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**December 20 - 26, 2014**

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■ **'WE HAVE YET TO INSTALL BUOYS AND ROPES'**

# SLASHED

■ **Speedboat hits tourist swimming in danger zone**

By **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

OFFICIALS have yet to scramble for safety solutions more than a week after a Russian tourist had his leg slashed open repeatedly by a speedboat propeller while he was swimming at Kata Noi.

Sergey Kuzenny, 55, was swimming in a boat zone when he was struck by a parasailing speedboat on December 10. He suffered five deep lacerations to his leg and remained in Mission Hospital this week.

"I was contacted by Mr Kuzenny and his wife to help them translate, but I was not there when the accident occurred," said Maria Lukashevich.

"Mr Kuzenny said that he had no idea that he was in an area where swimming was not allowed."

Though Marine Office staff concluded that Mr Kuzenny was in a speedboat zone, Phuket Marine Office Chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut admitted that there were no buoy lines clearly distinguishing swim zones from zones for boats and jet-skis to approach the beach.

"At Kata Noi, buoys have yet to be put in, but lifeguards use red-yellow flags on the beach to mark safe swimming zones," Mr Phuripat said.

Though red-yellow flags are used on Phuket beaches to mark safe swimming areas, they are traditionally associated with areas free of dangerous rip currents.

"We have yet to install buoys and ropes at Karon to mark..."

*Continued on Page 6*

**7-year-old girl dies after crash into a sinkhole**

MOLLY Anne Bailey, 7, who was critically injured when the pick-up truck she was travelling in plunged into a sinkhole in central Phuket last week, died on December 13.



**Molly Anne Bailey**

Her parents took her off life-support after doctors confirmed that she had no chance of recovering.

*Full Story Page 3*

**National Park: officials move to revoke deeds**

OFFICERS are calling for 17 land title deeds worth about 5 billion baht to be revoked, as they have been deemed to be within Sirinath National Park.

The call follows an investigation, first launched in 2012, into 379 plots suspected of encroaching on park land.

*Full Story Page 7*

**Uber gets legal traction for Thai taxi operations**

THE Department of Land Transportation has given the green light to Uber services, but made it clear that the company was not allowed to engage in the promotion of any illegal taxi drivers.

*Full Story Page 4*



**Mr Kuzenny was unaware that he was in a speedboat zone.** Photo: Voratuss Intasee

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## This Week



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Sky Club Asia reaches for the sky and reaps the benefits. **Page 11**



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Regent Bang Tao taps into local investment market. **Page 29**



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When the art of coffee becomes a serious competition. **Page 31**



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BISP art teacher's work on display in local gallery. **Page 35**



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Reduce waste for a green holiday season and future. **Page 36**



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Young sailors race to represent Thailand at SEA. **Page 39**

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# Cambodian kids rescued from human traffickers

By Chutharat Plerin

A 10-YEAR-OLD Cambodian boy and his 6-year-old sister are under close watch by welfare officers after being rescued from human traffickers by Patong Police on December 11.

"The children are now safe in one of our shelters. We will talk to them more on Monday about what is going on, and that may lead us to more suspects," Sirumporn Komonsanao, director of the Department of Social Development and Human Security office in Phuket, told the *Gazette* on December 13.

"We are afraid the kids will be threatened by other people in the gang who have yet to be arrested. We believe there are more of them."

Police secured a warrant and arrested three suspects at an unregistered house on Phisit Gorani Road at about 5:30pm, explained Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Khunnadet Nanongkhai.

The three were named by police as Thai national Wichai Thongmee, 20, and Vietnamese women Moon Chum, 31, and Lay



The three human-traffickers were arrested. Photo: Patong Police

Thee Hong Em, 50.

"They have all been charged with human trafficking, and with child abduction and gang-related deprivation of liberty against minors," Col Khunnadet confirmed.

The raid in Patong followed a tip-off from an NGO in Chiang Rai, said Ms Sirumporn.

"When some of the NGO's members saw the two Cambodian

children selling flowers in Patong, they informed police. So the NGO and the police worked together until they made the raid," she explained.

Meanwhile, Col Khunnadet assured that his officers were continuing their investigation in the hope of arresting more suspects involved in the human-trafficking gang.

## Local leaders protest proposed election changes

ABOUT 100 local leaders protested outside Provincial Hall on Monday against proposed changes to Thailand's electoral system.

"One of the proposals is to have elections for provincial governors, as well as local leaders such as *kamnan* [subdistrict chiefs] and *phu yai baan* [village chiefs]. Additionally, it proposes a two-year limit to their terms," said Kittisak Sotraksa, president of Phuket's association of *kamnan*



The protesters and governor.

and *phu yai baan*.

"Local administrative officers must be well connected with local people. If *kamnan* and *phu yai baan* change every two years along with the governor, the lead-

ers and locals will not be able to build the necessary rapport."

"We think that more problems between leaders and local residents will occur in the future if this happens, so we are asking the prime minister to prevent these changes."

The protesters presented their letter of complaint to Governor Nisit Jansomwong, who promised to pass it on to PM Prayut Chan-ocha. — *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

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# Sinkhole crash victim, Molly, 7, passes away

By Thawit Bilabdullar

MOLLY Anne Bailey, the 7-year-old girl who was critically injured when the pick-up truck she was travelling in plunged into a sinkhole in central Phuket on December 11, has died.

"Her parents decided to let Molly go by taking her off her life-support on Saturday night after doctors said she had no chance of recovering," Lt Col Yongyuth Kongmala of the Thalang Police told the *Gazette* on Monday.

Molly was rushed to hospital unconscious with her mother, Pakkamon DOUNGCHAYATEMARAT, 38, on December 11 after the pick-up truck Ms Pakkamon was driving crashed into a sinkhole crater that cut across a rural road in Srisoonthorn.

Ms Pakkamon broke her left arm in the accident and was soon discharged from hospital care.

Molly, however, remained in critical condition in the intensive care unit.



Molly Anne Bailey was taken off life support on December 13. Photo: Saroj Kueprasertkij

Molly's body arrived at Baan Manik temple at about 1:30pm last Sunday, where her family and many of her friends were waiting in deep grief.

Also present was Srisoonthorn Mayor Worrawut Songyot.

"This is a very sad accident," said Col Yongyuth.

"Barriers have been placed in front of the sinkhole to prevent another accident from occurring. Meanwhile, we will follow up with Srisoonthorn Municipality to make

sure the road is fixed as soon as possible."

The sinkhole first started to form last month when heavy rains washed away part of Rural Road 4008 off Thepkasattri Road, near Bang Jo Prison.



The bus crashed in Phang Nga.

## Phuket tour bus flips, injures 10 in Phang Nga

SIX tourists were sent to hospital after their Phuket tour bus crashed on a sharp turn in adverse weather conditions in Phang Nga on December 14.

Rescue workers were forced to use the "jaws of life" tool to cut free one of the 11 injured people travelling in the An Xin Tour Phuket bus, explained Lt Col Sanea Ukot of the Phang Nga Police.

"We arrived at the scene with rescue workers and found the bus on its side with things scattered everywhere. Chinese tourists were moaning on the ground and one woman was stuck inside crying in pain – they had to cut her free," Col Sanea said.

"A total of 13 people were in the 24-seater bus as it took them from Phuket to Bor Saen Villa & Spa Hotel in Phang Nga."

The driver, Sunya Anatapetch, was charged for reckless driving causing injury, Col Sanea confirmed to the *Gazette*.

An An Xin Tour Phuket staffer, who declined to reveal her name, told the *Gazette* on Monday that the company would help those injured. However, she was unable to reveal any further details.

Five of the injured were discharged from Phang Nga Hospital, while six were transferred to Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

## Patong Hill plays host to two crashes in 24 hours

A SIX-WHEELED truck loaded with cinder blocks slammed into a Phuket power pole on Patong Hill after the vehicle's brakes failed on the morning of December 11, making it the second vehicle to crash on the notorious hill in less than 24 hours.

A bus full of Chinese tourists had plunged down the hill the day before, obliterating a police box and crashing into a temple wall.

Both drivers told police that the crashes were a result of brake failure.

The driver of the six-wheeled truck full of cinder blocks, who police declined to name,

told police that he was delivering the load from Phuket Ka Cement in Rassada to a construction site in Patong when his brakes failed on the hill. He crashed into a power pole, scattering the blocks all over the road.

The driver of the tour bus, 49-year-old Pirom Joppromraj, was descending the hill at about 5:15pm, during hours when large vehicles are restricted, when his brakes failed.

"It was lucky that the crash did not seriously injure anyone," said Lt Sileenart Cherdchutrakulthong of the Patong Police.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



The bus slammed into a temple wall.



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## Jet-skis get green light

GOVERNOR Nisit Jansomwong has revealed a raft of new rules for jet-ski operators to abide by when renting their jet-skis out to tourists at Phuket beaches.

"The new rules will first be enforced at Patong. We will later introduce them at Kata-Karon and other beaches in Phuket, and even on other islands in our jurisdiction, such as Naka Island [off Phuket's east coast]," said Governor Nisit.

Patong Municipality will set up three swimming areas, each 500 meters wide and extending 150 meters offshore, Gov Nisit said.

"There will be only two areas, each about 300 meters wide, where jet-skis and parasail boats may approach the beach," he said.

Jet-skis and parasail boats will not be allowed more than one nautical mile offshore, with Patong Municipality to set up two red buoys to mark the outer reaches of the jet-ski and parasail zone.

"For safety, all jet-skis and parasail boats that are not approaching or leaving the beach must be operated at least 300m from shore," Gov Nisit added.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

# Uber gains legal traction

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THE Department of Land Transportation (DLT) came to terms with Uber last week, making it clear that the taxi-booking firm was legal, but that any promotion of illegal drivers in Phuket or elsewhere in Thailand was banned.

"We are not banning the use of the Uber application, but we are banning the use of black-plate vehicles, because they are illegal," Teerapong Rodpraert, director-general of DLT, told AFP.

"We have held talks with Uber twice... We must consider passenger safety because the taxi driver must have a public driving licence and a criminal-record check with our department."

After having finally dug out the deeply entrenched taxi mafia in Phuket with heavy military backing, officials are hesitant to provide any opportunities for illegal taxis to return to the streets.

"We understand that they are aiming to improve the quality and safety of taxi services in Phuket. However, many of the changes we have recently made to rid the island of 'black plate' [illegal] taxis



Uber drivers can operate in Phuket as long as they are legal. Photo: Reuters

have already done that [story here]," Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) Chief Terayout Prasertphol said earlier this month.

An Uber representative confirmed to the *Gazette* on December 11 that in Phuket, all the company's UberBlack partners are "established, licensed, chauffeur-driven limousine / rental companies that are registered and accredited by the government."

"Uber respects the DLT and its important role as the key regula-

tor on vehicle-for-hire transport in Thailand. We look forward to continued conversations with the DLT to bring our innovative transportation solutions within the appropriate regulatory framework in Thailand," a separate statement from Uber read.

What seems to have drawn the DLT's focus, however, is promotion of peer-to-peer ridesharing.

"Uber is working with governments around the world to promote safe, reliable and efficient

transportation options supported by reasonable regulations that put consumer interest first. Already, 14 jurisdictions have embraced our peer-to-peer ridesharing solution, UberX, by creating progressive and permanent regulatory frameworks for ridesharing – a transportation alternative that didn't even exist three years ago," the statement read.

Though facing legal action in many places, the company – which one year ago operated in 60 cities in 21 countries – now operates in 250 cities in 50 countries.

"Uber is transforming the way people move around their communities. Over the past few months, more and more Thai people have been cruising the streets of Bangkok and Phuket using the Uber platform, and they are loving the experience," said the statement.

"We are a technology company and our smartphone application connects people who need a ride with a driver at the tap of a button. Our goal is simple – we want to keep Thailand moving forward in a way that increases safety and reduces congestion."

## Drive-thru post office opens

THE main post office in Phuket Town has launched a new drive-through service so that customers no longer need to leave the comfort of their cars to pay bills or send mail.

"Our new Drive-Thru Post service is more convenient, and there is no need for us to provide more parking spaces," said Sukrit Phayu, acting director of the Phuket Post Office.

Customers can use the service to send normal letters, registered mail, domestic EMS mail, domestic parcels and pay utility bills, Mr



The drive-thru is open. Photo: PPAO Sukrit added.

The Drive-Thru Post window is open on regular office workdays, from 7:30am to 3pm.

— **Voratuss Intasee**

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# Official denies B5k fine for parking on sidewalk

By Chutharat Plerin

A KARON official has warned island-residents to obey the law or face the consequences, after a *Gazette* reader wrote in about an alleged 5,000-baht fine for parking on a sidewalk.

"On Friday, I parked my motorbike near the big statue of a snake [*naga*] at Karon Beach, like I've done for the past 11 years, but this time, when I came back, I found my bike locked with a ticket," the *Gazette* reader wrote in an email on December 13.

The reader wrote that he went to Karon Police Station, where he was re-directed to another office under the football stadium premises at the southern end of Karon, where he was shown a brochure listing fines for specific offenses.

"I've violated the 17(2) 'parking on public soil', thus I have to pay 5,000 baht," wrote the reader.

"I [asked] for the supervisor and was told he would be back at 22:00. I am trying to stay calm, despite the amount, and the fact that the board nearby warns about rip tides, but nowhere mentions 'no parking'.

"I pay and ask for the receipt. The officer says 'come back tomorrow'."

Weerasak Anekwongsawat, chief administrative officer at Karon



Mr Weerasak has denied that the reader had to pay 5,000 baht for parking on the sidewalk. Photo: Gazette file

Municipality, however, denied that the reader had been fined 5,000 baht – which is the maximum penalty for parking or riding vehicles on sidewalks under the Public Health Act, B.E. 2535 (1992), 17(2).

"I was not aware of the fine. However, I have spoken with our municipal officers and was told that the man was fined only 1,000 baht, not the maximum 5,000

baht," said Mr Weerasak on December 13.

Mr Weerasak confirmed that the receipt had been issued and could be picked up that day.

He then asked that the reader report directly to him if there is a discrepancy between the amount paid and the amount listed as paid on the receipt.

"If the receipt does not match the fee you paid, please bring the receipt to Karon Municipality and ask for me. I will take care of it," he said.

"Our municipality officers are enforcing the Public Health Act to ensure public cleanliness and to prevent possible public danger. Please obey the laws."

Other ordinances listed on the pamphlet that can incur heavy fines include:

- Cutting or damaging any trees on public land: fine of up to 2,000 baht
- Spitting in public, on the road or in public transport: fine of up to 2,000 baht
- Letting any sewage, garbage or construction materials fall from a vehicle to the road, including releasing any trash or sewage into water: fine of up to 10,000 baht.
- Washing a vehicle on a public road or on any other public land: fine 2,000 baht
- Causing damage to sidewalks: fine of up to 5,000 baht.



Visas on arrival counters at the airport. Photo: Saran Mitratat

## Endless re-entries given to Chinese, Ukrainian tourists

PHUKET'S Chinese and Ukrainian tourists are now allowed an unlimited number of re-entries through the popular visa-run checkpoint at Khuan Don in Satun, on the Malaysian border.

However, the same privilege has not been extended to foreigners who enter Thailand on "visa-exemption" status, confirmed Col Peemadej Sarakul, superintendent of the Satun Immigration Office.

The news comes after 10 checkpoints nationwide were approved to issue visas on arrival to tourists as of December 10, Col Peemadej explained.

"Expanding the number of border checkpoints that are permitted to allow visa-on-arrival entries is part of the move to encourage more tourists to visit Thailand in light of the ASEAN Economic Community [AEC] coming into effect next year," he said.

There is no limit to the number of times a foreigner may enter Thailand on a visa on arrival, Col Peemadej explained.

China and Ukraine are two of 19 countries whose nationals may enter Thailand on a visa on arrival, he said.

However, Col Peemadej was adamant his officers were checking all foreigners entering the country as tourists, and that the conditions of the visa-run crack-down earlier this year remain in effect. – *Khumpee Prasertphol*

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## Local officials call for beach, tourist safety

From page 1

...the outer boundaries of the swimming zones there," Mr Phuripat also admitted to the *Gazette* on Wednesday.

In the wake of the accident, and international attention, Governor Nisit Jansomwong called on all local authorities responsible for popular beaches on the island to install signs in Thai, English, Russian and Chinese to explain where it is safe to swim.

"I inspected the beaches recently and saw some tourists swimming in speedboat zones, which is dangerous," Governor Nisit said.

"I was told that installing signs could damage the aesthetics of the beach. However, I have ordered the relevant agencies to put the signs up in such a way that they inform tourists, and have only a minimal impact on the beauty of the beaches."

Mr Phuripat said that he too would look at what safety measures could be taken in addition to those that were implemented earlier this month.

New rules for jet-ski and parasailing operators were rubber-stamped by Gov Nisit last week. However, the plans, which create clearly dedicated swim zones and jet-ski/boating zones, are to be enforced only in Patong before being rolled out to other areas.

"The new rules will first be enforced in Patong. We will later introduce them at Kata-Karon and other beaches in Phuket," Gov Nisit said.

Though officials have outlined the zones in Patong, such zones for other areas have yet to be publicly announced.

## The Gazette wants to know: Do you trust Thai police?

THE Royal Thai Police force is fighting off a barrage of slurs to its reputation to the extent that even the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has recognized the problem as its top "Health & Safety" concern for tourists.

The recognition comes amid headlines of the ongoing corruption investigation centered on former Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) chief Pongpat Chayapan, who was found with cash and valuables from unexplained sources to the tune of 2 billion baht (see page 8).

That scandal came hot on the heels of allegations of police brutality in the Koh Tao

murder investigation and widespread claims on Thai social media of a cover-up by police to protect a local official's family.

Here at home, Phuket Immigration has yet to answer claims of money being extorted from foreigners at the Patong office.

Meanwhile, the Public-sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) has yet to reveal its findings in a case focusing on allegations of Chalong Police officers extorting money from dive industry operators.

However, Governor Nisit Jansomwong is fighting against such lack of transparency with

investigations into allegedly corrupt police.

Joining him in the fight for transparency is Phuket City Police Superintendent Sermphan Sirikong, who ordered an investigation into alleged police brutality at a night checkpoint in Phuket Town.

Yet the incessant string of "incidents" and "misunderstandings" have done little to improve the image of the Royal Thai Police.

So, the *Gazette* asks its readers, just as the TAT has: "Do you trust the Thai police?"

To have your say, go online and vote at [phuketgazette.net](http://phuketgazette.net). — *Phuket Gazette*

# Frenchman uses Facebook to sell chop-shop rebuild

By Athip Karndee

POLICE arrested a Frenchman in Patong on Tuesday for the theft of a motorcycle that he stripped to re-build his own bike, which he then sold through a Phuket Facebook group.

Mathieu Alfano, 28, was arrested at his rental room on Phra Barami Road in Patong for the theft of a PCX150 Honda from Nanai Road on December 3.

"We received the complaint and reviewed CCTV footage that showed Mr Alfano and a woman stealing the motorbike," Lt Col Sutthichai Tianpho of the Patong Police told the *Gazette*.

"We were told that the pair used to live in the apartment building the vehicle was stolen from, but moved out on November 28."

While police searched for the suspects, officers received a report of a junked motorcycle that matched the description of the stolen one.

"Eventually, we found Mr Alfano's new place. Inside, we



Frenchman Mathieu Alfano was arrested in Patong for theft on Tuesday. Photo: Patong Police

found some motorbike parts," Col Sutthichai said.

"He explained that he had stripped the stolen motorbike of parts and replaced parts on his own motorcycle that was the same make and model. He then posted it for sale on the Facebook

group Phuket Motorbike and Car For Sale and Rent."

The bike was allegedly sold for 40,000 baht to a foreigner who is training at a Muay Thai camp.

"We will call in the buyer, but have yet to press any charges against him," Col Sutthichai said.

Police continue to search for the woman caught on CCTV, but declined to reveal her name.

"At this point, we think there could be several more people involved, and we don't want to jeopardize the case," Col Sutthichai said.

## Full-scale tsunami drill postponed

PHUKET officials have postponed a full-scale tsunami drill that was planned for Christmas Day, following a number of complaints from victims' families who are preparing for the 10th anniversary of the tragedy on Boxing Day.

"We have cancelled plans to hold the full-scale drill on Christmas Day after receiving feedback from the victims' families, who feel that the drill will bring back bad memories," said Santhawat Riweung, chief of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) Phuket office.

"Governor Nisit Jansomwong understands that the timing of the drill is sensitive, so he has ordered it to be rescheduled."

Instead of the full-scale drill, Patong Municipality will hold a number of indoor events at a local hotel for emergency response staffers on Christmas Day.

"A seminar entitled 'Phuket: Ready for a Tsunami 10 Years On' will be held in the morning. It will



The full-scale drill will take place next year. Photo: Gazette file

be followed by an indoor drill for emergency response units from relevant departments in the afternoon," Mr Santhawat explained.

An official date has yet to be set for the full-scale drill, but will take place in the new year.

Phuket recently hosted "The Next Tsunami Zero Lost" conference, during which over 100 experts from about 12 countries reviewed emergency medical procedures to ensure recovery, safety and survival of tsunami victims.

"We are prepared for the next

natural disaster, and have continued to work closely with Japan International Cooperation Agency [JICA] to stay abreast of developments," Deputy Minister of Public Health Somsak Chunharas said at the opening ceremony.

Representatives from ASEAN member states were in attendance, along with experts from the United States and Japan.

"Having people from JICA at the conference is important, as they have dealt with a number of natural disasters in recent years," said Dr Wiwat Seetamanotch, one of the conference coordinators.

"We have reviewed how different countries have managed these disasters and what actions they have taken to minimize the impact on the lives of their citizens."

JICA has been working closely with Thailand since the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004.

"I can assure you, we'll be ready next time," said Dr Wiwat.

— *Gazette reporters*

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# Land battle labors on

## Officials call for 17 land title deeds to be revoked as 2,000 rai come under investigation

By Khumpee Prasertphol

OFFICIALS are calling for 17 land title deeds to be revoked for property valued at about 5 billion baht that is deemed to be within Sirinath National Park.

The call for revocation follows an investigation, first launched in 2012, into 379 plots suspected of encroaching on park land.

"Of the plots we investigated, 17 had *NorSor 3* or *Chanote* land documents that were illegitimate," Kitiphat Tharapiban, chief of Phuket's Sirinath National Park, told the *Gazette*.

The land, a total of about 100 rai, is owned by various big-name developers, including Fair & Firm Co Ltd, Malaiwana Park Development Co Ltd, United Developers Corporation Ltd and Three Dolphins Resort Co Ltd.

"This has been an ongoing inquiry since the hotel [Phuket Pullman Arcadia Co Ltd] opened," a spokesperson for Fair & Firm stated.



**'If the land titles are revoked, the officers who signed off on the illegal documents will then be investigated. If the investors refuse to vacate the property, they will face charges for encroaching on public land.'**

— Kitiphat Tharapiban, Sirinath National Park Chief

"We have been fully cooperating with the authorities to ensure any activities related to the case are carried out without interfering with our business. The property's owner has confirmed they have all the correct

paperwork, hotel license and can legally operate in Thailand."

In line with the company statement, the titles for the plots have yet to be revoked.

"At the moment, we cannot take any action. We will have to wait until all legal processes have concluded," Mr Kitiphat said.

An audit committee will review each case and decide whether or not to revoke the documents.

"This process will allow the investors to submit an appeal to the committee if they do not agree with the investigation's results," Mr Kitiphat said.

"If the land titles are revoked, the officers who signed off on the illegal documents will then be investigated. If the investors refuse to vacate the property, they



DNP officers began investigating the legitimacy of land titles for 710 plots covering more than 2,000 rai of park land. Photo: Supplied

will face charges for encroaching on public land."

On December 12, Department of National Parks Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) officers began investigating 710 other plots covering more than 2,000 rai inside the park at the order of DNP director-general Nipon Chotiban.

The officers will examine land documents to determine whether or not they are legitimate, Mr Kitiphat said.

"The officers, who have been arranged into 20 teams, are experts in land-survey techniques and reading aerial photographs," he added.

The investigation is expected to take about three months.

"If any of the documents are found to have been obtained

through illegal means, we will press charges for public land encroachment and reclaim the land," Mr Kitiphat assured.

Mr Kitiphat tendered his resignation in September, after only three months as park chief, amid death threats and reports of intimidation by influential people.

However, just two days later, he announced his decision to stay after the newly appointed Natural Resources and Environment Minister Gen Dapong Ratanasuwan vowed to provide military support and personnel to protect Mr Kitiphat and his officers.

Gen Dapong also pledged his support for Mr Kitiphat to continue his work in exposing illegal claims to park land – and reclaiming any illegally obtained plots.



Ms Chonticha filed a complaint.

## Police officers hunt suspect over vanishing cream fraud

A TOTAL of 17 people filed a complaint to Phuket City Police on December 11 against a woman who had allegedly disappeared with 7 million baht that was intended to pay for vanishing cream.

Chonticha Jampa-ngern, 32, told police that she had invested an undisclosed sum with her friend Netwimon, 31, so that Ms Netwimon could start selling the beauty cream. Both Ms Chonticha and police declined to reveal Ms Netwimon's family name.

The cream was sold for 1,400 baht per tube, and Ms Chonticha was to earn 250 baht per unit sold.

As business grew, Ms Chonticha started investing larger amounts of money. Eventually, Ms Chonticha convinced some of her friends to invest.

Ms Chonticha calculated the total amount given to Ms Netwimon to be almost 7 million baht.

None of the investors have seen Ms Netwimon since.

Lt Jariyawat Taencheun of the Phuket City Police said that he would proceed as usual with the case.

"At this stage, all we can do is issue a notice for Ms Netwimon to present herself to the police station," he said, adding that it would be sent to her registered address.

"If she fails to present herself, we will seek a warrant for her arrest." — Kritsada Mueanhawong



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## AROUND THE nation

### Slash in gas prices New Year's gift

THE National Energy Policy Committee has lowered the price of diesel fuel and petrol by 1 baht and 2 baht per liter respectively in what has been labeled a New Year gift in line with government policy.

"This is a gift from the government in celebration of the New Year," Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-ocha said on Monday.

PM Prayut added that since the National Council for Peace and Order, which he also heads, seized power from the elected government, fuel prices in Thailand had dropped by nearly B10 a liter, reported *The Nation*.

"The prices may get even lower in the future," he said.

PM Prayut said the fuel-price structure had been distorted, causing motorists to use liquefied petroleum gas and forcing the country to import more of it.

Nevertheless, he said the LPG price for households would remain unchanged. For oil-based fuels, he said more price cuts were possible.

The Oil Fund, which currently has a balance of 20 billion baht, will be kept to help stabilize fuel prices when they go up.

The supreme energy board agreed to restructure fuel prices, outlining six key policies: Energy prices must reflect their true costs; excise tax rates should be similar for each transport fuel; and cross-subsidy between fuel products must be reduced.

It also said the marketing margin of motor-fuel retailers must be appropriate and low-income earners must be taken care off.

The National Energy Policy Committee also approved a feed-in tariff structure for electricity purchased from renewable power projects and a 15-year power-development plan.

# AMLO puts freeze on B400mn of former crime-buster's assets

THE Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) on December 9 agreed to freeze a portion of assets – 104 plots of land worth about 400 million baht – jointly held by former crime-buster Lt Gen Pongpat Chayaphan on the assumption that they were acquired unlawfully.

"In the next 30 days, any plots that Gen Pongpat or joint owners fail to prove that they have acquired lawfully will be seized," said Seehanart Prayoonrat, secretary-general of AMLO.

Of all the 136 land titles in his name, 104 that he acquired after becoming commissioner of the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) have been ordered frozen.

AMLO would notify the other owners of the dates to meet with officials to verify their ownership or acquisition of these land plots.

The decision by AMLO was approved by its board on grounds that the land plots had likely been bought with money given on a daily basis to Gen Pongpat by illegal gambling dens across the country, since his promotion to CIB chief on October 1, 2010.

Gambling proceeds are some of the ill-gotten assets subject to seizure under AMLO regulations.

AMLO will later verify other assets of Gen Pongpat after receiving lists from investigators,



The AMLO has agreed to freeze disgraced crime-buster Lt Gen Pongpat's assets. Photo: The Nation

which includes dozens of artifacts and luxury cars. Assets of other members of Gen Pongpat's racket will also soon undergo an AMLO inspection, Mr Seehanart added.

The AMLO is tracing possible money flow from Gen Pongpat to other countries, but the amount might not be large, as he and other members were able to hide the transactions, Mr Seehanart said.

As for Gen Pongpat's connection with the petrol smuggling business in the Deep South run by

fugitive Pattani-based businessman Sahachai Jiansersin, AMLO has not yet found bank records.

"It's possible that these people made payments in cash," Mr Seehanart pointed out.

Borwornwej Rungrujee, director-general of the Fine Arts Department, said more than 30 art objects from Gen Pongpat's collection of about 30,000 pieces found in Nonthaburi were proven authentic and worth an estimated 10 million baht.

The owners of Sawong Antique shop and Sawong apartment, where the items were hidden, failed to produce permits to possess and sell certain antiques.

Maj Gen Prasobchoke Phrommool, commander of the police division tasked with preserving the environment, said the owners, Sawong Mungthiang and Rerngsak Saknarongdej, would be prosecuted for possessing carcasses of endangered animals and ivory without a permit.

## Brother claims missing businessman abducted

THE brother of Pattani-based businessman Sahachai Jiansersin, who has disappeared amid allegations of running a contraband-petrol trade in the Deep South, met police on December 11 to defend Mr Sahachai, saying he was framed and may have been abducted.

Warakorn Jiansersin called on the media to help track down his brother, adding that he did not believe the so-called list of bribe-takers that police said they had seized from Mr Sahachai's home existed, reported *The Nation*.

Mr Sahachai has been sentenced to 21 months in jail for forging court seals, in addition to suspicion of him running an illicit but lucrative petrol trade for years, while paying bribes to a large number of police and security officials, including now disgraced former crime-buster Lt Gen Pongpat Chayaphan of the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB).

The Bangkok Remand Prison has put the officers who were part of Gen Pongpat's racket in the same detention cell for their own safety, prison commander Aryut Sinthopphan.

On Monday, two more arrest warrants were issued: one for senior policeman Lt Col Songrak Khunsri, and the other for a civilian – both allegedly involved in Gen Pongpat's debt-collecting racket.

Col Songrak, who has been charged with criminal conspiracy and money laundering, is also on the verge of being discharged from police, said acting Crime Suppression Division commander Col Akkharadej Phimolsri.

The civilian was identified as Songphol Thongsin, a chauffeur of Maj Gen Kowit Wongrungraj, a deputy chief under Pongpat at the CIB. Mr Songphol has also been charged with money laundering.



Warakorn Jiansersin has called on the media to help track down his brother, whom he believes has been abducted. Photo: The Nation

## Government denies existence of secret prisons after US Embassy warning

GOVERNMENT officials have again denied the existence of secret prisons or the torture of suspected foreign terrorists in Thailand following a recent security alert issued by the US Embassy in Thailand.

They also rejected aspersions cast on the Kingdom following the recent report released by the US Senate, detailing the Central Intelligence Agency's harsh interrogation techniques used on terrorist suspects, reported *The Nation*.

"A secret prison has not existed here and there are no reports of torture in Thailand. No Thai agencies have carried out such operations," Prime Minister's Office Minister Suwaphan Tanyuvaradhana said.

"There have never been cases of bringing in these sorts of prisoners. We have never conducted any illegal activities with

the US."

Mr Suwaphan, a former director of the National Intelligence Agency, said he did not see Thailand being mentioned anywhere in the report. "The incidents mentioned in the report took place many years ago... Anyway, I can assure [you] there are no secret prisons, or torture in Thailand."

Mr Suwaphan said authorities would increase security measures after the US Embassy in Bangkok stepped up security levels and warned American citizens of pos-



The US Embassy. Photo: US Department of State

sible terrorist attacks.

"Thailand has no information about threats, but we will not take risks," he said.

Interior Minister Gen Anupong Paochinda also affirmed that no secret prisons have ever existed in Thailand.

"The Army was unaware of any secret prison in Thailand when I served as the Army chief. At that time, I had given assurance that Thailand did not have any secret prisons," Gen Anupong said.

Armed Forces Supreme Commander Gen Worapong Sanganetra also said that he had no information regarding secret prisons or torture of suspected terrorists on Thai soil.

Gen Worapong also said it was "normal" for the US authorities to warn their nationals. In response to the US warning of possible terrorist attacks in Thailand, the general said that security personnel were carefully dealing with the matter.

The US Senate report mentions Thailand many times for its role in facilitating and sheltering terrorism suspects as well as helping US authorities capture some key suspects.

Meanwhile, the tourism industry said the US warning would have no impact on tourist arrivals to Thailand.



# Leave wild animals where they belong

## FIRST PERSON

EVER since the National Council for Peace and Order took power, I have yet to receive any reports of animal touts in Phuket, not even on Bangla Road.

While this is good news, it does not mean that the problem isn't still there and that touts will not be back.

I trust that the police are keeping a close eye on what is happening in their areas, but animal touts have a tendency to return to their old trade, even after they have been caught.

It will be much harder for them to do this if everyone works together – residents and tourists alike – in looking out for animal touts, taking pictures of offenders and making reports to the police, or to my office.

There are many risks involved in keeping wild animals as pets.

First, it is possible for wild animals to transfer diseases to humans. In the worst case scenario, we would not be able to identify the strain of a disease and we would not be able to find a cure. This could pose a massive problem for the animal owner's health and the health of the public.

Another serious risk that comes with owning a non-domesticated animal is that their natural instincts may lead them to attack, if they are in a stressful situation or sense that they are in danger. Even when animals are trained by



**Awat Nitikul**, 53, a Phang Nga native, is chief of Phuket's Environmental Conservation unit based at Khao Phra Thaew Wildlife Sanctuary. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the Gregorio Araneta University Foundation (now the De La Salle Araneta University) in Manila, Philippines, and has held his position at the sanctuary since 1996.

Here, he talks about the dangers – to both humans and to animals – involved in owning wild animals, as well as the moral and ethical dilemmas of keeping them as pets, or using them to make money.

humans, they still have instincts that cannot be tamed.

There are so many domesticated animals that are safe and legal to own, and which make wonderful pets.

There are also ethical and moral dilemmas that come with taking a wild animal from its natural habitat and keeping it inside – even worse, in a cage – and using it to make money or for personal happiness.

If you exploit an animal for your livelihood, you are trading a life for money. I urge everyone to think beyond money. There

are so many other ways to make a living without harming animals in the process.

There are also those that raise animals, such as gibbons, purely for personal enjoyment and hap-

piness. This is a protected species, and owning them is illegal unless you have proper permits. It is selfish to keep an animal like this just for fun. They need freedom as much as we do.

I also have often come across situations in which people who raise wild animals eventually get tired of them – especially when they start to become full-grown – and release them into the wild after years in captivity.

They are just like any other pet in that way, and need to be taken care of for their entire lives once they are claimed as pets.

However, in no way do I condone keeping wild animals as pets.

Some people who keep wild animals as pets truly believe that they are taking good care of them. No matter how well you think you are looking after them, it will never be enough.

Wild animals belong in their natural habitats, not in cages or inside of a house.

They have minds of their own and love to be home where they belong, like we do. Their home is in the forest. Let them be.



Be sure to wait for the green-light go ahead. Photo: Mattes

## Red light special

A FUNNY thing happened on the way to work the other day. I got a ticket for running a red light.

The officer was nice about it. His superior had radioed ahead from where he saw me run the red light at the new junction of Chaofa Muang Road and Chao Fa West Road, so that I could be collared at the next set of lights.

As should have been expected, the incident carried a touch of irony. In fact, it was served with a double shot of irony in quick succession, with a third to come without the cocktail umbrella.

The reason I was nabbed was because I was the only vehicle that stopped at the red light. A passenger van and a pick-up truck in front of him both ran the light just after it turned red to make sure they could keep with traffic flow.

To be honest, I considered following them, too, but then thought of how early the traffic jumps out from the side road and decided that safety comes first.

Which, ironically, was the same thought that got me the ticket for running the light in the first place.

There I was, one motorbike stopped amid three empty lanes when the officer poked his head out from behind a roadside hedge.

He started walking toward me. "Did you just run a red light?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," I smiled.

He waved: "Come with me."

And so I did. At the police box the officer radioed back to confirm he had the right culprit in custody, then proceeded to write up the ticket. He also confiscated my Thai motorbike driver's license, redeemable upon correct payment of the fine at the Wichit Police Station within seven days.

I explained that I was in the left

## Island View

By Damian Evans

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

lane approaching the lights when the van came dangerously close behind me and revved his engine to get me out of the way.

By the time I could get out of the way, I was in the middle of the intersection. Instead of staying there, I checked the traffic-flow: nothing coming through from any direction, as the traffic light behind me was about to turn green, so I continued on fully knowing the light was still red.

Regardless, the officer issuing me the ticket apologized, and noted that he was compelled to carry out his duty.

Later, I saw the officer when I went to pay the ticket.

After having the day to consider the ramifications of my sin, I thanked the officer for issuing me the ticket. I explained that I had lived on the island for more than 10 years. Over those years, many horrific accidents have happened here as a result of people ignoring red lights – and anachronisms like myself must learn new driving behaviors in order to help forge a safer Phuket.

That night, I found myself waiting at the same intersection, alone.

Then, as the light turned green I began making my way across the intersection only to be forced to stop halfway to make way for three trucks speeding through the same junction southbound.

Shot number three. I am going to stick to my guns and start observing more traffic laws – with safety in mind first.

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

### What happened to our beautiful – and once clean – Phuket beaches?

WE LOVE to spend time on the beach, that's why we booked two weeks in a hotel in front of Karon Beach – but to our disappointment the beach is full of trash!

We thought it would be cleaned up after a few days, but it has become worse each day.

We've seen street cleaners, but not beach cleaners. In most resort areas they have beach-combing trucks cleaning the sand every day, but here we have not seen any beach cleaners at all.

Mrs L,  
New York City

**Preecha Taweetong**, director of Karon Municipality's Public Health and Environment Department, replies:

We are the department which is responsible for maintaining Karon's environment and cleanliness, including the beach, and we apologize for not doing our duty as well as we should have.



Residents take part in a Karon Beach cleanup this year. Photo: Gazette file

Thank you for informing us of this issue. We will send officers to clean it up as soon as we can.

We have staff who are supposed to check Karon Beach, and other places in our area of administration, to locate such unsightly

piles so we can clean them up. Karon Municipality recently launched a project to keep Karon Beach clean by having our officers clean the beach every Friday.

The beach is a hard place to keep clean, because trash and gar-

bage come from both land and sea. Much trash often washes ashore, and this issue has yet to be solved.

I would also like to kindly ask local residents and tourists in the area to please help us look after the beach, too. Although it is our responsibility to keep the beach clean, it is also the responsibility of every single person in the area.

I'd like to point out that when there were vendors on the sand, they helped us a lot by keeping each of their individual areas clean.

If anyone has any similar complaints, please call Karon Municipality's Public Health and Environment department on: 076-333367. We are ready to serve you.

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

Submit your issue at

[www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers](http://www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers)



# Fine solutions

THE allegation of a 5,000-baht fine levied against a tourist for illegally parking a motorbike in a restricted zone in Karon raises several issues about the future role of local administrative bodies, both in terms of how they raise revenue and how they use these funds (see News pages).

The fact that Karon Municipality now appears to be taking a more active approach to issues such as public parking seems like a step in the right direction, especially so when compared with the pre-coup days, when “who could park where” in the town was largely decided by illegal transport syndicates – regardless of what the public road signs indicated.

“If you park here, we cannot guarantee the safety of your vehicle,” was a standard threat for years by these self-entitled thugs, who would very often go ahead and vandalize the vehicles of owners who failed to heed the threats.

The crackdown on Phuket mafias earlier this year is likely to have greatly reduced some individuals’ income from actions such as divvying up the beaches for rent to vendors and colluding with the tuk-tuk mafia.

So it should come as little surprise if such officials were to turn to other revenue schemes, which may include leveraging genuine laws to their advantage, such as issuing more parking tickets, fining more people who pollute the environment, and so on.

In theory, better enforcement of some provisions of the long-ignored Public Health Act of 1992 could improve traffic flow, make our roadways safer and cleaner, as well as improving the island in many other ways.

But if these measures are now to be more strictly enforced, the municipalities doing so must first be ordered to launch a public-relations campaign to give the public some advance warning about what might be in store for them.

As just one example, people caught spitting in public in Karon could be subjected to a fine of as much as 2,000 baht. Clear information should also be made lucid to visitors, otherwise excessive fining of tourists who do not know the rules could threaten our reputation as a destination.

Just as importantly, officers who issue these fines should do so under the “spirit of the law”, not as a way of shaking down the tax-paying members of the public in order to keep the municipal coffers at desired levels.

With Phuket’s ever-increasing traffic congestion, it would be especially beneficial to issue more tickets to motorists who commit infractions that slow traffic flow, such as those who selfishly double-park along key arteries, causing tailbacks.

Finally, and it goes without saying, all fines should be issued in a fair and transparent manner, with a receipt issued immediately upon payment, and in the correct amount. Any other approach opens a new avenue for official corruption; most readers would likely agree we have had enough of those already.



## Voice of support for lounge-free beaches

I would like to support the decision to keep the beautiful beaches on Phuket’s west coast umbrella and sun lounge free – which in turn keeps the touts away too.

These are some of the most beautiful coastlines in the world and the umbrellas and loungers are nothing more than a cramped eyesore.

Private beds and umbrellas go home each night – anything for rent stays!

Phuket, stand and be proud of the natural beauty that you have!

I have enjoyed many years holidaying in Southern Thailand, and the new beach culture can only increase the appeal of this wonderful and picturesque island.

Jon  
UK

### Letters to the Editor

Do you have an opinion to voice?  
Email [Editor@PhuketGazette.net](mailto:Editor@PhuketGazette.net)

When the tea money from other lucrative businesses dries up, this is the sort of thing that happens.

Hopefully more people will complain at this unjust and blatant rip-off.

Publicity and loss of face is the only way to beat it.

Strange, though, that the taxis and tuk-tuks that take up public parking spaces along the beach and intimidate other drivers aren’t prosecuted – or is it?

Mister Ree  
Gazette forum

able to do as they like, just like they have always done.

Phuket officials should have had the backbone to ban them completely.

So many other countries have banned them – for exactly the same set of problems they have created here in Phuket!

Phil Phelan  
Facebook

## A proper checkpoint might be helpful

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket truck slams into Patong Hill power pole after brakes fail, December 11*

The solution is rather obvious.

Instead of police safety checkpoints targeting only foreigners and motorbike riders without helmets, how about the safety checkpoints target buses and large trucks?

The checks would of course include brakes, with hefty fines for discrepancies found.

Scudman  
Gazette forum

## An all too frequent occurrence

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket tour bus crashes, 10 injured, December 15*

The *Gazette* could run this story every week during low season, and twice a week during high season, and readers wouldn’t miss a beat!

Let’s face it, the amount of training these drivers get, along with the oversights by the local government, is virtually nothing.

Until someone rich and famous is killed or seriously injured, no one in the enforcement part of the government will care.

If they did... they’d fix it!

MJE  
Gazette forum

## Consequences need to match the crime

Re: *Gazette online, Bus ban ignored: Phuket tour bus plunges down Patong Hill, December 11*

If the driver was driving on Patong hill during the ban he should be arrested, charged and banned from driving.

He was disobeying the police and government, and it was a miracle no one was killed.

If a person shoots a gun in a crowded street, he/she will be charged even if it does not hit anyone.

This is the same. The driver disobeyed the law and it was only luck that many people were not killed.

Simon  
Gazette forum

## Keep complaining to initiate change

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket official denies B5k fine for beachside parking ‘on sidewalk’, December 13*

## Well done to all for helping save the kids

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket police rescue Cambodian kids from human-traffickers in Patong, December 13*

Well done to the NGO officials who saw them and then persuaded the police to follow up on them.

Well done also to the police for taking the report seriously.

Let’s hope it’s a lesson to all regulars and expats to also report anything that looks suspiciously like child trafficking.

These evil perpetrators must be put behind bars for a long time.

Spot  
Gazette forum

## Who will be watching the watchdogs?

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket jet-skis get green light, December 12*

Who’s going to watch the ones that are to control these jet-ski thieves?

They pay enough and will be

### Phuket Gazette

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# Join the club

## The owners of Sky Club Asia turned a passion into a prosperous business

DO WHAT you love and make money doing it – how's that for a business plan?

That is exactly what Sky Club Asia co-owners Mark Silverberg and Paul Derstroff did when they turned their passion into a prospering business.

One of the things that Mark brought with him when he moved to Thailand was passion – a passion for flying. He used to go paragliding in Mexico before getting licenced as a paramotor instructor in the United States. Once in Thailand, he continued flying in his free time... and making wings during working hours.

"For the first few years in Thailand, I worked as a project manager for a factory making gliders," he explains. "Through that, I connected myself to a lot of people in the world of paragliding."

"We do not bother anybody, we fly slow and local, and most of the guys who fly are pretty conservative and follow the few rules that we have. So, it's easy to build a community."

It was during his time operating a paramotor club in Hua Hin that Mark met his business partner, Paul Derstroff. What was, at first, just a means of having fun and meeting other flying enthusiasts, quickly expanded into more.

"There was a point when I had a good club running – a great community – but I couldn't make a living out of it," says Mark. "I wanted to expand, use different engines, train a larger range of pilots and make sure that everybody



With branches in Hua Hin and now here at Phuket Airpark, Sky Club, Thailand's paramotor business, is truly taking off. Photo: Maciek Klimowicz

flies with the latest and best gear.

"On top of that, I wanted to take up new projects that might not really make money but were exciting. I needed a way to fund all this – and that's why I decided to expand the club into a business."

However, before this business venture could become a reality, Mark had to ditch his day job.

"I had to look ten years down the road and ask myself: do I want to put all my energy into building a community of pilots and growing a business? Or, do I want to stick to a safer path of regular day-to-day work in a factory – also paramotor and paraglider related, but still an office job.

"They say that flying might be dangerous, but it's the office jobs that will kill you," he laughs.

A few years later, it's obvious that Mark's decision to follow his dreams was the right one. With branches in Hua Hin and Phuket it seems that the sky is the limit for the Sky Club – or maybe it isn't.

With a diverse variety of revenue sources, from fun discovery flights, paramotor courses, aerial photography and equipment retail to banner advertising in partnership with the (Phuket) "Gazette Air Force", the company has but one way to go – up.

For more information go to [skyclubasia.com](http://skyclubasia.com)



Isaac Stone Simonelli has been appointed Editor-in-chief of the *Phuket Gazette*. Photo: Gazette file

## New Editor-in-chief

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

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

"The media world has changed to the point that our readers expect not only the same quality and even-handed presentation of news as the world's major newspapers, but also a bigger-than-average dose of features – the faces, personalities, opinions and bizarre happenings that make our island so colorful, if not at times almost incomprehensible," Mr Simonelli said.

"The rapid pace at which the industry is evolving has also created a plethora of opportunities to connect with our readers, as well as to collect readership data that

can guide our content and ensure that we are best serving the community.

"Additionally, we are seeing new ways for advertisers to focus their efforts, so that those who want and need their services are able to find them easily."

In his new role, Mr Simonelli will continue to oversee editorial policy and content management for the web, the newspaper and social media sites, as well as develop long-term marketing strategies to ensure that the *Gazette* remains the best place for the island, region and world to get its news about Phuket.

"I'm excited to undertake these new responsibilities within the management team and continue to play my part in the social and digital revolution that is redefining how we consume information." /

continue to play my part in the social and digital revolution that is redefining how we consume information, especially here at the island's leading newspaper and the *Gazette Online*, Google's top-ranked website for Phuket," Mr Simonelli added.

## Govt expects e-commerce to reach B1trn in 2016 with its policy support for trade

THE military-led government's "digital economy" policy is expected to help boost the volume of e-commerce in Thailand to break the 1-trillion-baht barrier this year, according to the Department of Business Development (DBD).

According to the DBD, e-commerce in Thailand was valued at about 700 billion baht last year.

Policy support to help ramp up business-to-business and business-to-customer online trade will see more people engage in e-commerce, said Whichai Phochanakij, DBD deputy director-general.

"People will trade more online to save time and energy," he said.

E-commerce was growing at about 20 per cent a year as more people surf the Internet, and so local companies should focus more on electronic trading to capture more customers in the domestic and overseas markets,

Mr Whichai ventured.

To encourage more trade online, the DBD has cooperated with 10 agencies, including Thailand Post, financial institutions, the Thai E-Commerce Association and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, to hold its "Thailand Online Mega Sale" from December 15-30.

The mega-sale is expected to generate more than 500 million baht. Joining the fair are more than 2,000 enterprises from various sectors.

Discounts of 20-80 per cent are available to customers who make online purchases through the mega-sale's official web portals, [www.thailandmegasale.com](http://www.thailandmegasale.com) or [www.onlinesaleTH.com](http://www.onlinesaleTH.com).

However, Mr Whichai cautioned against unscrupulous vendors targeting consumers online.

The DBD has filed about 10 complaints to the police this year, settlements to most of which



According to the DBD, E-commerce in Thailand was valued at about 700 billion baht last year. Photo: Giuseppe Leto Barone

could be negotiated, he said.

Mr Whichai urged e-commerce operators to register with the DBD under the Business Act so that they would be issued an appropriate business licence and receive protection under the law.

All e-commerce sites registered with the DBD are issued registration and verified e-trader certificates so that they can be trusted by consumers, he explained.

– The Nation



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# Expatriate guide to the inevitable

Financial planning should not be taken lightly, especially not by expats



Finance

By Don Freeman

Expats must keep this in mind while considering the risk of their investments, as high returns can often mean higher risk of losses.

IT'S natural to experience culture shock as an expat, but the real shock comes when expats consider just how complicated proper investment or financial planning becomes after they expatriate from their home countries.

Here are some of the key areas expats will need to have a plan for and likely consult with knowledgeable experts about.

## EXCHANGE RATE AND REMITTANCE

Expats whose income is largely fixed and denominated in a currency different from that used in the country in which they are living need to have a plan for dealing with exchange rate fluctuations as well as transactional costs of having their money remitted to them.

In the worst case scenario, where the exchange rate makes a big and sustained movement not in the expats' favor, they may have to plan on making major cutbacks in living expenses or even return home.

## INFLATION

For most expats in Phuket, their home country has low inflation and low interest rates.

However, emerging markets such as Thailand tend to have much higher rates of inflation that their incomes or investment returns will need to keep pace with.

Expats also need to keep in mind and plan for the likelihood that various social welfare entitlements such as unemployment compensation or disability from the home country probably won't cover them while living abroad. They may even need to re-establish residency back home in order to qualify.

## EMERGENCIES

Expats need to tie up cash in a much bigger emergency cash fund than most would otherwise need back home.

This emergency cash fund should be large enough to cover things such as medical emergencies, where cash may be needed to pay upfront or to cover repatriation to the home country should the expat need to return home.

Expats also need to keep in mind and plan for the likelihood that various social welfare entitlements, such as unemployment compensation or disability, from the home country probably won't cover them while living abroad.

They may even need to re-establish residency back home in order to qualify.

## TAX

Expats from countries that enforce worldwide taxation, such as the United States, or require their nationals to maintain a residence in the home country, could face double taxation – unless there is a tax treaty in place.

Such expats need to consult a tax expert to find out which taxes they and their investments could be liable for, as investing in various offshore investments marketed to expats as a way to lower taxes may actually not make sense.

## EDUCATION



No one likes to talk about the inevitable, but planning for it is crucial, especially if family is involved. Photo: Eric Ward

Expats with children will need to have a plan for how to pay for their children's education costs, including international school fees and possibly even for university.

Even if the employer is currently footing the bill for most international school fees, such parents better have a backup plan in the event they don't always have an employer willing to do so in the future.

## HEALTH CARE

The older expats get, the harder and more expensive it is for them to get good expat health insurance coverage, and the home country's retirement health care scheme will likely not cover them while abroad.

They may need to plan on returning home after a certain age

or if their health deteriorates to a certain level.

## RETIREMENT

Expats working abroad might be paying into their adopted country's government sponsored retirement program and still be eligible for a pension back home if there is an appropriate tax treaty.

If not, they will need to plan on saving and investing a considerable amount of extra money for retirement.

## DEATH

No one likes to talk about the inevitable, but planning for the inevitable becomes much more complicated if assets or family members need to be provided for. This includes those in both the

expat's adopted country and back in their home country.

If the expat's financial and family situation is complicated, he or she had better find an expert lawyer in estate planning back home and in the country where he or she is currently living.

At the very least, they should make sure they have a written will and appropriate power of attorney documents kept in a safe place.

Don Freeman is president of Freeman Capital Management, an independent US-registered investment advisor. He has over 20 years' experience and provides personal financial planning and wealth management to expatriates living in Phuket, and specializes in UK and US pension transfers. Call 089-970-5795 or email: freemancapital@gmail.com.

# Stock Exchange of Thailand goes on a rollercoaster ride

THAI shares plummeted nearly 9 per cent at one point on Monday, more than any regional bourses which are also suffering from low oil prices.

The exchange is unlikely to launch any measure to stem the heavy loss today.

"We will need to monitor the market closely, but I don't think we need any measures yet," said Kesara Manhusree, president of the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) at a press conference.

At 2:33pm, the SET index lost 54.79 points or 3.62 per cent, to 1,460.16 points. It was last seen below 1,460 in June. On June 12, the index stood at 1,457 points.

It slid fast minutes later. At 3:27pm, the index lost 129.87 points or 8.57 per cent.

At 3:31pm, the loss widened to 135.64 points or 8.95 per cent.

At 3:39pm, the buying spree narrowed

the loss to 85.56 points or 5.65 per cent. Turnover has so far reached 76.7 billion baht.

The loss has narrowed to 47.08 points or 3.11 per cent at 4:31pm. Turnover skyrocketed to 97.6bn baht.

In the past five trading days, the index has lost 8.23 per cent. It is well below the expected 2015 price-earning ratio. Suffering the most were stocks in the energy, communications, banking, retail, property and food sectors.

The slide in Asian markets comes after a



Watching the stocks. Photo: Rafael Matsunaga

crash in oil prices dragged US stocks to one of their worst losses of the year last Friday.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.79 per cent and the S&P 500 tumbled 1.62 per cent.

It was the S&P 500's first

weekly loss in nearly two months and its worst single-week decline – 3.5 per cent – since May 2012.

Lower oil prices benefit consumers, but traders have been unnerved by the speed of the free-fall in crude prices, which could

put projects on hold in the oil sector and hurt energy companies and banks.

In Thailand, the banking and energy sectors constitute more than one fourth of the exchange's market capitalization.

"LTF and window dressing are now the last hopes," said Asia Plus Securities in its research note. "The market slump should encourage more investment into LTF and window dressing at the end of the year should also be more active. In eight of the past 10 years, SET index gained average 2.6 per cent in the past two weeks of the year."

Technically, the index can dive further to 1,438 points, the securities house said.

This week, the US Federal Open Market Committee and Bank of Thailand will convene on policy rates. The Thai central bank is expected to cut the policy rate by 0.25 percentage point.

– The Nation



## WHAT'S ON in Phuket

### December 16-18, 10:30am-11:30pm. Asia Superyacht Rendezvous 2014

Phuket will welcome superyachts, their owners, captains and VIP guests to the 14<sup>th</sup> Asia Superyacht Rendezvous for three days of excitement, from December 16-18. Once the first night's formalities are concluded, the majestic *Silolona* will host an opening cocktail party.

With two days of competitive "Superyacht Races", principal sponsor Feadship will host the "Challenge" during the second night's fun, where participants are to construct model boats to race.

Kata Rocks will again be the spectacular host venue where all shore events will take place, culminating with the opulent gala dinner.

The annual Superyacht Rendezvous is proudly sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and the "Phuket Today" show, the island's only nationally broadcast television program (aired daily on True Visions).

### December 24, from 6pm-9pm. Christmas Festivities and Feasts at Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort

Join us at Locavore Restaurant for a traditional Christmas Buffet, featuring slow-roasted, grain-fed Australian sirloin; Christmas turkey with gravy and cranberry sauce; roasted leg of lamb; Norwegian salmon; rock lobster; and a selection of Christmas desserts. Starting at 1,950 baht for adults, and 950 baht per



child aged 4 to 12, inclusive of free-flowing soft drinks.

### December 24, 6pm-11.30. Two Chefs at Kata Beach and Kamala Christmas Buffet

Two Chefs Traditional Christmas Buffet is at two locations this year. At our newly reopened Kata Beach branch and our Kamala branch, we are offering one early buffet at 6pm and a late buffet at 9pm.

These large buffets include: cold smoked salmon, roast beef, Christmas ham, pickled herring,

Swedish meatballs, ginger and honey marinated pork ribs, roast turkey breast stuffed with herbs, chocolate mousse, saffron rolls, ginger bread cookies, and rice a la Malta with strawberry sauce.

All this and much more... Only 1,450 baht, kids just 750 baht (under 12 years of age). Live music from 7pm with the famous house bands. Come for the food, and stay for the fun!

For more information visit the website: [www.twochefs.com](http://www.twochefs.com)

### December 24-31, 6pm-1am. Festive Celebrations 2014 at Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort

### December 24-31, 6pm-1am. Festive Celebrations 2014 at Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort

Surround yourself with family and loved ones, and spend a very special Christmas and New Year's Eve holiday at Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort. Guests can indulge in exquisite menu options amid the inviting setting of the hotel's magnificent holiday decor at the resort's hillside Sunset Grill or The Pool House. Enjoy a delightful evening under the stars, overlooking the pool with live entertainment and a special New Year's Eve BBQ. Get together and ring in the New Year

while enjoying an international buffet, and floating your wishes for the incoming New Year with a traditional Thai lantern.

### December 25, 1pm-9pm. Traditional Christmas Dinner at Islander Restaurant

Enjoy our Traditional Christmas Dinner at the Islander Restaurant, Soi Patong Resort (off Bangla Road). Menu includes a prawn cocktail starter, main course roast turkey with all the trimmings, Christmas pudding with custard for dessert, plus a glass of house wine (red or white) – all for 895 baht. To be sure of a seat, please book early with the cashier or call Khun Kanha on 081-893 6072.

### December 31, 8pm-12am. New Year Feast at Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort

Our New Year's extravaganza commences with an international buffet featuring the very best seafood, meats, salads and sumptuous desserts. Settle in for a night of lively and elegant performances, and then dance the night away to live music by our seven-piece band Rhythm Nation, and our professional DJ.

Join us on Wednesday, December 31 at our Locavore restaurant and Icon Terrace & Lounge from 8pm to bid farewell to 2014 and welcome in 2015! Prices from THB 7,000++ per person, half price for children aged 4 to 12.

### January 18-25, 9.30am-6pm Shamanism Courses.

The Foundation for Shamanic Studies presents its first courses in Phuket during the second half of January. Book now at [www.shamanism-asia.com/2014/11/thai](http://www.shamanism-asia.com/2014/11/thai), or call 081-891 5539 for more information.

**Now on Truevisions HD 79, SD 107**

**BROADCASTING PHUKET TO THE WORLD**

Phuket Today takes the Pearl of the Andaman to an international audience. PGTV's one-hour show features the personalities, lifestyle, sports and leisure activities that make Phuket famous.

Produced by PGTV, the show is designed to promote Phuket to tourists and the international community in Thailand.

LOCAL COVERAGE	NATIONAL COVERAGE	INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE																								
<p><b>Phuket Cable</b> Coverage: All of Phuket Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10.30am, 6pm, 9pm Saturday-Sunday: 10.30am, 9pm</p> <p><b>Rawai Cable</b> Coverage: Rawai, Kata, Karon Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10am, 1pm, 7pm, 10pm</p> <p><b>KDTV</b> Coverage: Phuket's West Coast from Patong to Cherng Talay Channel: 10 Daily: 8.30am, 2.30pm</p>	<p><b>MCOT World</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>Tuesday:</td><td>12.05pm &amp; 7pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday:</td><td>6pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday:</td><td>1pm &amp; 8pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Friday:</td><td>9am</td></tr> <tr><td>Saturday:</td><td>1pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Sunday:</td><td>6am</td></tr> </table> <p>Truevisions HD Channel: 79 Truevisions SD Channel: 107 PSI TRUE TV Channel: 37 GMMZ Channel: 103</p>	Tuesday:	12.05pm & 7pm	Wednesday:	6pm	Thursday:	1pm & 8pm	Friday:	9am	Saturday:	1pm	Sunday:	6am	<p>Broadcast to China, the Philippines, Southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Turkey, UAE, and many other countries around Asia and beyond.</p> <p><b>Thaicom 5 Sat 3520H</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>Tuesday:</td><td>12.05pm &amp; 7pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday:</td><td>6pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday:</td><td>1pm &amp; 8pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Friday:</td><td>9am</td></tr> <tr><td>Saturday:</td><td>1pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Sunday:</td><td>6am</td></tr> </table>	Tuesday:	12.05pm & 7pm	Wednesday:	6pm	Thursday:	1pm & 8pm	Friday:	9am	Saturday:	1pm	Sunday:	6am
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Online: [www.phuketgazette.net/tv](http://www.phuketgazette.net/tv) | [www.youtube.com/PGTVPhuket](http://www.youtube.com/PGTVPhuket)  
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# YOUR Phuket



DANCE WITH ME: Pauls' beats get the crowd going at Xana.

## Jamming with Oakenfold

Three-time Grammy-nominated DJ and former number one on DJ Magazine DJ Paul Oakenfold graced the sands of Xana Beach Club on Bang Tao Beach drove the crowd wild with the set from his We are Planet Perfecto Volume 4 tour.



BEACH PARTY: L to R: Paul Oakenfold; Mike Smith, GM Novotel Kamala; Brett Wilson, GM Pullman Phuket Arcadia.

## No worries, Two Chefs has you with their Reggae Night



STUCK IN THE MIDDLE: Billy Agren (center left) and Krister Westberg (center right) of Two Chefs.

## Arabian Night brings sexy attire and fire

Karon Beach Square put on a show with beautiful belly dancers and fire performers for guests digging into their BBQ buffet on Saturday night.



1,001 NIGHTS IN ONE: Nampetch Tipaxsorn, director of marketing communication (at right); stands with performers and Tawee Saengrungs, director of rooms (3<sup>rd</sup> from right); and Sham Rahman, director of F&B (2<sup>nd</sup> from left).

## Don't be Krabi, there's always Bie Sukrit

Bie Sukrit, one of the country's hottest live acts and runner-up in the television talent show The Star 3, gave a dazzling performance in a packed venue at Sofitel Krabi Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort.



STARSTRUCK: Bie Sukrit puts on a stellar performance.



Miss Universe 2005 Natalie Glebova steps up to the turntables for her debut performance.



The Phuket Gazette's weekly

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

PROPERTY FOR SALE  
of the week



See page 16

PROPERTY SERVICES  
of the week



See page 19

JOB of the week

K.Y. PROPERTY

See page 21

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES  
of the week



See page 22

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## Properties For Sale

**URGENT PATONG VILLA 4 BED**

Firesale price - sudden departure - direct from owner - now 19.9 million baht, estimated 29 million baht - Luxury 4-bedroom villa, mountain side, panoramic seaview of Patong bay, 4 bathrooms, private pool, tennis, fully furnished modern style, 270sqm. Tel: 081-832 8154 (English).

**POOL HOUSE**

Near Heroines, Pa Khlok Road, 250sqm. Land 452sqm. 3/4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 4 aircons, big kitchen, furnished, pool 9 x 3m. Price: 5.25 million baht. Tel: 089-854 0277. Email: catayacht@csloxi.info.com

**HOUSE FOR SALE**

From Phuket 100km. Between A. Thap Put Phang Nga and A. Panom Surat Thani



Near Khao Sok National Park. Land 1 rai, furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 aircons, price: 2.2 million baht. Please call: 081-667 1637 (Thai), 082-539 6433 (English).

**ENTERTAINMENT PALACE**

Magnificent penthouse in Karon with panoramic sea view apartment. Reduced by 10 million baht for quick sale, includes an additional two-bedroom apartment. Now 46 million baht. Freehold. Please call 080-124 1245. Email: kay@phuketandamanrealestate.com

**NAKA ISLAND**

Beachfront house, panoramic views of bay & islands to the south, built 2007, easy access to Phuket, 240sqm on 2 floors, 4 beds, 750sqm plot, separate house for staff. Tel: 084-8461 270 (English). Email: ahcopse@gmail.com

**KATA OCEAN VIEW**

1 bedroom, fully furnished, 91sqm, sea view. Best price in complex: Only 60,000 baht/sqm; 5.5 million baht total. Tel: 095-037 9680, 089-617 2312, 076-288872, 076-341045.

**SEAVIEW POOL VILLA**

Seaview over Chalong Bay marina. 7 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, private pool. Chanote. Size: 800sqm. Price: 25 million baht. Tel: 084-868 1732, or 084-933 9829. Email: kig wd@hotmail.com

**ONE SINGLE HOUSE FOR SALE**

3km from Laguna Phuket, 3 beds, 2 bath, 3.5 million baht. Contact Nan 081-367 8967.

**FREEHOLD POOL VILLA**

From 1.1 million baht. 800m from Nai Harn Beach. For more information, please call 080-124 1245. Email: kay@phuketandamanrealestate.com

**3-BED HOUSE - LARGE GARDEN**

Chuan Cheun Lagoon, close to British International School and the Boat Lagoon Marina. Chanote land title, 146sqm. (584 sqm), private cul-de-sac location in secure, clean village. Cool, bright, open plan with large Western kitchen and good water supply. Large car park, patios. 6.85 million baht, negotiable. For sale by owner. Contact for more photos and info. Tel: 086-040 6866 (English), 081-979 6707 (Thai). Email: adrian.j.simpson@gmail.com

**Condo for Rent/Sale**

Rawai Condominium 60sqm., 1 bed, 1 bathroom, Great kitchen, fully furnished, European style, first floor, swimming pool view, price for sale 3.9 million baht, price for rent 30,000 baht for long-term.

For more information  
English: Denis 082-539 6433,  
Sue 087-897 4421, Thai: Aoi 081-667 1637.

**KAMALA**

Large 4 bed house, 3 bath, guest Water Close, 5 aircons, ADSL, close to sea. Tel: 085-250 4197.

**CHALONG BEACHFRONT POOL VILLA**

For sale / rent 3 bedrooms. Tel: 089-649 9939. Email: siri\_phuket@changrunner.com

**LAND FOR SALE**

73sqm. with Chanote titles. 15 minutes to Panwa Beach (Ao Makham bay). Conveniently located, road frontage. Please contact 081-6912526. Email: s\_jumpon@yahoo.com

**2- BEDROOMS BEACHFRONT CONDO RAWAI**

2bdr / 2bath, huge balcony with direct walk out to pool, beach, restaurant, in 5 star resort with access to gym, spa, ideal for family, separate storage, furniture incl, fast owner sale, leaving Asia, 13.9million baht. neg. Tel: 096-532849 (English). Email: laura@tilaholdings.com

**KARON BEACH CONDO**

1-bedroom Karon apartment is for sale. Ground floor with direct pool access. Tel: 087-892 3876 (English). Email: info@phuketcondo.net, www.phuketcondo.net

**BEAUTIFUL LAND PLOT FOR SALE**

Very conveniently located in a secure estate with underground electricity, less than 10 mins from Phuket International Academy, airport, Tesco, Nai Yang beach, Ao Po Grand marina, in a peaceful foreign community, Chanote title, 1,100sqm, flat land with fences around, mountain view, ready to build, good investment. For quick sale direct from owner only 3.5million baht. Tel: 081-343 0777.

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Contact: 076-350118, 083-389 7799.

Email: Pee\_bang56@hotmail.com

**FREEHOLD CONDO FOR SALE**

Patong Tower building. One bedroom with 270-degree view of Patong Beach and town, 10th floor, 54.35sqm. 11 million baht ONO. Contact Songpan. Genuine buyers only. No brokers please. Tel: 081-737 8662.

**26-ROOM HOTEL SEAVIEW**

1 km from beach, 26 rooms & apt (total 40 rooms), land 500sqm, 65 million baht. Email: bookx90@gmail.com

**SEAVIEW HOUSE**

3-bedrooms Rawai, 640sqm land, 2 floors, perfect seaview on loft top, BBQ area on loft top 11 sqm. Tel: 088-168 5032. Email: info@thenetworkproperty.com

**NICE HOUSE CHALONG**

400sqm. Furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, European kitchen, 4 aircons, swimming pool, Sale 4.9 million baht. Tel: 081-787 4831.

**RAWAI VIP VILLAS WITH PARK**

Unique project with private park. 300m from Rawai Beach. Pool villas from 7.9 million baht. 4 villas left! Web Best selling villas in Rawai. Tel: 085-575 3300, 092-979 7899 (English & Thai). Email: an drey@phuket9.com See more details: http://phuket9.com/rawai-vip-villas-new/

**CHEAP LAND & HOUSE FOR SALE**

Land of 35 rai and a house with aircon, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and kitchen at Tambon Bornok, Prachuap Khiri Khan, 20km from Prachuap Khiri Khan Town. The land is 1.3km from Petchkasem Road. Price is only 10 million baht. Nor Sor 3 title deed. Please call 086-615 9719.

**LARGE SEAVIEW HOUSE AT LAYAN**

3 rai, Chanote. Price: 54 million baht. Tel: 081-787 4383. Email: ruggdan@gmail.com



## Properties For Rent

**ORCHID KATHU HEIGHTS**

Serviced apartment, studio, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, rooftop, pool, free WiFi. Tel: 076-203208, 081-892 0038. www.orchidkathuheights-phuket.com

**PRUKSA VILLE - THALANG**

This is a new 3-bed, 2-bath house, fully furnished. Available in high season from December, 2014. 10 mins direct from airport and many beaches. Short and long-term. 15-20,000 baht per month. Tel: 090-924 5838. Contact vicky\_grc@hotmail.com

**OFFICE FOR RENT IN PATONG**

Situated at prime location, 1<sup>st</sup> floor with 42sqm. Tel: 092-493 9644 (English & Thai). Email: organ@century21-andaman.com

**FULLY FURNISHED HOUSE**

3-bedrooms, 400sqm, free WiFi and cable TV. 25,000 baht per month. For more information, please call 081-892 4311. http://palaigreen.weebly.com

**CHEAP RENT HOUSE**

Fully furnished 1-3 bedrooms, aircons, free WiFi, start from 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311. Website: panwa.green.weebly.com

**PATONG CONDO FOR RENT**

Luxury poolside condominium. Fully furnished 2-bed/-bath, equipped kitchen, WiFi, cable TV, aircon. For Rent or For Sale. Available from 16<sup>th</sup> December. Tel: 085-792 2815 (English). Email: bern@global.net.au

**LAGUNA 1 BED CONDO**

Renovated 1-bedroom condo for rent at Allamanda Residence, within the Laguna complex. Tel: 082-412 7022. Email: siam.servicegroup@mail.com

**ZCAPE CONDO BANG TAO**

Studio room, fully furnished, near Laguna complex and Bang Tao Beach. Available now for short and long-term rent 12-20,000 baht per month. Email: vicky\_grc@hotmail.com

**B.L. APARTMENT**

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

**SEAVIEW CONDO IN PATONG**

For rent 1 & 2 bedroom, fully furnished on daily, monthly & yearly. Contact no. 081-797 7199, 086-683 0786. Email: highstylecondominium@gmail.com

**POOL VILLAS FOR RENT**

1, 2 bedrooms, near Laguna, fully furnished from 20,000 Baht. Tel: 093-713 2278.

**LAST-MINUTE RENTAL**

An elegant, high-quality 3-bedroom villa with private 12-meter pool is available for short-term or long term rental. Furnished to the highest standards, the property is part of a luxury private estate located only minutes to Nai Harn Beach, restaurants and shops. 12-month contract, 85,000 baht per month; Daily rate from 10,000 baht per day. Tel: 081-080 3184 (English). Email: zuber@loxinfo.co.th www.villastellaphuket.com

**APARTMENT IN SURIN FOR RENT**

1 bedroom, furnished with balcony. Long or short term, 18,000 a month. Tel: 084-689 4658 (English), 081-537 2549 (English & Thai). Email: Malin@vertigo-phuket.com Website: suringate.com

**HOUSE FOR RENT**

2 aircon bedrooms, 1 bathroom, aircon living room, kitchen, furnished house, car park. Tel: 081-537 9878 (English & Thai). Email: tiwus@hotmail.co.th

**CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT**

54sqm 1-bedroom in Patong near Simon Cabaret. Long-term rent (min 5 month) 20,000 baht per month. Security, big swimming pool, call Mr Finn. Tel: 083-104 6599.

**POOL VILLA FOR NEW YEAR**

Nai Harn Samakee, 3 bedroom, pool, good condition, 150,000 baht / month. Tel: 093-741 3735. Email: phuket.hello@gmail.com

**KATA BEACH APARTMENT**

Nice 1 bedroom, kitchen, WiFi, spa, fully furnished, 500 baht per night. Tel: 086-595 8512, 081-970 4638 Email: nalumana2000@yahoo.com

**RENT APARTMENT PATONG**

Condo, pool, security, 46sqm fully furnished. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: thamad17@yahoo.com

**DELUXE BEACHFRONT CONDO**

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

**NICE BUNGALOW RAWAI**

1-bedroom, aircon, WiFi, kitchen. Fully furnished, 9,000 baht. Tel: 081-271 7092. Email: bricothailand@hotmail.com

**KATA NOI, 1 & 2 BED SEAVIEW**

Beach 3-minute walk. Immaculate, new, 1 and 2-bed condo & pool penthouse. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

**PRIVATE RENTAL PATONG CONDO**

1 bed, furn apt, living room, balcony, pool, gym, parking, WiFi, cable. Avail now. Want reliable, trustworthy LT tenant, good rate for right person. Tel: 085-069 0938. Email: neiln5nh6@gmail.com

**APARTMENT FOR RENT**

Serviced apartment: 66sqm, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 1 living room with pull-out sofa, 1 bedroom. Fully equipped European kitchen, WiFi internet access, cable LCD TV, DVD, stereo system. Maid cleaning, shuttle service to Nai Harn beach, fitness center, spa, poolside restaurant and bar, children's playground. Price: 3,200 baht per night. Contact: 081-550 7379.

**STUDIO ROOM FOR RENT**

Royal Place condo, Phuket City, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus, 37 Sqm, 2 fl. Studio room, fully furnished.

Please contact 086-4769612 email: annanoi1@hotmail.com

**HOLIDAY RENTAL**

The White House @ Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina is available for holiday rental. Tel: 087-465 8883 (English & Thai). Email: pen@mindproperties.net Website: mindproperties.net

**APARTMENT FOR RENT PATONG**

Condo, pool, security, 46sqm. Fully furnished. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: thamad17@yahoo.com

**10 UNITS CONDO FOR RENT**

In Patong, seaview 7-storey condo with rooftop swimming pool, good lobby, elevator, parking, fully furnished with 1&2 bedrooms, living room, well-equipped kitchen, 4-star property, with cheap rent. Call 081-797 7199, 086-683 0786 Email: highstylecondominium@gmail.com

**LOFT STYLE FLATS - KATHU**

Furnished, quiet, good exercise area, 10K baht/month. Tel: 086-664 5575 (English). Email: hkmsn@yahoo.com

**KAMALA BEACH RENTAL**

Very nice house all apartment; furnished, quiet, clean, secure. Price 16,000-22,000 baht/month. Tel: 083-645 3546.

**KATA SEAVIEW CONDO FOR RENT**

Long-term rental, more than 6 months. Nov - Apr: 38,000 baht per month. May-Oct 28,000 baht/month. Tel: 087-282 3724. Email: keywest\_aloha@hotmail.com

**HOUSE FOR RENT**

3-bedrooms, 2-bathrooms, 4 aircons. Fully furnished with small garden, quiet area. Rent 15,000 baht / month. Tel: 086-690 0626. Email: bcarrent@hotmail.com

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



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

Mail: AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net

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







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

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

The Gazette Online is always on top in Google!



# Property Classifieds

Property Services	Property Wanted	Accommodation Available	Holiday Homes & Villa Rentals	Household Items
<b>PDS PHUKET DRAIN SPECIALIST</b> At Phuket drain specialists, we can guarantee that you will receive a quick and efficient service for everything from blocked drains to drain repairs to pipe replacement. Our team of highly qualified staff have a wealth of experience in dealing with blocked drains. We operate a 24hr emergency service and ensure a quick response time. when you have a blocked drain, you know who to call. Phuket drain specialists. we guarantee we will beat any quote. Tel: 081-090 9516 (English), 085-224 6685(Thai). Email: kjoshea@hotmail.co.uk	<b>HOLIDAY RENTAL WANTED</b> Karon or Kata. Large 2 or 3-bedroom penthouse or condo with own pool, sea view. Excellent quality wanted, Jan 19 to Feb 2. Tel: +61 043-150 3481 (English).	<b>LARGE HOUSE / RENT IN KATHU</b> 340sqm house for rent in strategic Kathu, near shopping malls, schools. 3 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, superb kitchen, garden of 690sqm. Advanced security systems. 55,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-494 4987 (English & Thai). Email: willy@asia webdirect.com www.phuket101.net/2012/10/house-for-rent-in-phuket-kathu.html	<b>CONDO SURIN BEACH</b> 1-bedroom condo, fully furnished. Facilities include: swimming pool, parking and restaurant. Long-term/short-term from 14,000 baht a month+electric. Tel: 084-689 4658 (English), 081-537 2549 (Thai). Email: Malin@vertigo phuket.com	<b>LEAVING PHUKET</b> Luxbed skin sofa / chair. Various other furniture items. All for sale, leaving Thailand. 10am-12 noon. Located in Kata. Call 089-591 7249. Ask for Morten. Tel: 089-591 7249(English). Email: morten.pasby@gmail.com
<b>BUILDING SERVICES</b> Professional contractor, villa / pool contractor, villa / pool construction, refurbishment, extensions. Free consultation, quote. Tel: 091-654 7383(English & Thai).	<b>OFFICE / RETAIL SPACE WANTED</b> Office / Retail space wanted asap. Approx 20sqm. In Kamala / Surin area. Tel: 082-521 7745 (English). Email: mrcraigwhite@hotmail.co.uk	<b>PATONG CONDO WITH SEAVIEW</b> 2 bed and bathroom, Western kitchen, 3 LCD TVs, 3 aircons, terrace, car park, big pool. 120sqm, seaview. Long-term rental only. Tel: 081-824 1385.	<b>PRIVATE POOL VILLA</b> 3-bedroom private pool villa located minutes from the famed Laguna area. Tel: 084-842 2262 (English & Thai). Email: lita.hine@hotmail.com	<b>BAR CONTENTS FOR SALE</b> Pool tables, TVs, fridges, point of sale tables and chairs, etc, in Patong. Tel: 085-562 6711.
<b>PROPERTY, VILLA MANAGEMENT</b> Experienced hoteliers / property managers offer pre-opening, management and rental services of resorts, villas, apartments & estate management including juristic persons. Email: resortgm@gmail.com	<b>INVESTMENT PROPERTY</b> Wanted in Phuket, Phang Nga or Khao Lak areas, cash buyer. Tel: 087-278 5037. Email: peter.callen@live.com	<b>ABSOLUTELY BEACHFRONT</b>  Stunning luxury 2-bedroom waterfall pool villa on prime beach 2 large double bedrooms both with ensuite bathrooms Luxury Italian design kitchen - State of the art entertainment system Full broadband Maid service Available for daily / weekly rental Visa / Mastercard Accepted. Please contact Tana wan on 094-294 9935. Email: tanawan@phuket propertyhunter.com	<b>BRAND NEW MODERN POOL VILLA</b>  Brand new modern pool villas (2 & 3 beds). Fully furnished. Free WiFi, satellite TV, pool & garden maintenance. Between Cape Yamu & Ao Po Marina. Tel: 081-893 5270, 093-014 5072. Email: srdupouy@gmail.com www.tropical-house.net	<b>MODERN KITCHEN &amp; APPLIANCES</b>  For sale. Complete with all modern appliances, fridge and dining table. Please call for photos. Bargain price at 85,000 baht. Tel: 084-650 1048, 085-354 9694.
<b>phuket home services</b> Experts in Renovation 076 324 400 phukethomeservices.com	<b>SEEKING LONG-TERM VILLA RENTAL</b> Prefer unfurnished, single storey only, 2 bedrooms + garden. Must accept 2 Labrador dogs. All areas considered except Patong. Contact Keith. Tel: 081-929 2267. Teresa: 081-867 7223. Email: kmh.thh.1@gmail.com	<b>SEA VIEW 3-BED VILLA, PATONG</b> Luxury villa of character with Patong sea view. Estate pool, private and secure. 60,000 baht per week; 200,000 per month; 1 million baht per year – plus utilities, service extra. Minimum deposit of 20,000 baht. Tel: 086-587 0196 (English & Thai). Email: natawa paeng@gmail.com	<b>2-BEDROOMS BEACHFRONT CONDO RAWAI</b> 2- bedrooms / 2-bath ens, huge balcony with direct walk out to pool, beach, restaurant, in 5 star resort with access to gym, spa, ideal for families, separate storage, furniture incl, fast owner sale, leaving Asia, 13.9million baht neg. Tel: 096-532849(English). Email: laura@tila holdings.com	<b>BABY BED FOR SALE</b>  Can turn into daybed. Paid 20,000 baht, price negotiable. Tel: 085-136 3031 (English).

## 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!**

## Looking for land to buy?

See more classified ads at [www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)

## Classified Advertisements

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

(heading)

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 140 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad. All advertising must be paid for in advance.

**Please note that ads are now being accepted for the Dec 27 & Jan 03 Issue onwards**

**The deadline for placing ad on issue Dec 27 is on Dec 19**

**The deadline for placing ad on issue Jan 03 is on Dec 24**



**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

We are looking for a graphic designer to join our young and fast-growing team. Please send CV for immediate response. Email: paul@livephuket.com

**LIVE-IN HOUSEKEEPER**

Thai lady to live in with small family in Kathu. Duties include cleaning, laundry, pets, some childcare and cooking. Tel: 094-593 0729 (English). Email: ritalouised obson@hotmail.com

**TEACHING AT PSU**

Prince of Songkla University International College Haad Yai campus is looking for 4 lecturers for 3D Animation / English and, Science lecturer. Please send CV to psuic@psu.ac.th www.uic.psu.ac.th

**PART-TIME TEACHERS NEEDED!!**

Native speaker for English, Chinese and Japanese. Bachelor's degree or higher. Must be able to teach various ages of students. Tel: 076-219337, 095-429 5251 (English & Thai). Email: nycphuket@gmail.com

**HOUSEKEEPER NEEDED**

To manage and ensure the cleanliness of our operation. Must be a dynamic team worker with a pleasant personality. Contact us. Tel: 081-893 5492 (English & Thai).

**ENTHUSIASTIC STAFF WANTED**

Enthusiastic, fit, sociable, snorkelling trainer & safety person required for speedboat tours. Thai or foreign with the correct qualifications. Excellent English a must. Send photo with CV. Excellent pay for right person. Tel: 076-289044, 086-011 5340 (English & Thai). Email: work for simba@gmail.com

**GERMAN-SPEAKING STAFF**

Required. Tel: 093-579 6644 (Nuch). For more info please send your CV and recent photo to rainforestjob@gmail.com

**MARKETING MANAGER**

Real estate company looking for foreign-national manager with good English skills. Basic salary + commission + work permit. Tel: 089-594 6888. Email: info@arhouse.asia

**EUROPEAN CHEFS**

We are hiring Sous Chef and Executive Chef. We want both full-time. Good salary and work permit for the right candidate. Tel: 081-905 8353. Email: hr bangtao@oceanresort group.net

**FRONT OFFICE GIRL WANTED**

Patong area, Thai national, good English, hotel experience. Start from 25,000 baht. Tel: 085-694 6463 (English & Thai). Email: solitude001@aol.com

**HOTEL COOK NEEDED**

Filipino cook wanted for western food and Thai food. Must be able to speak and write English. Tel: 076-345670, 083-392 8462. Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

**NEW RESTAURANT IN LAGUNA**

Now hiring: Chefs – all levels; Servers – all levels; Bar staff; Back of house staff; and a Personal Assistant. Basic English necessary, previous experience preferred. Must be under 35 years of age. For the right candidates, we offer an excellent salary, benefits, holidays and structured professional development. Please forward CVs and a current picture to Jamie@bampot.co or call 092-130 3114. www.bampot.com

**Phuket Gazette**

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

**CLASSIFIEDS ADMINISTRATION 2 POSITIONS**

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 Kookai at [Kookai@PhuketGazette.Net](mailto:Kookai@PhuketGazette.Net)

**The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd**

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew  
A. Muang, Phuket 83000  
Tel: 076-273555, ext 207 Fax: 076-615240

**Phuket Gazette**

**Reporter Wanted: Looking for a fun, enthusiastic and confident individual to join Phuket's main English-language media team.**

**REPORTER**

- ▶ Thai national
- ▶ No experience needed!
- ▶ University degree not required
- ▶ Top quality on-the-job training provided
- ▶ Must have strong communication skills and a desire to help Phuket
- ▶ Reasonable command of spoken English

Competitive salary for the right candidate.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to [Um@PhuketGazette.net](mailto:Um@PhuketGazette.net)

**The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd**

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew  
A. Muang, Phuket 83000  
Tel: 076-273555 Ext 402 Mobile: 081-970 8381

**SENIOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

TLI is looking for a creative architect with post-graduate experience in landscape design & management. Proven experience in co-ordination of projects from concept to construction drawings. Tel: 083-102 2910 (English). Email: belinda@tropical-landscaping.com

**FUNDRAISING OFFICER**

Soi Dog Foundation seeks a Fund-raising Officer who will manage Soi Dog's donor database and send emails to supporters around the world, working closely with other members of the fundraising team. The position requires excellent attention to detail. Applicants should be reliable, consistent, comfortable with computers, fairly competent at writing in English, and love cats and dogs. To apply, please send a CV and cover letter to belinda@soidog.org

**SALES REPRESENTATIVE**

Career opportunity for a dedicated sales rep at a holiday ownership company, based in Phuket. Tremendous potential for huge earnings. Legal working status will be arranged. Please send your resume to: [rbv@royalperspective.com](mailto:rbv@royalperspective.com)

**SECRETARY**

Female, Thai nationality, good command of written and spoken English, good computer knowledge (Word and Excel programs), good attitude and positive person. Benefit: salary 12,000-15,000 baht per month + commission 10-20%, social fee, public holiday, vacation. Tel: 086-940 5187, 081-415 7774. Email: [sales@phuketislandrealestate.com](mailto:sales@phuketislandrealestate.com)

**SALES REPRESENTATIVES**

English speaking TO and Sales Reps needed. Experience in timeshare only. Start immediately. Tel: 076-342794, 088-450 1833. Email: [hr@davidvacationclub.com](mailto:hr@davidvacationclub.com)

**CHINESE STAFF NEEDED**

A Chinese person with reasonable English skills for marketing department of a yacht charter company. Tel: 087-384 2743.

**SALES OFFICER - AQUA MASTER**

Leading distributor of scuba diving equipment. We are currently looking for two sales officers based in Chalong. Tel: 076-281227, 081-893 5492 (English), 081-270 4819 (English & Thai).

**HOTEL STAFF WANTED**

Front officer, cook, night receptionist, hotel manager needed. For new hotel with 200 rooms. Filipino and Thai staff only. Contact us by email only. Tel: 081-893 7720.

## Live in Patong?

### Place your GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS at Andy's Real Estate Agency (AREA)



Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Andy: (076-341644)**

**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!**

**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**

- NEW** ▶ **Andy's Real Estate Agency** (Opp. Savoey Seafood) Tel: **076-341644**
- ▶ **Taurus Travel** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: **076-344521-2**
- ▶ **Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: **076-290468**

**PHUKET CITY**

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

**CHERNG TALAY**

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

**RAWAI**

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

**KARON**

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



**SALES MANAGER NEEDED**

Sales staff needed for real estate business. Contact by email only. Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

**RESTAURANT NEEDS URGENTLY**

Looking for female Assistant Manager with bubbly personality. Up to 20,000 baht per month. Bar Manager needed for up to 15k. Waitresses needed for up to 12k. All plus service charge and benefits. Call for details. Tel: 076-211775, 086-509 7510 (English), 087-884 8271 (English & Thai). Email: simon@colonial-connection.com

**RUSSIAN REAL ESTATE 150K+**

We are a leading real estate company in Phuket that is expanding fast and looking for a talented individual to join our young, dynamic team. Must be a Russian-speaking agent who has a number of years experience in real estate, and preferably in Phuket. CVs to paul@livephuket.com, www.livephuket.com

**THAI EXECUTIVE CHEF NEEDED**

The Chakri Group of Restaurants has 6 successful restaurants throughout KL, Malaysia. We are recruiting Executive Chefs with hotel experience of a minimum of 7 years. Tel: (60) 03-5569 2211, +60 016-227 7610. Email: cal@chakri.com.my www.chakri.com.my

**TROPICAL CO., LTD.**  
PHUKET REAL ESTATE EXPERT

**Wanted**

**1. Sales: English, Chinese, Russian**  
(Good commission, must have sales experience)

**2. Staff for Property booth**  
(17,000 baht, lunch + commission; must speak English well)

Please contact **Kaew 094-807 3434**  
E-mail: [kaew@agtropical.com](mailto:kaew@agtropical.com)

**K.Y. PROPERTY CO., LTD**

**Urgently required in General Office: 2 positions**

**Salary: 15,000 baht and up**  
**Benefits:** Adjustment of income every year, uniform and Social Security

**Qualifications:**

- Male / Female Applicants welcome
- Bachelor's degree
- Service-minded with good personality
- Communication Skills and good command of English
- Responsible and enthusiastic
- Computer and print skills

**Contact us**  
20 Moo 2, Thepkasatthi Road, Koh-Kaew, Muang Phuket  
Tel. 076-273414

**SWEDISH STAFF**

Swedish-speaking 20-30 years old staff wanted. Send your CV & photo to naturejob13@gmail.com

**CRUISE LINE CHEFS**

To double as a ship manager in Myanmar on the Pandaw River Cruises. Tel: 087-096 9625. Email: anthonydupont@yahoo.com

**DIGITAL CONTENT / MEDIA ASST.**

Knowledge in Graphic Design / VDO Editing (Adobe Suite preferred). Fluent in written and spoken English (native-Level Preferred Thai national). Ability to take pictures and VDO is an advantage. Email: aey@princessyachtssea.com

**BB PHUKET NEEDS YOU!**

A unique, luxury hospitality project, located on the tranquil eastern shores of Phuket, invites you to become a part of our team.

**If you:**

Have a passion for high-end hospitality  
Have some experience in the hospitality industry  
Have a pleasant, service-minded personality  
Have a good command of English

We'd like to get to know you better!

Competitive compensation and benefit packages and guaranteed service fees for all successful applicants.

**Contact us on [jobs@bbphuket.com](mailto:jobs@bbphuket.com)**

Open office event every day except Sundays, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, at Beach Projects, 51/9 Moo 5, Chalemprakiat 9 Rd., T. Rassada, A. Mueang, Phuket 83000 Thailand.

**INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION**

Thai person who can speak English and, importantly, Chinese. Will work with Chinese and Russian customers. If experienced in real estate business, there will be a great salary. Phuket Project Co, Ltd. Tel: 093-587 3711.

**SHOP MANAGER**

We have a position for a manager to run our busy massage shop to a high standard. You must be self-motivated, a good communicator with good Thai / English-language skills and good staff management skills. Good salary + bonus. Call for an interview. Tel: 084-247 2935 (English). Email: Peter.ritchie@hotmail.co.nz

**QUALIFIED BOAT CREW**

Wanted for a 6-month journey in Southeast Asia on a 19m motor yacht. Pls email your resume with boating experience and skills, and phone number. Email: boatcrewwanted@gmail.com

**EXPERIENCED CS STAFF WANTED**

Native English-Speaking Customer Service Agent needed for E-commerce fashion retailer. Work permit. High salary. 5-day work week. Work on Macs. Tel: 076-282759.

**COOKS URGENTLY NEEDED**

Busy farang-style restaurant needs 2 full-time cooks. Some experience necessary but training given. Good salary and can start immediately. Tel: 086-509 7510 (English & Thai), 087-283 6074.

**PHUKET HOME SERVICE**

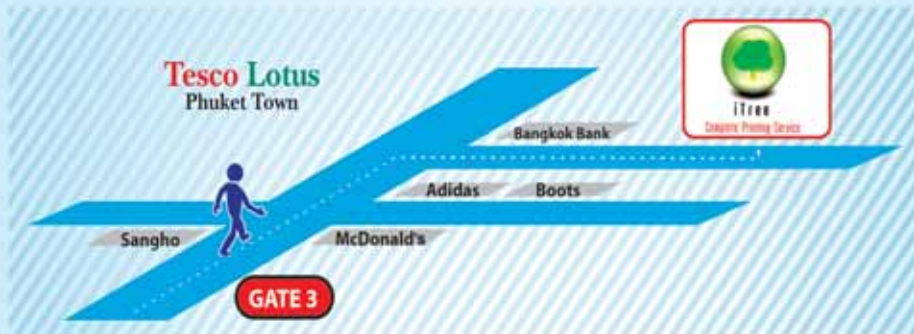
New maintenance company looking for staff: maid, plumber, baby-sitter, ++. Contact: info@home-phuket-service.com or call 083-105 2707 (12.00-20.00) . www.home-phuket-service.com

**EXECUTIVE CHEF WANTED**

A popular hotel in central Patong requires an executive chef. Applicants must have a minimum of 5 years experience in a similar position, and be able to undertake the full management of a busy kitchen. Languages required: Thai / English. Salary is negotiable, dependent on experience and ability. Tel: 089-208 8557. Email: nealeavey@gmail.com

**Live in Town?**

Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at **iTree Complete Printing Service**



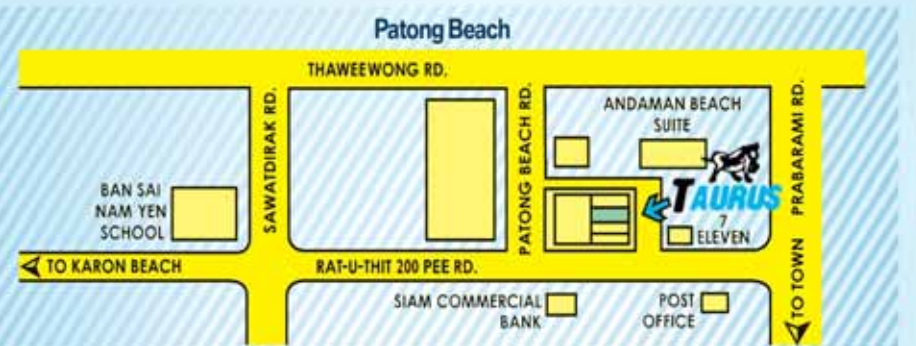
Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Nan: (076-255425)**

**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!**

**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)**

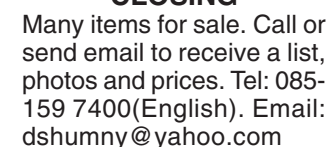
**GAZETTE CLASSADS** - they work because they're **PAID!** Hundreds of new ads in print every week, all published simultaneously and **FREE** - in the **Gazette Online!**

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

**Looking for a job?**  
**Looking for a better candidate?**  
**Find more Recruitment Classifieds at [www.PhuketGazette.Net](http://www.PhuketGazette.Net)!**



## Bulletins



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**FRASER 41 (1988)**

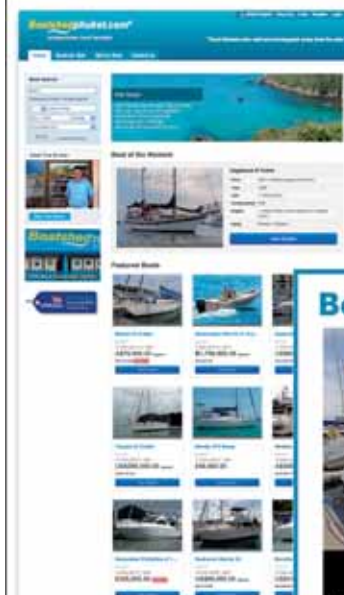
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This long legged performance cruiser reflects years of multihull sailing experience and has been conceived with long distance short-handed sailing in mind. Lying: Langkawi, Malaysia.

**THE SOLUTION TO THIS WEEK'S****Cryptic Crossword****COFFEE break**

**Abbreviations:** UPPER CASE (if used as part of anagram, in brackets).

**Normal spelling:** lower case.

**Anagrams:** *italic* (indicated in clue by words 'out', 'possibly', 'strangely', 'wild', or similar).

**Letters left out:** underlined.

**Across:**

9. BRASSBAND: no strings 10. ONSTREAM: *amonster* 12. EACH: *ache* 13. ADVICE: A.D.-vice 14. ENNOBLE: *nbone*-le 15. TOLERANCE: *cleartone* 17. TABULATED: *dealbutat* 18. REVENGE: *evenreg* 20. STRAIN: kind 21. NORN: No.-R.N. 24. PLANNING: plan-N-*gin* 26. FASTENER: *fearsnet* 28. ODDS: O-D-D-S 29. CRATER: *tracer* 31. THINNER: *thenin*-R 34. BENIGHTED: *thenbeing*-D 36. PERIMETER: per-1-meter 38. RATATAT: *art-at-a-T* 39. NELLIE: e-1-lle[rev] 40. SCUT: *cuts* 41. PORTIONS: (No.1rev)*sports* 42. COLLATION: (L)*location*

**Down:**

1. OBJECTOR: *jobector* 2. CANCEL: C-*clean* 3. FANDANCE: fan-dance 4. ADVICE: A.D.-vice 5. MOLESTER: *letsmore* 6. ASSEMBLIES: *ablemisses* 7. GRANDLY: grand-L-Y 8. RABBIT: R-A-B.-bit 11. PENDENT: dependent 16. RANONG: ran-on-g 19. VALID: V-*laid* 20. SAG: gas[up] 22. OCEAN: *oncea* 23. MEDIUM: medium 25. IRRITATION: *itrainitor* 26. FAR: R.A.F.[up] 27. RUBBERY: *berry*(O.B.) 30. TIDINESS: *idissent* 31. TERRIBLE: *leerbrit* 32. RERATING: *tearring* 33. AGITATE: *igetata* 35. NOTION: *inntoo* 36. POLICE: pol-I/C-e 37. act-tic

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I-ECCE - Italy  
G-BVNL - UK



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# Royal Phuket Marina brings out the big guns



**PUMPING IRON:** L to R: Pinno Natthakorn, fitness manager; Patcharee Vatcharawipakorn, membership manager; Dion Friedman, current senior International Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation Mr Universe and Mr World; and Hayden Rhodes, fitness club manager.

# Let there be art!

British International School art teacher Kathy Manthai Coulson opens her multimedia art exhibition at Villa Royale Gallery on December 10.



**JUST SHOWING OFF:** L to R: Neil Richards, headmaster of BIS; Helene Fallon Wood, Honorary Consul of Ireland; Kathy Manthai Coulson and Ian Coulson. Photo: Bruce Stanely

# Teeing up to prevent spread of HIV




**RPM SPARKLES, SHINES AT SPEAK EASY:** L to R: Zoran Lalvani, RPM director of business development; Caterina Licitra Ponti; and Jay Walker, RPM director of marketing and operations.



**WEIRD:** Teams put on their strangest as they take part in the Life Home Project Foundation's 4<sup>th</sup> annual charity golf event this month.

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## Words from the wise

"Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection."  
— Winston Churchill

"Christmas is a holiday that persecutes the lonely,  
the frayed, and the rejected."  
— Jimmy Cannon

## Medium

	5	3		9		1	6	
9				4				7
1			3		8			9
		9				7		
6	7						9	1
		1				6		
8			9		2			6
5				3				4
	9	6		5		2	8	

## Hard

7		8			2	9		
					9	1	4	
			5				3	
6		9	7				2	
4								5
	5				4	6		1
	2				5			
	7	4	9					
		1	3			5		4

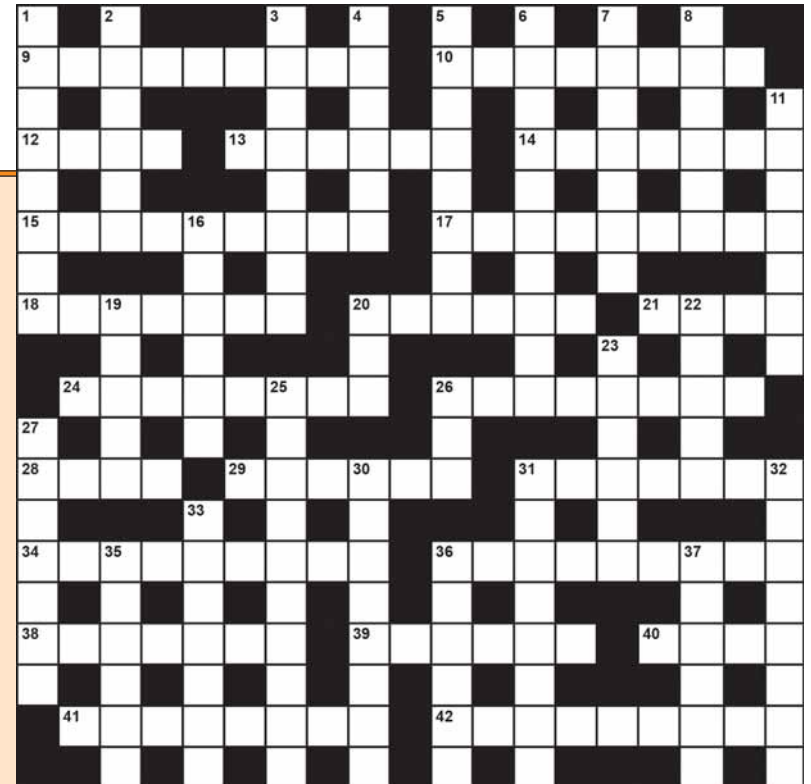
**SUDOKU:** Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

COFFEE  
break

## Cryptic Crossword

## Across

9. No strings attached for this musical group (5,4)  
10. A monster wildly operational (2,6)  
12. Every one to ache badly (4)  
13. I dream about and think highly of (6)  
14. Give title to one. N.B. could be the French! (7)  
15. Clear tone showing forbearance (9)  
17. Listed deal, but at new structure (9)  
18. Even Reg disturbed by retribution (7)  
20. Kind of overwork (6)  
21. Number Royal Navy sleeping in Thailand (4)  
24. Project new strange gin preparation (8)  
26. Fears net destroyed by fixing device (8)  
28. Chances nil daughter departs second (4)  
29. Tracer exploded making a hole (6)  
31. Not so fat then in new run (7)  
34. The being possibly died ignorant (9)  
36. For each one meter of boundary (9)  
38. Sharp knocking of bad art at a time (7)  
39. Ellen back around one for another girl (6)  
40. Untidily cuts an animal's tail (4)  
41. Back number one in different sport segments (8)  
42. Informal meal left in different location (9)



## Down

1. Protester about job, etc., or arrangement thereof (8)  
2. Caught clean, move to call off (6)  
3. Enthusiast to shake a leg for erotic show (3,5)  
4. Counsel for nowadays' immorality (6)  
5. Pesterer lets more be upset (8)  
6. Able Misses arrange gatherings (10)  
7. Importantly a thousand left unknown (7)  
8. River sailor sank teeth into small animal (6)  
11. Hanging dependent of French extraction! (7)  
16. Telephoned on in Changwat north of Phang Nga (6)  
19. Legitimate victor laid out (5)  
20. Gas up and sink under the weight (3)

22. Once a different large area of water (5)  
23. Spiritualist T.V., for example (6)  
25. I train it or cause annoyance (10)  
26. British flying service rises a good way (3)  
27. Stealing strange berry, Old Boy hides (7)  
30. I dissent about an orderly state (8)  
31. Awful leer Brit produces! (8)  
32. Assessing again to tear ring apart (2-6)  
33. I get at a disturbance and stir (7)  
35. Concept of inn too unsettled (6)  
36. Pole in charge taken in by constabulary (6)  
37. Act out personal quirk as stratagem (6)

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Your intuitive understanding of a situation could make the difference between resolving it, or not. Though facts can seem compelling, they may not represent the whole truth, whereas your gut feeling just might. Meanwhile, money matters come under the spotlight. Someone with sound advice and worldly experience could want to share this with you.

## CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



You may feel like the pressure is on to make changes that offer greater scope for the future. Though this can be easy in theory, in practice there could be many reasons why this doesn't seem possible. Even so, an event or conversation could act as a catalyst and help you see a way ahead that might be more doable over the long-term.

## AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



If you feel shaken this week, it might be down to the planetary energies that are having a truly profound impact. Though

generally you're known as a free thinker, some of your beliefs and ideals may be challenged, leaving you somewhat insecure. Still, if you dip your toe into the water, you might find these will prove liberating rather than threatening.

## PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):



With a lively blend of energies enhancing your social sector, you might be spoilt for choice when it comes to getting invites and having fun. Yet, one thing might surprise you, which is that certain friends can find your ideas rather radical. Consider this: if you've changed so much over the past couple of years, it could be time to move in new circles.

## ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):



Powerful energies may need directing as a Uranus Pluto clash, along with other influences, can encourage you to act rather too much on impulse. However, opportunities which can jolt you out of your comfort zone could also show up regarding your goals and romance. Yet, don't be so radical that you spoil all your recent hard work. Best to take things one step at a time.

YOUR  
horoscope  
By Patrick Arundell

## TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):



You could feel like you're walking on eggshells during this week, especially if a relationship with someone you are close to seems on edge. If this or an equally strained situation has been ongoing, you might have an opportunity to take action. Wait though, until your emotions are more settled before you decide to have a heart-to-heart talk.

## GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



A feeling of insecurity could mean you're holding on tight to a job or situation that has outgrown its usefulness. Yet, over the coming days, the desire to embrace a new opportunity might become stronger. If so, it's certainly worth making plans to expand your options, allowing you move in the direction of your dreams.

## CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Are the demands of others blocking the fulfillment of your ambitions? If so, they may not be doing this intentionally, but nevertheless you could be frustrated that you don't have as much freedom as you'd like. It will be important this week to focus on your goals, particularly the most important ones, and to find a workable compromise.

## LEO (July 24-Aug 23):



If you've been under pressure in key areas of life, this week's alignments can be a game-changer. Tensions may surface, but ones which might push you to take action. However, don't jump out of the proverbial frying pan and into the fire. There is a way to lessen the pressure by developing your personal interests, and embracing more freedom from strains.

## VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23):



Creative ideas will blossom if you're able to move out of your comfort zone and explore new ways to fire up your enthu-

siasm. The same can be said of a romance or other situations that seem to have lost their sparkle. Meanwhile, Venus's influence suggests you could earn more money from a skill that you are currently not tapping into sufficiently, Virgo.

## LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



You may find yourself in a situation that you are struggling to reconcile. Whatever choice you make might seem too far removed from your ideal, meaning you'll need to find another way to get what you want. However, the emerging Capricorn focus suggests that you could be tempted to err on the side of caution, when an experimental approach might be best.

## SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Don't let doubts prevent you from continuing along the path that brings fulfillment and happiness to you. You could find that the days ahead test your resolve of whether to stick with an idea or plan that you've so far benefited by, but leave you wondering whether you're doing the right thing. Let the results speak for themselves.



# Regent goes for rentals

The Regent Bang Tao taps into Phuket's rental property investment market

## PROPERTY Gazette

By Maciek Klimowicz

EXPATS in Phuket live in a tropical paradise, yet many work full time. Holidaymakers surround them while they divide their time between home and the office.

Phuket can be a strange place to live – not to call it schizophrenic – but this dual character of island life comes with a distinct benefit, and The Regent Bang Tao is here to capitalize on it.

A popular online meme claims that travelling is the only thing in life which you spend money on that still makes you richer.

I disagree: investing in property in Phuket is, and for many it is a great way to generate a stable source of income while enjoying a tropical residence.

Phuket's near-constant influx of holidaymakers provides local property owners an endless customer supply, not just for long-term rentals but also for highly profitable vacation rentals.

And it's the customers looking



A reception is here to provide all types of services required by short-stay guests, such as vehicle rentals and tours.

for property as an investment opportunity that The Regent Bang Tao is focusing on.

Located on a quiet three-rai a stone's throw from Laguna Phuket, The Regent Bang Tao consists of two buildings that are home to 170 units in four designs: studio (43sqm); one bedroom (86sqm); twin suite, two bedrooms (114sqm); and deluxe two bedroom (140sqm).

"More than 100 units, about 70 per cent of the project, have already been sold.

Most of them are studio apartments," says Pisuttisak Ema-suan, Regent Bang Tao manager.

Unit owners can enjoy the range of hotel-like facilities, including swimming pool, fitness center, 24-hour security and key card access – all of which are quickly becoming standard in Phuket condominiums.

What makes the project special, though, is what it offers guests on short-term stays – namely 24-hour reception, buffet breakfast and all the facilities and services that holidaymakers require, inclusive of motorbike rentals and tours programs.

Staying at Regent Bang Tao will feel like staying at an elegant



Staying at Regent Bang Tao will feel like staying at an elegant hotel, but with a more homey feel. Photos: Supplied

hotel, but with more a homey feel.

"We provide two separate offices: one for the owners and one for people on short-term stays," explains Mr Pisuttisak.

"A reception is here to provide all types of services required by short-stay guests, such as vehicle rentals and tours."

For the convenience of the units' owners, investment and rental packages are provided.

The former offers a guaranteed return of 7 per cent per annum for the first three years, while the

latter spares owners the trouble of providing their apartments' guests with all the necessary amenities.

"Not only are all the units fully furnished, but we also provide a package for rental investment with in-room amenities, including bedsheets, kitchen utensils and so on. The apartments are ready to

move in," Mr Pisuttisak adds.

All this in tastefully designed surroundings, which provide a relaxing ambiance with of subdued earthy shades, as well as plenty of green space all around.

For more information visit [theregentphuket.com](http://theregentphuket.com).






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# It's all about prime location

THE exclusive, very private and tranquil Baan Bua estate of over 60 rai is one of the best-kept secrets in Phuket. It could be described as the Beverly Hills of Thailand – hidden in Nai Harn, in the very south of the island, sheltered and surrounded by the hills on three sides with lakes and its own water supply.

The grounds are idyllic avenues of trees and an assortment of flora and fauna surrounding every private villa of which there are over 50 spacious spread out on land plots of more than one rai, all with complete privacy. There is exceptionally tight security with two guard gates manned 24/7.

Rarely do these exceptional villas, which are much sought after, come on the market for resale.

The villa and pool are set within a 1,200sqm plot of tropical garden, facing east over a picturesque tree-lined lagoon, with the sun rising in the morning and remaining



**Phuket Pads**  
**Patrick Lusted**

every day of the year until late afternoon over the lagoon, pool area and rear sandstone terrace.

**The private pool has an automated ionized, non-chlorinated water-cleaning system, providing clean, fresh water for relaxing in.**

There is also plenty of shade on the outdoor verandah, Thai sala and overhanging eaves of the roof along the rear terrace. More than 30 species of tropical birds have been seen to visit at various times, with the local Mynas being especially common in numbers.

The villas' 440sqm interior features very spacious, high vaulted-ceilings an open-plan lounge, dining and kitchen area with refrigerator and dishwasher. Air conditioning is fitted in all the bedrooms and lounge, with the added features of satellite TV and a sound system with connections for iPod and mobile phones.

There are three bathrooms, two



More than 30 species of tropical bird have been seen to visit the estate at various times. Photo: Supplied

of which are en suite; washing machine and ironing facilities; and a separate study with a comfortable sofa, computer internet connections and a library.

The private pool is 1.3 meters deep throughout, and has an automated ionized, non-chlorinated water-cleaning system,

providing clean, fresh water for relaxing in.

Built in 2002, this beautiful Thai-Balinese style property boasts some of the best build quality and finishings on the island.

The villa is available to buy now and has great rental potential with many customer bookings already

in place, if the new buyers choose to rent out the property. Returns of up to 7 per cent per annum can be achieved.

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## Developers forced to revise revenues

GIVEN the unpredictability of the property market this year, most listed residential developers have had to adjust their revenue and presale targets from estimates made earlier this year.

"We have increased our total revenue target from 41 billion baht estimated early this year to 42bn, after witnessing strong demand for projects with homes costing up to 10mn baht per unit in the second half – after the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) assumed the running of the country," said Prukha Real Estate President and CEO Thongma Vijitpongpan.

The property market dropped more than 20 per cent in the first half, during a period of heightened political uncertainty, he said.

However, the coup boosted the market to second-half growth of over 15 per cent, which in turn enabled Prukha's presales and revenue to expand above previously estimated levels, he added.

In the first nine months of the year, Prukha recorded revenues of 30.54bn baht and a net profit of

4.77bn baht, up 20.9% and 15.6% respectively from the same period last year.

Land & Houses has also upped its full-year revenue projection, from 24bn to 25bn baht, thanks to a second-half recovery in demand and its condominium projects being transferred to customers in line with the developer's target, said Managing Director Adisorn Nanthanarapoon.

On the other side of the coin, Sansiri has revised its 2014 revenue target from 34bn to 29bn baht, after customers delayed having their homes transferred on schedule, with some having to cancel their purchases.

"The combination of political uncertainty and slight economic growth affected our presales and transfers to customers to the extent that we have had to lower our total revenue target for this year," said chief operating officer Wanchak Buranasiri.

Sansiri announced revenues of 19bn baht and net earnings of 2.16bn baht for the first nine months of the year. – *The Nation*

**The coup boosted the market to second-half growth of over 15 per cent**

– **Thongma Vijitpongpan, President and CEO, Prukha Real Estate**





# The art of coffee

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

EVEN before the world was full of middle-class yuppies, coffee was a big deal to those in the know. Now, everyone is part of the in-crowd, and even those wanting just a simple cup of coffee are asking their barista for an Americano.

For those who aren't in the know, a barista is to coffee what a sommelier is to wine and a soda jerk is to cola. They are the ones who ensure that your cappuccino gets an equal part of that familiar morning trinity of espresso, milk and foam.

Now, just leave it to the Americans to follow the Japanese and let something as normal as coffee get weird with bikini baristas, which is a person who prepares and serves coffee drinks while dressed in scanty attire, at least according to Wikipedia (where else do you confirm such a strange fact?) This marketing trend of banking in on "sexpresso" shops started in Japan in the 1980s and spread to the US in the early noughties. However, nearly 14 years later in Phuket – the capital of terrible sex puns – we are still keeping it classy when it comes to coffee and our baristas.

Such coffee class rose to the milky surface on December 15, when Chalalai Saenkhan – Food & Beverage Captain from Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa – took home the Thailand Barista Cup. After having beaten out five competitors on the island she was able to advance to the nationwide level and put seven other of Hilton's finest in the Kingdom to shame.



A good cup of coffee involves more than just roasting beans and boiling water. Photo: Susanne Nilsson

The Hilton competition, unlike other barista comps, is split into a written product knowledge test and a preparation test.

During the preparation test, Ms Chalalai had to make an espresso, a cappuccino and a "freestyle specialty coffee" – no alcohol allowed. And when it came down to it, it was her award-winning Lychee Tower caffeine creation that made the difference.

"We are immensely proud and happy for Chalalai. Throughout the entire preparation period she was constantly trying to improve her signature coffee, seeking the opinions of others and feedback from the judges," a Hilton repre-

sentative told the *Phuket Gazette*.

"She is extremely service oriented with a beautiful smile, and winning this competition is a testament to her hard work. We had no doubt Khun Chalalai would make us proud and represent Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa with great enthusiasm.

"This was also a good experience for her as she was able to view, taste, and discover new flavors and coffee-making techniques, which will surely challenge her to come back and create even more exciting coffees."

Now, Chalalai will face top Hilton baristas from other countries in the region, such as Singapore, Malay-

sia, Vietnam, The Maldives, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves: a competitive barista's skills aren't something solely appreciated and judged by the Hilton and their guests; there is also the World Barista Championship (WBC), which started in 2000.

In the WBC, competitors have 15 minutes to prepare and serve 12 coffee beverages: four espresso, four cappuccino and four signature drinks for four sensory judges.

Even if you aren't in desperate need of 12 top-notch coffees, that Lychee Tower definitely sounds tempting.

## Do you know your coffee?

### Americano

An Americano consists of a single or double-shot of espresso combined with up to four or five ounces of hot water in a two-demitasse cup. An Americano is created by adding the water to an already extracted espresso, not by extracting extra water through a single espresso puck.



### Caffè latte

Caffè latte consists of one-third espresso, two-thirds heated milk and about 1cm of foam. Thanks to Starbucks the Flat White (1 shot of espresso, fill cut with steamed milk, top with foam) has been masquerading around as Caffe Latte.



### Cappuccino

Considered one of the original espresso drinks representative of Italian espresso cuisine, a cappuccino consists of one-third espresso, one-third third heated milk and one-third milk foam and is generally served in a 6 to 8-ounce cup.



### Caffè Mocha

Caffè Mocha is an American invention and a variant of a caffè latte, inspired by the Turin coffee beverage Bicerin. The term "caffè mocha" is not used in Italy or France, where it is referred to as a "mocha latte". Like a caffè latte, it is typically one third espresso and two thirds steamed milk, but a portion of chocolate is added, typically in the form of sweet cocoa powder.



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# Briefcases for backpacks

## One couple's story of trading a life of work for a life of travel

By Joseph Ross

IN THE words of Mark Twain: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

This advice resonated quite well with my wife, Farideh, and I. So, she traded a sought-after winery job in Sonoma, California, and I traded a university teaching position for an around-the-world adventure – with backpacks.

As far as bucket lists go, ours is getting shorter. We've had the privilege of sailing up the Nile with Said, our Egyptian felucca captain, from Aswan to

Luxor. We visited the temples of Karnak and the tombs of the Pharaohs in the Valley of the Kings, then travelled to Cairo and the Great Pyramid of Giza.

We've seen the big five in the Masai Mara, dived with great white sharks in South Africa and hiked to the top of Machu Picchu.

We've stood within inches of howler monkeys and toucans at

Tikal, found pink dolphins and giant anacondas deep in the Amazon Jungle and visited Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego and Cape Horn.

We have photographed Galapagos tortoises, iguanas, hammerhead sharks and watched the sunset from Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro. We've walked in the footsteps of Alexander the Great and Darius the Great at Persepolis, and traversed the forbidding Atacama Desert through desolate landscapes completely devoid of vegetation, where some weather stations have never re-

corded a single drop of rain.

We've read about travellers who make a living while on the road. We are not that clever: our travels are financed by savings.

For years, there was never enough money, so we waited.

Even on the day when we strapped on our backpacks and walked out the door, there was not enough money – but we did not care to wait any longer.

When people ask about surviving without health insurance, our reply is "don't get sick".

This is arrogant, of course, and

Even on the day when we finally strapped on our backpacks and walked out the door, there was most certainly not enough money – but we did not care to wait any longer.



The adventurous couple poses for a picture after hiking up to the top of Machu Picchu. Photos: Joseph Ross

sooner or later we will most likely have to deal with medical difficulties, but we have chosen to cross that bridge when we come to it and not allow fear to dictate the way in which our lives evolve.

Currently, we are searching for the planet's top scuba diving destinations. We will be blogging our Phuket scuba diving adventure at World Dive Quest.

Neither of us are computer savvy, yet a great deal of our lives now revolves around the internet: communication with family; banking; booking planes, trains and automobiles; researching destinations; and now, blogging.

We are an American and Iranian couple.

Ultimately, we hope that shar-

ing our trip and our experiences through our blog will help demonstrate to the world that Americans and Iranians can work together, connect and interact positively with people around the globe, rather than quarreling and creating conflict.

We think we're doing a much better job than our respective governments.

When we were younger, travel was often boom, boom, boom – always jumping from one place to the next. Now – and not so young – we try to remain at least a week in every destination and maintain a leisurely pace throughout the journey. Packing bags every other day is too much like a real job – might as well stay at the office.

How long can one live as a vagabond, you might ask?

Perhaps, for as long as one can walk.

For us, thoughts of a real home, a garden, a cat, our own kitchen, a car, a golf course with some buddies, are slowly creeping into our minds more and more.

First, we will check off a few more countries, hike a few more mountains, explore a few more cities, and dive a few more reefs.

Surely, we will settle down somewhere, someday.

For now our only choice is to keep exploring, because, as James Masfield expressed in *Sea Fever*, the call of the road for travelers is "a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied."

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Joseph and Farideh say that their bucket list is getting shorter as they continue their trip around the world.





# Tackling corruption

## On Your Mind

By Patrick Mattimore

THE *Gazette* recently reported that the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) Phuket office called on resident expats to report cases of corruption involving local government officials.

Tawichat Nillikan, an NACC representative, told the *Gazette* that many foreigners had been victims of corruption, and that by opening a Phuket office last year to investigate complaints, the government was "showing the world" that it is serious about dealing with corruption.

Mr Tawichat said that Thailand ranked poorly on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, but that Thailand was "genuinely trying to tackle the problem" of corruption. He also made the case that the NACC's investigation of abuses was transparent.

Let's assume the best: that Thailand, and, more specifically, Phuket, are serious about weeding out corruption. How best to do it?

The dictionary defines corruption as dishonest or fraudulent



Patrick is just one expat who wants to know if there is price-fixing for tuk-tuks in Phuket. Photo: Jeremie Schatz

behavior by those in power, that is government officials. It would help a great deal if Mr Tawichat and the NACC would provide some examples of corrupt behavior that expats might encounter. How can we recognize corruption in the first place?

In the meantime, here are some questions I have, as a resident expat – evidently the targeted ben-

eficiary of the anti-corruption policy.

If I am stopped on a motorbike and fined for not wearing a helmet, but the police officer agrees to let me pay the fine directly to him, is that corruption? How best should I respond?

If the owner of my favorite massage parlor complains to me that she may have to close or sell

her business because a local official has stepped up his graft demands, what can I do?

Why is it that the price of a tuk-tuk here costs roughly 10 times (200 baht versus 20 baht) what I paid when I travelled the same distance while living in Chiang Mai? Is government corruption behind a price-fixing issue here?

Is there a system in place in

Phuket in which officials condone "illegal" activities, such as prostitution or selling knock-off products in exchange for consideration? If so, is that something NACC really wants to tackle, or is it largely seen as a benefit to everyone?

Can the legal system be trusted to enforce laws fairly? For example, a recent case of an alleged rape of a 12-year-old girl by her school teacher was apparently going to be handled extra-judicially, but met a snag when the teacher refused to meet the girl's family's monetary demands. Is the system willing to seek legal justice regardless of whether "unofficial" agreements are reached between perpetrators and victims?

Then, there is the issue of reprisals. What assurances can NACC provide that whistleblowers will not become targets themselves of their reports?

While it is admirable that there is an NACC at all, that particular group needs to take a long look at whether it is serious about rooting out corruption, or merely playing at it.

If the former, perhaps the commission could begin by addressing some of the issues that are being raised here.



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# No paucity of pawpaws



## Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

I FIRST encountered papayas as an exotic item in colorful bowls of dessert served up along with slices of kiwi and dragon fruit, chunks of pineapple and mango.

That was many years ago. The venues? High-society restaurants in London's Mayfair where the management was frantically vying with rival casinos to attract high rollers with sumptuous free meals. Not that I was ever a high roller or "whale": I was merely the lucky beneficiary of a wealthy friend's largesse.

In Thailand, such an assemblage of luscious fruit would be nothing out of the ordinary, even in a relatively modest eatery. Why? Because they are grown here, and part of

That is not its only claim to uniqueness. The plant, an American native, comes in three sexes: male, female and hermaphrodite. So, you could say it is very much at home in Thailand.

Two per cent of the world's papayas are cultivated in the Kingdom, more than enough to satisfy the nation's love affair with the fruit. It ranks third, behind only the aforementioned mango and pineapple, in the list of the world's most widely cultivated fruits.

The papaya, or pawpaw in other parts of the globe, is the botanist's *carica papaya*; oddly, it is the sole member of the genus. Its unique, slightly musky flavor when ripe – and this is how it is eaten in Europe – is not replicated by any other fruit.

That is not its only claim to uniqueness. The plant, an American native, comes in three sexes: male, female and hermaphrodite. So, you could say it is very much at home here in Thailand.

Ironically, the hermaphrodite is favored by growers since it is self-pollinating.

The papaya is

a rapid growing and unfussy plant which can tolerate poor soil, producing a cluster of large, heavy, marrow-like fruits, often within two years.

Weighing as much as two kilos, they start green before turning first yellow and then orange. Its twin hates are soggy conditions – standing water will kill it – and frost. It's truly tropical, and one which everyone can grow in Phuket from seed.

Although it looks like a conventional tree – sometimes mistaken for a variety of palm with its single stem and crown of deeply serrated leaves – it is actually not, since it possesses paper-thin foliage and a relatively soft, hollow trunk which can be felled



Unripe papaya is used as the base of a popular Thai dish called som tam. Photo: Takeaway



Many people like to enjoy the musky taste of the fruit when it is ripe. Photo: Janine

with a single blow from a machete.

In the pantheon of medicinal plants, however, it ranks highly and deserves its place in our survey of plants both nutritious and curative.

The green fruits are rich in papain, a chemical used to tenderize meat, and the ripe papaya also contains pectin, an ingredient in many jellies.

The delicious pinkish orange flesh contains both vitamin A and

C, carotenoids, and folate, a source of vitamin B6. Rich in trace elements, the papaya abounds in potassium and in common with most fruits and vegetables, is a plentiful source of fiber.

Folk medicine and cookery has made use of the papaya for centuries. The leaves are sometimes made into a tea for the treatment of malaria, or can be steamed and used as a substitute for spinach.

The dense black seeds are spicy and are sometimes used as a substitute for pepper.

Its other perceived benefits include aiding digestion, raising platelet levels in the blood and, believe it or not, as a contraceptive.

Only don't ask me how...

Catch Patrick online at [PhuketGazette.net](http://PhuketGazette.net) Sunday morning next week, when he explores the refreshing properties of Roselle.



The papaya tree is often mistaken as a palm. Photo: Thamizhparithi Maari

## Tip of the Week

### Plant galls

A READER recently wrote in to say his *schefflera* (umbrella plant) had developed strange lumps on its new foliage. The pictures were quite graphic. I have seen such excrescences before, but only on eucalyptus leaves and, in the UK, on elms, willows and of course, as oak-apples.

Galls are unnatural growths on plant tissues and are normally caused by parasites or insects.

I suspect the latter in this case, with insects (a fly or wasp) piercing the outer skin of the leaf and laying eggs inside.

On hatching, the larvae produce chemicals which cause this abnormal growth which acts both as a haven for the developing grub and as a food source. Once mature the insect will leave its host.

I would suggest either removal of the affected growth (*scheffleras* are tough), or a pesticide sprayed directly on the affected leaves, or watered in as a systemic treatment.



Look at the galls on this oak. Photo: Lairich Rig



# Bumpy Mandalay road



## Island Fever

By Bill Barnett

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE to travel to Myanmar and not wax-lyrically about days long past. Just think of the storied nostalgia of Rudyard Kipling, George Orwell, Norman Lewis and Pablo Neruda, who transport their readers magically through time and space. This piece is set firmly in the present, so let's focus on the emerging free market of 2014.

Hitting the tarmac on the flight into Mandalay, I glance around at my fellow passengers and see that the demographic is clearly Westerners and, thankfully, I feel young – given that the median age is at the upper end of the scale.

I wistfully look at the towering motionless air bridges and can't help but ask an official why they aren't used, and the reply of course is "no work long time". Little did I know, this was about to be a recurring theme during the next few days. My thoughts were suddenly



It's impossible to travel to Myanmar and not wax-lyrically about days long past, says Bill. Photo: Calflier001

jarred by the bump of the bus to immigration, which threw a bizarrely blond, octogenarian, American woman into my lap.

Waiting at customs, the idle background chatter of the well-heeled, "been there done that" crowd gets increasingly louder.

These are upwardly mobile

world travelers who stay in the best hotels and don't do things on the cheap. Somehow, they all managed to find similar wardrobes – was there a memo?

I then climbed into my waiting car, which was driven by Jojo; and yes, he has a Gmail account. It's a long ride to the city, but I managed

to avoid cerebral hemorrhage after bouncing for 60 minutes like a mad man on a pogo stick.

Over the next few days, my task is to research tourism and hotel trends there, and, frankly, everyone I speak to is just so nice and helpful. And yet, when you dig deeper, the market does show

cracks, with a mismatch between expectations and reality. New hotels are springing up everywhere, and the global brands are coming.

Still, cultural tourism has a faux promise, in that it fails to see return visitors, and there is always pressure to tap into a growth model. Seasonality is another key issue, with March through September seeing dismal numbers, slashed hotel rates and monsoon weather.

There remains so many unfulfilled promises, from a surging number of luxury riverboats operating on the Irrawaddy to the increased connections with China. Infrastructure is a work in progress; WiFi is patchy; dining is mostly confined to hotels; and soaring land prices are seeing many small hotels emerge with few differences. It seems the "same same" trend has followed me here.

And yet, as I began my return to the Land of Smiles, I couldn't help but be cautiously optimistic about Mandalay. My advice is go soon, as the wonderment is vanishing with every new day.

## Phuket graced with 'Fusions'



Kathy poses in front of one of her unique pieces. Photo: Supplied

KATHY Manthei Coulson arrived to Phuket in 1999. She has built her life on the island as an art teacher and a volunteer organizer for the Life Home Project, and has produced a significant body of visual art during the past 15 years.

Her show at Villa Royale Gallery, which will be on display until mid-February 2015, demonstrates how well she works with a variety of materials not found elsewhere in this part of the world.

"I am always intrigued by the interplay of the earth, the sky and the surrounding sea and in most of my work, I use these colors and refer to the shapes and the changes of light that affect what we see," Kathy says.

While Kathy's pieces celebrate the natural beauty of Phuket's surroundings, what is of great interest is her ability to work with mixed media such as metallic reactive and iron-oxide paint, copper wire, iridescent dichroic glass and a variety of other media.

She says it often takes two months for one of her canvases to settle into their final colors, as she sometimes applies a rust activator to affect her materials. She obviously enjoys the more uncertain, yet magical, aspects of creating her art.

When looking at each piece from a distance, one can fondly see the beauty of Phang Nga Bay and the Andaman region. She has cleverly abstracted these pieces through the layering of different materials, such as strips of sail cloth – which give homage to the history of boating in the region.

Kathy attended the University of California Davis campus, and in the past few years she has returned to learn more about how to use various non-traditional materials to create art.

Her current show is called "Fusions", which reflects the expansion of her vocabulary regarding unique combinations of art materials. – *Bruce Stanley*



### UITNODIGING

Op 26 december a.s. is het precies 10 jaar geleden dat Phuket en een aantal andere provincies in het zuiden van Thailand werden getroffen door een Tsunami. Ten minste 26 Nederlanders verloren hierbij het leven. De Nederlandse ambassade in Bangkok en het consulaat in Phuket organiseren op deze dag een korte herdenking voor nabestaanden van slachtoffers en Nederlanders in Thailand. Wij nodigen u hierbij uit om deze herdenking bij te wonen.

In tegenstelling tot eerdere berichten en aankondigingen zal de herdenking **NIET** plaatsvinden bij het consulaat. Omdat de Intersectie bij Tesco Lotus vanaf 6 december gedurende drie maanden gedeeltelijk wordt afgesloten verwachten wij te veel geluidsoverlast van het verkeer.

De herdenking wordt nu gehouden in Room Kamala 1 van het Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort, 16/12 Moo 6, Tambon Kamala, Amphur Kathu, Phuket 83150. Telefoon 076 231 234. Dit hotel heeft onder de naam "Kamala Bay Terrace Resort" in 2004 grote schade opgelopen.

Het voorlopige programma ziet er als volgt uit:

11.45 uur	Aanmelding belangstellenden
12.15 uur	Welkom door de ceremoniemeester
12.19 uur	Inhoudelijke bijdrage nabestaanden
12.30 uur	Kranslegging nabestaanden
12.32 uur	Kranslegging namens de Nederlandse gemeenschap
12.32 uur	Kranslegging ambassadeur Drs. Joan Boer/Mw. Wendelmoet Boer-Schippers
12.34 uur	Toespraak ambassadeur Drs. Joan Boer
12.44 uur	Taptoesignaal
12.46 uur	Eén minuut stilte
12.47 uur	Nederlandse en Thaise volkslied
12.53 uur	Dankwoord ceremoniemeester
12.55 uur	Einde ceremonie

Wij zouden het op prijs stellen indien u ons per e-mail ([dutchhpc@gmail.com](mailto:dutchhpc@gmail.com)) kunt laten weten of en zo ja, met hoeveel personen u aanwezig zult zijn.

Na de herdenking wordt er een lichte lunch aangeboden.

Een routebeschrijving vindt u door op de volgende link te klikken:

<http://www.phuket.regency.hyatt.com/en/hotel/our-hotel/map-and-directions.html>

Nadien vertrekken de ambassadeur, zijn echtgenote en de honorair consul met zijn vrouw naar de grote nationale herdenkingsdienst, die van af 17.00 uur zal worden gehouden bij de "Police Boat T813" in Khao Lak, provincie Phang Nga.

Voor meer informatie:

Consulaat van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden

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Phuket, December 2014



# Dreaming of a green Christmas



**Thinking Green**  
By Dr Peter W Harris

ONLY a few weeks ago, I appreciated the message on the front doors of Jungceylon which promoted “Zero Bags, Zero Waste”.

“How commendable that action was taking place to help reduce the amount of waste that we have in our community,” I thought.

Yes, it was only a promotion, but at least it promoted a good cause. Now with Christmas almost most upon us, the doors are wishing us a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

I suspect that in this period of great joy we are encouraged to give to friends and loved ones, preferably presents and food from one of the stores that reside within. With the spike in shopping comes a proliferation of festive, green plastic bags, which seems contradictory to last month’s promotion.

We should be dreaming of a green Christmas without a sea of plastic bags that only adds to the growing problem of waste

disposal. It is not only the plastic bags, but what is in them that we should consider.

For many people, this is a time of renewal and hope. It is my hope that we can take the necessary steps to leave the next generation a sustainable planet that will enable all of its citizens to share in its bounty.

Environmental sustainability is a key concern in our community. We know that the incinerator, which handles 800 tonnes a day, has reached its capacity, and that 60 per cent of it is wet waste.

So rather than focusing on disposal, we need to focus on reduction, re-use and recycling.

That’s all very well, but does it really matter in this time of cheer? Of course it does!

In this whirlwind of holiday consumption, it is necessary to slow down and look at what we purchase. Do we really need it? How is it packaged? How are we carrying it home?

Let’s make our holiday shopping habits green.

Think about the entire life-cycle of a product. This includes acquisition of raw materials, toxicity,



Maybe this Christmas we should put the excessiveness of the holidays aside. Photo: Jackie

recycling capacity and whether it is water and/or energy efficient.

While we’re paying attention, let’s take a look at our holiday feast! Check out the sheer volume of food we purchase. Are the products we buy coming from companies that are genuinely sup-

porting fair trade and fair wages? Are they taking steps to promote a sustainable future?

There is often a last-minute rush, as we dash around buying the “necessary” elements for Christmas dinner or our last-minute gifts. Instead of just

mindlessly listening to Jingle Bells as we zoom through the store, why we don’t we stand still for a moment and dream of a green Christmas? Then, with that dream in mind, why don’t we look into our carts and make that dream a reality?

## Oceans plagued by 5.25tn pieces of plastic

IF YOU have been to a Phuket beach or beneath the Andaman Sea’s surface, you will know that discarded plastics are constantly present. Hardly a month goes by without a dive company, resort or local “green” group calling on volunteers to bag beach rubbish. Some groups, such as Clean The Beach Boot Camp, have regular campaigns to rid the beach areas of plastic that washes up from the sea – yet there seems to be no way to stem the constant flow of it onto our shores, which shouldn’t really come as a surprise.

For more than two decades, we have known that dense collections of plastic waste are creating floating islands of rubbish the size of European countries at gyres – areas in the sea where currents converge. Now, though, researchers are getting a much better sense of the size and scope of the problem.

A study published last week by PLOS ONE revealed that an estimated 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic, weighing 269,000 tonnes, could be found throughout the world’s oceans.

“Plastic pollution is globally distributed across all oceans due to its properties of buoyancy and durability, and the sorption of toxicants to plastic while travelling through the environment have led some researchers to claim that synthetic polymers in the ocean should be regarded as hazardous waste,” the report said. “Through photodegradation and other weathering pro-



Clean The Beach Boot Camp participants pose next to their collection efforts. Photo: Supplied

cesses, plastics fragment and disperse in the ocean, converging in the subtropical gyres. Generation and accumulation of plastic pollution also occurs in closed bays, gulfs and seas surrounded by densely populated coastlines and watersheds.”

In 24 expeditions between 2007 and

2013, samples were collected by net towing, as well as visual survey transects of large plastic debris. Then, through computer modeling, the research team was able to estimate the amount of plastic in the world’s oceans.

However, the report cautioned that the

estimates were highly conservative and didn’t account for potentially massive amount of plastics present on shorelines, on seabeds, suspended in water columns and within organisms.

“The impact of plastic pollution through ingestion and entanglement of marine fauna, ranging from zooplankton to cetaceans, seabirds and marine reptiles, are well documented. Adsorption of persistent organic pollutants onto plastic and their transfer into the tissues and organs through ingestion is impacting marine megafauna, as well as lower trophic-level organisms and their predators,” the report said.

Phuket diners digging into their tuna, barracuda, shark or other tasty marine creatures should pause right about now. You might not consider yourself a predator, but you do the eating portion of the job.

“Plastics are like a cocktail of contaminants floating around in the aquatic habitat,” Chelsea M Rochman, a marine ecologist at the University of California, Davis, told *The New York Times*. “These contaminants may be magnifying up the food chain.”

Marcus Eriksen, the leader of the research effort, explained to *The New York Times* that the scope of the problem makes floating garbage collection impractical.

“We’ve got to put some onus on producers,” Dr Eriksen said. “If you make it, take it back, or make sure the ocean can deal with it in an environmentally harmless way.”

– Isaac Stone Simonelli





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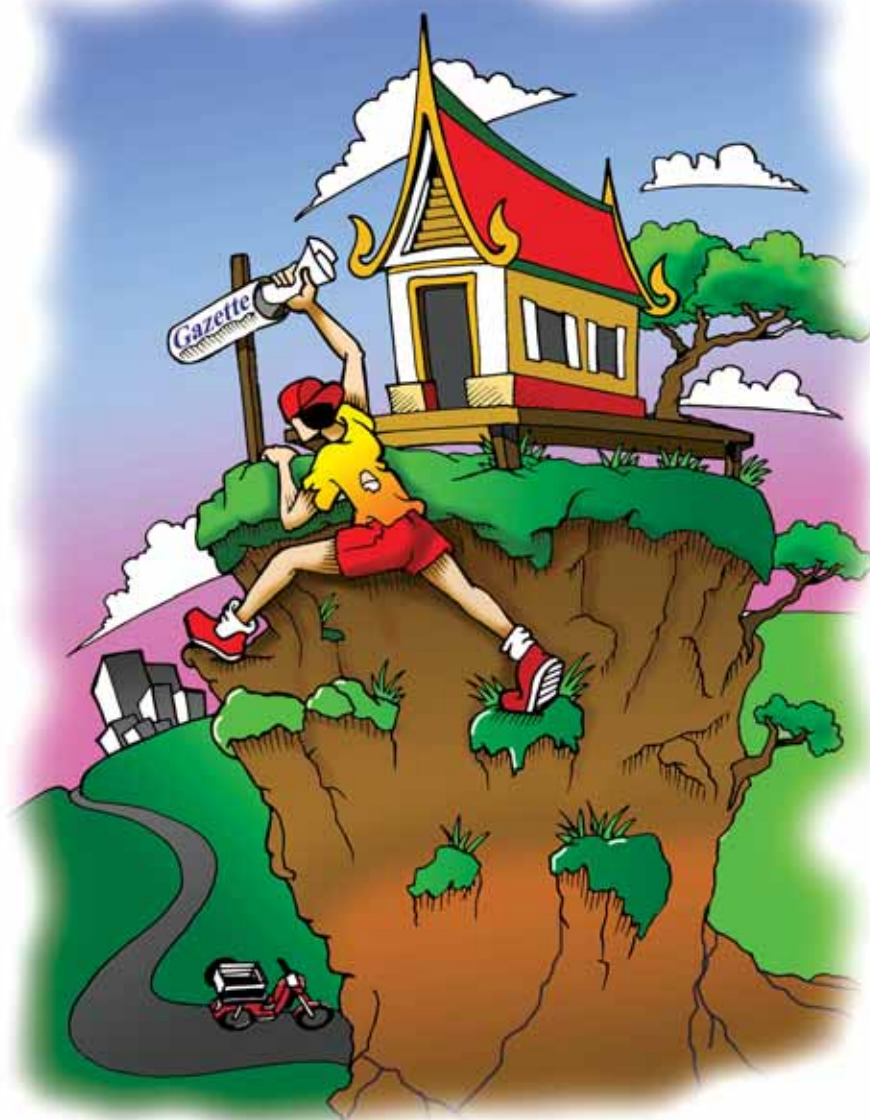
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Alessandro Calbucci of Italy and Vinicius Font of Brazil won the men's event. Photo: Supplied

## ITF tennis lands on the beach

ALESSANDRO Calbucci of Italy and his partner Vinicius Font of Brazil have been crowned champions of the inaugural Phuket Beach Tennis Tournament.

Calbucci and Font outplayed runners-up Nikita Burmakin and Sergey Kuptsov of Russia to win the ITF-sanctioned event, which was held over three days at the Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort at Bang Tao, culminating with the final on Sunday.

Maraike Bigmaier of Germany and Mathilde Hoarau of France were crowned champions in the women's event, outfoxing French duo Pauline Bourdet and Julie Labrit in their final.

The amateur tournament attracted 16 local teams from Thailand who battled it out for their slice of the 10,000 baht prize purse and the right to be crowned the first champions of this event.

The local entrants were competing against teams from around the world, including Italy, Slovenia, Japan, the US and Venezuela.

"The Phuket beach tennis event was a great success. Players and spectators enjoyed the whole experience. Outrigger looks forward to hopefully doing it again next year," said Tony Pedroni, general manager of the Outrigger at Phuket's Bang Tao Beach.

— *Phuket Gazette*



Keeping focus is one of the great challenges for triathletes as they complete the gruelling swim, bike and run events in competitions. Photo: Gazette file

# Minds made of iron

By Maciek Klimowicz

A GREAT triathlete has to be fast. But there's much more to the sport than speed. Persistence, perseverance and resistance are also essential qualities.

Andreas Raelert, a German triathlon champion has it all, and as the Ironman World Record holder, he is fast – very fast.

Raelert came to Phuket two weeks ago to train at Thanyapura Phuket. Less than halfway through his visit, he decided to extend his stay. Why?

"Phuket is a paradise for triathletes. It's a really great place for training, the facilities are amazing and Thai people are very kind. I feel very safe and welcome here," he says.

When asked about the qualities that make Phuket such a great destination for triathletes, he has a number of things to say.

First there is the weather: "It's almost perfect, from 6am to 6pm except for maybe the few hours around noon when it's too hot,"

Mental training is the most important part of triathlon training. It's all about finding your balance – focusing all your strengths on your goal – this helps you to become more powerful.

— **Andreas Raelert,**  
German triathlon champion  
currently in training at the  
Thanyapura Mind Center



says Raelert.

Then there are the landscapes: "It's green everywhere, you get excited with the views when you train. There are great places to practice open water swimming, the beaches are beautiful, the water is warm and nice."

Raelert is also full of praise for Phuket's roads. "The quality of the roads are really high and there are

plenty of routes to take. There are hilly sections that are quite tricky and require more effort and skills, but there is always a choice."

But what's even more important than the above is the triathlon culture in Phuket, which is a source of inspiration for Raelert. "When you're in a new country, in a new environment, it's great because you gain new experi-

ences. It's even more true here in Phuket, where the triathlon community is quite big. Training with local athletes is a great source of inspiration for me," he says.

In addition to tough physical training, Raelert takes part in mind-coaching sessions at Thanyapura's Mind Centre – taking care of the most important part of the body for any triathlete: the brain.

"Mental training is the most important part of triathlon training. It's all about finding your balance – focusing all your strengths on your goal – this helps you to become more powerful," says Raelert.

"The best way to performing well in a triathlon is to keep it fun and enjoyable," he continues. "Finding other people who enjoy it too and training in a group, also makes it way more sociable, competitive and gives you the opportunity to learn from others"

"For me, Triathlon is a passion and I'm happy to do it seven days a week," concludes Raelert.

## Golfers raise B1.2mn for Life Home Project charity

LOCAL golfers on the fairways of Phuket have raised 1.2 million baht for island-based charity Life Home Project Foundation.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Life Home Project Charity Golf Event took place at the Blue Canyon Country Club on November 15, when more than 100 golfers took to the fairways and greens of the spectacular Lakes Course.

The tournament was first run by Liam Stewart in 2011 as a way to earn extra funding to help the kids at Life Home Project Foundation charity shelter.

"From its humble beginnings, the event is now one of the main income streams for this great local charity," said Stewart.

The Life Home Project Foundation is a shelter for mothers who are HIV positive and their children – who may or may not be infected – where they can live safely in a supportive community.

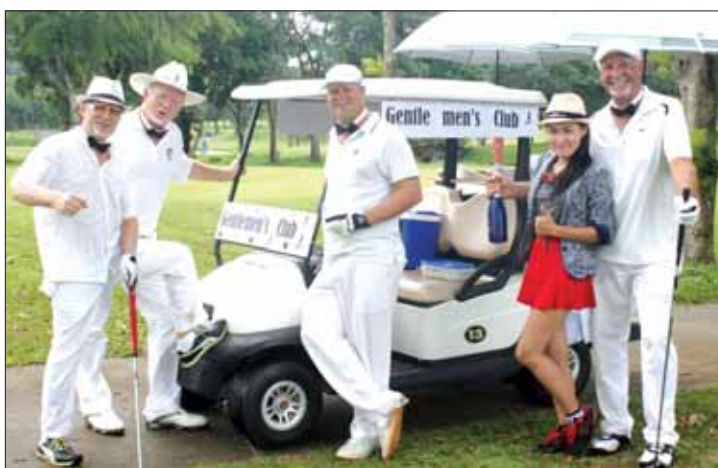
"Unfortunately, one of the impacts of AIDS is that parents are unable to look after their children for various reasons such

as poverty and family breakdowns. The foundation ensures every child goes to school, so that they receive an education and have access to healthcare," Stewart explained.

"It is hoped that within the project all the kids experience what it is like to live within a loving family environment. The staff, children, mothers and volunteers live and learn together, sharing every day experiences and taking care of each other. The project currently takes care of 25 adults and 22 children, 10 of whom are orphaned."

The theme for the golf charity event was "Colorfully Uncoordinated", and the golfers were allowed to dress up and wear anything that was very colorful and did not match.

"This year, the golfers really went out



Many of the golfers who took part in the 1.2-million-baht fund-raising effort embraced the spirit of the charity event. Photo: Supplied

of their way to get into the spirit of the event and we had everything from Rastafarians to superheroes to cross-dressers, as well as lots of color and costumes," Stewart noted.

"Golf took a back seat for the day and the emphasis was on having fun while raising money for a very worthy cause."

The golf format on the day was a Two Person Scramble and those who donated a little extra to the charity could have a few mulligans and cheat.

The tournament was won by Ken Abday and Rolf Johannsen, closely followed by Kenth Fredin and Wayne Klapko.

The prize for the team who were the most outlandish and put in the most effort in keeping with the dresscode went to the perennial winners, the father-

and-son team of Chris and Tom Gordon. "A big thanks to everyone who helped this year and hopefully see you all at next year's event," invited Stewart.

— *Phuket Gazette*



# Youths take the helm

By Chris Husted

TWO exceptional young Phuket sailors – Nattapong “Max” Yuang-ngam, 13, and Cartoon “Toon” Jundet, 12 – have received personal invitations to attend the National Optimist qualifiers for selection to represent Thailand at the 28<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian Games in Singapore next year.

Max and Toon, both from the Phuket Youth Sailing Club (PYSC) based at Cape Panwa, will travel to Sattahip, in Chon Buri, to race in the qualifiers, to be held on December 20-21.

The Southeast Asian Games, also known simply as the SEA Games, is a biennial multi-sports event involving participants from the 11 countries of Southeast Asia.

The games are held in accordance with the regulations of the Southeast Asian Games Federation, with supervision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic Council of Asia.

The Optimist is a small, single-handed sailing dinghy intended for use by children up to the age of 15. It is one of the most popular sailing dinghies in the world, with over 200,000 boats officially registered in the class and many more built but never registered.

The Optimist is the biggest youth racing class in the world. As well as the annual world championship, the class also has six continental championships, at-



Cartoon Jundet, 12, will be racing to represent Thailand at the SEA Games in Singapore next year. Photo: Katy Gooch

tended by a total of more than 850 sailors a year.

Max and Toon have been training with the PYSC for the past five years and their sailing talent has been recognized through recent successes in the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Dinghy Series.

In November, Max and Toon scored first and second, respectively, in the Optimist class in the series event.

In third place was fellow PYSC youth sailor Sarawuth “Ta” Kulak, also just 13 years old.

At the Phuket King's Cup



Young Toon is all smiles when he's on the water. Photo: Katy Gooch

International Dinghy Regatta, raced as part of the King's Cup off Kata earlier this month, Max and Toon scored fourth and sixth

places, respectively, in the Optimist class against some of the best dinghy sailors in Thailand.

“The invitation to attend the

qualifiers is a great accolade to the club and a great accomplishment to these young sailors who live in a children's home, and only train once a week against fellow sailors who train every day,” said Katy Gooch, the PYSC's Club Coach.

The training has certainly paid off. Not only are Max and Toon ranked among the best dinghy sailors in Thailand, they are also ranked in the top 10 in the Topper dinghy class in the world.

Toon ranked fifth overall in the 4.2m class at the Zhik Topper World Championships, held at the Pwllheli Sailing Club in Wales in August this year. Ta ranked seventh in the same class.

“The Phuket Youth Sailing Club is a nonprofit organization, Ms Gooch explained.

“For its finances – to provide dinghies, sailing gear and to participate in local, national and international regattas – we rely on donations and sponsorships.”

Thanks to the generous support from sponsors, the club and its youth sailing program has already come a long way, she said.

“However, as with all amateur sports, finding stable financial support is the greatest obstacle to the best intentions,” Coach Gooch explained.

“So we need to find other ways to support the program.”

For more information or to support the PYSC, contact Katy Gooch at Tel: 085-2159185, or Email: [katy@toppersailphuket.com](mailto:katy@toppersailphuket.com)

## Rest of the World bowl to victory at annual Pryder Cup

LATE surges from the Rest of the World top order saw them come through and take the final singles 3-1 and eventually triumph comprehensively 9-5 to win Phuket's premier lawn bowls trophy, the Pryder Cup, last Saturday.

Named in honor of golf's premier team competition, the biennial Ryder Cup, the annual Phuket Pryder Cup is the premier annual team competition held at the Kamala Lawn Bowls.

Reigning champions, the Southern Hemisphere, who won convincingly last year, managed to force a 1-1 draw after the ini-

tial fours games. After that, team selection became crucial, with all pairings, games and matches drawn in secret.

Unexpected results in both directions and top-class bowling saw the Rest of the World leading 4-2 after the pairs, which put the pressure on the Southern Hemisphere heading into the singles.

Needing to win five of the eight singles to retain the cup, the “southerners” were forced to start with a strong four singles to reduce the deficit.

Surprise results again in both directions meant that after the first four singles, the



Bernie Rogers delivers a bowl in his singles match for The Rest of the World. Photo: Supplied

Rest of the World lead by two with the score standing at 6-4.

Going into the last four singles, the Rest of the World unexpectedly found them-

selves trailing in three of the four matches, and it looked as though the Southern Hemisphere might salvage or scramble a draw, which would have been sufficient for them to retain the cup.

However, glory was to go to the Rest of the World with excellent bowls late in the games, which saw them run out winners 9-5.

At the cup handover ceremony, special mention was given to Chuck Graydon and Rob Knight, who remained undefeated in the tournament with a 3-0 record from their games.

– Rob Knight

## We Freedive series heads for final

THE We Freedive Suunto Series 2014 comes to a close this Sunday with competitors taking deep breaths before launching into a trinity of events: Static Apnea, Dynamic No Fins (DNF) and Dynamic with Fins (DYF).

It will be a tight race for overall winner of the series with American Walter Johnson leading Melanie Long from the UK with just one white card, which signifies a clean dive in accordance with Association Internationale pour le Developpement de l'Apnee (AIDA) rules.

However, all eyes will be on American Katie Wierenga, who covered 105m during the last DNF competition and is poised to break the United States record in what is regarded by many as the most difficult of the eight freediving disciplines.

As in the past, AIDA International Judges Sarah Whitcher and Richard Wonka from We Freedive will be overseeing the event, starting at 9am at Phuket Country Home in Chalong.

At the start of the series Mr Wonka emphasized that his and Ms Whitcher's roles as AIDA International judges was to ensure that athletes finish their dives in a healthy and controlled state.

The final prize at the end of the series is a white Suunto D6i dive computer, which is awarded to the athlete with the cleanest record (least number of red cards and yellow cards).

“We are looking for people who perform well and collect white cards, no blackouts and no penalties – nice and clean dives,” Mr Wonka said.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli

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