in a residential maritime township surrounded by commercial plaza and sporting facilities. Fully furnished, private carport, large swimming pool available for residents. Living area: 198sqm. Free hold. Price: 11 million baht. Tel: 080-789 4500 (English & French). Email: Chris tophe.soula@hotmail.fr

BUILDING BANGLA - PATONG

25 million baht, XL commercial / residential building in Soi Bangla Square, Patong. 4 floors + 6m frontage. Over 360sqm in total. For more information, please call 087-881 7600 (English & Thai). Email: cocodiorster@gmail.com

NICE 2-STORY HOUSE FOR SALE

Karon Beach, close to the Hilton, customize furniture, 2 bedrooms/bathrooms, parking inside and outside. Price: 4.2 million baht (93,000 euro). Contact Charles. Tel: 084-441 3871 (English), 090-163 2140 (Thai)

SELL CHEAP!

4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool villa, Sai Yuan. Fully furnished. Land 320/260sq m. 7.95 million baht or near offer. More pictures please contact. Tel: 081-538 4588. Email: manager@purimasproperty.com

HOUSE FOR SALE NAI HARN

3 bedrooms, fully furnished, 5 minutes to the Beach. Reduced to 3.9 million baht for quick sale. Tel: 088-168 5032

LAND IN SOI SALIGA RAWAI

850sqm, dual access land in Soi Saliga, Rawai. Has full Chanote title and house registration. Sea view possible from first floor. Tel: 081-833 7836 (English). Email: silomdon@gmail.com

CHEAP CONDO PATONG

Patong Condotel, 7th floor, freehold, 28sqm. Fully furnished, new bathroom, new aircon. Five minutes to the beach. A bargain at 999,000 baht. Tel: 084-844 7693 (English & Thai). Email: heijojo@hotmail.com

LUXURY VILLA

Just 3 minutes from BIS, 900sqm land, 350sqm building, 3 bedrooms + maid room, 4 bathrooms, studio, 14x4m swimming pool, fish ponds. 15 million baht. Contact Alex. Tel: 089-651 3250

AO PO SEAVIEW LAND

1.5 rai. Constructed access road. Chanote. 300m from Grand Marina. 10 million baht. Tel: 082-277 5971 (English & Thai). Email: roscom clean@yahoo.com.au

TOWNHOUSE PHUKET TOWN

In Supalai City Hill Estate, very quiet, safe, convenient. 3 years old, 2 storeys, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, WiFi, decorated, shady garden, well-maintained by original owner. For sale: 2.8 million baht ono. Or long-term rent: 10,000 baht per month. For more information, please call 089-874 0061. Email: ste phenfein@gmail.com

UNIQUE IN PHUKET KATA BEACH CENTER

Dual 440sqm Penthouse on 6th and 7th floors, 5 big bedrooms ensuite, big terrace, with outside jacuzzi, bar and outdoor kitchen. Private access with elevator. Facilities: elevator, sauna, pool, gym. Price: 27 million baht. Contact Charles. Tel: 084-441 3871

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

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

LUXURY POOL VILLA

Within unique development - 8,700,000 baht. Please call 081-077 1765. Email: phuketformations@gmail.com

FOR SALE SEA VIEW

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

KAMALA APARTMENT

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

PATONG FREEHOLD

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 100sqm. For more information, please call 081-612 4187. Email: nicolaas5@yahoo.com

APARTMENT FOR SALE

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

3-BEDROOM VILLA 3.95 MILLION BAHAT

Newly renovated 3-bed villa. CCTV, western kitchen, electric gate and more. 3.95 million baht. Tel: 080-124 1245. Email: kay@phuketandamanrealestate.com

LAND FOR SALE

Khok Kloy. 8.5 rai land, Chanote title. 2km from Sarasin Bridge. 1km from Beach. Road access and power supply. Recently measured by government. Only 850,000 baht per rai. Please contact Paew: 089-972 5378 (English&Thai), Tin: 089-288 4537 (English&Thai)

LAND CHANOTE PHUKET

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

Private Home For Sale 21 Million Baht

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

Live in Cherng Talay?

Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at Chaba Supermarket



Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Na: (076-325586) or (081-3977307)**

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

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PAID!

— your assurance that whatever's advertised here is seriously for sale.

Gazette Classads - they work!
....because they're real.

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

Properties For Rent

STUNNING 4-BED VILLA CAPE YAMU

Close to BIS and PIA Schools. Big pool. Amazing sea views. Private estate. 75,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-279 6283 Email: kdesmond59@yahoo.co.uk

KATACH BEACH APARTMENT FOR RENT

Nice, jacuzzi, WiFi, kitchen, aircon/fan, cable TV. For more information, please call 086-595 8512. Email: nalu mana2000@yahoo.com

KATHU GOLF & VALLEY VIEW VILLA

For rent, 330sqm, 3 bed/3 bath penthouse, and 1 bed/1 bath, 135sqm apartment, big modern kitchen, living room and balconies, big pool, 4km to BIS, fantastic views of Loch Palm Golf Course and valley, quiet on top of a private hill, fully furnished, maid, WiFi, secure. Long term: 75,000 baht and 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-269 8492

RENTAL HOUSE KOH KAEW

Land and house, 5 minutes to BIS, 3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, fully furnished. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-693 5424

KATA HILL SEAVIEW HOUSE

2-storey, fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, aircons, 3BB internet. Price: 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

CONDO FOR RENT IN TOWN

Furnished condo with aircon, TV, fridge. Gym & pool. 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-978 1558 (English & Thai). Email: keng.na.ra nong@hotmail.com

POOL VILLA LUXURY

Live in tropical garden, near Laguna, has all, for 8 months: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-594 4067

POOL VILLA IN NAI HARN

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

HOUSE IN LIPON FOR RENT

1 storey, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircons, 1 car park, 15,000 baht per month. Please call 087-508 3516. Email: rujikarn2498@gmail.com

PATONG CONDO 58SQM

5 minutes walk to the Beach, fully furnished, parking, 14,000 baht per month. Tel: 088-181 1965. Email: e.breh @web.de

FOR RENT RAWAI/NAI HARN

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

B.L. APARTMENT

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

THAI VILLA AND POOL

In Soi Naya, Nai Harn. Long term: 37,500 baht per month. Short term negotiable. For more information, please call 081-270 5126. Email: mer vyn.crocker@yahoo.com

SEAVIEW APARTMENT FOR RENT

2 bedrooms, fully furnished, WiFi, and all mod cons. Located in a resort complex. 50,000 baht per month. For more information, please call 082-521 7745 (English). Email: mrcraigwhite@hotmail.co.uk

NICE HOUSE FOR RENT - THALANG

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, semi-furnished. For long-term rent: 13,000 baht per month. For more information, please call 097-237 9781 (English). Email: greatdeal94@gmail.com

3-BEDROOM HOUSE FOR RENT

Located between Tesco Lotus and Bangkok Phuket Hospital, opposite Club House Pool. Tel: 081-892 4311. For further details, please see our website at <http://sites.google.com/site/phuketvillasamkong>

LUXURY VILLAS FOR RENT KAMALA

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

CHEAP RENT HOUSE

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

POOL VILLAS FOR RENT IN RAWAI

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

KATA HOUSE RENT/SALE

1 to 4 bedrooms. 20,000 baht per month. 400 baht per night, can walk to the beach. Contact Nit. Tel: 081-303 2202

NAI HARN 2-BED BEACH CONDOS

Long / short-term rent. Large pool & gardens, spacious, serviced apartments, beach 3 minutes walk. Email: resort gm@gmail.com

PHUKET VILLA 5 FOR RENT

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

LOVELY TOWNHOUSE

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

CONDO AT RATCHAPORN PLACE

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

3-BED HOUSE NEAR AIRPORT

Fully furnished house, 3 bedrooms. Long-time rental. One year: 21,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-847 4377 (English), 084-842 6147

NEW CONDO FOR RENT

Short or long-term rent at Kathu, fully furnished, swimming pool, fitness, quiet and secure. Tel: 081-607 8567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com For further information, please see our website at www.phuket-condo.net

Live in Rawai?
Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at
The Network property office



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

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Mail: AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net

PROJECT SECRETARY (THAI) WANTED

At least 3 years experience in the construction industry. Able to speak, write and read English and Thai. Full understanding of Microsoft Office (excel, outlook and word). Salary based on experience, excellent benefits. Send your CV to info@avcphuket.com

THAI LAWYER

Thai national with BA in Laws, experience working in law firm, good English, excellent salary and benefits. Send English resume to lawphuket@yahoo.com

RESTAURANT STAFF

New restaurant "Thai Basil". Bartender: 15,000 baht. Waiters/waitresses: 14,000 baht plus tips. Manager: 25,000 baht. Soi Bangla, 58/7-8, contact between 4pm and 7pm. Email: office@thai.basil.phuket.com

ASSIST. SALES MANAGER ASIA

Pfleiderer Asia Pacific representatives are looking for an Assistant Sales Manager Asia. Age: 25-30 years. Excellent English language skills required. Mandarin would be a plus. Approx 50% travel in Asia. Office location: Phuket. Please contact: jobs@apr-pfleiderer.com For further details, please see our website at www.pfleiderer.com

Joob Joob designer cupcakes

Learn how to make and decorate cupcakes with Thailand's leading cupcake makers - Joob Joob!

We have 3 FULL TIME vacancies for girls keen to learn with us and have fun.

No previous experience is necessary, all that is required is a big smile and positive attitude. Females preferred. English and / or another language (e.g. Russian, Chinese) is a big advantage, but not essential.

We pay a good salary with performance bonus, and you will have the opportunity to work in both our shops, Patong at The Kids Club in The Promenade, and also Central Festival on Level 1, opposite Swensens, behind Mr. Donut. We also give English lessons each week by a qualified foreigner.

Please call Khun: Ant on 081-601 2523, Khun Kea: 087-934 7089 or Anthony: 080 609-1128 anytime.



Please call Khun: Ant on 081-601 2523, Khun Kea: 087-934 7089 or Anthony: 080 609-1128 anytime.

PR & MARKETING

The View Condominium.
- Female, 20-35 years.
- To promote the property with prospective customers at our booth
- Coordinate with recruiters
- Collaborate with team
- Language: English and Russian or English and Chinese. Tel: 086-439 9996. Email: sales@theviewphuket.com

YOGA TEACHER WANTED

Qualified yoga instructor to teach at PhuketFit Resort. Please apply with resume and qualifications. Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

RECEPTIONIST WANTED

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

British International School, Phuket

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

• Teacher AssistantQualifications

- Thai Nationality, Bachelor's Degree in related field
- Teaching qualifications and experience of child care / teaching preferable
- Good command of spoken and written English

• Graphic & Publications OfficerQualifications

- Bachelor degree in Computer Science or related field.
- 1-2 years' experience in graphic design/desktop publishing.
- Excellent knowledge of computer graphics applications.
- Experience in using Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, HTML, CSS, Macromedia Flash and Macromedia Dreamweaver, Wordpress.
- Good communication and presentation skills (in Thai and English).
- Able to work in a team and independently without requiring close supervision.

• PE and SPORTS Administrative OfficerQualifications

- 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

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@sea.staffing.com

KARON CLIFF

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

3 WAITRESSES FOR RESTAURANT

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

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@thai.basilphuket.com

RAW FOOD CHEF WANTED

Thai national: raw food chef, good salary + benefits! Tel: 081-270 9772. Email: liam@phuketfit.com

MARKETING ASSISTANT

Proficient in word, excel, uni graduate preferred. Photo shop Vany online experience valued highly. Tel: 081-205 3932.

Authorized Agents for Classified Advertising:**CHALONG**

- ▶ **Julapan Stationery** (Chaofa East Rd) Tel: 076-282254
- ▶ **KL Mart** (Patak Rd, Chalong Circle) Tel: 076-280400
- ▶ **Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe** (Fisherman's Way Business Center, Chaofa East Rd) Tel: 076-282403

PATONG

- ▶ **Taurus Travel** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-344521-2
- ▶ **Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-290468
- ▶ **Deli Supermarket** (Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd) Tel: 076-342275

PHUKET CITY

- ▶ **Earth Language Training Centre School** (Phang Nga Rd) Tel: 076-232398
- ▶ **Sin & Lee** (Thalang Rd) Tel: 076-258369
- ▶ **iTree complete printing service** (Tesco Lotus Phuket Town) bank zone Tel: 076-255425

CHERNG TALAY

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

RAWAI

- ▶ **The Network property office** (Saiyuan Rd) Tel: 076-613173

KARON

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

Live in Town?

Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at iTree Complete Printing Service



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

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

The Gazette Online is always on top in Google!

SOCIAL MEDIA TO HELP DOGS!

Soi Dog Foundation seeks a Social Media Officer to lead our Facebook page and create and publish content. Excellent creative writing, strong video and photo skills, and empathy for animals required. Tel: 087-263 0827, 081-788 4222 (English & Thai). Email: gregg@soi dog.org. Learn more at www.SoiDog.org & www.facebook.com/SoiDog PageInEnglish

HOUSEKEEPER NEEDED

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

LOOKING FOR MANAGER AT WAKE PARK

Aged 25 years or older, permanently resident of Phuket, Russian speaking with excellent knowledge of English and preferably Thai. Official papers (no benefits, work permit), salary starts from 30,000 baht. Tel: 089-870 2796. Please send CV to opaopa543@mail.ru

ASSISTANT MANAGER, KHAO SOK

Our Jungle House is the top resort in Khao Sok, Surat Thani. Qualifications: Thai national only, minimum 2 years experience in resort, must truly love nature, excellent English and computer skills. Tel: 081-417 0546. Email: ourjunglehouse1985@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://khaosokaccommodation.com>

THAI OFFICE WORKER FOR GYM

Muay Thai Gym. Wanting Thai office worker with good English. Tel: 080-613 3312 (English & Thai). Email: phuket top team@email.com. Website: phuket top team.com

COOK / CHEF

Cook wanted in a small Ban Moon noodle bar, to cook basic Thai and European food. Room available as part of wages. Tel: 083-690 7014 (English). Please call or email mick nppr@hotmail.com

OPC

DVC looking for OPC. Good package for right candidate, including WP + SS. Tel: 076-342794, 088-450 1833 (English). Contact: hr@davidvacationclub.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

REAL ESTATE OFFICE STAFF

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

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, Thepkrasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-273555, ext 102 Fax: 076-615240

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

OFFICE MANAGER/ ACCOUNTANT

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

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

DIVE AND SURF SHOP

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

VILLA MANAGER (LIVE IN)

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

RESORT STAFF WANTED

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



Development Management Group Co., Ltd. is looking for the best candidates to join our successful team on a high profile hotel development project in Phuket. Thai national with relevant construction experience desired.

We have the following positions open:

Contracts Manager The successful candidate will have a proven track record of successful contracts work in a construction environment.

Quantity Surveyor The quantity surveyor will be responsible for managing all costs relating to building and civil engineering projects, from the initial calculations to the final figures.

Tel: 076-617763.
Email: hr@dmg-thailand.com

YACHT STEWARDESS

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

BRANCH MANAGER

ISS Facility Services require Branch Managers for 2 new locations in Had Yai and Koh Samui. Preferred applicants are English-speaking Thai nationals, degree educated with previous experience in property or hotel management. Excellent salary and benefits on offer. Tel: 076-610315, 081-958 6879. Email: scott.d@th.issworld.com

JUNIOR ACCOUNTANT NEEDED

To assist with the accounting tasks, including accounts receivable. Good spoken / written English and pleasant personality are a must. Tel: 076-227281, 081-893 5492 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-227073. For further information on the job, please see our website at www.aquamaster.net/job.html

WEB PROGRAMMER

Bachelor's degree in related field. Knowledge of PHP, Javascript, jQuery, MySQL required. 2 years experience, English speaking. Send CV to hr@luxuryvillasandhomes.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.

AD SALES REPRESENTATIVE

We are currently seeking trusted, fluent in English, professional candidates for the position of advertising sales representative in Phuket. Level/salary range: up to 40,000 baht (first full year earnings potentials). The position is open for Thai and foreigners (work permit required). Kindly send your resume by email. Email: info@phuketitaly.com

Live in Patong?

Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at Taurus Travel



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

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

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

Live in Karon?

Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at Euro style tailors



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

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

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

Looking for a **JOB?**

Looking for a better candidate?

Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PhuketGazette.Net!

Audio/Video
Equipment**DIME D-100
GUITAR AMP**

Like new DIME D-100 guitar amp with DIME D-412 cabinet. The best guitar rig for heavy rock and metal. Tel: 080-719 3705. Email: tobias.l@bohussound.com

Bar &
Restaurant
Equipment**BAR EQUIPMENT
CHEAP**

Have 3 top class fridges, round pool table (only one in Patong), sound system, 1 huge freezer, etc. And many, many knickknacks. Best offers. Tel: 087-896 5219, 084-053 4365. Email: striker_1957@hotmail.com

**BQ116 ICE CREAM
MACHINE**

Never used, still packed. BQ116. Production capacity: 10-14kg per hour (14-20 l/h). Cups per hour (60g per cup): 160-230. For sale at 1/3 of its cost. 49,000 baht. Tel: 082-414 0600

**BAR FURNITURE ETC.
FOR SALE**

Full set of furniture, fixtures, fittings & equipment for stylish bar - only 1 year old - or take over the large bar premises (include accommodation) with all equipment in place. No key money just "quick sale price" for the gear. Please call 081-787 5938 (English & Thai). Email for list of equipment: nitta yakm@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/WhiteSpacePhuket

**BUSINESS
FOR SALE**

2 storeys, 9 rooms, 6 bathrooms. Upstairs: 4 bedrooms with ensembles for rent. Downstairs: 5 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 1 beauty salon, 1 restaurant and bar, front/back entrances. Asking price: 8.9 million baht. Tel: 081-270 6310

**KATA BEACH
CENTER PHUKET
SOLID PROPERTY
INVESTMENT!**

In one purchase: 7-floor building, with 300sqm penthouse, one 140sqm apartment, two each 62sqm apartment. Facilities: restaurant, pool, sauna, gym, office room, staff room. All in one sale price: 30 million baht. Contact Charles. Tel: 084-441 3871

Business Opportunities

**COMMERCIAL
BUILDING**

Land, building business for sale. 4 storeys with 6-room guesthouse + restaurant with a large steady clients. Patong, just 60m from the Beach. 16 million baht. Contact Alex. Tel: 089-651 3250

**INCREDIBLE PROJECT
INVESTMENT**

Luxury project for sale. 50% process done. Only 5 million baht. Tel: 080-891 1611. Email: aopoproject@gmail.com

**BAR FOR SALE
BANGLA**

900,000 baht for everything. 3 years on lease. Rent: 60,000 baht per month. Good place. Tel: 089-471 8188 (English & Thai). Email: cocodi orster@gmail.com

**KATA SPA SHOPHOUSE
FOR SALE**

3 storeys, 1 bedroom with western kitchen, second bedroom for staff, beautiful decoration for spa on first floor with sauna. Fully furnished. Urgent sale US\$ 305,000. Negotiable! No agent. Tel: 081-956 1077

**GUESTHOUSE
CENTER OF PATONG**

Good opportunity, 15-room guesthouse, fully furnished, in center of Patong, for lease. 5 minutes from the beach and 15 minutes from Bangla. 2 shops at ground floor for rent and 1 apartment for accommodation. Price: 2.7 million baht. Tel: 076-290 496, 083-526 4485. For further details, please see our website at www.orangehotelp Phuket.com

**MARINA VIEW
RESTAURANT**

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

**BEVERAGE
INVESTMENT**

International beverage experts seek investor for new hotel beverage brand. From US\$10,000. Tel: 086-057 7714. www.humanba.com

RESORT FOR SALE

Resort in Rawai on street with houses, priced up to 50 million baht, owner retiring. 18 bungalows, 2 rai, 15m pool, office, restaurant, bar, laundry, sauna, exterior showers, bathrooms, fish pond. House: 2 storeys, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, remodeled main house, 3m walls, security system, cable, satellite TV, internet, parking in a lush garden setting. Annual turnover 5.5 million baht. Price: 25.5 million baht. Land valued 23.5 million baht. Contact Dr Stonck: 087-275 1700, Da: 081-477 5869

**HOTEL SEA VIEW
PATONG**

Very nice hotel, pool and garden, 1km to beach, profit + 3.5 million baht yearly. Price: 45 million baht. Email: titi 2013namson@gmail.com

**Alcoholics
Anonymous**

If you want to drink
that is your business

If you want
to stop
that is ours

Daily Meetings

Patong, Phuket Town,
Chalong, Surin, Karon

081-895 4763
084-307 7408

Email: phuketaa@yahoo.com

Google AA Phuket

Phuket Gazette

CLASSIFIED AD ORDER FORM

STANDARD AD (Text only): 140 baht/line

OPTIONS (NEWSPAPER ONLY - NOT WEB):

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

NUMBER OF INSERTIONS: **issue(s)**

ONLINE OPTIONS:

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

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

TELEVISION OPTION:

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

Total cost of your classified **baht**

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

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

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

PROMOTION PRICE
Your Ad on PGTV

SAMPLE ADS

TOYOTA HILUX HERO

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

Standard: 840 baht (incl VAT)

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

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

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

Phone Mr Reece
(02) 668-1268

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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

Online: www.phuketgazette.net / tv | www.youtube.com / PGTVPhuket

Business Products & Services

WORLDWIDE AIR TICKETS

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

MASSAGE THERAPY AT YOUR PLACE

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

WHEATGRASS JUICE

Lumpoons Coffee House. At Chalong. Tel: 081-476 5808

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

TATTOO REMOVAL

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

NEW CARDIO TENNIS

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

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

TRANSLATION CENTER PHUKET

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

STRESSED OVER PARTIES?

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

HOTEL BOOKING LIST SERVICE

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



DINO DAYCARE CENTER

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

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

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

FREE ITALIAN ESPRESSO MACHINE

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

Club Memberships Available

LOCH PALM MEMBERSHIP

Lifetime family membership available. 500,000 baht, including transfer fee. For more information, please call 081-979 7047 (English & Thai). Email: petemorrow@hotmail.com

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Lifetime family membership for sale. 400,000 baht only. Email: mons billgrenl@gmail.com

LAGUNA GOLF CLUB

350,000 baht + transfer, expires 2024. For more information, please call 089-868 6842. Email: nagel.klaus@web.de

Personals

BACKGAMMON

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

Education



Oak Meadow International School

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

Personal Services

LEGAL SERVICES

Contract drafting, counseling, civil & criminal action, court interpreter. For more information, please call 089-873 6533. Fax: 076-273399. Email: info@suwatchana-law-office.com

Personal Services Wanted

HOME FITNESS TRAINER

Personal fitness trainer needed. I have the equipment, but need help with the motivation. Male or female considered, must be able to visit my home in Patong. Tel: 080-892 0920. Email: steve hull@me.com

LEARN THAI

From an experienced Thai teacher (male). Tel: 084-447 5257. Email: mikeroper2003@hotmail.com

Pets

ADOPT A DOG from Doggie Heaven

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

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




Phuket today
Phuket Gazette

Hot deal!

Classified Ads on TV

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

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

Catch the show at these times

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Saloon Cars

CHEVROLET AVEO

Automatic, 2010, silver, low mileage, full service, leather seat. Sale: 370,000 baht. Tel: 085-787 0131

NISSAN NV
QUEEN CAB 1999

195,000km, good mechanical condition, 85,000 baht. Tel: 089-873 1300. Email: kspphuket@gmail.com

MERCEDES SL

1987. Excellent condition, automatic, aircon, new interior, bodywork, mechanics, 2Jz engine, drives perfectly, new soft top, hard top, Phuket Blue book registered. 1.1 million baht or reasonable offers. Tel: 084-630 2416. Email: jonhassall@aol.com

BMW E46 330i
FOR SALE

BMW E46 330i in superb condition for sale. Extremely well maintained. Suspension upgraded with performance bushings, bilstein shocks, ~230hp engine. 700,000 baht ono. Tel: 081-978 1150. Email: dennis@hbdesign.biz

COROLLA ALTIS 2010

Black, 1.6G. 36,000km, excellent condition. 580,000 baht. Tel: 084-745 5546

MAZDA 2 SEDAN

1.5L. 2011. 25,000km. Automatic, aircon, ABS. 410,000 baht. Tel: 084-921 2600 (English), 095-410 0064 (English). Email: muellerbrenton@gmail.com

CHEVROLET
CAPTIVALTZ

Year 2010, for sale, excellent condition. Price: 890,000 baht. Tel: 081-397 2175

SILVER PROTON
SAGA 1.3

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

NISSAN TEANA
250 XV V6

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

CHEVROLET
CAPTIVA BLACK

2,400cc. 2008 with sports extras. 84,000 km. Good condition. Priced to sell at 550,000 baht. Can view in Panwa. Tel: 086-991 7116

Pick-ups

FORD 4WD SUPERCAB
PICK-UP

Built July 1999, 250,000km, very good condition. Blue metallic, new tyres, new clutch, generator, cooler. 200,000 baht. Tel: 081-538 8873 (English & Thai). Fax +49-321-2267 1958

TOYOTA VIGO 4X4
FOR SALE

Year 2012, Turbo Diesel. This is the best 4x4 in Phuket. Please call 091-648 4427

TATA XENON 2012 2.2
DIESEL

Tata Xenon only 45,000km / 3 Suzuki Next 2013, 3-5,000 km / Yamaha Fino 2012, 8,000km / Yamaha Million 2012, 4,200km. Please call for prices. Tel: 083-645 4008 (English), 083-172 0312 (Thai)

Others

HJC HELMET

Almost new HJC helmet (CS-14 Model), imported, matt black, large (60), excellent condition. Price: 5,000 baht. Tel: 087-273 2067 (English). Email: ianjbarratt@gmail.com

Rentals

A1 CAR RENT



With accommodation, fully insured. Tel: 089-831 4703. Email: a1carrent@gmail.com

CAR RENT
@ FAIR PRICES

Long-term rent, from 12,000 baht per month. Short term, please ask for price. Tel: 084-847 4377 (English), 085-655 2613. Email: info@thai dreams.se

CAR RENTAL ALL
MODELS

AUT or MT, delivery service, short/long term, first-class insurance. Tel: 087-281 1211

PCX 150CC 7,000 B/M
RENT / SALE

Top model Yamaha Nouvo SX 125CC, Mio GTX, Click 125CC. 3,000 baht per month. Free delivery. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

PCX 150CC 7,000
BAHT / MONTH

Top model Yamaha Nouvo SX 125CC, Mio GTX, Click 125CC. 3,000 baht per month. Free delivery. Please call 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

LUXURY CAR
PORSCHE 911(996) Cabriolet

Year 2000 with hardtop, metallic silver, AAS serviced, 36,000km, very nice. Price: 4.59 million baht.

Contact Khun Lerd
Tel: 087-263 6706
(Proton Showroom)

Boats & Marine

Yachting Freedom Since 1984



2013 Lagoon 400S2 - EUR 397,000



2008 Azimut 47 - EUR 499,000



2011 Princess 42 - USD 650,000



2012 Fusion 40 - EUR 345,000

Yachting Freedom begins with a call to our team:

Sergio Loiacono
+66 (0) 86 277 3360
sergio.l@simpsonmarine.com

Максим Волков
+66 (0) 84 745 9900
maksim.volkov@simpsonmarine.com

Adam Blackmore
+66 (0) 81 892 8919
adam.blackmore@simpsonmarine.com

Nicole van de Wall
+66 (0) 93 140 5088
nicole.vandewall@simpsonmarine.com

BENETEAU
OCEANIS 48 (2013)

Yanmar Diesel with dock and Go System. Presents as new. Euro 295,000. Contact Alan Giles. Boatshedphuket.com Tel: 084-842 6146. Email: alan.giles@boatshedphuket.com

U.S. 42FT BERTRAM



Strong, seaworthy boat, hull in good condition. Needs re-powering with Hino engines to make a perfect game fishing charter boat. 3 million baht. Thai registered. Engine cost 500,000 baht. Call Andy: +441 7715394550. Email: as.ac@hotmail.co.uk

TASAR DINGHY

Two sets sails. Launch and road trailer. Asking price: 130,000 baht. Email: Sailing alone2001-mail@yahoo.com

NEW BOAT SR-21

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

HARD TO FIND
TEAK BOAT

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

THAILAND'S LEADING BROKERAGE & NEW YACHT DEALERSHIP

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International Marine Brokerage

SINCE 1997

Please visit our website for more used power & sail listings:
www.leemarine.com

Feature Boat

<p>► Pershing 72 1,250,000 Euro</p> <p>NEW LISTING</p> 	<p>► Mangusta 72 1,700,000 Euro</p> <p>PRICE REDUCTION</p> 	<p>► Pershing 64 Price on Application</p> <p>NEW LISTING</p> 
<p>► Grady White 4,500,000 THB</p> 	<p>► American Speed Boat 24,900 GBP</p> 	<p>► Don Brooke Cavalier 80 \$1,092,000 USD</p> <p>NEW LISTING</p> 
<p>► Simonis Catamaran \$490,000 USD</p> <p>NEW LISTING</p> 	<p>► Jeanneau 45 50 Performance \$230,000 USD</p> 	<p>► Chassiron 43 DH \$95,000 USD</p> <p>NEW LISTING</p> 

Martin Holmes Mobile: 081 891 7057 Email: martin@leemarine.com
 Marcus Overman Mobile: 081 968 1437 Email: marcus@leemarine.com
 Jim Poulsen Mobile: 081 891 3237 Email: jim@leemarine.com
 Mark Heath Mobile: 081 787 9408 Email: mark@leemarine.com

leemarine.com

42FT BERTRAM SPORT FISHER

Strong seaworthy boat, priced to sell, thai registered, needs little work to the perfect fishing/ cruising boat. 3 million baht. Contact Andy Tel: +014 471 539 4550. Email: as.ac@hotmail.co.uk

CAPTAIN WANTED

For large motor yacht. Must be experienced and speak English. Also English speaking deckhand required. Tel: 081-787 1752. Please send CV to mjoneilluk@yahoo.co.uk

SEARAY 280 SUNDANCER

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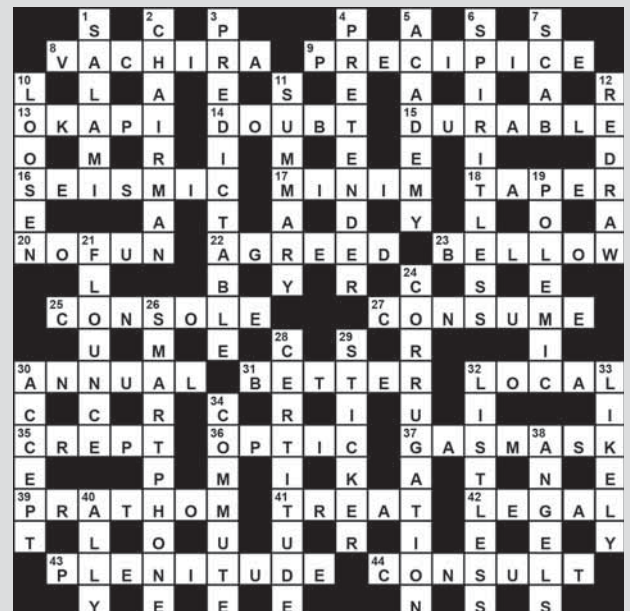
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SOLUTION TO THIS WEEK'S

Cryptic crossword

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CONGRATULATIONS

Euro Creations congratulated the Phuket Gazette on its 20th anniversary. Nishamon Eve PaiBoonnukulkij, Marketing Manager Euro Creations presented a floral bouquet to Isaac Stone Simonelli, Phuket Gazette managing editor.

SIZZLER

Sizzler at Banana Walk Patong recently launched their new everyday specials promotion. From left: Kirana Roekbangplad, marketing manager of Sizzler; Kraisorn Kanjanakul, operation manager of Sizzler; and Kridakan Phinidchai, assistant public relations manager of Minor Food Group.

FREE TENNIS CENTER OPEN DAY

Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort held a free Tennis Centre Open Day for Phuket residents and guests under the theme of 'A Savitar Festival of Tennis' – free mini tennis for kids and free coaching tips for adults by Savitar, a Singapore-based tennis coaching provider.

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Polish pianist Katarzyna Wieczorek will perform in Phuket. Photo: Supplied

World-class music at BIS

ACCLAIMED Polish pianist Katarzyna Wieczorek is coming to Phuket to demonstrate her skill and spread her love for music. Known for her spirited performances, remarkable versatility and tremendously supportive attitude, Ms Wieczorek has performed during countless festivals across the globe including Bastad Chamber Music Festival, Rheingau Festival, IKIF Festival New York, Malibu Songfest and Bebersee Festival. She has also won numerous competitions in her home country, as well as in Greece, Italy, Germany and the Czech Republic.

Ms Wieczorek will be holding a concert and workshop for British International School Phuket year 10 and 11 students and all piano students at the school on Monday, March 10 from 2:45 to 3:30pm in the secondary auditorium.

The concert will feature works from Frederic Chopin, as well as other well-known composers. The public is invited to join the concert. the ticket price is 200 baht. However children under 18 years old do not need a ticket.

Ms Wieczorek will also be offering private lessons during the day for 3,000 baht per hour. If you would like to sign up for a private lesson, contact Head of Arts Mr Neill Thacker at nthacker@bisp Phuket.ac.th.

Later on Wednesday, March 12, an Operatic Tenor Professor Thomas Kiessling will be performing at BISP in the secondary auditorium from 1:30 to 2:30pm. Entry will be free for students and 100 baht for guests. The concert will also include performances by the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 student choirs, and BISP music teachers.

Professor Kiessling has performed concerts in New York (Carnegie Hall), Vienna (Vienna State Opera), Salzburg (Salzburger Festival Playhouse), Bregenz, Luxemburg, France, Spain, Greece, Switzerland and Mexico. His extensive repertoire includes works from Rigoletto, Tosca, La Boheme, The Magic Flute, countless oratorios and German Lieder. Professor Kiessling has produced many albums with Deutsche Grammophon and featured on countless TV programs throughout his career.



MARCH 8

1817 The New York Stock Exchange was founded.
1910 French aviatrix Raymonde de Laroche became the first woman to receive a pilot's license.
1920 The Arab Kingdom of Syria, the first modern Arab state to come into existence, was established.
1974 Charles de Gaulle Airport opened in Paris, France.
1979 Philips demonstrated the Compact Disc publicly for the first time.



PILOT 1910 Photo: Library of Congress



DATA 1979 Photo: Arun Kulshreshtha

MARCH 9

1842 The first documented discovery of gold in California.
1945 Bombing of Tokyo by the United States Army Air Forces began, one of the most destructive bombing raids in history.
1959 The Barbie doll made its debut at the American International Toy Fair in New York.



TOY 1959 Photo: Tracheotomy Bob

MARCH 10

1876 Alexander Graham Bell made the first telephone call by saying "Mr. Watson, come here, I want to see you."
1922 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested in India, tried for sedition, and sentenced to six years in prison
1977 Astronomers discovered rings around Uranus.
2006 The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter arrived at Mars.



TREASURE 1842 Photo: BullionVault

MARCH 11

1851 The first performance of Rigoletto by Giuseppe Verdi took place in Venice.
1946 Rudolf H ss, the first commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp, was captured by British troops.
1983 Pakistan successfully conducted a cold test of a nuclear weapon.
2004 Simultaneous explosions on rush hour trains in Madrid, Spain, killed 191 people.



CALL 1976 Photo: Bentom Wyemji

MARCH 12

1622 Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier, founders of the Jesuits, were canonized as saints by the Catholic Church.
1894 Coca-Cola was bottled and sold for the first time in Vicksburg, Mississippi.
1918 Moscow became the capital of Russia again, after Saint Petersburg held the status for 215 years.



DRINK 1894 Photo: Hariadhi

MARCH 13

1639 Harvard College was named for clergyman John Harvard.
1781 William Herschel discovered Uranus.
1930 The news of the discovery of Pluto was telegraphed to the Harvard College Observatory.
1943 German forces liquidated the Jewish ghetto in Krak w.
2013 Pope Francis was elected in the papal conclave to succeed Pope Benedict XVI.

MARCH 14

1489 The Queen of Cyprus, Catherine Cornaro, sold her kingdom to Venice.
1900 The Gold Standard Act was ratified, placing United States currency on the gold standard.
1931 Alam Ara, India's first talking film, was released.
1939 Slovakia declared independence under German pressure.



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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

8-10-March, 6:00-22:30pm. Weekly Buffet Promotions @Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket
Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket offers weekly buffet promotions. South-east Asia Street Food Buffet every Tuesday 998++ baht per person (food only). Andaman Seafood BBQ Buffet every Thursday and Saturday 1,420++ baht per person (food only). Bella Italia Buffet every Sunday 1,320++ baht per person (food only) 50% off for children aged 6-12 years. Bookings are essential. Contact Food and Beverage Department on 076 362 999.

Mar 14, 4:00 pm-7:00 pm. Phuket's MICE market – an AMCHAM event

The island's growing MICE market (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) is a key segment which can help Phuket attract quality visitors. On Friday, March 14, the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) will present this tourism development event at the Angsana Laguna Phuket Resort, focusing on how to grow MICE business sustainably.

A series of presentations from the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), and the private sector will lead on into an open session during which the audience will be able to exchange ideas with the speakers and other tourism industry members in attendance.

Speakers include:

- Supawan Teerarat, Director - Strategic & Business Development, TCEB
 - Welf Ebeling, Vice President, Asia-Pacific, GBTA
 - Mark Simmons, Vice President - Sales & Marketing, Asia-Pacific, Outrigger Hotels & Resorts
- Shine PR's Natasha Eldred will serve as moderator.

The event is open to the public and presents a tremendous opportunity for those associated with hotels, tourism and the service industry to learn more about Phuket's MICE sector and how it can contribute to the island's focus on generating quality visitors (not quantity).

Registration for the event begins at 4:00pm, with the presentations and discussions starting at 4:30 and continuing until 6:00pm. Admission 100 baht.

Networking drinks will follow the formal program.

To sign up for the event, please visit the website at left or contact Sheree Tanpensuk at sheree@amchamthailand.com, or telephone her on 02 254 1041. If phoning, ask for extension 212.

Mar 20, 10am-2pm. Phuket International Women's Club AGM and lunch

The AGM of the Phuket International Women's Club will start at 10am, where coffee will be

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ENTRY DEADLINE 19 MARCH 2014

Entry Fee: Singles / Doubles THB 1,500
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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 076-316 711 email info@phuketiwc.com or go to phuketiwc.com

Mar 21, 6-11:30pm. Abba Tribute Night

Mamma Mia! It's ABBA night at Two Chefs Bar & Grill, Karon. Large buffet with Skagen toasts, Smoked salmon, Pickled herrings, Swedish meatballs, Beef Greta, Stuffed pork tenderloin, Poached red snapper filet and much more. All this and more at only 795 baht, with kids at just 395 baht, including the show, our large buffet, as well as a welcome drink. We will start serving the buffet at 6pm. There will be a guest artist playing 6-9pm. Then, at 9pm the the Two Chefs ABBA Tribute show will begin. Come for the food and stay for the fun! For more info call 076 286 479, email karon@twochefs.com or visit twochefs.com

Apr 5-12. Phuket ITF Senior Pro Circuit 2014

ITF Senior Pro Tournament in Phuket at Thanyapura. Played on world-class covered plexicushion tennis courts. Entry deadline: March 19. For more information contact Club Services on 76 336 000 ext. 5055, email tslc@thanyapura.com.

Apr 6. 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. Substitute Holiday for Chakri Day

A public holiday in Thailand commemorating the Chakri dynasty

Apr 13-15. Songkran Festival

Songkran is the Thai New Year Festival, also known as the Water Festival. Held during the hot-

test 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. Labor Day

Public holiday for all commercial workers, but government offices will remain open.

May 5. Coronation Day

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

May 24. 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).

Jun 12 to Jul 13. FIFA World Cup in Brazil

Football (soccer) fans around the world look forward to the 20th edition of the World Cup, this year to be played in arguably the top footballing nation on the planet. Here in Phuket, most of the games will be aired live in the morning hours, though many restaurants and bars will certainly screen reruns of all the matches.

Jun 28-July 27. (depends on moon sighting). Ramadan

Muslims worldwide, or roughly a quarter of the planet's population, observe Ramadan as the ninth month of their calendar, a time for fasting during the day hours and feasting at night.

Jul 11. Arsarnha Bucha Day

This full-moon day of the eighth lunar month (traditional Thai calendar) 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.

Jul 12. Buddhist Lent

This day of a full moon marks the start of the Buddhist Lent, or rains retreat, the traditional time for Thai males to ordain as a monk, informally observed as the start of the rainy season, when the Southwesterly Monsoons are in full force.

Aug 12. Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday

Her Majesty the Queen Srikrit Kitiyakara's 82nd Birthday. Also celebrated as Mother's day in Thailand. Her Majesty's Birthday is a public holiday.

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Photos of the future

The rise of mirrorless camera systems may give DSLRs a run for their money

Photo: Bill Ebbesen

By Jeremie Schatz

HERE in Thailand, which has earned itself the title of world "selfie" capital, pictures are important. Whether it's locals snapping shots while out and about to upload to Facebook, tourists looking for that exotic portrait from their trip abroad or the pros clicking away to beef up their stock portfolio, cameras are everywhere, all the time.

Although it might seem as if many people are shooting with their mobile phones (Iphones are the most popular camera in the Flickr community, right behind Canon), the market for digital devices dedicated to capturing images is strong and growing.



The Fujifilm X100 is revered for its compact size and high image quality. Photo: Johannes Gilger

Part of the momentum behind industry growth, especially in Asia Pacific, is growing incomes and the increasing prosperity of consumers. With people already obsessed with taking pictures and the likelihood of finding themselves with a little more spending money, it doesn't take a market analyst to figure out where this is going.

Out of all consumer electronics, digital cameras are one of the strongest segments on the market. The desire and demand for versatile and high quality cameras is obvious – just take a look at how often major brands are updating existing products and releasing new ones.

Gaining huge momentum and popularity in the past few years among enthusiasts are interchangeable lens cameras (ILCs) of the mirrorless variety. What started out as a promising twig on the evolutionary tree of imaging technology is now maturing into a solid branch. With weaknesses and limitations being addressed, recent iterations of select mirrorless systems are getting some solid attention from enthusiasts and professionals alike.

What exactly is a mirrorless camera? In a basic sense, a mirrorless camera is an ILC (usually) that instead of relying on a mirror and pentaprism for composing a photo

through the lens like a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) camera, relays the scene in live-view through the sensor and displays it on a screen. However, since composing photos on a screen is often not ideal, electronic view finders (EVFs) have been added which mimic the functionality of DSLR view finders.

This is not really a new concept but one championed by digital point-and-shoots and mobile phone cameras. Eliminating dependence on the mirror has some immediate advantages such as: reduced body size, quieter operation and less moving parts, but mirrorless systems have been plagued by certain shortcomings like slow autofocus and fewer lens options which have kept them relegated to the amateur and enthusiasts realm.

Fuel was thrown onto the mirrorless fire when Sony introduced the NEX series, especially the NEX-6 which offered an APS-C size sensor, increased high ISO sensitivity and performance, 1080 HD video capabilities and other features which boosted its versatility. Toward the end of last year Sony took it a step farther by introducing the full-frame-sensor-sporting A7 and A7R, flaunting 24 and 36 mega-pixels respectively.

Fujifilm has also emerged as a

strong player in the mirrorless game with the XA-1, popular X100S, the X-Pro1 and most recently, the XT-1. The X100 and subsequent upgrade, the X100s were very popular and critics gave them rave reviews despite having a non-interchangeable 23mm f2.0 lens.

The latest incarnation from Fujifilm, the XT-1, undoubtedly has some pros taking a long, hard look at the reality of adopting a mirrorless system. So far, reviews have made it mighty enticing, raving about the good low light capabilities, fast and accurate auto focus, accessible controls, high image quality, sexy retro styling and professional grade weather sealed body.

One of the most important factors that has and will continue to prevent us DSLR shooters from making the leap to mirrorless, is the comparatively minimal selection of lenses and accessories.

For instance, the Sony A7/A7R is a full-frame mirrorless system which is a first for Sony, which means there were no lenses designed specifically for the camera. Lenses are constructed based on a number of factors, one being the distance between the sensor and rear element of the lens – a distance that is shorter on a camera with no mirror. They did

The A7 is Sony's first mirrorless camera with a full frame sensor.

release five lenses with the camera and promise another 10 to choose from in 2015 but it is a big step for a photographer that has a long-established relationship with a camera system to start from scratch with a new one. It is possible to add a lens adapter into the equation but they add more bulk to the setup, incur an additional cost and generally reduce the image quality.

As more people find faith in, and join, the mirrorless revolution, the offerings on the market will continue to grow in quality and quantity. The long-lived, robust, mirror-slapping DSLRs are not going to disappear anytime soon but we will surely see the big dogs, Canon and Nikon, take the high-end mirrorless ILC market a little more seriously and dip their toes in the proverbial mirrorless waters. Come on in guys... the water's fine.



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.

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

All get ready for the rally!

GET those engines revving! The upcoming PVCPhuket.com Invitational Car Rally has automotive lovers and treasure hunt aficionados amped up and ready for action. The non-profit event on March 23 will see competitors exploring the paradise island in teams of two or more and finding sights even seasoned expats may have missed.

"It's a real opportunity to visit places that, no matter how long you've lived here, you may not have discovered yet," says event organizer Byron Jones whose company Media Business Services took over the rally this year.

"It'll provide something new and challenging. Figuring out clues, photographing specific spots, and some last-minute surprise tests are all on tap."

Clerk of the Course Jum Ali Khan brings years of experience to the helm and participants will expect nothing less than a fun-filled day of non-stop action. Khan has spent a lifetime in motorsports and has been involved in several famous off-road and cross-country rallies all around the globe including countries such as Portugal, Argentina and Jordan.

While the jam-packed course will provide some unique entertainment along the way, Jones is quick to point out that this is not a race and that speeding to the



Sign up if you fancy beautiful cars and treasure hunts.

finish line is not allowed.

"The objective here is to do something different for all ages and nationalities. At the end of the day you have married couples playfully arguing over wrong turns and kids yelling directions at dad. It's not the Amazing Race yet!" he says with a laugh.

"There's no digging up treasure or blindfolded swimming. It's just good fun for everyone," he adds.

The fourth annual charity fundraiser will change things up this year by starting on the south end of the island at the Green Man Pub in Chalong and working its way north to Bliss Beach Club at Bangtao Beach. A sumptuous lunch at Dewa Phuket in Nai Yang and a celebratory buffet dinner at Bliss will keep drivers and their passengers energized.

Although it'll be a day of adventuring for the whole family, Jones insists the underlying message has always been one of support for the local community.

"We are raising funds for Raunjai Rescue Foundation in Phuket so that they can buy a sturdier stretcher. It's important that we continue to support local charities and foundations that identify specific equipment needs that we can raise money for. These items will then be bought and given to the nominated charity."

Participation in the event costs 2,000 baht per vehicle and a maximum of 50 cars can sign up, so get in fast to secure your spot! Application forms can be downloaded at: phuketinvitational.com.

The entry cost includes lunch and dinner, along with t-shirts for both the driver and navigator.

Additional passengers can buy tickets for 350 Baht or 100 Baht if they are under 12-years-old. The evening will wrap up with a trophy and medal presentation along with either a raffle or silent auction. Bragging rights are free of charge!

— *Phuket Gazette*

For more information, contact the event's media officer Natasha Horrell on 090-168-0086 or visit the website at: phuketinvitational.com



Photo: Gazette File

Heroines festival in full swing

THE annual Heroines' Memorial Fair kicked off on March 7 in Thalang, and will be running strong with historical and cultural activities to honor Thao Thepkasattri and Thao Srisoonthorn for the next two weeks.

"The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO), Phuket Culture Office and other local organizations are once again putting on the fair to honor the heroism of Lady Thepkasattri and Lady Srisoonthorn," said Phuket Governor Maitri Inthasut.

"The event will teach the younger generations about the heroism of their ancestors, who sacrificed their blood and lives for the sake of generations to come."

Among the events taking place to honor Thao Thepkasattri and Thao Srisoonthorn, the famous heroines who led Siamese forces in repelling the 1785 Burmese invaders, will be group tours of the historical spots in Thalang associated with the battle and sport competitions, as well as light and sound shows.

The schedule of the remaining events of the festival is as follows:

March 8-9

Tours of historical locations will take place throughout Thalang.

March 9

Sport competitions will take place at Thalang Historical Park near the Heroines' Monument.

March 12

Wat Mounng Komaraphat will have a worship gathering in respect of ancestors.

March 13

At the significant time of 9:09am, there will be a ceremony to honor Thao Thepkasattri and Thao Srisoonthorn. Officials will place garlands at the Heroines' Monument and praise the bravery of the two sisters.

March 13-15

Vendors will sell local food and One Tambon One Product (OTOP) goods around the monument starting at 5pm. Starting at 8:30pm, there will also be a light and sound show describing the history of Thalang.



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Climbing to new heights



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

A FEW columns back I threatened to return to the topic of easy-to-grow climbers. Some of the varieties mentioned then are indeed

tough and resilient, but they are not natural vines inasmuch as they lack aids in the form of suckers, twining stems, modified leaves or tendrils to help them cling and ascend.

That they are substantial and weighty plants means that they need support of some kind or another, a requirement that inevitably takes

up more of the gardener's time and patience. Certainly they can be trained to flow over garden fences, pergolas, trellises and walls, but they do need to be given human

aid and direction. *Allamandas*, *solandras* (chalice vines), *thunbergias*, Indian rubber vines and Rangoon creepers all come into this category. Even bougainvilleas, though these do cheat a bit by having vicious curved spines that enable them to get a grip on other plants, though not on smooth sur-

faces such as garden walls. All these vines happen to be personal favorites, since they are spectacular bloomers and extremely tolerant of a range of conditions for growth.

Among the genuinely low maintenance, self-sufficient climbers, perhaps the easiest of all is *antigonum leptopus*. That it has become invasive in parts of

the southern states of America, is a clear reflection of its durability. Better known as the coral vine or Mexican creeper, I have seen it growing on a neglected roadside



Antigonum leptopus, or Mexican creeper, is a genuinely low maintenance climber. Photo: J.M.Garg



The argyrea nervosa is a handsome, vigorous climber with distinctive large leaves. Photo: Patrice78500



Photo: Andy Mabbett

Ipomoea is associated with the flower power movement in the 60s.

site in Chalong. It climbs rapidly with the aid of tendrils which can readily support the dense mass of heart-shaped leaves and attractive racemes of deep pink florets.

Having the inestimable advantage of flowering almost all year long, the coral vine can grow quite tall – maybe five meters in favorable conditions. Though it normally spreads by forming underground tubers and substantial root stocks, it also produces masses of seeds which germinate readily. *Antigonum* will also take from hard wood cuttings. If that is not enough to get you going, it is a popular potted plant in garden centers. It is fussy only about adequate moisture for its roots: perhaps I should pop among and

see how the Chalong specimen is coping with the current spell of prolonged dry weather. But even if it has died back, it will probably reappear once the rains return.

Also known as the silver morning glory, it the variety most associated with hallucinogenic properties, and contains lysergic acid amide (LSA, though increasingly its medicinal value (as an immune system booster) is being explored.

Another toughie is the *imopoea*, usually referred to as “morning glory”. Associated with the so-called “flower power” movement of the sixties, the *convolvulaceae* genus contains some 400 species, and like the coral vine, its more vigorous brethren have become naturalized in some parts of the world. A single morning glory flourished on my baking hot patio in Andalusia, producing fifty or more blooms every day. Without visible means of support, it still managed to cling to the stucco walls. This variety, known as *indica*, has trumpet-shaped flowers of an intensely deep blue which turn to violet as the sun bleaches the color away.

Much more common here is a pink or pale mauve form (*pulchella*) which often grows wild. *Horsfallia* is a rare red version, while *alba* (known as the moon flower), is atypically not a sun worshipper at all, saving its huge white flowers for the arrival of twilight. Since the fragrant but fragile blooms then

open quickly, it is possible to watch them unfold as dusk approaches. Because of this, it is not suited to a sunny tropical location. Give it a sheltered berth.

The elephant creeper or *argyrea nervosa* is another convolvulus that will thrive in Phuket, even though – and perhaps oddly – it is infrequently cultivated. Also known as the silver morning glory, it is the variety most associated with hallucinogenic properties, and contains lysergic acid amide (LSA), though increasingly its medicinal value (as an immune system booster), is being explored. In aesthetic terms, *argyrea* is a handsome, vigorous climber with distinctive large leaves which are silvery beneath. The rose-pink flowers are huge, and furry. Sadly these are often hidden among the lush foliage.

Nonetheless, this is another excellent choice for your low-maintenance garden. And once installed, it is bound to become a talking point.

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



Tip of the week

Caring for orchids

RECENTLY, I have received a number of inquiries about orchids and how best to cultivate them. The short answer is: it depends on the variety. There are at least seven main orchid types in Thailand and they do not all need the same treatment. For example, *phalaenopsis* orchids (sometimes known as moth orchids) have large flowers which appear to float on wiry stems, need full shade and should never be allowed to dry out completely.

Even so, they will not tolerate being saturated. *Cattleya* orchids need both high levels of humidity and soil that will remain moist – as well as a degree of sunlight. All others need exposure to the sun, in most cases at least half a day's worth. And all varieties, with the exception of *paphiopedilum* orchids, are epiphytic: they do not root in soil like conventional plants and consequently require anchoring in pots that drain easily – using fiber, charcoal or even broken brick.



Photo: Larsen Twins Orchid
Cattleyas need high humidity and soil that remains moist.

Against the machine

Books

By James Eckardt

FOR me, Thomas Pynchon and Robert Stone are the two best living American writers. Both have recently come out with new novels. I'll get around to Robert Stone next time.

Bleeding Edge (The Penguin Press, New York, 2013, 477pp) is Thomas Pynchon's eighth novel. His first, *V.*, astonished the literary world in 1963. *Gravity's Rainbow* and *Against the Day* were even more epic, leading to calls for Pynchon to be awarded the Nobel Prize.

Bleeding Edge recalls Pynchon's second novel *The Crying of Lot 49*, which featured a female protagonist, Oedipa Maas, on the track of a sinister conspiracy: an ancient, private, underground mail delivery organization.

How times have changed.

Now, it's a sinister computer network called hashslinrz and the heroine is Maxine Tarnow – a private fraud investigator and Jewish mother of two young boys who packs a Beretta in her purse.

Her quarry is Gabriel Ice, a techno-nerd who is gathering the reins of power after the dot-com bubble burst, funneling funds to the Arabian peninsula, and leaving clues of a great looming catastrophe.

Six months before September 11, the scene is Manhattan's Upper West Side and Pynchon's distinctive narrative voice opens the novel.

"It's the first day of spring 2001, and Maxine Tarnow, though some still have her in their system as Loeffler, is walking her boys to school. Yes maybe they're past the age where they need an escort, maybe Maxine doesn't want to let go just yet, it's only a couple blocks, it's on her way to work, she enjoys it, so?"

The plot involves a cast of hundreds with

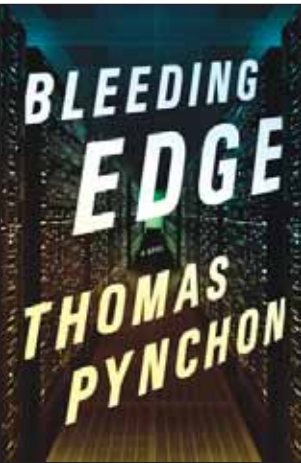
Pynchon's usual wacky names – Vyrna McElmo, Nicholas Windust, Lester Traipse, Conkling Speedwell and Eric Outfield – involved in various scams of skullduggery. There are a whole shoal of red herrings, trivia references to movies and TV shows, extended song lyrics and outrageous puns, "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers." Or a strip club called Joie de Beavre.

But as one critic has observed, one no more reads Thomas Pynchon for plot than he does Jane Austin for sex. The hip narrative voice, the wild humor, the exuberant pace – these sweep the reader along. No one outside of Elmore Leonard writes such brilliant dialogue, no one outside Faulkner such intricate, rolling and intense descriptions.

Take this trip into deep cyberspace, "Presently they're linked and descending from wee-hours Manhattan into teeming darkness, leaving the surface-Net crawlers busy overhead slithering link to link, leaving behind the banners and pop-ups and user groups and self-replicating chat rooms... down to where they can begin cruising among co-opted blocks of address space with cyber thugs guarding the perimeter, spammer operations centers, video games one way or another deemed too violent or offensive... It surprises Maxine how populated it is

down here in sub-spider country. Adventurers, pilgrims, remittance folks, lovers on the run, claim jumpers, skips, fugue cases, and a high number of inquisitive entrepre-nerds..."

Hustlers and investigators circle each other in an elaborate dance, leading to murders, disappearances and a heartbreaking description of New York in the aftermath of September 11. Amid all the hectic japey there's this serious warning from Maxine's old leftie father about the terror of Cold Warriors. "Yep, and your



■ Hustlers and investigators circle each other in an elaborate dance, leading to murders, disappearances and a heartbreaking description of New York in the aftermath of September 11



Photo: Eric J. Tilford

The scene begins six months before September 11 in Manhattan's Upper West Side.

internet was their invention, this magical convenience that creeps now like a smell through the smallest details of our lives: the shopping, the housework, the homework, the taxes, absorbing our energy, eating up our precious time. And there's no innocence. Anywhere. Never was. It was conceived in sin, the worst possible. As it kept growing, it never stopped carrying in its heart a bitter-cold death wish for the planet, and don't think anything has changed, kid."

Still, Maxine and her family survive into another year after she has allied herself with Gabriel Ice's estranged wife Tallis and her old leftie, pot-smoking and blogging activist mother March. Maxine forces Gabriel, at the point of her Beretta, to back down from a sidewalk stand-off. Out all night, she returns to her apartment as her sons are getting ready for school, "Go to your room," they tell her, "You are, like, so grounded."

And, another year gone, her sons head off to school by themselves.



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Phuket Gazette



Phuket Gazette founder and publisher John Magee

Managers and staff members past and present were joined readers, writers and friends of the island's main newspaper hosted by founder and publisher John Magee and wife Janpen



marks 20 years

by more than 500 business leaders, to celebrate the milestone at a party Arno at their home in Cherng Talay.



PHUKET Governor Maitri Inthusut, himself regular columnist for the *Gazette*, kicked off the evening with a brief address:

"Ladies and gentlemen, tonight we are here to honor the *Phuket Gazette* newspaper on its twenty-year anniversary. In the two decades of its existence, the *Gazette* has been an indispensable part of our province.

So tonight, on behalf of all Phuket citizens, it is my joyful duty to salute the professional individuals who for twenty years have toiled and strived to make history and have made the *Gazette* what it is today.

I would like to salute a remarkable leader and the head of the business team at *Gazette*, Oranee Hildebrand, managing director. She has put together a competent business team with a bright smile. Oranee, you have our trust, admiration and love, and we are looking forward to working with you for many years to come.

I would also like to salute John Magee, the founder and publisher, whose generosity has made this newspaper possible. We can now say that the *Gazette* has become the newspaper that all Phuket citizens read every week. The *Gazette* is a constructive voice for Phuket. It continues to promote the ideals of a free and democratic society, and to provide a public platform for all Phuket citizens to express their opinions, thus contributing to the strength of our province. The *Gazette* has always strived to be accurate and neutral and always shares the news in a sober and responsible manner.

I can assure you that in the years to come, with God's blessing and your support, the *Gazette* will always be number one in Phuket, as the voice of reason and conscience. That is why I am here today: to celebrate with you and thank you for being a strong voice. Once again, congratulations on your 20th anniversary. Thank you very much."

Photos:
Phuket Gazette
and Phuket Index



Pushing pedals

Sweden to Phuket: Cycling journey of epic

A MAN is standing out in the cold in the snowy town of Karlskoga, his fellow citizens walk briskly past, unaware that within about a month the man will be departing their homeland on an epic cycling journey across half of the world to the shores of paradise – Phuket.

Unlike many such great undertakings, which have been motivated by the historic words of Everest mountaineer George “Because it’s there” Herbert, Calle Wollgard is embarking on his trip for family. Not his family in Sweden, but the caretakers and dozens of orphans of Barnhem Muang Mai in Phuket.

The trip will raise money for the post-tsunami orphanage run by Susanne Janson and Hans Forssell, as businesses in Sweden, Phuket and the rest of the world pledge cash for each 10 kilometer Calle and his team of three put between them and their homeland.

The largest hurdle to date for Calle was not in obtaining any particular visa or in the training, but wrangling a blessing for the trip from his distraught mother.

“First she began to cry,” Calle explains when asked about his mother’s reaction to the news that he would be riding from Sweden to Phuket.

“She couldn’t sleep for a couple of nights, and then she

forbade me to do it.

“I was still on my own at this point. So, in late August last year, when three friends of mine joined me for the trip, she was very relieved!”

Now that the hard part is done, Calle merely has to conquer 18 countries (including Iran), 16,000km of questionable road, insane traffic, mountain passes, visas and all the other unknowns that lurk within the epic pages of an adventure.

“I don’t know if it’s crazy, it’s just a way of travelling. I’m not going to worry about it.”

The Team

The three men that have joined Calle and helped him secure his mother’s goodwill for the trip are Fredrik Jessen, Tomi Blum and Christofer Johansson, all 27 years old.

None are cyclists.

Fredrik, reportedly handy in the kitchen, has been dubbed the cook. Christofer and Tomi’s – the Sandal Sultans – current claim to fame is making it to Mount Everest base camp in flip-flops while serenading fellow travellers with their guitar.

“I would say zero,” Calle replies when asked about distance-cycling experience on the team.

Each member of the “Happy Tour” troupe is taking care of his own training – hitting the gym and spin classes as the heavy snows in Sweden keep

them locked in doors.

The Trip

For an estimated eight months, with a Christmas Eve deadline, the team will be averaging 80 kilometers a day on their heavily laden bikes.

“We’ll probably take one day of rest a week. Some days the rain will probably fall on us and there will be wind, so then maybe we will cycle for 50km or 60km. On other days, there might be perfect weather and the wind might be at our back so we might be cycling more,” Calle explains, seemingly

■ The orphanage is not shiny and new, it doesn’t have bells and whistles – it is rustic, honest and openly full of love and care. ■

unfazed by spending a cold, rainy day in the saddle and then having to set up camp in some remote part of Kyrgyzstan.

Though the team expects to spend 80-90 per cent of their time abroad camping, countries such as Uzbekistan have laws requiring them to stay in hotels. They will be asked for receipts when they leave the country.

“It’s a whole adventure in itself. We will be able to see so much, and meet a lot of people from so many cultures while we will live a very simple life in our tents,” Calle says.

The 18 countries they will traverse, each filled with its own

diverse cultural groups are: Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Laos and Thailand.

Dangers and Fears

“Traffic is a much bigger problem than terrorists. Of course there is a risk of that as well, but I think the traffic situation in Iran, especially around the capital, Tehran, is going to be crazy,” Calle says from Sweden during a Skype interview.

“Really, my biggest concern is that the equipment will fail – especially the bikes. I’m also worried about the bikes being stolen, that would really suck,” he says matter-of-factly.

The other major concern for Calle is visas, especially those for Iran, China, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

“A lot of people think I’m just going to die by going into those countries. I don’t think of it like that at all. I don’t worry about it.”

Failure? I Don’t Understand The Question

Calle, unflustered ahead of events, seems willing to roll with whatever chaos and misadventures they meet on their way. However, what he seems unwilling to do is finish anywhere other than Barnhem Muang Mai in Phuket.

“I really want to make it, but of course if something happens, I mean, worst case scenario and someone dies, we will cancel it. Hopefully, no one will... you never know though. There is a lot of traffic, I mean things can happen.

However, when it comes to government red tape, Calle is taking a much harder line than Thomas Stevens. Mr Stevens is the first man to ride around the entire world from 1884-1886; he and his penny-farthing bicycle were refused permission to travel through Siberia, forcing him into Afghanistan, where local authorities expelled him.

If visas fall through, and visas to alternate-route countries are also denied, Calle is prepared to do whatever is necessary to get to Phuket.

“I can’t turn around in Uzbekistan and say, ‘No, let’s turn around.’ That’s

not going to happen.”

Family

Sitting under a mango tree in the slightly over-grown court yard of Barnhem Muang Mai with Susanne and Hans, it is understandable why Calle has adopted the place and people as a second home. The orphanage is not shiny and new, it doesn’t have bells and whistles – it is rustic, honest and openly full of love and care.

“We will follow him with mixed emotions, horror and joy, as he has become kind of like our little brother,” Susanne says.

“He came down here as a volunteer, and we just connected. He got very close to Thailand and the children and the Thai staff here.”

“He is the volunteer that we have gotten closest to over the years, and not just us. It would be the same if we were to ask a lot of the staff and the kids,” Hans says.

Calle is the kind of person who blends in, becoming part of your life without a person even realizing it or understanding how it happened, they explained with contemplative smiles.

Even Susanne’s relatives in Stockholm consider him family.

“He went to Stockholm to meet a sponsor, and I got an email from my sister, ‘Oh, our little brother was here sleeping.’”

The feeling is mutual for Calle.

“I spent so much time there that they have become like a second family for me. That’s why I’m doing this. The kids are great, the staff is great, the Swedish couple... If you think this is something, it’s nothing compared to her [Susanne’s] story,” Calle says.

“They have become, not parents, but like really, really close relatives. So I am doing it for them as well, but mostly for the kids of course.”

Learn to Walk Before You Ride

Hans and Susanne are able to offer a glimpse beyond Calle’s deep modesty, which could easily leave one wondering whether or not he and his friends fully understand the trials that come with this epic journey.

It was firsthand experience of Calle’s tenacity that gives Hans and Susanne a deep belief in his ability to complete the task at hand.

In 2011 Calle organized a group with four other friends to walk from Bangkok to Phuket to raise funds for Barnhem Muang Mai. They raised around 1 million baht for the orphanage.

“If he hadn’t been walking, I would have been like, ‘Okay Calle,



Swedish citizens (from left) Fredrik Jessen, Tomi Blumen, Calle Wollgard and Christofer Johansson are planning to cycle from Sweden to Phuket to raise money for Barhem Muang Mai orphanage.

for Phuket kids

proportions in support of island orphanage

just give it up, you can't do it. It's impossible bicycling through all these countries.' But as he had already walked, I thought, 'okay, if Calle wants to do it, then he will do it some way or another,' confides Hans.

Traits of a Hero

A hero is simply, according to the dictionary, "a person who is admired for great or brave acts or fine qualities," which seems to be greatly under-selling all heroes, from Superman to Calle.

Talking with Calle on Skype or even in person, it's impossible to believe he fully grasps the magnitude of his undertaking. He seems to be a Peter Parker, a Clark Kent – understated, blending into the crowd.

"When you meet him, he's... he's not an extreme extrovert, he's not an extreme introvert. He's not a charismatic dude, who when you see his presence you say, 'wow'. He seems so average and normal and friendly. I don't know what it is, but people seem to love him very much," Hans says.

It's his genuineness; his resolve; his confidence.

"He has quite a big Thai heart actually; he's very calm and precise. He has checked up on everything, and still he knows he can run into problems. He doesn't worry about them. He can solve them when they occur – and he knows they will," Susanne explains.

Calle has done his homework. He has spent countless hours reading the blogs of fellow travellers who have tackled similar journeys. He's done the "batcave" research, and has the necessary letters for entering countries and explaining what it is, in fact, that he is doing in places like China.

"He can be very stubborn when

he needs to be, and focused. And that's really important," Hans points out.

"If he gets..." Hans corrects himself, "When he gets into problems people will help him, because his personality shines through."

Susanne shared Hans' sentiments about why Calle will succeed, why he will inspire those following him, as well as the kids that will welcome him at Sarasin Bridge in November or December.

Orphanage's History

Barnhem Muang Mai in Phuket was founded in the wake of the 2004 Tsunami disaster, by a Thai-Swedish couple.

Though Barnhem means "home for children" in Swedish, it is a home to many in need, often accepting single mothers with children, or grandmothers with grandchildren, unable to provide for themselves.

Susanne and Hans volunteered at the orphanage in 2005 and then moved to Thailand permanently in 2006 when they became managers of the home.

It was the heart-wrenching disaster on December 26 that took not only thousands of Thais, but

I spent so much time there that they have become like a second family for me. That's why I'm doing this.

swept away the lives of Susanne's two daughters.

Eleonor, 14 and Josefin, 12 were vacationing in Thailand at the time with Susanne's ex-husband and his new family – they were in Khao Lak when the wave struck.

"I felt a connection with the Thai people," Susanne told CNN during an interview in 2011. "They had suffered so much more than I suffered. Here, you



The Swedes' journey will take them through 18 countries and 16,000km of road, during a gruelling eight months.

had people that lost children, homes, everything, and they were strong. So I think that affected me, and their kindness to me was such that I wanted to give something back."

There is no question that Susanne and Hans are giving back. Both through the success of the children, who are instilled with the value of education as building blocks they can use to create their own future, and the transparency of the home's financial transactions.

"We do believe in transparency, as it protects us in the long run. And we do believe that people who support us have the right to know how we spend our money, and they shouldn't have to ask for it," Susanne says.

The Pay Off

When Calle walked from Bangkok to Phuket he admittedly had no idea how much money his team would raise for the kids at Barnhem Muang Mai.

"We would just have been happy if we could cross the finish line with 100,000 baht or something like that," he says.

They raised 1 million baht.

"So hopefully we will make it to a million this time as well, but if we raise even more, no one will be happier than me. And if we raise less, it's not the end of the world," says the virtuous Swede, with his seemingly infinite amount of modesty.

The money, however much it amounts to, comes from individuals and companies making

pledges for every Swedish mile (10km) the team rides.

"If someone wants to donate, they just email us and tell us their name and how much they want to donate for each Swedish mile... that's one way to push us to cycle the whole way. We will feel that with every mile we are bringing money to the orphanage."


But perhaps greater than any amount of money, from the kids'

perspective, will be their hero arriving in time for Christmas... there continues to be a great amount of speculation behind their sparkling eyes about whether or not Calle has been the one donning a thick white beard and red suit for several years now.

Red suit or not, Calle is without a doubt travelling from the snowy north to the sunny shores of Phuket with an unbelievable gift for everyone at Barnhem Muang Mai.



The children of Barnhem Muang Mai orphanage in Phuket.



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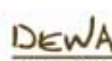

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Meremen need skills

'Moisture is the essence of wetness, and wetness is the essence of beauty,' *Zoolander*

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

IT WASN'T going to happen. After three failed attempts at completing a 50-meter-underwater swim – in a merman tail – it became startlingly clear that the island's first merman might not be gold merfolk material. His freediving skills simply weren't shaping up for high-end mythical creature status.

Things aren't like they use to be. In the old days, merfolk merely seduced sailors or battled it out with tridents. Now the world has changed, and the sea has changed, those few mermen and mermaids still out there can flip their fins, but just don't get too far.

Well, at least some of them. Kat Felton, better known around the world as Mermaid

Kat, is about

to break away from her Phuket mer-pod and depart for the Red Sea.

She will leave behind two or three working mermaids and one chubby, office-bound merman. Out of the over 100 merfolk she has certified, 30 to 35 of them have been ushered into the world as ambassadors to the ocean in Phuket – none, but one, have had to worry about an awkward frontal tail bulge.

"When I started some people had this reaction, they kind of looked down on you. Didn't respect you," Kat tells the three students in her last workshop on the island. "It's hard work, you can be proud of what you do."

Kat is serious, German serious. The course breaks down into three segments: written exam after a two hour lecture on environmental awareness and merfolk's responsibilities as role models; technical freediving basics, including mono-tail swimming techniques; and modeling, above and below the water's surface.

In sweeping brush strokes, Kat attempts to instill in her students her burning passion for environmental conservation.

A graphic video of a man sawing off the fins of a live shark is played; she dives into the red water of *The Cove*, a documentary that details the slaughtering of dolphins in Japan.

"I cried all day long after that movie. From that point forward I became a vegetarian. It's everyday life too. I don't use bags. I don't shower unnecessarily," she explains.

A 90 per cent or better is necessary on the written exam to be in the running for gold mermaid/merman status. If you miss it, you can still make the podium as a silver or bronze certified merperson.

If you are a diver, then some of the test questions are pretty straight forward: Should you feed fish? True or False: I shouldn't touch any animal underwater, only corals and rocks (trick question); True or False: More people die each year because of pet dogs than sharks.

For the underwater and above water modeling, you need to score a seven or better on a scale of 1-10. Having been Miss Germany 2010 along with countless professional modeling shoots, above and below the water, Kat knows exactly what it takes.

The difference between an untrained model and Kat is breathtaking.

The photographer working with Kat during the course, Adriano Trapani, puts it perfectly, "It's like a car accident, you don't want to look, but you can't stop."

For many, however, the challenge of being a true mermaid, or in this particular case merman, is your freediving skills.

So you can swim 200 meters? Okay. How long can you hold your breath?

To take home the gold, you must hold your breath for over 2:31 minutes; silver between 1:30 and 2:30 minutes; and bronze less than 1:30min. Lastly, it's the underwater



Photos: Adriano Trapani

Mermaids and mermen are entertainers, models, freedivers and ambassadors for the ocean.



Things aren't like they use to be. In the old days, merfolk merely seduced sailors or battled it out with tridents.

swim test in a monotail.

With a 95 per cent on the written test and the rest of the skill sets checked off for bringing home the gold, this was it for Phuket's first merman.

Then it happened. Determination overtook the brain's warning signs of rising CO₂ levels and several laps in Andaman Ocean Safari's beautiful pool were completed.

But as Kat pointed out, even after the beach photo shoot the next day, certification through her academy is just the first step – there are much larger battles to be won in the ocean,

with or without a trident.

"Mermaids [and mermen] are also entertainers, models and freedivers, but most importantly, they are ambassadors for the ocean – role models that can teach children and adults about the ocean environment," Kat says.

Kat's departure from the island is no doubt a loss. However, it was wonderful of her to make merit by raising, and then releasing three more merfolk back into the sea: Vivien Seek, Sirene Serene and your humble author.





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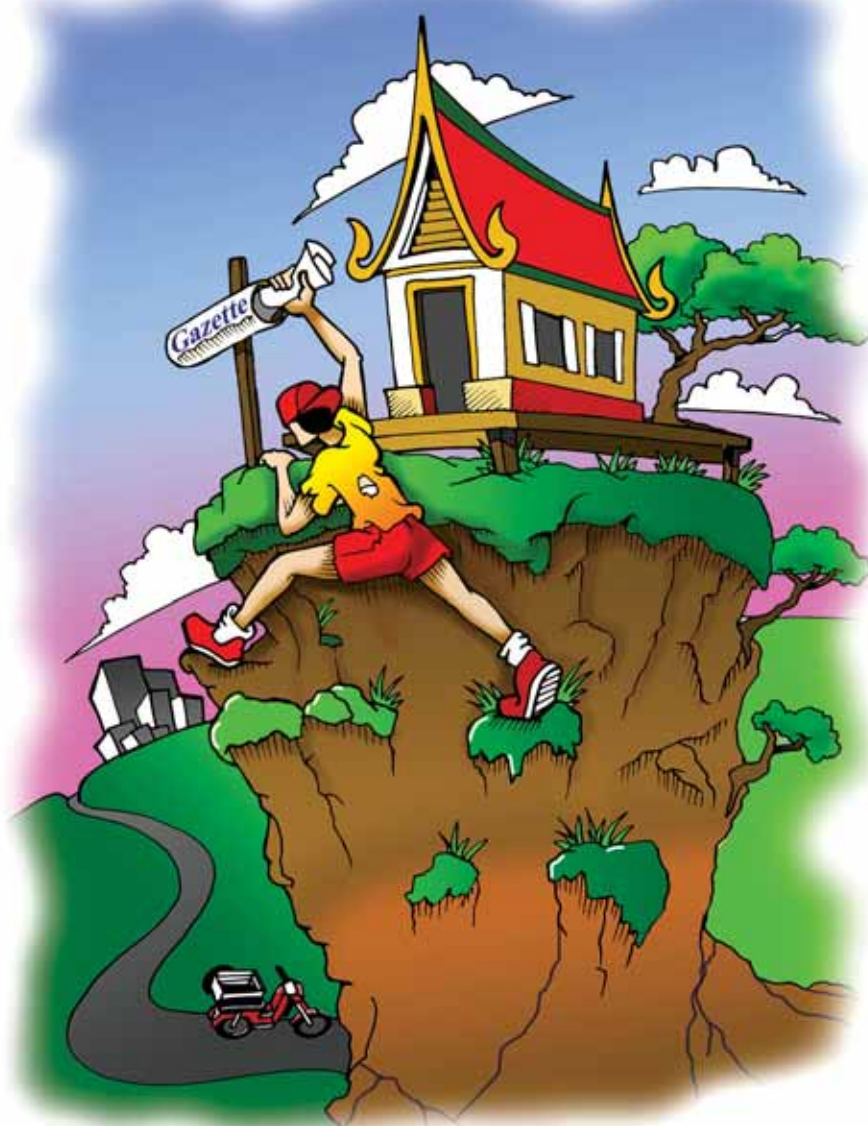
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Your weekly pith:

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go..."

—Dr Seuss

"In order to write about life, first you must live it."

—Ernest Hemingway

Medium

	7		5		9		6	
1		3				4		7
	6						1	
2			9	5	7			6
			2		1			
7			8	6	4			1
	8						5	
5		4				7		2
	2		4		5		3	

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

Hard

		6				9		
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	5			8			3	
7								2
			2	7	4			
		4				8		

COFFEE
break

Across

8. Against a broken chair in a Phuket hospital (7)
 9. Recipe breaks ice, a bluff (9)
 13. Creature is satisfactory, a goody-goody! (5)
 14. But do wrong with uncertainty (5)
 15. Long lasting rule bad perhaps (7)
 16. Mice! Sis trembles like an earthquake! (7)
 17. Short note goes back and forth (5)
 18. Lessen spill (5)
 20. New UFO back North, not amusing! (2,3)
 22. Accepted grade developed out East (6)
 23. Left in at a lower level, roar (6)
 25. Close on providing comfort (7)
 27. Eat scone? Um, perhaps (7)
 30. Annul covering article once a year (6)
 31. Superior sort of gambler? (6)
 32. Call out about nothing in the pub (5)
 35. Stole credit, pet, maybe (5)
 36. To do with seeing something behind the bar? (5)
 37. Grand, as many request a respirator (3,4)
 39. Maybe harm top of Thai lower classes in school (7)
 41. Deal with something that gives pleasure (5)
 42. The French-American girl could be legitimate (5)
 43. Maybe dupe lent around island - more than enough (9)
 44. Possibly counts Left in - seek advice (7)

Down

1. Possible malaise out East from highly seasoned food (6)
 2. Convener in a march in a disturbance (8)
 3. Papa tried cable, maybe to be expected (11)
 4. Rented per arrangement as claimant to the throne (9)
 5. School day came, as arranged (7)
 6. Apathetic without strong drink! (10)
 7. A black leg from mange (4)
 10. Lose no possibility to relax (6)
 11. Rundown total may be about right (7)
 12. Raffle again for the upset warder (6)
 19. Police maybe take in minutes

of diatribe (7)

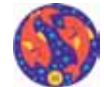
21. Ruffle, storm off (7)
 24. Ridge in our coating could be about right (11)
 26. Nor the spam involved in a sophisticated mobile device (10)
 28. Possibly cited true conviction (9)
 29. Sicker about sort of shirt label (7)
 30. Take E.C. pact apart (6)
 32. Uninterested, lean to one side not so much (8)
 33. Probable key I'll change (6)
 34. Reduce the travel to work (7)
 38. Different angles for divine beings (6)
 40. Join in association with every unknown (4)

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):



Grasping at straws can land you in hot water towards the middle of the month. The stars advise that an unresolved dilemma is best tackled with professional advice, particularly if it relates to money. In the realm of romance, single Pisceans see sparks fly when introduced to a fire sign this weekend. If your birthday falls during the coming week, the stars show better luck in love in the year ahead.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):



Astral influences prompt Arians to reflect more on events that happened at the start of this year. If this results from having contact with a person you parted with on bad terms, the stars advise that closure can be found. Regarding finances, a loss that you suffered might be regained. Investments are auspicious until the middle of March. Romance with another fire sign is positively affected by a heart to heart conversation.

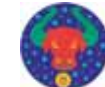
TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):



A generous offer causes Taureans to suspect someone's motives. The stars show that another earth sign can be trusted, but anyone else may only be thinking of their own gain.

Plans to change your employment are best put on hold until later this month when the cosmic climate will be more supportive of change. Money matters are lucky on Thursday and Friday. Flirtation perks you up this weekend.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



Your sense of humor might not be shared by others. There are hints that Geminis could take things too far this week, with focus on a more serious air sign being upset at your idea of a joke. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, there is reason to remember that a relationship needs to be a two way street. Money matters are most auspicious on Wednesday and Thursday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Those born under the sign of Cancer who have been putting something away for a rainy day are tempted into spending unwisely this week. A bout of boredom can affect you as the middle of the month approaches and the stars suggest catching up with friends who know how to have low cost fun. A casual romantic relationship with an earth sign is compromised by that person's desire to get more serious.

YOUR
horoscope
By Isla Star

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



You can be inclined to behave in a way that you know isn't right this week. The stars suggest that trying to impress someone you have a crush on might be the cause, but it will become harder to play this game as time goes on. Those Leos hoping to be promoted at work should guard against getting into deeper waters than they can handle. Lucky days for money matters are Monday and Tuesday.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



Your mental energy is slow until the middle of the week and Virgoans are advised to keep things simple until they feel brighter. The stars recommend getting more physical exercise; this is an auspicious time to take up the sport you've had at the back of your mind for a while. Creative solutions to financial problems can be found after Wednesday - another earth sign is forecast to offer some handy tips.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Business and work go well for Librans this week, with hints that a lucky break is imminent. On a personal level, a close friend is forecast to come clean about something that will make you wonder how well you really know this person. In the realm of romance, an earth sign you were close to can make contact. The stars suggest that this will stir up feelings you thought were in the past.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Positive vibrations begin to affect your working life after a period of feeling unsure about the future. In the realm of romance, sharing your emotions is good up to a point, but Scorpions are advised to be sure before opening up too much. A relationship that was recently begun with another water sign needs to grow more before it is made serious. Love with air signs can become more committed.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



The stars forecast calm before a small storm this week. Sagittarians who thought they were sure of events due to happen in their world of work can have their patience put to the test by last minute changes.

There are signs that this will involve extra input, which can clash with personal plans. Where personal relationships are concerned, a new relationship with an earth sign can turn your world upside down.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



The cosmic climate encourages Capricorns to seek more knowledge and this should fit in well with how certain friends are feeling. An air sign is forecast to suggest learning something new together and a fire sign is looking for a companion to take a trip with. Travel is well starred later in the month, but the stars recommend checking that your personal affairs are well in order before making concrete plans.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



Your personal life can interfere with work this week. The stars advise caution when mixing business with pleasure as sensitive information could land in the wrong hands. Where finances are concerned, Aquarians who are trying to figure out how to move on from a difficult situation should find answers from trusted sources. Romance is relaxing this weekend; a fire sign in particular is as keen as you to simply chill out.

Stars team up for IPTL

WORLD number one Rafa Nadal will team up with 14-time major champion Pete Sampras in Mumbai for the inaugural International Premier Tennis League (IPTL) later this year, tournament organizers said on Sunday.

Serena Williams, the top-ranked women's player, will headline the Singapore team alongside Tomas Berdych and Andre Agassi in the off-season tournament from November 28 to December 14, which is styled on cricket's franchise-based Indian Premier League.

Four teams – Bangkok and Dubai being the others – will compete in men's and women's singles, men's and mixed doubles and a men's legends singles with one set per match, and no advantage scoring.

Serb Novak Djokovic and former women's number one Caroline Wozniacki will lead Dubai while Britain's Andy Murray, Frenchman Jo Wilfried-Tsonga and Victoria Azarenka of Belarus were picked by Bangkok when the teams were drafted on Sunday in Dubai.

The 2014 season will feature 24 matches across the four host cities with all four teams competing in a round-robin format in each of the four cities, organizers said.

"As an Indian and the owner of the tournament, I'm delighted that the world number one Rafa Nadal is playing for an Indian city," promoter Mahesh Bhupathi said on Sunday.

"I think the teams are evenly balanced, I'm happy for the players who have been picked."

The IPTL has been generally well-received by the world's top players although not all have signed up.

Roger Federer, winner of a record 17 grand slam titles, and former women's world No 1 Maria Sharapova will not be appearing.

"I don't know that much about it to be honest," Federer said in Dubai this week where he won the title.

"I wish I could tell you exactly what's going on. I just didn't sign up because I didn't want to. I just first wanted to see it get off the ground."

Some will question why play-

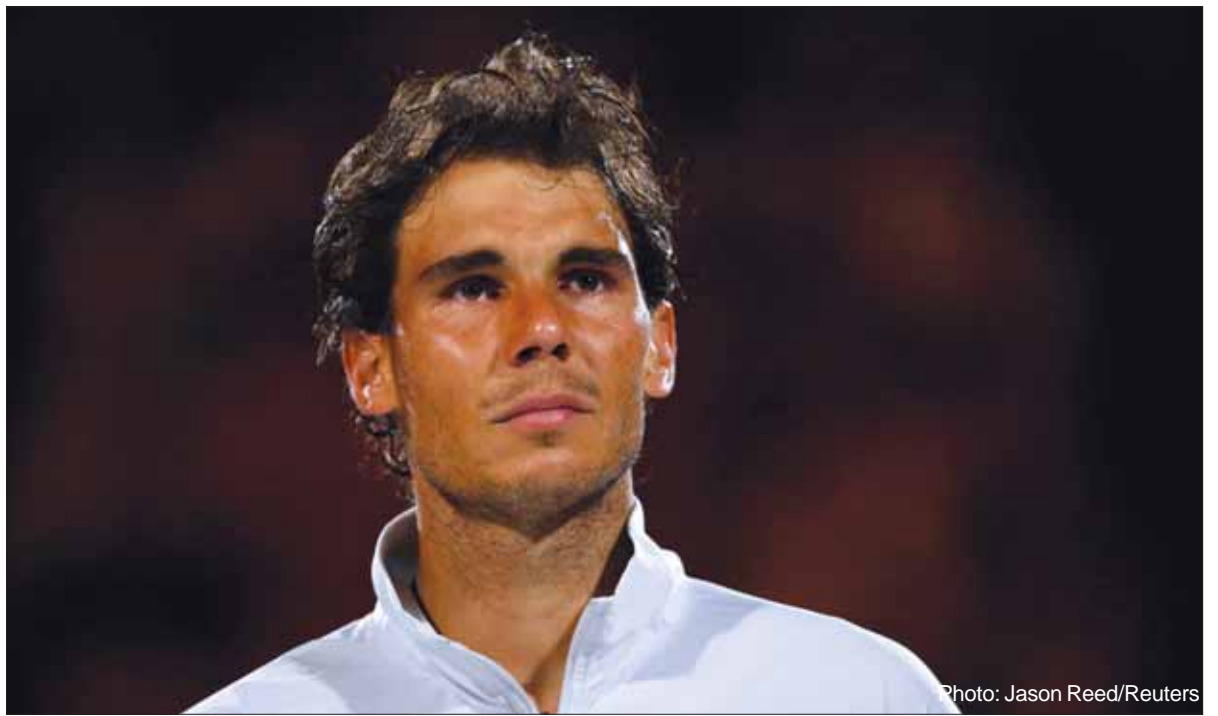


Photo: Jason Reed/Reuters

Rafael Nadal of Spain at the Australian Open 2014 tennis tournament in Melbourne January 26, 2014.

ers who have regularly raised concerns about the length of the season are willing to take long-haul flights to play matches in the short off-season.

It promises to be extremely lucrative, however, with organizers saying Sunday's initial draft

had seen an outlay of US\$24 million with salaries for each team expected to be between \$4 and \$10mn.

"Really happy that I was drafted for Dubai...Thanks," Serbia's Janko Tipsarevic said on Twitter while his compatriot Ana

Ivanovic said she was happy to join Nadal playing for Mumbai.

"So excited to learn I have been picked for # Mumbai team for # IPTL! Can't wait to get on court and get together with my great teammates! :))" she said.

– Reuters

Wembley to host ultimate rematch



Photo: Jussi Nukari/Lehtikuva/Reuters

Carl Froch (left) and Arthur Abraham during their WBC super middleweights title bout November 27, 2010.

WEMBLEY Stadium will host the re-match between WBA and IBF super-middleweight champion Carl Froch and George Groves on May 31 with promoters expecting to sell more tickets than for any post-World War Two fight in Britain.

The fight will be the first staged at the new national stadium in North London, which re-opened in 2007 and seats 90,000.

"I think we have got the product to fill stadiums like this. When you get an opportunity to do so, you have to grab it with both hands," promoter Eddie Hearn told the BBC.

"This is the ultimate, in my

opinion – steeped in history – and this is the first fight at the new stadium. And what a fight."

The two Britons first clashed at the Manchester Arena in November when Groves, 25, was controversially stopped by 36-year-old Froch in the ninth of 12 scheduled rounds.

Groves had floored Nottingham-based Froch in the opening round and was ahead on the judges' cards when referee Howard Foster stepped in.

"I don't want to fight in Nottingham. Nottingham's not big enough," Froch told Sky Sports news. "It only holds the best part of 30,000.

Back injury plagues Woods

WORLD number one Tiger Woods withdrew from the Honda Classic during the final round on Sunday at Palm Beach Gardens in Florida, citing a back injury.

Woods retired while playing the 13th hole at PGA National where he was five over par for the day and level for the tournament, having struggled to the turn in five-over 40.

"It's my lower back with spasms," Woods, 38, said in a statement. "It started this morning warming up."

He said it was the "same feeling" he had during The Barclays tournament last August, where he finished in obvious discomfort.

His withdrawal comes less than five weeks before the first major of the year, the April 10-13 Masters at Augusta National.

Woods, whose career major tally of 14 is second only to Jack Nicklaus, said it was too soon to know whether he would be able to defend his title at the WGC-Cadillac Championship, starting in Miami on Thursday.

"It's too early to tell," he said. "I need treatment every day until Thursday to try to calm it down and we'll see how it is."

Woods last withdrew from a tournament at the 2012 Cadillac Championship. He cited an Achilles injury but it did not prove serious. He bounced back two weeks later to win the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

– Reuters



Photo: Brad Barr/USA TODAY Sports

Tiger Woods drives on nine during the final round of The Honda Classic golf tournament.

"I am just so excited that I am going to give George Groves an absolute pasting in front of such a big crowd."

The current highest attendance recorded at a British bout was 55,000 who watched local IBO light-welterweight champion Ricky Hatton take on Mexican Juan Lazcano at the City of Manchester stadium in 2008.

The last fight at the old Wembley stadium was the WBC heavy-weight title clash in 1995 between Britain's Frank Bruno and American Oliver McCall which the home favourite won on points to become champion at the fourth attempt.

– Reuters

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Maradona praises Messi's greatness

By Luis Ampuero, Rex Gowar

LIONEL Messi does not need a World Cup winners' medal to be considered among soccer's all-time greats, fellow Argentine Diego Maradona said on Tuesday.

"Messi doesn't need to win the World Cup to be the best player in the world," Maradona, who inspired Argentina to the title in Mexico in 1986, told *La Nacion*.

"(If he did) it would be great for Argentina, the fans and Lio, but (winning) a World Cup or not won't take away any of his achievements up to now to be among the greatest."

Twice World Cup winners Argentina face Romania in a friendly in Bucharest last Wednesday and they are beginning to crank up their preparations for this year's finals in Brazil.

Former captain and coach Maradona said everything appeared in place for Messi to shine, although Argentina's task would be tough, with hosts Brazil, title holders Spain and Germany

among the sides to beat.

Maradona said Messi had had a great World Cup in South Africa in 2010 despite not scoring any goals. The Argentina team coached by Maradona lost 4-0 to Germany in the quarter-finals.

"Messi had an exceptional World Cup with me... and no-one said so. (Was it) because he didn't score? He turned all the goalkeepers into stars," he said.

Maradona said he could not forget Messi's sobs when Argentina were eliminated.

"I approached him and told him he'd have many World Cups to get revenge. I said it with all my heart. While the rest were thinking about our return (home) he was there, head bowed, crying."

Argentina are in Group F with Bosnia, Iran and Nigeria at the finals starting on June 12.

"There's Spain, Germany and there's Brazil with a tremendous defence. You think of Brazil's defence and six or seven names come to mind, you think of their attack and there's only

Neymar," Maradona said.

"For Lio it will be a test of character, to bring out all that crying he has in his heart. Brazil can be his great revenge," added Maradona, who will commentate on the tournament for a Venezuelan television programme.

— Reuters



Photo: Cadaverexquisito

Maradona, Argentina's former captain, coach and all time football legend.



Lionel Messi is already dominating Argentinian football. Photo: Stefano Stabile

Puyol to leave Barca

By Tim Hanlon

BARCELONA captain Carles Puyol will leave the club at the end of the season following a persistent battle with a knee injury, he said on Tuesday.

The 35-year-old defender, a fans' favourite for his battling displays, has been restricted to just five league games this season and has decided to end his time at the Nou Camp.

Puyol, who made his Barca debut in 1999, has the second highest number of appearances for the club with 593, only bettered by Xavi Hernandez.

"I will leave FC Barcelona at the end of the season," he told a news conference.

"I have told the club the situation and we are both in agreement that it is the right decision. I will rescind the two years left on my contract.

"The injuries I have been suffering from have been worse than I expected and have not allowed me to play at my level."

He added: "It is not finished today, there are three months of the championship left where those that know me are aware that I will not take it easy and I will fight to the end to try and help the team achieve their objectives this season."

Puyol came through the Barcelona youth system, La Masia, and was given his debut under coach Louis van Gaal.



Injury has forced Barca's Puyol to leave his team. Photo: Gustau Nacarino

He has been club captain for the past 10 years, but has been restricted in the last two seasons by knee injuries.

He has won 21 titles at the club and captained the famed "six cups" side of 2009 that won all the competitions open to them during that calendar year.

With Spain he won Euro 2008 and the 2010 World Cup but injury cost him a place in the victorious Euro 2012 squad.

Spanish media have reported the Catalan could continue his playing career at a less-demanding level, such as Major League Soccer, but he has yet to give any hint of his next move.

"I don't know what I will do after June 30, what I am sure about is that after the season I will need to rest," he added. "I have had four years without a break due to injuries. After that we will see."

— Reuters



Photo: Kacper Pempel

Poland's Lewandowski will join Bayern Munich next season.

Injured Lewandowski out of Poland squad

By Karolos Grohmann

POLAND striker Robert Lewandowski has left the squad before last Wednesday's friendly against Scotland due to a knee injury and is on his way back to Germany for further tests, his club Borussia Dortmund said on Tuesday.

Lewandowski, who will join Bayern Munich next season, is top of the Bundesliga scorers' list with 15 goals. He has added another six in the Champions League.

"Upon his arrival he will be checked by the team doctor to determine the extent of his injury," Dortmund said in a statement.

Dortmund, second in the league behind Bayern, are also in action in the Champions League later this month when they host Zenit St Petersburg in the second leg of the round of 16 after beating them 4-2 in Russia with Lewandowski scoring twice.

— Reuters

International Sport

BISP conquers Challenge Cup

THE British International School Phuket (BISP) Under 19 boys' basketball team proved too strong in the inaugural Challenge Cup on the weekend, with a convincing win over Thai Hua 32-21 in the final.

The senior boys' basketball tournament, held in BISP's sports hall, featured six of the best teams in Phuket. Spectators were

treated to high-quality basketball and thrilling close encounters, with one of the semi-finals going into extra time.

The day-long competition followed a two-pool format of six teams in total. However, BISP head coach Jamie Blake said he plans to grow the tournament in 2015 and establish a strong annual event on the island.

"We stuck to a six team format this year, but had interest from several more boys' teams on the island. Next year we hope to attract some girls' teams as well and make it a full two-day competition," said Blake.

BISP's Challenge Cup win comes a month after taking out the boys basketball final at the annual Senior Games at Regents International School, Pattaya.

BISP basketball captain, Harry O'Brien, said, "It's a great feeling to win both tournaments. I'm surprised because we have such a young team, but all the hard work at training has obviously paid off."

— *Phuket Gazette*



Finals action gets under way.

Hard work at training has paid off – BISP celebrates victory. Photos: Supplied

Anna Nordqvist takes LPGA trophy

ANNA Nordqvist of Sweden completed a wire-to-wire victory at the Siam County Club Pattaya Old Course, firing a 68 in the final round to beat world No 1 Inbee Park by two shots and claim the US\$1.5 million Honda LPGA Thailand crown on Tuesday, March 4.

Enjoying a four-shot advantage at the start of the round, Nordqvist bounced back from a double bogey on the par-4 fifth hole to shoot seven birdies to ward off the stiff challenge from defending champion Park with a 15-under 273 total.

The 26-year-old, who claimed the LPGA Championship and LPGA Tour Championship as her first two titles in 2009, finally put an end to her long winning drought on the LPGA Tour.

Her last international crown was the Valenciana European Ladies Gold Cup in 2011.

"I'm speechless to be honest. It's been a couple of years since I won," the world No 27 said.

"I kept working hard even when I was down. Inbee kept hitting birdies and [Michelle] Wie played so well."

"I just had to stay there with them and tried to be aggressive."

"I'm happy to be back in the winning circle. It took me a few years."

"This is a very emotional win for me and it will push me to work harder."

"I have to thank my family and friends and coach [Jorje Parada] for pushing me through good and bad times."

"They really inspired me and believed in me no matter what.

And here I am sitting here with the trophy."

Nordqvist almost decided to call it quits last year after poor results.

The title in Pattaya, plus the cheque of US\$225,000, proved the decision not to quit was right.

Park fought hard to retain the crown and was one stroke behind the leader at the start of the back nine.

But when the gutsy Swede fired three straight birdies from holes 10 to 12, it was too much for the South Korean.

Park finished with a bogey-free 66 for 13-under 275 and earned US\$139,572. In third place was 44-year-old Catriona Matthew of Scotland, who shot back-to-back 65 for an 11-under 277 total.

Inconsistent US pro Michelle Wie, who was tied for second after Saturday's third round, shot three birdies and an eagle against two bogeys for a 69 and had to settle for fourth place at 10-under.

Former champion Yani Tseng, with a final round 68, was joint fifth at nine-under with American trio of Gerina Pillier, Stacy Lewis and Lexi Thompson and Paraguayan Julieta Granada.

Suzann Pettersen, the 2007 winner, finished 10th at eight-under.

A stroke behind her were Spain's Azahara Munoz and South Koreans Ryu So-yeon and Jenny Shin.

Thailand's Thidapa Suwanapura started with four birdies from five holes, which briefly sent her to No 2 on the leaderboard,

before a costly double bogey dropped her back to five under.

She finished with a third-straight 70 and was tied for 14th at five-under.

"I started very well and was so determined, thinking my moment was coming," she said.

"And then on the sixth hole, I teed off the ball to the edge of the sand bunker and it was so difficult to get out of that position and I ended up with a double bogey."

"I should have finished better today, as I shot more birdies. I just wish I could have made it to the top 10."

Thidapa will have a three-week break before heading to the US.

Thai No 1 Pornanong Phatlum signed off with a 292, three strokes ahead of Ariya Jutanugarn, who is still struggling to find her momentum after eight months out with an injury.

"I'm glad that I hit it well with my driver but my irons and putter let me down," Ariya said.

"I just need more time to get my momentum back."

Ariya finished two shots better than her sister, Moriya Jutanugarn, who had a 297.

Ariya will play a tournament in Asia next week before going to defend her Ladies European in Morocco.

— *The Nation*



Anna Nordqvist. Photo: Wojciech Migda

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Train like a pro, win like a pro

Professional training routine yields great results for one of Phuket's best athletes.

By Maciek Klimowicz

ROUGHLY 135 is the number of triathlons completed by Jaray Jearanai, Phuket's homegrown triathlete. "I've been running for nine years and each year I run more than 15 triathlons," he says. But as much as he likes it, it's not all just for fun, "I want to be the best Thai triathlete. Right now, there are no Thais going high up in the professional triathlon [ranks] and I want to change that to become an example for other people who want

to take up triathlon," says Jaray. "He started triathlon training on his own, with no professional guidance. Inspired by a major triathlon event in his local Bang Tao – Laguna Phuket Triathlon, he decided to give it a try, but at first, years of self-training didn't bring the desired results. "In the first 4-5 years I did the training on my own, without a proper coach, no swimming pool – I learned to swim in the open water in the ocean. I was cycling and running on my own which was quite challenging."

But to take his triathlon experience to a new level, Jaray had to do the same with his training.

"Four years ago, before Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club opened, I was training with its founder Klaus Hebben and it was him who invited me to train here," explains Jaray. "When I met Jurgen Zack, Thanyapura's triathlon coach, I experienced an amazing change. The first three months were very hard but it was also a big jump for me. Everyday, hard training brought great results – suddenly from never being in the top 10, I jumped to the first place in the Thai Elite group."



Jaray Jearanai aims to become Thailand's leading triathlete. Photos: Supplied.

Today, Jaray continues intensive training and takes triathlons even more seriously.

"Triathlon is like a full time job for me. I train seven days a week, I wake up at 5-5:30 in the morning, I train for 30-35 hours a week, I swim around 12-15 km a week, 400-450 km per week of cycling and 60-70 km of running

a week," says Jaray. This intensive training combined with professional guidance of Thanyapura's coaches brings impressive results – recently a second place in the Southeast Asia elite group during the Philippines Challenge. "It was one of my best races, considering that there were more than 20 pros competing. It

was my first race of that level and I'm really happy with my results."

The next step on the long way to success – a Triathlon in Cha Am on March 17. Jaray has no lack of faith in his and his team's abilities. "I'm in the right place to move up and I think one or two years and I will be where I want [to be]."



500km of cycling a week is part of Jaray's training.

Being on balance

By Roger Cochrane

IT IS an often-told story within PBI (Peter Burwash International) how Peter wrote an article for Tennis Magazine in 1987 entitled, "Break the Rules, Open your Stance". This article ended up being the cover story for the month and it created a fire storm within the tennis industry.

Tennis Magazine had never received that volume of mail in regards to a cover story and 75 per cent of the comments were negative. Everyone was up in arms about Peter saying that you didn't have to turn sideways to hit a ground-stroke and that in some instances it is actually more practical to not turn sideways. Interestingly enough, if you flash-forward to today's tennis, it is very predominantly a game of open stance shots.

Peter had played on the tour and had seen all different types of players. He himself had been coached in the classic turn side-

ways style and he found it wasn't always practical when you are playing matches. When he formed PBI he came up with his three fundamentals of ground-strokes (forehands and backhands), which are: balance, the use of left hand, and contact. We mention these three fundamentals constantly in Thanyapura's morning adult clinics, our junior after-school program, and throughout private lessons at Thanyapura.

In PBI, we feel that it is more important to be balanced when you hit the ball than to have a designated "correct" position to be in. Our PBI definition of balance is that your belly button is over your feet. You can be open stance (facing the net) or closed stance (sideways) and as long as you are on balance you should be able to strike the ball and have your body feel at ease.

Many of us were only shown one way to hit the ball, either open stance or closed stance. It is always a good idea to prac-

tice both stances when you are playing. You often don't have time to think about what foot is where and which way should you stand during the actual moment of a match. The game happens so quickly. It is very practical to practice both, as you never know where your opponent will hit the ball and the scenario you will be in when the moment of striking the ball needs to happen.

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to position your feet for the point of contact, the circumstances will determine your position. Being on balance is the key to your repeated success.

Tip provided by Thanyapura's Tennis Head Coach, Roger Cochrane. To contact the coach with your questions and enquiries send an email to at: tennis@thanyapura.com



The key to success is being on balance. Photo: Gazette file

Thalang dominate Patong

MATCH 12 of the Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) league was played between Thalang and Patong. Patong, finalists in last year's JLL league and also the Outrigger T20 competition, were in desperate need of a win to keep their finals chances intact, but it wasn't to be, with Thalang winning by 128 runs.

On a warm, dry day with little wind, Thalang won the coin toss and chose to bat first on the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG), which is holding up extremely well considering it hasn't rained for over two months.

The first over from David Watson was a maiden, with his left arm swingers beating the bat of Thalang's s run-machine Justin Thomatos three times in a row. As the batsmen's nerves settled the runs started to flow. A finger injury to opening bowler Richard Desmond saw him removed from the attack after just a single over, and with Imtiyaz Mushtaq late to arrive at the ground, Patong were forced to change their plans.

Thalang's opening pair were able to score freely with few risks taken and at the 12th over drinks break Thalang were 75-0. After the break, Thomatos plundered 18 runs off the next David Thomas over and soon after the openers brought up their second consecutive 100 run partnership. The opening stand came to an end on 131 when Thomatos (63 from 64 balls) was caught in the deep off the bowling of Monish Chandawaskar. When the second drinks break came around the score was 163-1 with Andrew McMillan 81 not out and Bill Stahmer on 8. Just two straight



Dave Thomas sweeps on his way to 29 runs for Patong.

David Watson deliveries after the break and Thalang had lost Bill Stahmer (bowled) and debutant Carl Baxter (LBW). Walking out to defend the hat-trick opportunity was Simon Wetherell, who scored a golden duck in his last innings courtesy of a Watson delivery.

With the field all around the bat, and some friendly advice being given to the batsman, Watson steamed in and delivered a full, straight ball that was comfortably played through the field for 2 runs. McMillan, (86 from 74 balls) was the next to fall in the 27th over with the score 191-4. Chipping in with some fast runs at the finish was Wetherell (32 off 17), and Craig Murphy (30 not out) including a 6 from the last ball of the innings that was dropped over the boundary rope.

For Patong David Thomas 2-52 and David Watson 2-42 bowled well to restrict the Thalang total to 241-7.

After a meal upstairs in the Boundary Bar, play resumed with Patong requiring 242 to win. Erratic up-and-coming Bangladeshi me-

dium pace bowler Anamul Hossain opened the bowling in Neill Culpan's absence and struck gold in the second over, removing David Watson.

Seemant Raju played around a full pitched ball from Anthony Dupont in the next over and Patong were 16-2. Paddy Morton and David Thomas then went about playing Patong back into the game, keeping the run rate in check by punishing the leg side bowling. Heads dropped out on the field and the heat started to play a role until Paddy missed a straight one and was bowled for 28 runs in the 10th over. Patong went into the first drinks break 75-3 with a lot of runs still to make.

David Thomas and Imtiyaz Mustaq toiled hard after the break but with the score on 96, Bill Stahmer had Thomas (LBW) trapped in front of his stumps on 29 runs.

Momentum swung Thalang's way from that point as Roshan Jayasuriya picked up the next 2 wickets with Patong stagnant on 99 runs. All-rounder Bill Stahmer saw



Photos: Michael Way

Thai lad, Paan, unleashes a fast ball for Thalang Cricket Team.



Coming up to the 12th over break Patong were on the required run rate.

his opportunity for a man of the match award and went through the next four Patong batsmen like a knife through hot butter. His mix of slow out-swingers and very slow out-swingers drew mistimed shots that were well caught by the fieldsmen.

In the end Patong were all out

for 113. 128 runs shy of Thalang's score, and with 2 very valuable bonus points going to Thalang, they now sit 3 points clear on the top of the ladder.

This Sunday, Laguna play against the Village at the Alan Cooke Ground starting at 10am.

– Phuket Gazette

Young cricketers shine in Sawasdee League

PHUKET'S young cricketing talent took part in another round of the Phuket Cricket Group's (PCG) "Sawasdee League" at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) Saturday, March 1 with PCG's Youth Academy playing against and Thai Hua school in some closely contested matches.

The PCG youth academy teams, while younger than their Thai Hua opponents, were ready for a contest and keen to show the spectators how well their skills have developed during the past year at coaching clinics held every Saturday morning at the ACG by PCG coaches John King and Andrew Macmillan.

In game one, PCG's Youth Academy team A took on Thai Hua team A coached by Kru Sombat. In a head-to-head match, youngsters from both teams showcased their skills which can only augur well for the future of cricket which some great displays of bowling, fielding and batting from both teams. The PCG Academy were comfortable



Thai Hua lad dispatches a ball to boundary. Photos: Michael Way

winners, scoring 257 versus Thai Hua's 237.

In game two, PCG Youth Academy team B took on Thai Hua team B. This match proved to be much closer and Thai Hua evened up the results with a narrow win over the PCG Academy team scoring 233 versus PCG's 229.

Great sportsmanship was displayed by all the youngsters who congratulated each other at the end of each match.

The next round of the "Sawasdee League" should see

the competition heat up with teams from Headstart International School taking to the field. The HSI players have received some intensive coaching clinics recently, which included a visit from former English test cricketer and international umpire, Jack Birkenshaw.

The PCG Youth Academy is held every Saturday morning from 9am at the ACG. For more information contact chairman@phuketcricketgroup.com or visit www.phuketcricketgroup.com



Marcus flights a slower ball.



Max plays a straight drive.



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