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INSIDE TODAY

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■ 'THIS IS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL JET-SKI OPERATORS'

PUNISHED

■ Attempted extortion of tourists for B200k backfires on operator

By **Kongleaphy Keam**

THE jet-ski operator who attempted to extort 200,000 baht from a Chinese tourist was slapped with a 10,000-baht fine and a 30-day ban on his operations on Wednesday.

The Bang Tao jet-ski operator, Air Yotharuk, had his helmsman license suspended and his two jet-skis *Yotharuk 1* and *Yotharuk 2* banned by the Phuket Marine Office.

"The Marine Office and Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong wanted this to serve as an example to all jet-ski operators on the island," said Marine Office chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut.

The ban and fine are compromises, as Governor Nisit originally asked that a stronger message be sent to jet-ski operators by banning Mr Air for life, Mr Phuripat added.

"I am not protecting the jet-ski operator, I am just trying to manage this situation without creating any trouble. We cannot be too hard on them or choose to enforce the law every time something happens – we must consider what is reasonable," Mr Phuripat told the *Gazette*. "In this case, I think one month without his job is enough, as he does have a responsibility to take care of his family."

Mr Phuripat's statement follows several ultimatums that claimed a failure of jet-ski operators to abide by the rules could invoke an island-wide ban on all jet-skis, and a softer ultimatum in which he vowed to revoke the



GOVERNOR'S IRE: Gov Nisit calls Phuket Marine chief and demands action against rogue jet-skis.

permits of any operators whose businesses or jet-skis were involved in any untoward incidents.

Mr Air, who had allowed the insurance on his jet-skis to lapse, attempted to force a pair of Chinese tourists to pay 200,000 baht for repairs after the two rented jet-skis collided. However, after negotiations, they settled on 90,000 baht as compensation.

Regardless of the tourists paying the settlement, Anusorn Salae, former president of the Bang Tao Jet-ski Club, led the tourists to the

Cherng Talay Police Station, and then to the Damrongtham Center (ombudsman's office) in Phuket Town to file complaints.

All the parties were called to the Damrongtham Center to settle the dispute on Monday, though Cheng Zhang, who admitted fault for the accident, had left Phuket earlier that day.

"The four jet-skis involved are registered..."

Continued on Page 6

SPECIAL REPORT

Property probe watershed for developments

THAILAND stands on the brink of a great leap forward in boosting investor confidence in beachfront properties and resorts, if court officials uphold existing building regulations on construction of buildings along the shoreline.

Here, the *Gazette* investigates what is at stake in enforcing the building code.

Full Story Pages 4-5

Australian teen busted for fake robbery claim

AN AUSTRALIAN confessed to police that he was attempting to scam his insurance company after he was caught reporting a theft that never happened.

Alex Gorgees originally told Karon Police officers that he was robbed at knifepoint. However, police found the "stolen" items in his flat in Chalong.

Full Story Page 3

All beaches to follow the 10% rule in Phuket

THE trial rule of restricting vendors to only 10 per cent of the beach is to be rolled out at all beaches, Gov Nisit Jansomwong has confirmed.

Full Story Page 2

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This Week



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Chinese tourists and the medical tourism boom. **Page 11**



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Good location is not enough for a restaurant to succeed. **Page 29**



Explore

Classic car rally races from Singapore to Myanmar. **Page 32**



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Aziamendi pushes the limit and takes food to a new level. **Page 33**



Environment

Local students take stand on horrors of Taiji Cove. **Page 35**



Sport

Finnish pro golfer tees off at Phuket's golf courses. **Page 38**

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New beach rules now apply to all, says Gov

By Chutharat Plerin

THE trial rule of restricting vendors to only 10 per cent of the beach is to be rolled out at all beaches in Phuket, Governor Nisit Jansomwong has confirmed.

"Local administrations will remain responsible for regulating and enforcing the new rules, which include no sun loungers at any beaches," he added.

"The local administration for every beach in Phuket will submit their own detailed plans of where vendors may operate at beaches in their respective jurisdictions, to ensure they comply with the 10-per-cent rule.

"I have also suggested that signs in four languages – Thai, English, Chinese and Russian – be installed at every beach to explain the rules to tourists."

Governor Nisit noted that it may be a tough task ensuring that vendors comply with the rules.

"The rules currently on trial are not the best for everyone, and I am aware that some vendors keep trying to break them," he said.

"We are trying to change what they have been doing for 30 years. It will take time to adjust and for us to come to the same understanding.



Tourists can bring their own umbrellas or rent them. Photo: Gazette file

"I will leave it to local officials, including police, to enforce – and I have tasked the three vice governors to each look after a district."

Gov Nisit admitted that not all people who worked as vendors would return to the sands.

"We are trying to balance demand from tourists for vendors' services and all the old vendors wanting their jobs back, but the most important thing is to return the beaches to the public," he said.

Gov Nisit warned that any officials caught intentionally allowing breaches of the rules to occur in their areas would be charged with failing to perform their duties.

The penalty for officials found guilty of neglecting their duties is imprisonment of one to 10 years, a fine of 2,000 to 20,000 baht, or both, he noted.

Governor Nisit stressed that tourists could rent or bring their own umbrellas and sit wherever they wanted on the sands.

"Umbrella vendors can help tourists set up an umbrella for them in the 10-per-cent area, but the umbrella must be removed as soon as the tourists leave," he said.

"No area on any beach can be used by any vendor as their own, and no equipment is to be left on the beaches overnight."

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Tuk-tuk driver punches Australian over ride fare



Mr Sipeng (in white) was punched in the face by Mr Chinrat (right).



A TUK-TUK driver has confessed to punching an Australian national in the face after an argument about the price of a ride Monday evening.

"Mr Sipeng, 20, told us that he was punched by the tuk-tuk driver after he got into an altercation with him about the price of the ride from Sugar Palm Residence Condominium, where he lives, to Central Festival," said Wichit Police Superintendent Kittipong Klaikaew.

According to Mr Sipeng, the driver told him that the ride would only cost him and his friend 20 baht each, said Lt Col Kittipong.

"However, when Mr Sipeng and his companion arrived at Central Festival the tuk-tuk driver – who we now know as 42-year-

old Chinrat Kaewsom – told Mr Sipeng that the fare was not 20 baht each, but 200 baht," Col Kittipong said.

"During the argument, Mr Chinrat punched Mr Sipeng in the face – busting his lip and bloodying his nose."

While police were trying to track down Mr Chinrat, he turned up at Wichit Police Station and confessed to the attack.

"We consider this a serious incident, as this kind of altercation gives Phuket a bad name and is very harmful to tourism," Col Kittipong said.

Mr Chinrat was arraigned the next day and charged with causing bodily harm. He was released on bail.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Russian busted for selling coke



Anton Rybak was arrested.

POLICE have arrested a Russian tourist for selling cocaine in a shopping center parking lot after he tried to sell the drugs to an undercover police officer.

Officers arrested Anton Rybak, 25, on February 6 after a sting operation at the car park of the Makro store in Rawai, said Lt Col Kritsana Yardkham, senior inspector of the Phuket City Police.

"We managed to trap him after we received a tip-off from a reliable source that he was selling drugs in the Rawai area," Col Kritsana told the *Gazette*.

Police found Mr Rybak with three packets containing a total 2.51 grams of cocaine.

Officers then searched his house in Chalong, where they discovered two bags containing a total of 12 grams of marijuana.

Mr Rybak was charged with possession of a Category 1 drug (cocaine) with intent to sell and possession of a Category 5 drug (marijuana).

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Australian busted for insurance fraud claim

AN AUSTRALIAN teen failed in an attempted insurance fraud scam after Phuket police investigated his claim of being robbed at knifepoint on Karon Beach on February 8.

Alex Gorgees, 19, from New South Wales, told Karon Police that he was robbed of cash and personal belongings valued at about 389,500 baht.

"He said that three unknown men held him at knifepoint and forced him to kneel and beg for his life, then took his iPhone 6, a gold necklace, a wristwatch and a gold ring," said Lt Col Phachai Matthayay of the Karon Police.

Officers identified the location of the alleged robbery and started reviewing CCTV

footage, and questioned locals about the reported robbery.

Police then questioned Mr Gorgees' flatmate, who they declined to name, at their apartment on Soi Ta-iad, in Chalong.

"That's where we found all the valuables that Mr Gorgees claimed were stolen," said Col Phachai.

After being presented with the evidence, Mr Gorgees confessed that he had lied about the robbery in order to file a compensation claim with his insurance, Col Phachai said.

"He was charged with presenting false information to police," he added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



Mr Gorgees claimed his valuables were stolen.



Mr Wu was on a yacht trip.

Expat hacked with hatchet

Frenchman connected to Russian kidnapping in May attacked

By Thawit Bilabdullar

A FRENCH businessman was savagely attacked with a hatchet after arriving at his home in Cherng Talay on February 8.

Eric Seigneurin, 53, who had just arrived home with his wife, was attacked as he got out of his car at about 12:15am.

"After Mr Seigneurin got out of his car, a man wearing a black jacket with a hood came out of the bushes at the side of the house and hit him with the hatchet," said Lt Jirasak Sungwisut of the Cherng Talay Police.

"The man then dropped the weapon and fled into the dark."

Mr Seigneurin sustained a four-inch-deep wound to the back side of his head and was taken to Thalang Hospital for treatment, after being administered first aid by rescue workers.

"We found no signs of a break-in at Mr Seigneurin's house, so we are working on the assumption that this attack might be related to his business," said Lt Jirasak, adding that Mr Seigneurin and his wife also ran a small apartment rental business.

Lt Jirasak said that police would continue their investigations. However, police are waiting for Mr Seigneurin to recover enough to give a statement.

Last year, Mr Seigneurin was arrested by Immigration Police at The Blue Garden Resort & Spa in Cherng Talay, where Russian



Eric Seigneurin, 53, who had just arrived home with his wife, was attacked as he got out of his car.

woman Iana Strizheus was found bruised and battered after her alleged kidnapping ordeal.

Mr Seigneurin presented officers with his passport and the company registration documents for the resort, but could not produce a work permit, Phuket Immigration Inspector Tianchai Chompoo explained in May.

"In addition to being charged

for working without a work permit, Mr Seigneurin was charged for not filing a list of guests currently staying at the resort with Phuket Immigration, which in this case would have included Ms Strizheus," Lt Col Tianchai said.

Ms Strizheus and her Russian boyfriend Alexey Slabinskiy, 39, were reported missing on March 12. Ms Strizheus was found on

March 16 lying in a guestroom managed by Mr Seigneurin. She had deep cuts to her neck and right wrist. About three weeks later police found the body of Mr Slabinskiy.

The two suspects wanted for the kidnapping, Oleksandr Boychuk, 44, and Aleksandr Novichkov, 58, continue to evade the authorities.

Chinese national dies after jet-ski crash into yacht off Koh Phi Phi

A TOURIST died in hospital after crashing a jet-ski into a yacht anchored at Nui Bay, off Phi Phi Island, on Tuesday.

Wu Xixiong, 46, was taken to Phi Phi Hospital with a broken neck, jaw, arm and leg. Due to the extent of his injuries, he was transferred to Bangkok Hospital Phuket, confirmed Surasak Mongkolchaiyasit of the Krabi Marine Office.

Mr Wu succumbed to his injuries at about 11pm.

Mr Wu had joined a tour on a yacht, *June*, on Tuesday, skippered by British national David Milner.

After arriving at Phi Phi, Mr Wu took the jet-ski that was housed in *June* out to Nui Bay, where he crashed into *Dao Taley 2*.

Police will not investigate the incident further, as Mr Wu's relatives agreed to pay compensation to the owner of *Dao Taley 2* for the damage caused, said Maj Segsak Boonlirt of the Phi Phi Police Station.

Mr Surasak confirmed to the *Gazette* that his office would also not continue their investigation, despite jet-skis being banned at Phi Phi.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Eva assures legality

IN RESPONSE to an inspection of the Eva project site in Rawai by a team of court investigators led by a chief judge last week, a spokesperson for The Eva Group has strongly maintained that the group's projects are "fully legal".

"The commission came not to judge evabeach and evabeach development [sic], and all the buyers of this project are victim of this case," the spokesperson, who declined to be named, told the *Gazette* on Tuesday.

The spokesperson pointed out several news articles from years past in the local press highlighting the developer's consistent denial of any wrongdoing.

Among the reports was the defence by Eva Group Managing Director Authanop Pankamnerd, who co-founded The Eva Group with Paride Bruno in 2007, at a press conference on April 10, 2012.

The press conference, held at Phuket Provincial Hall with permission by then-Governor Tri Augkaradecha, was called to "clarify that stories published in the media about the Eva Beach



Authanop Pankamnerd

project are not accurate".

In his defence, Mr Authanop showed reporters photocopies of a letter of approval from the Phuket Governor's Office, issued in 2010, along with permits issued by Rawai Municipality.

"We have followed the legal process. That's why we got permission to build the project," said Mr Authanop.

The Eva Group on March 15 that year filed a complaint against Ministry of the Interior spokesperson Pipatchai Paiboon, holding

him responsible for articles published in the media that Mr Authanop said were "not accurate" and had been damaging to the project.

Mr Pipatchai later told Bangkok-based media that the documents submitted with the complaint showed Eva Group's right to construct its project.

The news articles prompted Col Dusadee Arayawuth, secretary-general of the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) at the time, to launch an investigation into the issuance of building permits for the projects.

The stories had also prompted the buyers of nine villas to declare their intention to return their partly-constructed villas to the Eva Group, claimed Mr Authanop.

"Our future is ruined... The group's reputation has been tarnished by the inaccurate news," he said.

Mr Authanop said that the investigation by the PACC might be the result of "defamation by an individual who is not satisfied" with the Eva beach project.

— *Phuket Gazette*

Building

THAILAND stands on the brink of a great leap forward in boosting investor confidence in beachfront properties and resorts, if court officials uphold existing building regulations on construction of buildings along the Phuket shoreline.

Here, the *Phuket Gazette* investigates what is at stake in enforcing the building code.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL court inspection team led by a chief judge investigated the site of an upscale real estate project owned by the Eva Group in Rawai on February 6, ahead of a trial centered on the building permit for the project.

Tawatthai Sontivanit, chief judge of the recently formed environmental division of the regional Administrative Court responsible for Phuket, led the team. Nitisak Chobdamrongtham of the Architect Council of Thailand joined as an expert witness.

Judge Tawatthai revealed that he was leading the investigation ahead of conducting a trial in which Rawai Municipality and the provincial standing committee for approving Initial Environmental Evaluations (IEEs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) – required by law for all construction projects – were named as the accused.

Aroon Solos, the mayor of Rawai, was at the site to represent Rawai Municipality, and Nattawan Damrongkat of the Phuket Provincial Office of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) joined the investigation as a representative of the standing committee for approving IEEs, which paves the way for building permits to be issued.

"Experts will conclude their inspection and submit their report to the Administrative Court," Judge Tawatthai said.

"We will review the report and pass it on to all parties, including the Rawai Municipality, the provincial standing committee and the Eva Group.

"Once the parties receive the report, each party will be able to refute any claims made therein and explain their actions to the court.

"Mr Aroon as the mayor [of Rawai Municipality] will provide all documents relating to the approval of the construction of the

Eva project to us within seven days, then we can set the date for trial as soon as possible."

NEW DAY

While Chief Judge Tawatthai – who took up his post in October last year on an order by Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha – did not want to comment on his investigation, one of the investigators on his inspection team confirmed to the *Gazette* that official documents already filed relating to the case could be published.

Among such documents obtained by the *Gazette* are those showing that the ongoing investigation into the Eva site in Rawai mirrors a previous probe into alleged illegal construction at the same site by the same developer, named in a complaint filed with the Damrongtham Center at Provincial Hall on May 11, 2010.

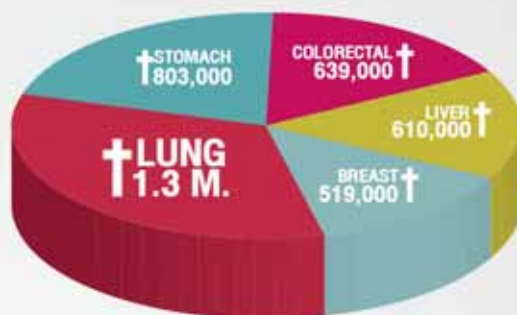
That investigation lurched into action nearly a year later – only after the Prime Minister's Office dispatched an official order tasking the court to investigate the complaint, which alleged that regulations governing beachfront construction had been blatantly ignored by officials in the construction of "The Vanilla Project by The Eva Group" (sic). That complaint specifically named Rawai Municipality and the MNRE Phuket office as accused of failing to perform their duties in upholding the building code.

CATCH-UP

Called on to answer on his progress in his investigation into the 2010 complaint, Wongsakorn Noonchukhan of the Office of Public Works and Town Planning of Phuket Province on April 25, 2011, informed the governor at the time, Tri Augkaradecha, that he had already reported his find-

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confidence at high tide

ings on October 12, 2010. In short, Mr Wongsakorn reported that his investigation had found that the project plainly violated the beachfront building code, but that somehow the project's IEE and EIA had been approved.

Armed with this declaration, Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkhao-sutthirak, ordered Mayor Aroon and the director of the MNRE Phuket office to take action against the offending structures.

That did not happen. In its defence of allowing the project to commence, Rawai Municipality reported to the court in 2011 that the building permit was issued on June 15, 2010, as the MNRE Phuket office had informed the municipality that the project had passed its IEE and the project was deemed to be in compliance with the laws codified in the Building Control Act B.E. 2522 (1979).

Rawai Municipality also attested to the presiding judge in that probe, Judge Sathien Thiewthong, that they had examined the project and found that it had already been modified to comply with the EIA in all respects.

The municipality also vowed that it had instructed its Engineering Division to follow up and regularly inspect the project.

"If any violations were found, all actions will be taken according to power and authority," the statement to the court assured.

Rawai Municipality's reply was sent to the Office of the Prime Minister on April 19, 2011.



The investigators found that one building at the site was just 7.5 meters from the water's edge at high tide.

NOTHING NEW

Critical to whether or not the beachfront land at The Eva falls under environmental protection, is how far the buildings are from the "shore".

As Mr Wongsakorn reported to Governor Tri in 2011, one of the main buildings at the site is just 7.5m from the sea – but at high tide. The mud flats in front of The Eva ensure that at low tide, the water's edge is hundreds of meters out into Chalong Bay.

To clarify this "matter of interpretation", the General Secretary of the Office of Environmental

Policy and Planning in 1999 sent an official request to the director-general of the Public Works Department for all of Thailand, asking for clarification on the law regarding how close to the shore buildings can be.

Chuchart Sutthiphan, Deputy Director-General of the Public Works Department at the time, replied, "by virtue of the Building Control Act B.E. 2522 (1979) [the same law Rawai Municipality claimed to be abiding by] that at this moment there is no clear and definite guidelines.

"However, in general, most local officials will measure at the

normal highest sea level as the guideline for defining the shoreline."

Apparently, that is not so in Rawai, where the buildings were plainly still standing when Judge Tawatchai and his team of inspectors pulled out their measuring tapes on February 6.

BIG IMPACT

The Eva Group has long maintained that it has conducted all its dealings legally. At a press conference in 2012, managing director Authanop Pankamnerd assured that all the company's

projects were fully legal, and that it would not have gone ahead with any of them if local officials had not approved the necessary permits (see facing page).

Yet, the court investigation might already be taking its toll. At the time of going to press, direct links on EvaBeach.com to The Eva Group's projects "The Eva" and "Vanilla by Eva Group" were not available, though links remained on the website homepage. A direct link to Eva Town, a project in Rassada, remained working.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Regardless of what decision Judge Tawatchai rules in the Eva case, the potential impact of enforcing the beachfront protection law in Phuket is massive, with the possible fallout affecting billions of baht of properties along the coast.

In the Rawai case alone, the impact could reach hundreds of millions of baht. The Eva Group website EvaBeach.com touts its villas as "all units offer uninterrupted sea and island views of the south east coast of Phuket". Considering project's location, that claim is beyond doubt.

The villa prices listed on the website range from 42.9mn baht to 53.9mn baht each... and there are 22 of them, with entire project amounting to 948.8mn baht in sales – at the cheapest.

Multiply that along the rest of the Phuket coast, and the impact could be immense.



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Ms Kwannate and Nong Folk.

IVF center expected to raise tourist numbers

The Safe Fertility Center's new IVF clinic is expected to boost tourist numbers through medical tourism, Vice Governor Suthee Thongyam said at the grand opening of the new building on Sunday. "The prices at this qualified clinic are much cheaper than similar treatments outside of Thailand. Therefore, I am expecting the clinic to bring more tourists to the island for in vitro fertilization," Vice Gov Suthee said.

The center was established in Phuket International Hospital in 2010. Then, in May 2014, members of the medical teams and staffers were moved into the new building, explained Manop Janthanaphan, medical director of the IVF Phuket.

"The IVF Phuket is the only center on the Andaman coast that has been certified by the Royal Thai College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists," Dr Manop said.

More than 100 couples have undergone the procedure, which has a success rate of about 50 per cent, said Dr Manop.

"My son is now eight months old. Nong Folk is a healthy and lively boy," Phuket native Kwannate Kliangchuay told the *Gazette*. "We still have embryo frozen at the clinic. We will come back for our second child."

The new IVF Phuket clinic is now located on the 4th floor of the CCM Complex Building on the bypass road.

Phuket Town gets in gear for the Chinese New Year

By Chutharat Plerin

CHINESE New Year, ringing in the "Year of the Goat", will be celebrated in style at Sanam Chai Park on February 19.

The highlights of this year's event, kicking off at 5pm, will be a performance by a troupe of acrobats hailing from Beijing, as well as a concert by Getsunova, a famous Thai pop-rock band.

Kanya 'Ying' Raiwin, a Thai-Chinese actress, will act as emcee during the festivities, and an official opening ceremony led by Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) President Paiboon Upatising and Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong will start at 7:15pm.

After the island's officials get the ball rolling, acrobats will take to the stage from 7:40pm. Following them will be Getsunova, who will perform until about 10:15pm.

The park will be decked out in red, a lucky color, and will feature a 10-meter tunnel full of lights and Chinese lanterns in which



The Chinese New Year festivities will kick off at 5pm on February 19 in Sanam Chai Park. Photo: Dcubillas

festival-goers can take photos.

The area will also be packed full of food stalls – at least 60 of them – offering delicious delicacies for New Year's revelers.

Also known in China as the Spring Festival, this is a time of

renewal, when houses, including family altars, are cleaned or rearranged; distant relatives come together for festive meals; and deceased relatives and ancestors are venerated through offerings.

"In keeping with the traditions

of Chinese New Year, we will be cleaning out our house on February 17. I urge all residents to do the same, and place anything no longer needed or wanted outside," Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansapana told the *Gazette*.

Jet-ski shakedown draws governor's ire

From page 1

...but their insurance expired last month. The owner is in the process of obtaining insurance for them now," said Surachai Yomdee, the current president of the Bang Tao Jet-ski Club.

"The owner agreed that the lack of insurance was his fault – by law all jet-skis must be insured – but he told the Chinese tourists not to drive too close to each other before they took the jet-skis out."

Mr Anusorn fired back that it was not the tourists' fault that the jet-skis were uninsured. "It was the owner's fault. He has no right to claim money for repairs from tourists. They should get all their money back," he said.

A new settlement was reached on Monday

with the jet-ski operator returning 40,000 baht to one of Mr Cheng's friends who was acting on his behalf.

The complaint filed at Cherg Talay Police Station was to be withdrawn as part of the settlement, Mr Surachai confirmed.

Governor Nisit Jansomwong was present at the Damrongtham Center to hear the jet-ski operators haggle for their discounted claim.

Mr Surachai urged Governor Nisit to ensure that no more unregistered jet-skis were allowed to be rented out in Phuket, echoing his call last month for all jet-skis to be registered.

"Perhaps Phuket Marine Chief Phuriphat [Theerakulpisut] is not taking this matter seriously," he said.

Gov Nisit obliged, and called Mr Phuriphat

while still in front of Mr Surachai to remind the chief that no more than the current 286 jet-skis are allowed to be operated in Phuket.

Bang Tao over the years has gained a reputation for dangerous jet-ski shenanigans.

As recently as January 22, four jet-skis rented out at Bang Tao Beach endangered unsuspecting tourists swimming at nearby Surin Beach, prompting Ma-ann Samran, president of the Cherg Talay Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*), to take action.

In 2012, Mr Ma-ann called in competing jet-ski rental operators at Bang Tao for talks after rumors were spread that guns were being readied to settle a dispute over illegal jet-skis being rented out to tourists at that beach.

Additional reporting by Voratuss Intasee

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Police nab serial burglars

By Thawit Bilabdullar

TWO Phuket burglars thought to have been involved in a series of recent robberies of homes in Thalang have been arrested, police announced on February 5.

The master thief, 26-year-old Saroj Seubsot, and his accomplice Prasert Thothip, 20, were detained after police discovered a large number of items at Mr Saroj's house that were linked to the robberies.

"Mr Saroj confessed to having robbed many houses throughout Thalang with Mr Prasert as his accomplice," said Phuket Provincial Police Commander Patchara Boonyasit.

"They were hard to catch because Mr Saroj held on to the items he stole for a long period of time before selling them – making it difficult to identify the stolen goods," Maj Gen Patchara explained.

Early last month, three foreign neighbors were robbed of cash and valuables amounting to more than 100,000 baht – all on the same night.



The two suspects are suspected of being involved in a series of recent robberies in the Thalang area.

The serial thieves struck again two weeks later when they robbed two more Thalang homes, relieving the residents of cash and valuables that also amounted to about 100,000 baht.

Gen Patchara said that Thalang

resident Saowanee Horebore, 37, whose house was robbed in the second burglary, had already identified several of her belongings from those recovered from Mr Saroj's house.

"She has been to Thalang

Police Station and positively identified a purse and a case for an iPad Mini as being items that belong to her," said Gen Patchara.

Mr Saroj is thought to be responsible for numerous robberies in the Thalang area dating back to

August 2013, when he was caught on CCTV robbing the Democrat Party's Phuket office.

At the time, a reward of 5,000 baht was offered for any information leading to his arrest, but Mr Saroj managed to allude the police, until last week.

"Police arrested Saroj on suspicion of his involvement in the robbery at the Democrat Party Phuket office," said Gen Patchara.

"Only then did we discover that the items found in his house included things from the two recent robberies in Thalang, and possibly more from other households."

Saroj and Prasert were both charged with robbery. They will remain in custody until their court hearing.

"We are now trying to track down those who bought stolen items from Mr Saroj. They will be charged with receiving stolen goods," Gen Patchara said.

"Anyone who thinks his or her items were stolen by the two offenders should please come to the Thalang Police Station to identify their belongings, so that we can return them to you."

Patong bar raided for baraku, hookahs

KATHU District officials raided a bar in Patong last Saturday morning for selling hookah tobacco and providing water pipes – a smoking style called *baraku* in Thailand – to customers, mainly tourists.

Barkeeper and Myanmar national Tan Ser U was arrested in the raid of the Red Sky Bar on Sirirat Road at the southern end of Patong at 2am.

"We found him in possession of three kilograms of shisha tobacco and we seized water pipes that were provided to customers to inhale it with," said Siripong Leeprasit, head of the internal security division at Kathu District Office.

The raid was conducted as part



Mr Tan (left) with police.

of a campaign to prevent teenagers from indulging in *baraku*, which is illegal in Thailand.

However, no teenagers were in the bar at the time of the raid.

Mr Tan was taken to Patong Police Station, where he was charged for the possession, concealment and selling of an illegal tobacco product.

– Thawit Bilabdullar

Police hunt temple thief

POLICE are searching for a man who is suspected of stealing more than 100,000 baht in cash from Tah Reua Temple, which houses Phuket's top monk, Phra Visutthi Thamma-kanee.

Officers were alerted to the theft at 10:30am on February 8.

"Phra Visutthi Thamma-kanee said that he saw a man about 40 years old sitting in front of the monks' dormitory at about 3pm on Saturday," said Capt Suporn Muangkhai of the Thalang Police.

"The abbot greeted the man and thought he was a local resident who just came to visit the temple, and so he continued his walk.

"When he returned, he realized


that an envelope containing 100,000 baht in donations was gone. He thought that he had misplaced it, until another monk also reported 8,000 baht in donations disappearing from another room at the temple."

Officers found no sign of a break-in, though Phra Visutthi Thamma-kanee admitted that he had left his accommodation unlocked while he went for his walk.

"The abbot is concerned that the man he saw may be responsible for the missing money," Capt Suporn said.

"We are investigating this thoroughly and will catch the thief."

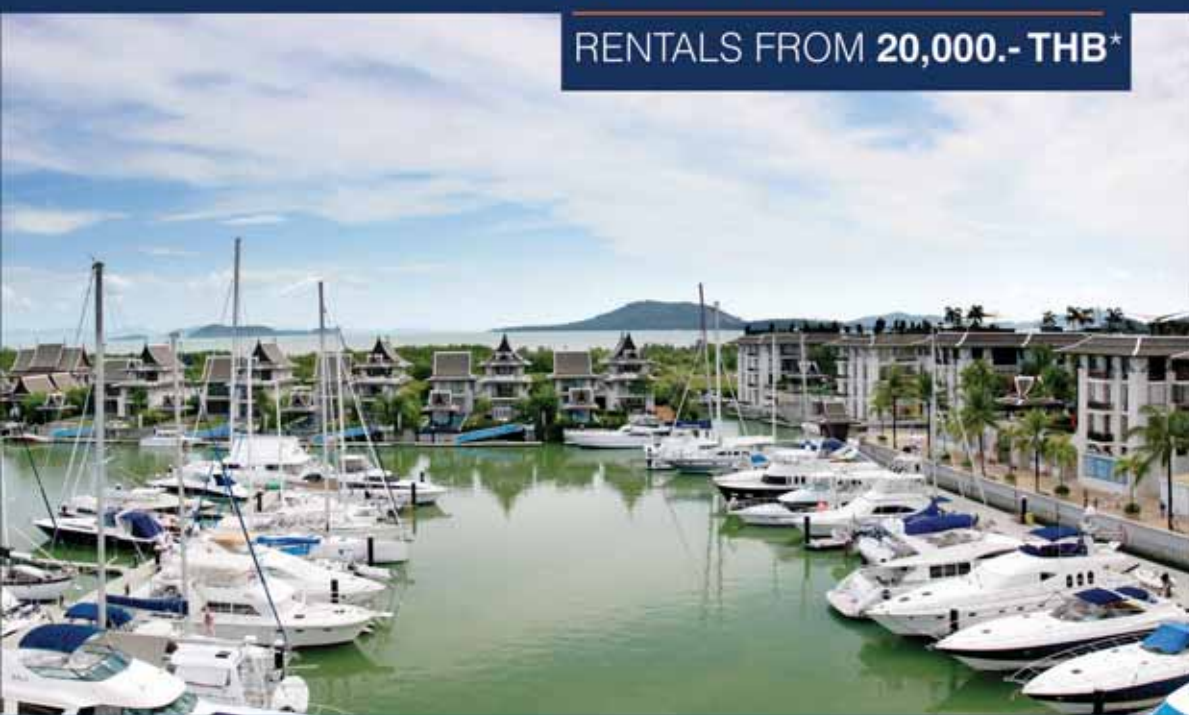
– Thawit Bilabdullar



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AROUND THE nation

SCB highrise catches fire, exterminators main suspects

FOUR employees of a pest-control company have become prime suspects in the blaze that erupted on the 10th floor of the Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) headquarters in Bangkok on February 7. They were reportedly the last people on that floor before the fire started.

A police source said they had been summoned on Monday and admitted to being in the area where the fire broke out. The source quoted them as saying that the chemical pesticide sprayed may have come into contact with electrical appliances and sparked the fire, reported *The Nation*.

"Police will check the scene and footage from cameras installed there. If all findings point to these four, then they and the owners of the pest-control company will be charged," a source said.

Forensic Science Office chief Thawatchai Mekprasert-suk said that investigators had found no signs of irregularity or flammable substances on the 10th floor of the building, though arson has not been ruled out yet.

The investigator said that the reports and professional recommendations on post-fire structural strength would be supplied by Bangkok's Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, while the final conclusion on the cause of the fire would be made by the Office of Forensic Science.

Democracy coming soon, Prayut tells Japanese PM

PRIME Minister Prayut Chan-ocha told his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe at a bilateral meeting in Tokyo on Monday that his government was committed to "an early restoration of democracy" with an election to be held by the end of this year or early next year.

In a joint statement issued after the meeting, both leaders reiterated their determination to maintain and further develop a partnership between the two countries based on a long-standing amicable relationship. They also agreed to boost security and defence cooperation.

PM Prayut told Mr Abe that he was committed to maintaining and improving Thailand's business environment so that Japanese enterprises could make long-term investments with ease.

The two leaders achieved no breakthroughs, other than reaffirming the importance of promoting the Dawei Special Economic Zone project through consultation with Myanmar, reported *The Nation*.

PM Prayut and Mr Abe witnessed the signing of the memorandum of intent on cooperating in the railway sector between their transport ministries, as well as a memorandum of cooperation on promoting business.

Thailand wants Japan to help develop rail routes connecting Bangkok with provinces in the West, East and North, and along the East-West Economic Corridor.

In a meeting with Japan's Labor Minister Yasuhisa Shiozaki, who also chairs the Thailand-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League, PM Prayut guaranteed



Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha (left) and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe smile after they attend a joint news conference after their meeting at Abe's official residence in Tokyo February 9, 2015. Photo: Reuters

that Japanese tourists and businesses in Thailand would be taken care of and that the government would enforce laws fairly without violating human rights or abusing its authority.

The prime minister also met with Sadayuki Sakakibara, chairman of a business association called Keidanren Sakakibara.

Mr Sakakibara said Japan would continue to cooperate with the Kingdom in rail and port infrastructure projects.

In Bangkok, Thanavath Phonvichai, director of the Eco-

nomic and Business Forecasting Centre, said that the prime minister's mission to Japan would help increase Japanese investor confidence and tighten cooperation between the two countries.

Mr Thanavath said the Thai economy could grow by up to 5 per cent this year following closer cooperation with Japan, while Tokyo might foresee greater opportunity to expand trade and investment in Thailand and its neighboring countries under the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement.

The Commerce Ministry said it has targeted exports to Japan increasing 2 per cent this year, after a 1.9 per cent drop last year. Japan is Thailand's fourth-largest export market, with exports to Japan accounting for 9.6 per cent of the total shipments last year.

Commerce Ministry spokeswoman Duangkamol Jiambutr said exports to Japan were expected to grow due to Japan's economy showing stronger signs of recovering following the government's quantitative-easing program.

Samui safari pick-up truck flips, lands tourist in ICU

A RUSSIAN tourist ended up in intensive care after a safari pick-up truck flipped onto its side on Koh Samui on February 7.

Koh Samui police chief Paitoon Krajajang has vowed to track down the driver, Vanich Sridon, 29, who fled the scene.

"He is wanted for reckless driving, causing injury," he said. "We have dispatched officers to track him down."

Mr Vanich, working for the "Funny Day Safari" tour company, was taking 11 tourists and one Myanmar national to the Tarnim Waterfall on the Khao Pom Road when the accident occurred at about 3:30pm.

"We were told that the truck was going too fast when it arrived at a sharp curve," Col Paitoon explained. "Mr Vanich lost control of the vehicle and it flipped onto



The tourists were sent to a private hospital for treatment.

its side, throwing all 12 passengers out of the truck."

Mr Vanich immediately fled the scene, Col Paitoon said.

Rescue workers administered first aid at the scene, before taking all 12 to Koh Samui Hospital.

Ms Kostenko suffered a broken leg, broken pelvis, injured spleen

and lung damage. She was put in intensive care, police reported.

The 11 other passengers, including Ms Nanyin, suffered minor cuts and bruises.

The tour company has arranged for the 10 tourists to be transferred to a private hospital to receive treatment. — Suchat Hankij

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Chinese New Year is for all islanders

FIRST PERSON

THIS is a very important time of the year for many Phuket residents, and the island is very busy as Thai-Chinese people bustle around preparing their homes for Chinese New Year celebrations, or get ready to visit close relatives elsewhere.

Chinese thoroughly enjoy this time, as they work hard all year long. In the old days, they never took time off during the year, so the new year period was the only time during which they felt comfortable about taking a break. No one is permitted to work on new year's day, which falls on February 19 this year.

Although this is a time for house cleaning and to visit relatives, food preparation is also an important part of this holiday. People take time and care to cook their most favorite dishes for themselves and as offerings to their ancestors.

It is our duty to inherit and preserve this culture for younger generations. If we fail to do so, the traditions will be lost in Phuket society – much like Chinese language has been. It is rare to come across a young Baba or Nyonya [male or female] Peranakan Chinese-Thai who can speak Chinese fluently these days.

Phuket is a place where many cultures, races and religions come together, such as Chinese, Malay and Muslim. The purpose of the Chinese New Year celebration is not just to preserve our cultural heritage, but to bring all people



Dr Kosol Tang-Uthai is the deputy mayor of Phuket City and president of the Thai Peranakan Association, a group dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Phuket's unique Chinese culture. Dr Kosol earned his doctorate from Mahidol University, and has been serving as president of the association since 2007.

Here, he explains the importance of the Chinese New Year celebrations to Phuket residents and of preserving the Chinese and Phuket culture for younger generations.

together to celebrate as one.

Though Peranakan Chinese make up the majority of the population in Phuket, you will see Muslim and Malay people setting up food stalls during the many Chinese New Year events that the island will host.

It is our duty to inherit and preserve this culture for younger generations. If we fail to do so, the traditions will be lost in Phuket society – much like Chinese language has been.

Unlike many other provinces in which Chinese New Year events have slowly disappeared, Phuket's celebrations get bigger and better each year. We started with only one street – Thalang Road – but have expanded to Krabi and Phang

Nga roads, among others.

A Chinese New Year festival, organized by the Phuket City Municipality, will be celebrated from February 26-28. It is also our tradition to celebrate the next five working days after Chinese New Year. This is unique to Phuket.

This is the 16th year that the Chinese New Year festival has

been organized by the Phuket City Municipality. It also inspired the Cultural Department to hold its Phuket Old Town Festival during the celebrations.

This year, with the full support of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports Phuket office, we will have five streets and five stages on which to celebrate. The main stage will be set up at the 72nd Anniversary Queen Sirikit Park.

A Chinese opera and a Chinese performing arts troupe will be the highlight of the event. Locals will present their prized Phuket foods along the streets in front of their houses, and the Phuket Town Food Association will bring dishes and hold cooking demonstrations on Phang Nga Road.

Last, but not least, we will hold our biggest parade yet from 5:00pm on February 26, starting on Phang Nga Road and finishing at Queen Sirikit Park.

Join us for the exciting celebrations to ring in the Chinese New Year. This new year will be represented by a female wooden sheep. If your lucky element is wood, fire or earth, you will live well in 2015.



Thailand's environment needs to be protected. Photo: Kallerna

Amazing Thailand

Island View

By Daniel Wilson

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

IN THE last 20 years, Thailand's tourism industry has grown in leaps and bounds due to the hard work of the industry's private-sector and effective campaigns created by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

One of the TAT's most successful ever was its "Amazing Thailand" campaign launched in 1998, which aimed to bolster the country's tourism income after the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

The campaign was only designed to run for a year, but the phrase turned into such a buzzword around the world that it went on to become the de facto tourism campaign for the next five years, until it was toppled in 2003 by "Unseen Thailand".

Even today, there are very few foreign tourists who haven't heard the Amazing Thailand slogan.

Back when it was launched, arrivals to Thailand were only 7.76 million. Today, those figures have jumped to more than three times that number. Last year, the total number of visitors was 24.7mn, despite the political crisis.

But has all this promotional activity been worth it? Has Thailand really invested in its natural beauty, or has it slowly allowed the tourism industry and other sectors to chip away and destroy the very resources from which it has gained so many tourism dollars?

The government's campaigns to promote the country's tourism to the world are just like any other capitalist venture created to sell a product: They hide the real truth for the sake of a profit.

In the last two decades, the Thai government has paid only lip-service to the dangers of environmental degradation; to the damage that poorly planned tourism products can cause; to

the polluters; and to destroyers of Thailand's natural habitat.

Its message – to the tourism industry; to corporations and to the Thai people – has been a clear one: We value profit over the preservation of our environment and natural resources. No wonder that today, pollution pervades almost every corner of Phuket.

When did you last see a promotional campaign in Phuket – or anywhere in Thailand for that matter – to stop people from littering, for example? In fact, when did you last see a trash bin?

Even in the face of destruction in Phuket, and elsewhere in Thailand, the Thai government does nothing to protect nature for the generations of future visitors – or for the people of the Kingdom.

Earlier this year, Tourism and Sports Minister Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul named Phuket Thailand's "poster child" for tourism.

There was no mention of the real environmental crisis facing the country, instead she was happy to announce that the government was looking at ways to "increase tourism spending per head."

She then went on to say that the fundamental selling point for tourism was its "Thainess".

Ms Kobkarn did not elaborate on exactly what Thainess is comprised of, but if she meant that it is the true embodiment of the Thai spirit, then that Thainess which tourists purportedly seek, could be in short supply, once Thailand's natural habitat has been truly pillaged for a profit.

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

Soi Sansabai needs to be inspected in case of an emergency

The tsunami was a very sad event 10 years ago, but the emergency-evacuation routes – especially Soi Sansabai in Patong – need to be inspected in case of another emergency.

Soi Sansabai is a designated evacuation route, but is blocked at night by motorbikes double- and triple-parked on both sides of the street. This will cause big problems in the case of an emergency evacuation.

Can someone look into this matter urgently so that the situation can be improved? I understand that this is a private road, but something needs to be done to rectify the matter.

Would someone from the Gazette take some photographs of Soi Sansabai at night and post them in your publication for all to see, so that the private owner can hopefully rectify this problem?

David,
Phuket

Prawit Rattanachot, from the Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Division of Patong Municipality, replies:

In 2004, Soi Sansabai was an evacuation point for people to use in case of a tsunami. Now, the street is crowded with shops and motorcycles at night, and there is also a lot of traffic.

However, in my opinion, Soi Sansabai is still safe enough to be an escape route, but thank you so much for making us aware of your concerns and the situation. We will see if we can get the street's owner to cooperate with us in some way so that we can rectify the problem.



The street looks tame during the day, but at night it comes alive and gets packed full of cars, motorbikes and pedestrians. Photo: DDPM Phuket

We have also had officers from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Phuket office to research areas in Patong where we could install new tsunami-evacuation signs, so people will know where it is safe for them to go in an emergency.

We will have the new signs installed as soon as possible.

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

Turn of tides

THERE is reason to be cautiously optimistic that the unprecedented involvement of the Administrative Court system in a controversial real-estate development case in Rawai (pages 4-5) could mark the emergence of a powerful new tool to ensure that local administrative bodies do a better job approving and overseeing work on future projects on the island, thus bolstering investor confidence.

It is clear that over the past decade unsound real-estate project planning, design and construction techniques have played a major role in the degradation of Phuket's natural resources.

The breathtaking natural beauty one would have observed when taking a leisurely drive along any of the island's coastal roads 20 years ago now survives mostly in the memories of those who had the opportunity to savor them at the time.

Travelling along the same thoroughfares nowadays is more of a white-knuckle experience for drivers, who are more interested in keeping their eyes on the road and staying alive than staring up at so many cookie-cutter condo and real-estate projects that extend far up into the hillsides, in many cases blatantly defying the ban on permanent structures 80 meters above sea level.

Huge swaths of virgin tropical forests situated on coastal hillsides across the island have been sacrificed – illegally and otherwise – in the name of these so-called “developments”. Even work around one of the island's top tourist attractions, the Big Buddha image high in the Nakkerd Hills of Karon, has led to an unprecedented rise in encroachment on state forest land.

In parts of the island further from the coast, entire hillsides have simply been excavated to make room for residences or even for use as fill, leaving behind ugly, unnatural escarpments. In many cases, subsequent erosion has resulted in landslides, some deadly.

Like so many of the important issues that have been addressed in this forum over the years, the crux of the problem lies not in existing environmental laws and regulations, but in the abject failure of many – if not most – local officials to simply execute their duties as the first line of defense in protecting the environment.

The Administrative Court established divisions to deal with “green cases” back in 2011, but to our knowledge this is the first time its regional headquarters in Nakhon Sri Thammarat is taking legal action in Phuket against local administrators for allegedly failing to enforce building codes applying to coastal developments.

Without commenting further on the details of this individual case, which is still under investigation, the *Gazette* certainly agrees with the introduction of any new legal mechanisms that will hold local administrators more accountable.

Systemic corruption among developers and local planning boards has been part and parcel of real-estate development on the island for far too long. Setting an example which demonstrates that such practices will no longer be tolerated could be a step in the right direction for saving what remains of Phuket's once-abundant natural resources.



Trial by social media might be effective

Re: Gazette online, Tuk-tuk driver punches Australian in face over fare, February 10

Well, how else would you expect a Phuket tuk-tuk gangster, Thailand's most embarrassing and infamous tourism ambassadors, to respond to conflict about ridiculous taxi fares?

Of course, by punching the 20-year-old in the face.

I hope Mr Sipeng shares this event all over social media, because there will likely be no consequences for Mr Chinrat. Bad press, spread globally, is what it is going to take to make changes, but I'm not holding my breath.

*No surprise
Gazette forum*

Letters to the Editor

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

good thing you arrested those darn Myanmar workers; they are certainly ruining Phuket. For sure, they are the people responsible for all of Phuket's ills – even the jet-skis – obviously.

Thanks for this latest dose of great nonsense.

*Get serious
Gazette forum*

and forth with the thugs running up and down the beach in pursuit.

It was so comical to see these guys trying to head me off before I landed. After I had run them for awhile and they worked up a good lather, I would sail off with a Cheshire cat grin on my face. Oh, I made sure they saw that grin, and a pleasant wave as well.

*Tread on me not
Gazette forum*

Unsafe working conditions should be finable

Re: Gazette online, Migrant worker found dead in empty elevator shaft, February 6

Fine the owner of the company that hires them.

The contractor doing my neighbor's house did not give them any protection masks when asking the workers to cut the tiles. All of the workers coughed non-stop every day.

Plus, they never bother to put up a PVC sheet to prevent dust from getting into the neighboring house. They don't have safety harnesses for when they paint and tile the second floor, either.

*Ling Ester
Facebook*

A happy ending like a breath of fresh air

Re: Gazette online, Phuket teacher answers prayers of mum with deaf son, February 5

What a breath of fresh air reading a story with a happy ending for a change!

Punyanukul School is the perfect solution.

The staff are kind and caring, and all the students are happy.

*Agogohome
Gazette forum*

Nothing new going on around here, officers

Re: Gazette online, Guns seized, staff test positive for drugs in Phuket beach mafia thug raid, February 7

What a revelation!

This has been going on at Nui Beach for at least 10 years.

I stopped going when they tried to charge me an entrance fee when entering by motorbike.

After that, I would sail my small boat up to Nui Beach to torment them by cruising just a few meters off the shore. I would sail back

Make the employers pay for staff mistakes

Re: Gazette online, Tourist in ICU after Samui safari pick-up truck flips, February 9

The employers need to be held responsible for their employees' actions.

Until laws are passed to this effect, nothing will change.

The driver will be fined a couple thousand baht at most, and told to apologize. Amazing Thailand!

*Jay Tz
Facebook*

Another nonsensical move made by police

Re: Gazette forum, Police raid bags nigh B3mn in counterfeit goods, February 5

If the police really wanted to confiscate all counterfeit items, most of the shops throughout Phuket would be empty.

I think these few stores might have fallen behind on their tea money payments.

But yes, Mr Police Department,

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Cashing in on bodies

Thousands of Chinese tourists bolster medical tourism market

By Maciek Klimowicz

FOR thousands of Chinese tourists who flock to Phuket each year, a visit to the island is more than just a chance to relax in the sun. It's a chance to access medical procedures and treatments not available in their home country.

Many countries around the globe have the same pressing healthcare issues: aging populations, increasing medical costs, collapsing welfare systems. But where other places struggle, Phuket benefits.

Thanyapura Phuket, one of the island's key medical service providers for tourists, has observed a steady and dynamic growth in demand from foreign visitors, especially those from China.

"We have been working with Chinese patients since July 2013. We first started with 100-150 patients each month, but now we serve as many as 400," Michael Klentze, chief scientific and medical officer at Thanyapura Health, told the *Gazette* during a special Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa event to welcome 800 Chinese tourists.

"They mostly come for various kinds of hormonal therapy. During our checkups we detect issues such as heart problems, breast cancer, diabetes and more."

Dr Klentze notes that the hormonal therapies combined with stem-cell therapy treatments and advanced diagnostics are all part of the preventative procedures offered by Thanyapura Health.

While such procedures have been available in the West for



Chinese medical tourists enjoy a party with well-dressed male models providing perfect photo opportunities.

decades, they are still relatively scarce in China.

"When it comes to medicine, China is still quite underdeveloped. Also, the thinking is completely different. I've had Chinese patients who were diagnosed with diabetes two years earlier and told quite simply by their doctors that their lives would be cut short," explains Dr Klentze, adding that while China still lacked expertise in preventative medicine, in larger cities like Beijing access to modern medical procedures was improving.

According to Dian Ying, who heads the travel agency in China which partners with Thanyapura, the relatively inexpensive cost of medical procedures in Phuket is not the only attraction.

"Compared with China, the treatment here is about half the price, which certainly makes it attractive, but the real issue is the lack of availability of these treatments," says Dian.

This, together with the island's holiday appeal and convenient location, is turning Phuket into a prime medical tourism hub for the

Chinese market.

With packages costing up to US\$5,000 per person, Chinese medical tourism is turning out to be a profitable one. However, it is also logistically complex, with hundreds of lab samples to be processed and the need for additional doctors to take care of large groups.

"We are currently processing as many as 1,200 patients at a time and will surpass that number by next year," says Dr Klentze. "Plans are already in motion to build a new clinic to cope with the influx."



Even if it's not your car, the selfie is a must!

Sell health with selfies

THERE are 800 of them and they came here for one and one reason only – to party! Well, in fact, they didn't. The 800 Chinese tourists, who recently partied in the grounds of Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa, visited the island for health reasons.

What does all this partying have to do with health? I'm talking about a full on, hip-hop music video-style extravaganza. I'm talking about 800 Chinese taking more than 800,000 selfies with Lamborghinis, Ferraris and Aston Martins parked nearby; tuxedo-dressed professional male models serving drinks; beaming hostesses wearing revealing feathered and sequined outfits. What does it all have to do with health?

Maybe it's that while sterile lab interiors, test tubes and machines that go "ping" might be hard to market, half-naked hostesses, sport cars and dance music definitely aren't.

Michiel Lugt joins Indigo Pearl



Michiel Lugt takes on the position of executive assistant manager.

INDIGO Pearl has brought Michiel Lugt on as the luxury resort's new executive assistant manager.

"We are delighted to have Michiel on board. Every challenge he has encountered has been met, and that's why his is a career in ascent," Indigo Pearl General Manager Christopher Oakes said.

"Indigo Pearl is the ultimate in highly stylized luxury on Phuket's sheltered, more discerning northern end, and given Michiel's

pedigree at five-star hotels, the fit couldn't be better."

The Dutch native has been on a long and winding road that has seen him serve as Food and Beverage Director at Grace Bay Club Resort, Turks and Caicos Islands, The Hong Kong Jockey Club and De L'Europe in Amsterdam. His previous position, which concluded last month, was F&B Director at The Chedi Muscat in Oman.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Two new directors at Regent

REGENT Phuket Cape Panwa appointed two new directors this month: Junya Ono as the new director of sales and marketing, and Stefan Zich as the new director of food and beverage.

A veteran of the hospitality industry, Mr Ono brings more than 28 years of luxury hotels sales and marketing experience to his new role at the Regent Phuket Cape Panwa. He will be responsible for all aspects of leisure sales and marketing, international and domestic group business as well as overseeing marketing, and generating revenue for the resort.

As the resort's new director of food and beverage, Stefan Zich will be responsible for ensuring the excellent daily dining operations of the resort's six bars and restaurants. Mr Zich joined the Regent family in 2010 when he was appointed the Operations Manager Food & Beverage of the Regent Berlin.

"We are thrilled to welcome Mr Ono and Mr Zich to our distin-



Junya Ono joins Regent as the new director of sales and marketing.

guished team. With their extensive experience in the hospitality industry and special focus on luxury hospitality and bespoke services, they will be valuable assets to Regent, as the well-established resort builds on its reputation for authentic, personable luxury hospitality," said General Manager of Regent Phuket Brice Borin.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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Learning to re-balance

PORTFOLIO re-balancing is one of the trickier aspects of investment management, as you will inevitably need to make

some hard and counterintuitive decisions to ensure that your portfolio's asset allocation continues to meet your investment goals and risk-tolerance level. But why, how and when should you re-balance your investment portfolio?

WHY YOU NEED TO TAKE WINNERS AND LOSERS OFF THE TABLE

Selling investments that have been big winners in the past in order to reinvest the proceeds in investments that have not performed as well (e.g. selling equities for bonds) will take a considerable amount of mental discipline on your part. After all, the "buy low, sell high" investment strategy works, but only if you have the emotional discipline to sell at the high point and not wait for the investment to go even higher.

Moreover, stock market plunges always provide a good reason for periodically re-balancing your portfolio because too many investors, especially retirees or near retirees, entered the dot com bust in year 2000 too heavily concentrated in tech stocks thanks to their run-up in value, while others entered the financial crisis with more than 90% of their portfolios concentrated in equities. These investors presumably failed to periodically re-balance their portfolios, which led to their asset allocations getting completely out of whack and, ultimately, to big and unnecessary losses.

Likewise, you need to periodically cut your losses on losing investments. For example, it may seem like you have nothing more to lose on an investment that's down 50% as it "could always go back up," but you need to remember that an investment down 50% will need to rise 100% in order



Finance

By Don Freeman

for you to at least break even again.

It's also important to remember that not only is the market and your

portfolio changing over time as asset classes or sectors move in and out of favor, but so are your investment goals and risk-tolerance levels in relation to the performance of the market and your portfolio. This means that even if your portfolio's asset allocation has managed to remain static, you may still need to re-balance your portfolio to ensure it continues to meet your changing risk profile and investment goals.

KEY RE-BALANCING CONSIDERATIONS

Although portfolio re-balancing is critical for maintaining your investment strategy and for helping you to avoid unnecessary risk, it's not something you should follow slavishly (e.g. you don't need to re-balance a 60% / 40% equity / bond portfolio when the equity portion suddenly becomes 60.5%) nor should you automatically re-balance your portfolio's assets on a set date every year.

Instead, talk to your financial adviser about setting some basic thresholds. For instance, if your asset allocation shifts 5% or more, or some of your investments have made significant moves, then it might be time to set up a meeting to figure out how to re-balance things. In fact, you may need to re-balance your portfolio a couple of times a year in a very active market or you may not need to re-balance it at all.

There may also be times when you need to re-balance your portfolio in order to take advantage of so-called "tactical" opportunities which periodically present themselves. Allocating a portion of your portfolio to beaten down home-builder stocks, which started bouncing back in mid-to-late 2011,



Re-balancing a portfolio is more of a balancing act than an exact science. Photo: Quinn Dombrowski

would have been a good tactical investment at the time, while now might be the time to take some or all of your profits off the table.

Finally, and before you over-re-balance your portfolio, remember that too much selling out of high performing assets in a bull market or too much buying and selling in general that racks up commissions or fees, can negatively impact your long-term investment returns. In other words, re-balancing an investment portfolio is more of a balancing act and an art form rather than an exact science.

If you have not re-balanced your investment portfolio in some time, call me and we can discuss how to do so.

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

Strong dollar brings down Thailand's foreign debt

THAILAND'S foreign debt has eased thanks partly to the recent appreciation of the US dollar against other major currencies, according to the Bank of Thailand.

At the end of 2014, Thailand's foreign debt in dollar terms stood at US\$140 billion, a decrease by US\$1.2bn from the previous month.

Recently, the dollar has strengthened against major currencies such as the Japanese yen and the euro. After conversion to US dollars, loans denominated in non-dollar currencies are of lower value.

"The dollar appreciation

reduced foreign debt by US\$500 million. The foreign debt also dropped by another US\$700mn in the month mostly by importers' short-term trade payments," the central bank said.

In total, the outstanding foreign debt shouldered by the Thai public sector and the bank was valued at US\$22.1 billion and US\$3.2 billion, respectively.

In December, the bank's debt dropped by US\$100 million from the previous month, as investors continued the net-sell of short-term bonds. — *The Nation*

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Day of love spending expected to drop to record-breaking low

SPENDING on St. Valentine's Day is expected to fall 4.52 per cent from the previous year to 3.51 billion baht, the lowest in nine years, according to a survey by the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.

The survey showed that consumer spending is not back to normal, said Thanavath Phonvichai, director to the UTCC's Economic and Business Forecasting Centre.

Plus, the public perception that goods prices have gone up sharply remains strong, he added.

Spending is expected to fall, though 61.7 per cent of respondents said that the atmosphere would be as joyous as in the past year. Yet, 41.6 per cent said that goods prices have gone up.

The survey also showed that flowers would be the most popular gifts for the day, as 30.8 per cent of respondents plan to buy flowers for their loved ones. Thirty per cent plan on dining out and 19.7 per cent plan to give



Nearly 20 per cent of the survey's respondents indicated they would be buying chocolate for their loved ones. Photo: John Hritz

chocolate to loved ones.

The average spending is 1,901 baht, against 1,181 baht in 2014. About 20.7 per cent of the respon-

dents said they would cut spending from last year, while 55.1 per cent planned to maintain last year's sum. — *The Nation*

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

February 14. Valentine's Day

Saint Valentine's Day, also known as Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, will be celebrated throughout the island.

Many resorts and restaurants are preparing special moments for courting and married couples. Best to plan ahead and book your table long before the day arrives.

February 17 - 23, starting at 6pm daily. Wat Chalong Fair

The biggest temple fair on the island will have daily concerts, games, rides, shopping and local food booths.

February 19, 5pm-10:15pm. Chinese New Year celebrations

Acrobats from Beijing will be performing at the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization's 'Year of the Goat' festivities.

There will be 60 food stalls set up ahead of the 7:40pm acrobatic performance at Sanam Chai Park in Phuket Town.

March 4. Makha Bucha Day

Makha Bucha Day, which falls on the full moon of the third lunar month, commemorates Buddha's ordaining of 1,250 monks who arrived unannounced from afar only nine months after



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the Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment.

April 6. Chakri Memorial Day

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

May 1. Labor Day

Public holiday for all commercial workers, but government

offices will remain open.

May 5. Coronation Day

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

June 1. Visakha Bucha Day

Visakha Bucha Day is observed on the day of the full moon during the sixth lunar month, which usually falls in either May or early June.

The day commemorates three

important incidents: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of Buddha.

Miraculously, these events fell in the same month and on the same date on the Buddhist calendar.

July 30. Asahna Bucha Day

This full-moon day of the eighth lunar month commemorates the Buddha's first sermon to five disciples after he attained enlightenment more than 2,500 years ago.

Evening candlelight processions will be staged in all Thai Buddhist temples throughout the island.

August 12. HM The Queen's Birthday

HM The Queen's Birthday is also Mother's Day in Thailand.

October 23. Chulalongkorn Memorial Day

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

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YOUR Phuket

DJ Sabrina plays Phuket venues



GLAMOUR GIRLS: L to R: Cecilia Pitre of BCBG Party and Style and local makeup artist Katherine Gabriela spend some quality time with DJ sensation Sabrina Terence. Photo: Adriano Trapani



German national and former model Sabrina Terence, who has become a sensation as a DJ in the Middle East, got the dance floors in Phuket thumping.

SKAL making a difference for Phuket children



DONATIONS THAT COUNT: L to R: Claude Sauter, president of SKAL; Frank Couture, director and vice president of Phuket Sunshine Village; and Brice Borin, vice president of SKAL, are happy to promote a brighter future.



DONATIONS THAT COUNT: L to R: Claude Sauter, president of SKAL; Susan Arnulphy of the Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC); Wipa Tanmanatragul of the PIWC; and Brice Borin, vice president of SKAL, are creating better futures for the next generation.

Sansiri continues developing properties, relationships



Jantana Jaikwang, from the Phuket Gazette; Phinyapat Huangnak, public relations manager for Sansiri; and Isaac Stone Simonelli, from the Phuket Gazette, play catchup.

Amari vists Gazette office



LET THE YEAR OF THE GOAT BEGIN: Penprapa Chooklin, manager of marketing communications, visits Isaac Stone Simonelli of the Phuket Gazette, and the rest of the team.

The Phuket Gazette's weekly

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

PROPERTY of the week

**BEAUTIFUL LAND
PLOT FOR SALE**

See page 17

PROPERTY SERVICES of the week

Thailand's Leading Property Site
 **DDproperty**
.com



See page 19

JOB of the week

HW
HARVEST
PROPERTY

See page 20

BOAT & MARINE of the week

Boatshedphuket.com
INTERNATIONAL YACHT BROKERS



See page 25

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Properties For Sale

3 BED FOR SALE / RENT

Furnished house in Chalong. Sale 3.95 million baht, rent 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-922 2800. Email: simonchinner@yahoo.com

222,700 BAHT / RAI PHANG NGA

26 rai in Phang Nga. Mountain view, small creek. Nor Sor 3 Gor. 084-992 8432. Mam.

STUDIO FOR SALE

In Phuket Town. 5 min to Central, Big C. 2nd floor, 33sqm. Kitchen, furnished. Price 680,000 baht. Tel: 081-719 7015. Email: jassa rabee@gmail.com

KATA HOUSE SALE

4-bedrooms. Reduced price, must sell. Was 3.5 million baht and now 2.99 million baht. Tel: 082-4659 939.

CHALONG HOUSE SALE BY OWNER

Chanote title. 412sqm. 2 bed, 2 bath, in- and outdoor kitchen, beautiful garden. 4.2 million baht, negotiable. Tel: 093-737 1242. Email: konradantonsson@gmail.com

TOWNHOUSE SALE / RENT

Townhouse for sale (2.8mn baht) or rent (12,000 baht/mo) in Supalai City Hill estate, Phuket Town. 3bed-rooms, 2 Bath. Quiet, convenient location. Furnished, full kitchen, decor, garden, car park, 2 aircons. Good for family. Avail. from 5/2015. Tel: 089-874 0061, 086-291 4115. Email: stephenfein@gmail.com

SUPER MODERN

This supermodern Phuket house just came for sale in Rawai. The house is insulated in European style. For more info contact soi.saliga@gmail.com. Price 13 million baht. Tel: 080-530 6880 (English). Email: soi.saliga@gmail.com

ANDAMAN BEACH SUITE

Spectacular sea view condo located on the 12th floor in Patong. This 127sqm apartment, with 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 balconies and a spacious living/dining room, has everything you need for comfortable living. Close to shops, the beach (2 minute walk), access to swimming pool and other facilities. Tel: 081-691 1580 (English & Thai). Email: Esherandi@gmail.com

OCEAN FRONT VILLA

Brand new, fully furnished, 3-4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 10-meter infinity swimming pool, beautiful view. For quick sale only 19.5 mn. Tel: 081-343 0777.

AMAZING VILLA

Modern villa, swimming pool in Rawai, 3 beds, 3 baths, seaview, fully furnished, 3 floors, close to beach & shops. Not for long price only 9 million baht, no brokers. Tel: 098-464 9220.

KARON BEACH CONDO

This 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 3.5 million baht. Tel: 081-343 0777.

**Condo for Rent**

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 8433,
Thai: Aoi 081-667 1637.

RAWAI BEACHFRONT CONDO

New fully furnished with amenities, 2-bed 2-bath. Great location. Must see. Only 7.2 million baht. Tel: 081-892 6710 (English), 081-895 7908 (English & Thai). Email: peterh@asianwind.biz

OCEAN VIEWS, KATA

New 1-bed condo 44sqm. Great views. In-house management & rental program. A valuable investment. Ready to move in. 3.98 million baht ONO Email: ianscondo@yahoo.com

2-BEDROOM BEACHFRONT CONDO RAWAI

2 bdr / 2 bath, 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, 13.9 million baht. neg. Tel: 096-532849 (English). Email: laura@tilaholdings.com

THE DECK CONDO FOR SALE

2 units condo for sale at the center of Patong. The Deck Project Studio unit no.0103309 Floor 3 Building A. 31 Sqm. Price 3.5 million baht. And 1 Bedroom Unit no.010310 area 41.5 sqm. Price 4.5 million THB. Full furnished, ready to move in May 2015. Tel: 081-085 7550 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-344789. Email: ornholland@hotmail.com

LAND HOUSE FOR SALE

400sqm, seaview, Karon: 3.9 million baht. Also, house and land (120sqm, 400sqm): 7 million baht. Tel: 091-040 2471. Email: naruchai@gmx.de

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

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New top design pool villas, 2 & 3 bedrooms and bathrooms, large 5x8 pool, nice green area, Rawai, close to MACRO. Start 9mn THB. Tel: 096-284 2463 (English & Thai), 084-898 8258 (English & Thai). Email: p.bumrung515@gmail.com

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1-BED APT SALE / RENT

Fully furnished apt in Chalong. Sale 1.95 million baht, rent 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-922 2800. Email: simonchinner@yahoo.com

KAMALA

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

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Luxury villas and apartment for rent, modern style, big garden, jacuzzi, swimming pool, WiFi. 600 m. from the beach with 2 or 3 bedrooms. Special price start from 3,000 baht per day. Email: francescobonta@gmail.com. For more info call Francesco 085-790 7816. www.villacheloni.com

GOLF VIEW 7-BEDROOM 4 RENT

Large house with private swimming pool, fully furnished, close to all international schools and shopping mall. Tel: 081-271 3228 (English & Thai). Email: info@procarpentering.com

1, 2, 3-BED BEACH CONDOS KATA

Apartments & pool penthouses. Walk to 2 beaches + Kata town in 3 mins. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

2-BEDROOM POOL PENTHOUSE

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From 15th March onward. Monthly 15,000 baht; long term 14,000. Free Internet/TV. Located in small road at end of Soi Fantasea. 2 porches. Partially furnished. Tel: 080-648 7150. Email: sund99@gmail.com

CONDO FOR RENT IN TOWN

Furnished condo w/ aircon, TV, fridge. Gym and pool. 10,000 baht per month, or for sale at 1.4 million baht. Tel: 081-978 1558. Email: keng.na.ranong@hotmail.com

PATONG HOUSE RENT

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DELUXE BEACHFRONT CONDO

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

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**STUDIO ROOM FOR RENT**

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Please contact 086-4769612 email: annano1@hotmail.com

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Affordable big 1-bedroom apartment with swimming pool. On Hilltop of the Bypass Rd. Tel: 089-973 9493 (English & Thai), 081-877 9292 (English & Thai). Email: ken@phuketlifestyle.com

10,000 BAHT / MONTH

1-bedroom condo, 65sqm. Nicely furnished. Tel: 085-795 4741. Ole. Email: oleandaman@gmail.com

KAMALA BEACH

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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.

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@vertigophuket.com Website: suringate.com

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

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@asiawebdirect.com www.phuket101.net/2012/10/house-for-rent-in-phuket-kathu.html

One bedroom, living room, fully equipped kitchen with 2 great balconies. Tel: 076-344922, 083-280 9433 (English & Thai). Email: kkiran23@hotmail.com
www.bluewaterphuket.com

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

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

Close to Nai Harn and Rawai Beaches. Fully furnished. Available immediately for 1-3 months rental - 45,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-970 1712. Email: coconutparadisevillas@gmail.com. www.coconutparadise.asia/coral-island-villa.html

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

Fully furnished, swimming pool, daily and monthly rate. Tel: 081-894 4730 (English & Thai), 081-892 5983 (Thai). Fax: 076-292149. Email: nanaivilla phuket@gmail.com www.nanaivilla.com

Luxbed skin sofa / chair. Various other furniture items. All for sale, leaving Thailand. Open 16-17 October, 10am-12 noon. Located in Kata. Call 089-591 7249. Ask for Morten. Tel: 089-591 7249(English). Email: morten.pasby@gmail.com

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

Household Help

Filipino staff wanted, 1 nanny and 1 cook. Cook needs to cook Western food. We take care of your visa costs. Free place to stay and free food. Good salary. Age for nanny not over 30 years. Tel: 081-893 7720. Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

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.com

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Place your **GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS** at
Taurus Travel

Patong Beach

THAWEEWONG RD.

SAWATIRAK RD.

BAN SAI NAM YEN SCHOOL

PATONG BEACH RD.

ANDAMAN BEACH SUITE

TAURUS 7 ELEVEN

RAT-U-THIT 200 PEE RD.

SIAM COMMERCIAL BANK

POST OFFICE

TO KARON BEACH

TO TOWN PRABRAMI RD.

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!

Classified Advertisements

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

[illegible]

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 140 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Property Gazette page: Friday 3 pm.

Deadline for all other ads: Saturday 12 noon.

Looking for land to buy?

See more classified ads at www.phuketgazette.net

TEACHER WANTED

Native English speaker, female, age 25+, for 4 children 6-8 years old. Mon-Fri, 9:00-14:00, starting salary 40,000 Baht. Tel: 081-343 0777. Email: montha_Phuket@yahoo.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.

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).

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 @bam.pot.co or call 092-130 3114.

IT PROGRAMMER

To learn home automation programming. Good English req. Pls send CV with references. Tel: 084-443 9863. Email: daragh@techworx.asia

FULL-TIME MAID WANTED

Full-time maid wanted for villa in Nai Harn. Possibility to live in house. Tel: 081-970 7633. (English). Email: roberto.omini@gmail.com

TECHNICIAN

With good skills in mechanics and electrics. Please send resume and contact number. Email: boatcrewwanted@gmail.com

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

With good CAD and English skills. Please submit CV with references. Tel: 084-443 9863. Email: daragh@techworx.asia

GERMAN-SPEAKING STAFF

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

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.

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

Phuket Gazette

Chief Sub-Editor Wanted: Looking for an experienced editor with a deep respect for the English language, who wants to stay hand on while developing, maintaining high-quality copy.

CHIEF SUB-EDITOR

- ☐ Native English speaker
- ☐ 3-5 years of full-time editing experience, preferably within the news industry
- ☐ Interested in relocating to Phuket
- ☐ Commercial Social Media and SEO experience a plus

Isaac@PhuketGazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83000

Tel: 076-273555 Ext 301 Mobile: 080-526 5362

PROPERTY LISTING MANAGER

Leading Phuket Real Estate Company looking for an English speaker to join our friendly team, full time. The job involves creating property listings, research and data entry. Working hours: Monday to Friday, 9 am to 6pm. Tel: 090-703 5023 (English). Email: paul@livephuket.com

1 COOK + 1 WAITRESS URGENTLY

1 cook + 1 waitress urgently needed. Start work right away. Contact mobile 082-270 6385 (English & Thai). Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.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

ENGLISH TEACHERS

1 x Kindergarten - Part-time: 14hrs/week, in Cherng Talay, start Jan 5. 2 x Full-Time. School near Phuket Town. All positions: TEFL certs req'd. Pls contact: The Head Teacher, ECC Phuket. Tel: 076-307 0579, 091-647 5465 (English), 089-139 8453 (English & Thai). Email: Giles@ecc.ac.th

CHINESE STAFF NEEDED

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

WAITRESS / FOOD RUNNER

Female, friendly, good service mind, experience is advantage. Benefits: salary, service charge, tips, social fee, 2 meals/day, uniform. Job available at Rossovivo Ristorante Italiano e Pizzeria 5/38 wiset road, Rawai. Tel: 076-384 686, 083-103 3801.

DATABASE UPDATER

Looking for a Thai national with basic English skills and computer knowledge. Own computer required. Full time job. Email if interested. Email: info @dive-the-world.com

MARKETING FOR REAL ESTATE

Phuket's leading real estate agency is now looking for new marketing staff to join our successful team at Jungceylon, the Banana Walk shopping center and our Kata Beach office. A high salary and commissions will be given for the right person. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-341045, 081-459 0152. Please send your CV to admin@propertyinphuket.com or call us for an interview. www.propertyinphuket.com

**REAL ESTATE STAFF WANTED****Real Estate Staff Wanted**

We are looking for staff to join our team in our progressing and increasing branches in Rawai and Bang Tao.

1. Sales and Rental Manager: Thai or foreigner (Bang Tao, Rawai)

2. Secretary/Receptionist: Thai female (Bang Tao, Rawai)
Require: Good personality and outgoing communication skills, enthusiasm, fluent written and spoken English, good computer skills. Good salary and commission!

please send resume and recent photo to contact@harvest-property.com

Tel: 076-388 801.

QUALIFIED BOAT CREW

Wanted for a 6-month journey in Southeast Asia on a 19m motor yacht. Email: boatcrewwanted@gmail.com

FULL-TIME NANNY AND MAID WANTED

Twin babies. Start March. Trial Feb. Salary negotiable on experience. Manik area. Mel 098-671 3740.

NANNY WANTED

Babysitter for 3 months, native English speaking, with possibility to live in house. Reference required. Tel: 081-970 7633 (English). Email: roberto.omini@gmail.com

CHINESE PROPERTY AGENT

Phuket's leading real estate agency is now looking for a Chinese real estate agent to join our successful team. You need to be able to write and speak Chinese fluently. Main job description is to introduce Phuket properties to our Chinese investors and buyers. High earnings are expected for the right candidate. Tel: 076-341045, 081-459 0152. Please send your CV to info @ propertyinphuket.com, www.propertyinphuket.com

SWIMMING COACH

REQUIRED. Current SAT Babies & Toddlers Learn to Swim Qualification or equivalent. Minimum of 2 years' experience teaching babies & toddlers. Bachelor Degree. Enthusiastic, dynamic and energetic. Must be in good health—non smoker is a must. Punctual and reliable. Native English speaker. PACKAGE DETAILS: Salary (Negotiable for the right candidate). Accommodation allowance. Health Insurance. Work Permit. Minimum contract period: 2 years. Tel: 086-687 0224. Email: mantakids.pkt@gmail.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Tropical Properties real estate is urgently looking for an Office Assistant. Must have good knowledge of spoken and written English. Basic accounting and good computer skills are essential. Must be able to organize, work independently and be in a position to start work almost immediately. Thai national only! Tel: 087-882 2856 (English). Email: luc @phuket-tropical-realestate.com

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

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.

FOOD / BEVERAGE MANAGER

Position available now. Salary range: 40 to 45,000 baht per month plus monthly SC. Work schedule: 8 hrs per day, 6 days a week. Minimum 2-year degree in Food Service or Restaurant Management. Thai Nationals only. Must speak English. Minimum 2 years in managing a high-volume restaurant. Experience in developing, planning and implementing innovative & exciting menu items. Thai & Western experience in controlling F/B costs. Knowledgeable in F/B sales. Email: gm@ccshideaway.com

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!

**PROJECT
MANAGER**

Local experience. Save cost, time. Quality assured. Low fees. Tel: 089-647 5001.

**PHUKET HOME
SERVICE**

New maintenance company looking for staff: maid, plumber, baby-sitter, ++. Contact: info@home-phuket-service.com

**QUALIFIED
BOAT CREW**

Wanted for a 6-month journey in Southeast Asia on a 19m motor yacht. Email: boatcrewwanted@gmail.com

**SALES MANAGER
NEEDED**

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

LEE MARINE
International Marine Brokerage
SINCE 1997**Service Office Administrator****Qualification:**

- Male or female
- Thai nationality, age 25 years and up
- A Bachelor's degree in any field
- Good command of English and computer literacy in MS office
- Basic accounting knowledge and previous experience in marine-related company an advantage
- Driving your own car

Job Description:

- Customer relations
- Administration of warranty job with the yacht manufacture
- Maintenance the work-order program
- Import duty custom clearance
- Office support to service manager

Good salary available for a successful candidate. Interested applicant should send full resume to **Khun Nunnaphat at bee@leemarine.net**.

**WAITRESS/FOOD
RUNNER**

Female, friendly, Good service mind, experience is advantage. Benefits: salary, service charge, tips, social fee, 2 meals/day, uniform. Job available at Rossovo Ristorante Italiano e Pizzeria 5/38 Viset road, Rawai. Tel: 076-384 686, 083-103 3801.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Call center customer service. Basic 15,000 baht per month. Fluent English speakers needed. Five-day working week. Great prospects, beautiful office in seafront villa environment. Tel: 083-1737 292 (English). Email: dennisbond44@yahoo.com

**PERSONAL
ASSISTANT**

Fluent in English and computer skills. International drinks industry. 15,000 baht per month. Mike 086-057 7714.

**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).

Phuket Gazette**MARKETING & EVENTS MANAGER**

THE PHUKET GAZETTE, the island's leading multi-media organization, is now recruiting a proven Manager to take over all aspects of its rapidly growing business in the marketing and promotion of high-quality, high-impact events. Responsibilities will focus on creation and delivery of service packages across the following platforms:

- The Phuket Gazette (the island's main newspaper)
- The Phuket Gazette Nationwide Edition
- The Phuket Gazette Airline Edition
- The Nation daily newspaper (50,000 readers)
- The Gazette Online (Google's No. 1 for Phuket)
- The Phuket Forum.Net (more readers / more perspectives)
- Facebook (Phuket's most active FB page)
- The Gazette Private List (35,000 subscribers - no spam)
- Island-wide English-language radio (24/7)
- Island-wide Thai-language Radio (24/7)
- PGTV / 'Phuket Today' (Phuket's only NATIONALLY broadcast TV Show)
- The Gazette YouTube Channel
- The Gazette Air Force (Aerial event promotion / banner towing)
- Phuket Tickets (Phuket's only free home delivery ticket service)

Working in coordination with the company's editors, reporters, artists, Broadcast Media Group and Sales & Marketing teams, the successful candidate will develop Sponsorship Proposals; monitor and coordinate the delivery of our services; and ensure a quality performance right through to post-event publicity.

To qualify for an interview, candidates must have/be:

- ▶ Thai nationals, aged 30 to 45
- ▶ Previous management experience in sales and marketing AND/OR administration of projects
- ▶ A university degree in any field
- ▶ A high degree of competence in English, written and spoken
- ▶ Respect for deadlines and details
- ▶ Sociable, upbeat, outgoing and happy to attend / participate in the island's leading events

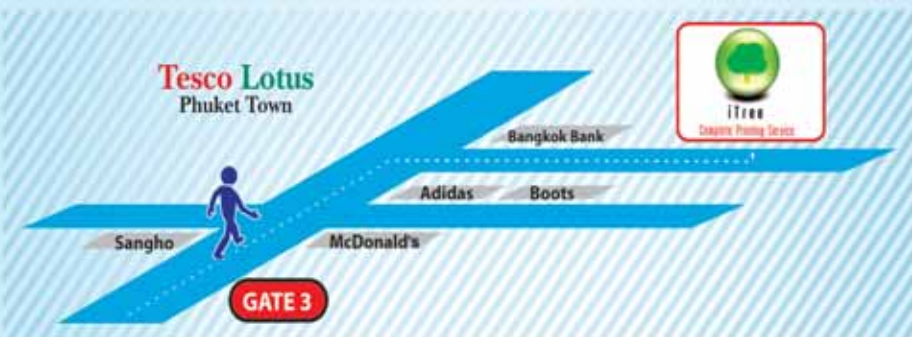
Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to **Khun Anna (General Manager)**, by email to: **Anna@phuketgazette.net**

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

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

Live in Town?

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



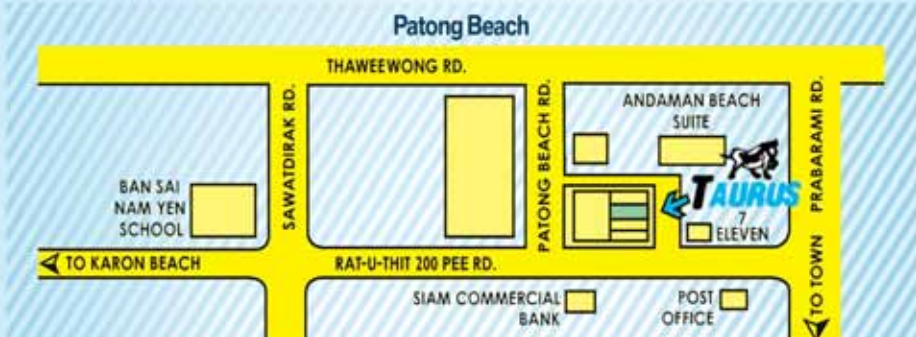
Simply write out your ad, pay and leave it with **Khun Nan: (076-255425)**

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!

Business Opportunities

14 years operating in Phuket complete with 10 years remaining on registered 15-year lease. main road frontage, air conditioned building in sought after location. Contact info@mobilepoo.doctor.com

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

Club Memberships Available

BLUE CANYON MEMBERSHIP

Maintenance paid through 2014, including Transfer Fee. Tel: 091-224 1773 (Eng lish).

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB
Golf membership 450,000 baht. Tel: 081-089 1407. Must sell.

GOLF MEMBERSHIP 480,000

Country club lifetime family membership. 480,000. Includes transfer fee. Tel: 087-469 3151. Email: williamsani g@yahoo.co.uk

GOLF MEMBERSHIP SALE

Life membership at Phuket Country Club Kathu. 550,000 baht, including transfer fee. Tel: 084-722 1520 (Ann, Kurt)

GOLF !!!.....GOLF !!!

Lifetime family membership at Phuket Country Club, Kathu. 540,000 baht, including transfer fee. Tel: 086 282 0700 (Werner).

Computer

ENGLISH COMPUTERMEN

English computer man. All computers except Apple. Tel: 084-0639 223 (English). Email: computermanphuket@gmail.com

IMAC 21.5" (2010)

Intel Core i3 3.2Ghz/4GB
MACBOOK PRO 15" (2009)
Intel Core 2 Duo 2.8Ghz/4GB
18,000 Baht. Tel: 076-510 143.

Cameras & Equipment

EOS 7D (I) + EF-S 18-135 NW

Rawai. Canon EOS 7D (2010), very good condition, + EF-S 18-135 (new). 24,000 baht. Tel: 080-717 9071.

Fitness Equipment

ASHTANGA YOGA SHALA

Mysore style, lead and beginner's classes. Personal approach and professional adjustment. Email: sofialin kova@gmail.com.

Business Products & Services



DINO DAYCARE CENTER

Accepting children 3 months old - 5 years old. 7am-7pm.

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

CALL NOW:
081-868 7676 (English).
080-525 3135 (Thai)

DINODAYCARECENTER

Pool Tables

STYLISH POOL TABLES

Style is a way to say who you are without having to speak. White 'Tokyo' model pool table. Tel: 085-797 0005, 085-7970 303. Email: ying@phuketpooltables.com

BAR CONTENTS - URGENT SALE

1 pool table, 50 bar stools, 15 fans, 4x42" LG TVs, 2-door fridge, sound system, 10 concrete tables, 4 timber top tables, shelving all new. Tel: 087-282 7407

SEX THERAPY MASSAGE (NO SEX)
Gents, ladies. Prem. ejac.? Important? Satisfy high libido? And much more! Natural. No drugs. Dr Dave (20 yrs' experience). Tel: 094-652 2029.

VISA SERVICES

UAE and Singapore for 3 days. Please call 080-697 1860.

Dive Gear

CHEAP DIVE COMPRESSORS

Bauer Mariner 250, year 2006. For sale 140,000 baht. L&W 245 year 2002 + another L&W 245 as spare parts. Total 70,000 baht. Tel: 081-370 3376.

Audio / Video Equipment

HI-FI AV RECEIVER

Cambridge Audio 540R V.20, excellent cond: 7,900 baht. 9-inch Acer monitor: 18,506 baht. Tel: 080-041 4240.

Building Products & Services

STAMPED CONCRETE

Stamped pattern and coloured concrete for driveways, pathways, etc. Many different patterns and colours available. Prompt and efficient service, at competitive rates. Tel: 085-576 6812 (English), 089-166 8090 (Thai). Email: ajd@thai worldconstruction.com

Lost & Found

HELP ME FIND MY DOG

Clio. She is a white pitbull terrier with brown spots on her rear and side and a bald shave mark on her head from a recent treatment. This dog is the world to me and I offer a good reward for her return. Tel: 081-891 9656 (English).

MISSING DOG



We miss our dog Quincy. An Airedale terrier, male, black and brown coat. He got lost on December 31 in Patong. 3,000 baht reward. Tel: 087-091 2798.

OUR SERVICE

Engineering structural design service- Steel structural design service-retaining wall structural design service-infrastructure design service-renovation engineering service. Tel: 076-283549, 081-255 7003 (English & Thai), 089-652 0768 Fax: 076-283549. Email: 2homerestort@gmail.com

Personal Services Wanted

THAI TRANSLATOR/COMPANION

International company director requires the assistance of a lady 27-32 years old with basic English as a Thai translator. Email: brianna.miraclemould@gmail.com

Personals

JOIN RAWAI BACKGAMMON CLUB

For free. Tel: 081-370 9661.



Phuket today
Phuket Gazette

Hot deal!
Classified Ads on TV

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

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

Catch the show at these times

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**BAYLINER175
BOAT (USA)**

Including GPS-Sona Sailed 3 times (total 20 hours) 650,000 baht. Tel: 083-636 0125, 091-758 8829.

**BOTNIA TARGA
32 (2013)**

As new and with nearly all the options. A quality Scandinavian-built, go anywhere, fast cruiser at a substantial savings on the new price. US\$340,000. Tel: 084 842 6146. Email: alangiles@boatshedphuket.com

**BENETEAU
EVASION 34**

1981 50 HP Perkins Motor Sailer, many extras, best state. 1,290,000 baht. Nihat Gunduz. Tel: 086-274 6272. Email: nihat_gunduz@hotmail.com

**POWER
CATAMARAN**

Austhai 6200. Cabcat. Full specs. Electric toilet, winch, etc. Galvanized trailer, boat cover. 2 Honda 90s with only 118 hours! Great boat. 900,000 baht. Tel: 081-894 0339 (English). Email: hilltribe@poppiessamui.com

**CAPELLI RIB FOR
SALE**

Capelli RIB, 8m. 250hp Yamaha 4-stroke outboard motor with 361 hours. Garmin GPS with Blue chart for Southeast Asia. 860,000 baht. Tel: 076-348134, 084-626 4969 (English). Fax: 076-348134. Email: neef@wanadoo.fr

**DEAN 440
CATAMARAN (2002)**

Four double cabins Twin Vetus 42 Hp Diesels. Reduced to US\$160,000 Contact Alan Giles at Boatshedphuket.com on 084-842 6146 or alangiles@boatshedphuket.com

**NAUTICAT 42 PILOT
HOUSE (1999)**

A top quality well-built yacht. Excellent condition and lightly used. Well-priced at US\$280,000 Contact Alan Giles at Boatshedphuket.com on 084-842 6146 or alangiles@boatshedphuket.com

**NEW YACHTSMAN
TENDERS**

Aluminium hull RIBs and "Air Floor" inflatables. Welded PVC and Hypalon options. Good quality at very competitive prices. Now in stock at our Boat Lagoon Showroom For details contact Alan Giles. Andaman Boat Sales. Tel: 084-842 6146. Email: boat@andamanboatsales.com

**33F W/A 2007 GULF
CRAFT**

For sale by owner. Suzuki 225 HP outboards, only 300 engine hours, air-con, custom dinghy with outboard, Raymarine GPS, many other extras - asking 3.85 million baht. Tel: 089-873 3713 (English). Email: erwin.a.hardy@gmail.com

**NAJAD 360
SLOOP (1989)**

Quality Scandinavian-built yacht. New Nanni 38 Hp Diesel. Well-equipped and realistically priced. Asking only 98,000 Euro. Contact Alan Giles at Boatshedphuket.com on 084-842 6146 or alangiles@boatshedphuket.com

**GC MARINE 26'
CENTER CONSOLE**

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**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. FANTASTIC: fan-static 10. SUPERIOR: super-rio 12. EDAM: made[rev] 13. SALAMI: *islama* 14. ENVELOP: *lovepen* 15. TANGERINE: *agreetin* 17. NOCONTEST: consent to arrangement 18. DEMOTED: *domeet-D* 20. M

Down:

1. AFFECTED: *deftface* 2. INVAIN: *viainn* 3. STEADIED: *tedsidea* 4. SCRAPE: *capers* 5. ASSIGNED: *as-singed* 6. UPPERCLASS: *clearspups* 7. PREVENT: P.R.-event 8. COLLIE: col-lie 11. SPOTTER: S-potter 16. ENTIRE: *ienter* 19. MANAO: *amoan* 20. MIG: G.I.-M[up] 22. CADDY: cad-D-Y 23. OUTLAW: out-law 25. INVIOLEABLE: *novelibail* 26. DOS: do's 27. CONFIRM: Co.-N-firm 30. CASHMERE: cash-mere 31. DISASTER: *saidrest* 32. DORMOUSE: *roomsdue* 33. STEAMER: *masteer* 35. ANSWER: a-news-R 36. DRUDGE: *dugred* 37. TOOTED: too-Ted

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100 hour check completed 19 Feb 2011.

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Horsepower: 260	Gross Weight: 3140 lbs
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TECNAM P-92

- Price: 1.5 million baht
- Registration: U-B08
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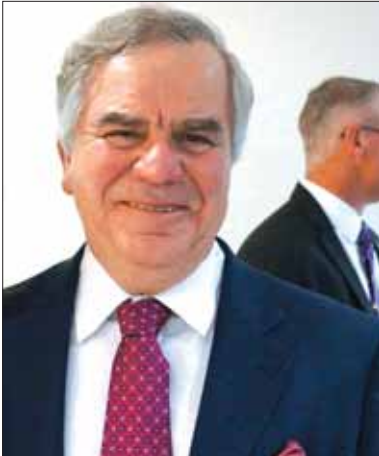


Michelle Hawryluk, a partner in the Phuket-based law firm Hawryluk Legal, received a warm welcome on Tuesday at CCM Complex Building.

Warm welcome



Australian Ambassador to Thailand Paul Robilliard came to Phuket to welcome Mrs Hawryluk to the team. Photos: Chutharat Plerin



PROUD: Mrs Hawryluk's father, Allan Hawryluk, enjoys the event.



OFFICIAL SUPPORT: Phuket Provincial Police Commander Patchara Boonyasit; Somnuek Patburee, Mrs Hawryluk's husband; and Flight Sergeant First Class Jaraspol Inbonrung join the event.

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Platinum Award
8 080u

Words from the wise

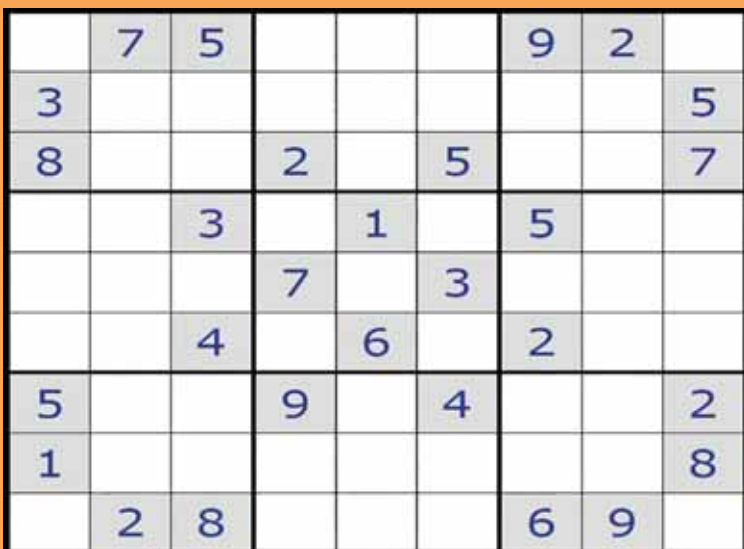
"Love isn't something you find. Love is something that finds you."
— Loretta Young

"Where there is love there is life."
— Mahatma Gandhi

Medium



Hard



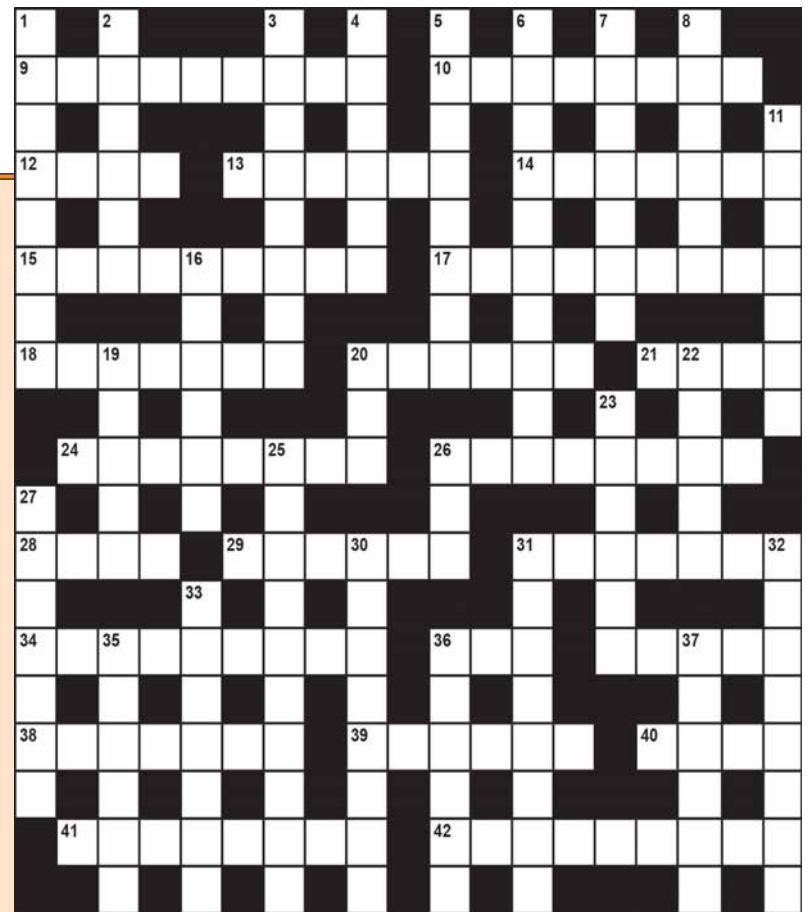
SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

COFFEE
break

Cryptic Crossword

Across

9. Supporter could be static or out of this world (9)
10. Excellent, Rio could be first rate (8)
12. Returned, made cheese (4)
13. In Islam, a different spicy food (6)
14. Love, pen carefully to enfold (7)
15. Fruit in a green tin, chopped (9)
17. Consent to arrange predetermined match (2,7)
18. Downgraded, upset, do meet date (7)
20. Madam could be new lunatic (6)
21. Reach each, not reach for long (4)
24. Noise expressing disgust for spoiled torn sign (8)
26. Deter us as died confused (8)
28. Instrument the hobo ends hiding (4)
29. Throws out for bad vice on short back street (6)
31. Day covering the Spanish, Editor held back (7)
34. Bad tempered fraction not new to us! (9)
36. Rated wish maybe not as dull as this is said to be! (9)
38. Rear Admiral's sad article on Phuket ferry pier (7)
39. Pout about second small smooth delicate dish (6)
40. Average distress signal nothing (2-2)
41. Concerning vendor as retailer (8)
42. Vegetables for naive apes perhaps (5,4)



Down

1. Unusually deft, face the pretentious (8)
2. Move via inn, without success (2,4)
3. Ted's idea perhaps held in place (8)
4. Capers about in a tight corner (6)
5. Made over as singed badly (8)
6. Clears pups becoming top drawer (5,5)
7. Public Relations incident put a stop to (7)
8. Pass false statement for dog (6)
11. Singular amble of weightlifter's assistant (7)
16. I enter carefully in one piece (6)
19. A moan about local citrus fruit! (5)
20. G.I. Mark goes up in Russian fighter! (3)
22. Blackguard daughter, unknown has small storage box (5)
23. Prohibit, not in legal code (6)
25. Unalterable novel I bail out (10)
26. Two Spanish things that one should carry out (3)
27. Firm new firm, verify (7)
30. Money only for fine woolen cloth (8)
31. Said rest caused catastrophe (8)
32. Change rooms due to small rodent (8)
33. Ma, steer around the old vessel (7)
35. Reply to a different news, right (6)
36. Slave dug red mess (6)
37. Blew the horn as well, Ted (6)

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



As Mercury pushes forward in your sign, a sense of freedom, joy and fun may lead to a confident announcement of a creative plan that inspires your sweetheart or a friend. It's a good time to share and let others in on your ideas. Plus, a gift for a significant other on Valentine's Day will be well received and deeply appreciated.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):



Your caring and sensitive personality comes to the fore this week, with a desire to make a love interest or sweetheart happy, especially on Valentine's Day itself. Meanwhile, continue to watch your dreams and attend to your intuition as hidden treasures in the form of ideas could surface, which can be lucrative – or simply too good to miss.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):



Mercury begins forging ahead, meaning that if you've experienced some kind of misunderstanding with

anyone, harmony should soon be restored. Plus opportunities for romance may emerge this week with a dreamy line-up in Pisces adding a special note to Valentine's celebrations. Whatever your relationship status there's plenty of fun to be had.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):



This week could be a social dream, as Valentine's Day sparkles with promise. With Venus and Mars adding a tender touch, the world can be your oyster, whether you're looking for love or hoping to spend some quality time with your partner. Plus, where a key goal is concerned, use current influences to make good progress.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



Mercury dances ahead, putting an end to any frustrations you've experienced recently. It's time to get those projects off the back-burner and get started. Meanwhile, you could be surprised by a Valentine's card from a mystery person. There's a good chance your hidden admirer may be someone quite familiar to you.

YOUR
horoscope
By Patrick Arundell

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Romance can come in a mystical package, bringing lively opportunities for dating, particularly if you're willing to explore new options. Even a long-term relationship can benefit from you taking on a challenge or planning a vacation that's out of the ordinary. Meanwhile, any delays around money owed should begin to ease up.

LEO (July 24-Aug 23):



As Mercury steps forward, you can go ahead with signing those deals or committing to new plans. After a period of frustration, life seems set to get a little easier all round. And with Valentine's Day on the menu, the Pisces focus encourages you to inject a little magic into a budding romance or committed bond.

VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23):



This week you're off and running, brimming with bright ideas and easily able to put them across to others, benefiting your job and income – but also everyday interactions. Meanwhile, a cozy focus on your relationship sector bodes well for Valentine's Day, potentially bringing opportunities to take a romance to a new level of commitment.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



If you're dreaming about a fulfilling career, this week's alignment encourages you to make it a reality. Try not to substitute pleasant fantasies for dynamic action though. Instead, summon your confidence and go for it. Later this week, Valentine's Day rewards may be yours as a sparkling social event enhances the feel-good factor.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



A bypassed opportunity could re-present itself again this week as Mercury turns direct. If you felt annoyed at miss-

ing out on a promising opening, be alert as you may have a second bite at the cherry. Meanwhile, the Quarter Moon could alert you to home-based issues that need attention. Valentine's Day can sizzle with fun.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Lively talks lead to fun invitations and social or romantic opportunities. Your optimism and awareness can make you a good teacher, salesperson or a fabulous friend to have on hand. Even so, Valentine's Day may be one you want to celebrate with your sweetheart or love interest in private. Enjoy every moment!

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



A plan could demand instant action. Regardless, be patient and let things develop slowly, as by doing so you'll lay the groundwork for future success. In addition, there's a poetic blend of energies which can be excellent for sharing feelings whether in person or via a hand-picked Valentine's card – ramping up the passion.

Success takes commitment

PROPERTY Gazette

By Maciek Klimowicz

WHAT makes a restaurant successful? Many will say it's the location, but the owners of Rodizio Brazil restaurant add "commitment" to this list, as they prepare to let go of one of their Patong ventures.

It's been a year and a half since Rodizio opened in Patong, in a narrow lane off the beachfront road, near the Patong Tower. It's difficult not to like the concept – an all-you-can-eat buffet of grilled meats plus a salad bar and traditional Brazilian sides.

So, why have the owners of Rodizio decided to let the restaurant go?

"It's all fine and fun, but a business needs someone looking after it," says one of the owners, who asked only to be referred to as "Lucky".

"A few years ago, together with my business partner, we started our first restaurant, a South American steakhouse in Jungceylon called Churrasco. Then we opened the second one, Rodizio. Unfortunately, we are both busy with our main businesses and running a restaurant is a lot of work."

Then why sell Rodizio and not Churrasco?



Lucky, one of Rodizio's owners, says that the restaurant is in an ideal location: near the road with a lot of traffic, and in a street filled with other restaurants.

"As far as restaurants go, our main focus was always Churrasco, it was our first [restaurant venture] and the one we enjoy the most," says Lucky.

"Churrasco is located in a shopping center and you cannot go

wrong with that. You have thousands of people passing by and many of them are in the area for one reason only – to eat."

Lucky also gives kudos to Rodizio's location.

"This is a good location for a

restaurant. It is near the road with a lot of traffic. The whole lane is filled with restaurants, as well as a few spas. The logical thing [for a new owner] to do would be to keep it as a restaurant," he says.

In addition to all the relevant

restaurant documentation and equipment, the new potential owner would inherit the three-story building, inclusive of two kitchens; three bedrooms with bathrooms; office space; and indoor and outdoor dining spaces.

"We have three years remaining on our rental contract for this development and we have a separate company for the restaurant set up here. All it takes is to take over the company and keep it running," says Lucky.

"The yearly lease for the property is 1.7 million baht, which is standard for this location. It is an old lease and in fact cheaper than many other places around here, where the prices go up to as much as 2,000 baht per square meter."

Lucky is aware of the fact that many will doubt his motivations and claim that he is letting go of the business because it simply wasn't successful. But according to him, that's not the case.

"We understand that making a restaurant a success takes years. And it also takes commitment. We have been successful and this place was sometimes very busy, though lately less so," he explains.

"But if this place was really successful, I would still have to give up my other businesses and this is something I don't want to do."

The owners of Rodizio are hoping to get approximately 3mn baht on the company transfer and want to complete it by April. For more information call Lucky on 081 970 7007.

China-based real-estate company to develop in Southern Thailand

CHINA-BASED Junfa Real Estate Co Ltd has made its first investment in Thailand by setting up a joint-venture company with Thai firm Charn Issara Plc to develop a 3-billion-baht mixed-use project in Phang Nga this year.

Junfa holds a 30-per-cent stake in the joint-venture firm and the rest is owned by Charn Issara, with registered capital of 420 million baht.

"We invested in Thailand when we saw the business potential to expand in Asean," Junfa chairman Li Man Bun said.

This is the first Junfa project in an Asean country, and is part of a plan to invest more in the region when the Asean Economic Community comes into full effect in December.

Junfa was ranked a top-100 excellence enterprise in China's real-estate sector from 2010-12. The company has focused on developing projects in Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou and Hainan. It reported sales of 10bn yuan (52.2bn baht) in 2012.

Charn Issara chief executive and managing director Songkran



Charn Issara looks to develop villas in Cape Panwa. Photo: Mauri Grant

Issara said that having a strategic partner in China meant there was the potential to expand Charn Issara in China.

He said the company had revised its business from developing residential and hospitality projects to now also being engaged in hospitality management in Thailand and overseas.

"We are negotiating with Junfa Real Estate Co Ltd to manage Junfa Real Estate Co Ltd's hospitality businesses in China, and there may be two or three

joint ventures in the next two or three years," he said.

He added that the company would sign a management contract to run a hotel in Patong in the second half of the year. Over the next few years, the company plans to manage up to five hotels in Thailand and overseas.

Charn Issara also has the opportunity to develop residential projects in China through Junta, Songkran said.

Since 2012, Charn Issara has set up four joint-venture firms to develop residential and hospitality projects.

They include Issara United Co Ltd, a joint venture with Saha Group; CIN Estate Co Ltd, a joint venture firm with Nawarat Pattanakarn Plc; and Charn Issara Vipapol Co, a joint venture firm with Vipapol Group.

Mr Songkran said the company had set aside an investment budget of between 500mn and 600mn baht this year to develop two condominium projects with Issara United and CIN Estate. It would also spend 900mn baht to develop a new villa project at Sri Panwa, Phuket.

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Laguna: The next Layan



Phuket Pads
Patrick Lusted

IT IS common knowledge that land prices have multiplied several times over in the last 10 years on Phuket, and land prices on the west coast have become out of reach for most buyers, except for large developers, hotels and resorts. The future for smaller developers and individual private buyers is inland and north of Laguna as land prices remain reasonable and competitive there at the moment – but not for long.

Next stop: Layan. With its quiet, uncrowded, unspoilt and peaceful beach and beautiful wooded surroundings, Layan has that back-to-nature feel.

VICHUDA HILLS – HUGE LUXURY VILLA FOR SALE, LAYAN PHUKET

One development in particular, Vichuda Hills Estate, is a prestigious and very private development of only six exclusive homes thoughtfully dispersed throughout 22,400sqm of verdant tropical landscape. It is one of the most secluded estates on the island of Phuket, enjoying magnificent scenery with incomparable views and stunning wooded hillsides sweeping down to a mature and private lake, as well as picturesque tropical gardens.

The residences have been designed to offer maximum privacy and there is 24-hour manned security to further ensure peace of mind.

This natural paradise of mature trees and rubber plantations surrounded by fields of water



Vichuda Hills Estate is located in an area of stunning natural beauty on the northern verges of the Laguna area.

buffalo, provides an elegant and private oasis for relaxation and peaceful everyday living.

Set on a sloping hillside, Vichuda Hills Estate is exclusively located

in an area of stunning natural beauty on the northern verges of the Laguna area. The quiet and uncrowded Layan Beach is only a stone's throw away, and lush

tropical valleys and hills form the estate's backdrop.

This area is considered to be one of Phuket's most prestigious, with Laguna Phuket less than five

minutes away, and is home to the internationally renowned Banyan Tree resort, spa and golf course. The Phuket International Airport is a short 15-minute drive.

Baan Twin Palms is one especially magnificent and spacious villa built in Thai style, set on three different levels and finished to a very high standard. Standing on 2.5 rai, the property is located on a sloping hillside with beautiful gardens and panoramic views of the surrounding hills.

There are four bedrooms all with en-suite bathrooms and private access to the gardens. There is an exceptionally spacious living area with high ceilings and a dining section, as well as a fully-equipped western kitchen. It also features a separate TV/internet room and an extremely spacious terrace area for dining and relaxing.

On the lower level there is an infinity swimming pool, a large BBQ area with full kitchen facilities, an additional leisure area, a spacious sala for relaxation and a housekeeper's room. There is plenty of terrace space for relaxing, entertaining and enjoying the beautiful surroundings.

The gardens are extensive and maintained on a regular basis. The indoor area is a total of 2,400sqm and the total area of the property is 4,000sqm.

The location is ideal and convenient for a growing family with top schools British International School Phuket and Phuket International Academy within a 15 to 20 minutes' drive.

For more information contact Patrick Lusted at Siam Real Estate, quote reference number: HSSV2725, at 076-288908, or pay a visit to www.siamrealestate.com




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Property firms focus on 'green' living spaces, aging population

CATERING to "green" living and senior citizens are the new focus areas for residential developers in a period when buyers are more concerned about the environment, the cost of living, and the quality of life as the country faces an increasingly "graying" society.

Pruksa Real Estate chief operating officer Lersak Chuladesa said after visiting Japanese company PanaHome's innovative Smart City Chio-Ashiya project in Osaka last week that the trend for residential design had to take into account environmental concerns and demand, especially when it came to catering to aging family members and their quality of life.

"We are interested in developing smart homes under the energy-saving concept, and intelligent residences to serve the middle-to upper-income market with homes priced above 5 million baht,



Property developers are focusing on aging buyers.

as they have the purchasing power to pay for innovative housing to serve their demand," he said.

Pruksa's first energy-saving project will launch this year under the brand, 'The Plant', on Pattanakarn Road in Bangkok.

Under the PanaHome concept at Smart City Shio-Ashiya, each of the detached houses is designed

to be a safe, healthy, energy-saving home and a smart home by using innovative technology to manage the electrical system.

Besides the green residential concept, property developers are also increasingly interested in developing housing to meet the needs of the growing aging population.

Mr Lersak said property firms had to develop homes that serve the needs of all generations, and that meet the needs of those willing and able to pay for innovation.

"We plan to develop innovative housing options that customers can select from, such as adding an energy-saving system and/or a smart-control system, and special design for the aging. If they want to add these things to their new home, they can place an order for us to do. This is our new business model for the next stage of development," he said. – *The Nation*

Return: Age of innocence



Island Fever

By Bill Barnett

I'M SITTING in a taxi in insanely mad traffic. The coarse upholstery of the back seat rubs against me like sandpaper. A spring is pinching my derriere, but never mind, as it hasn't drawn blood yet. Tuesday afternoon rush hour in Yangon and the sweltering heat relayed to me through an ineffective air conditioner is making my head swim.

Rushing toward what was intended to be a swift hotel check-in, followed by a hurriedly arranged meeting, my world suddenly caves in. I reach into my pocket for my wallet and find only empty space. Yes, empty-pocket syndrome, effectively. Cursing under my breath, a frantic search of the back seat leaves my heart standing still.

I mentally retrace my steps back to the last moment I recall that bulge in my pocket, and remember taking out a crisp hundred-dollar bill to exchange for a handful of Kyat. Then it hits me

like a brick: the recollection of leaving it on the counter, as I fumbled to deal with all that ignominious "small money".

While the wallet only contained maybe 5,000 baht, the real horror was the perilous loss of my Thai driver's licence and prospect of having to waste time getting a new one. All those credit cards too; and of course, the business card of my contact, whom I was supposedly meeting in fifteen minutes.

Sympathetically, my driver offers his condolences and procures the airport number to call in case of emergencies. I arrived at the hotel in a disheveled state, the desk clerk keeps muttering in broken English that he wants to help me... and he tries, but to no avail. I silently weigh my prospects on the theoretical odds of finding my wallet, if I return to the airport. In a dark corner of my mind, I am resigned to the fact that it is lost, but almost robotically, I throw myself back into the taxi and head to the airport.

Rushing inside, I return to the currency exchange booth and the same lady who had served me



You never know who will lend a helpful hand. Photo: Laurence King

simply stares blankly at my flurry of questions. She motions for me to sit and maybe five minutes later, a lady from lost and found appears with my wallet, asks me to check and returns it intact. I wanted to hug the currency lady, but she'd

have none of that. Reaching inside my wallet to give her a reward, she fends off my every attempt and simply smiles.

Despite missing my appointment and spending three and a half hours in "carmageddon" to get

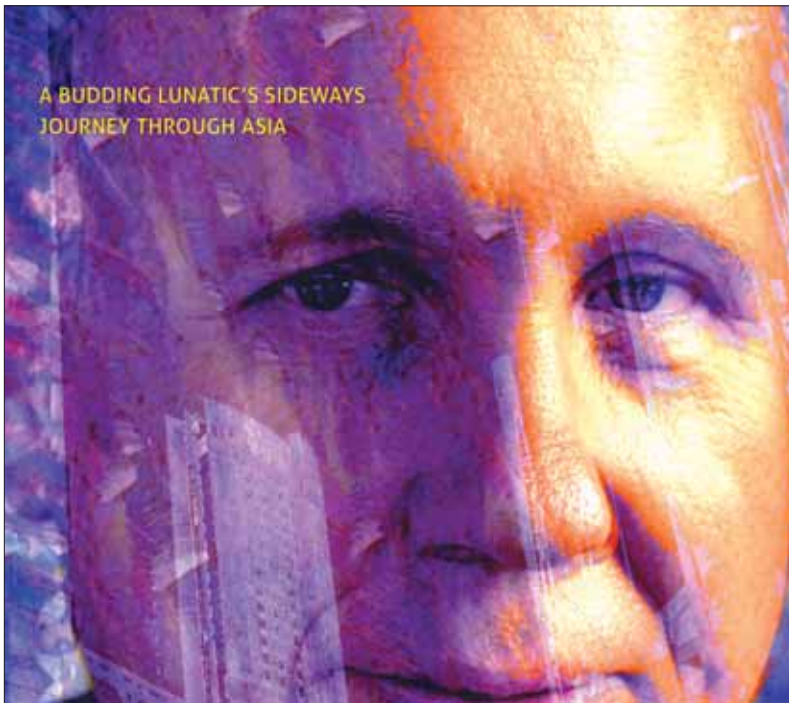
back to my hotel, my trip was not one of regret, but of one of benign newfound hope for humankind. Even the desk clerk back at the hotel gave me a triumphant high-five on my return.

In a lifetime of travel and being "on the road," one is constantly faced with "the good, the bad and the ugly". And yet, looking back at the unexpected kindness of a stranger, if there was a score card I am way ahead of the game. Sure, cynics will say that I was lucky, but back in Phuket – not so far from my office in Cherng Talay – a few years ago, I also had a wallet full of cash returned to me by a kind shop owner.

What's more, I can still recall a trip to Zamboanga City in the 1980s and when I realized I had run out of money and was unable to pay my hotel bill, the owner told me to mail it to him. He then paid my taxi to the airport and even provided me with a snack.

While all too often we hear the bad and the ugly side of things, the kindness of strangers in this weird and wonderful life never ceases to amaze me.

Bill releases book: 'Collective Swag'



Bill Barnett doesn't hold back in his third collection.

THE *Gazette's* "Island Fever" columnist, Bill Barnett, is back with his third book, *Collective Swag*, a phantasmagorical collection of rabid essays on everything from the evils of low-cost travel to blunders in modern architecture.

Reading his frantic, caffeine-charged chronicle of life on the road throughout the Indian sub-continent and the Asia-Pacific region is a sure cure for elevator music gone viral. The 70-page composition includes 27 pieces with titles that range from "Seventeen Ways to Die in Phuket" to "Asia's Altered State".

Bill's previous works, *It Might*

Get Weird (52 pages) and *Last Call: Never Trust A Mayan Selling Real Estate* (32 pages), continue to live lives of their own.

Nonetheless, in Bill's other life – the one that isn't producing dynamic, acid-tripping, stream-of-consciousness text – as a leading hospitality consultant, public speaker and columnist, he is quick to point out, for what it's worth: "There is no such thing as owning too many black t-shirts."

Collective Swag and Bill's other works can be downloaded at Issuu.com.

– *Phuket Gazette*



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The cars are doing a series of time trials as they make their way from Singapore to Myanmar. Photos: Woranut Pechdee

The Road to Mandalay

Classic cars race from Singapore to Myanmar

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

AN AMBITIOUS endurance classic car rally from Singapore to Myanmar saw a handful of the more than 70 vehicles taking part in The Road to Mandalay race complete time trials in Phuket on February 8.

Three years in the making, The Road to Mandalay will be the first classic car rally to cross into Myanmar, making it a historic event, said Philip Young of The Endurance Rally Association, which organized the race.

"The hardest thing has been trying to persuade the Myanmar authorities and the government to let us in. They've never seen a car rally before and this is the very first time there has been a car rally that has gone across the border from Thailand to Myanmar," Mr Young said.

The timed sporting event boasts



Phuket Today's newest team member, Rose Maitland-Smith, gets behind the wheel of 1967 Porsche 911.

an enormous array of vintage and classic cars including: a 1924 Rolls Royce 40/50 Silver Ghost, a 1929 Bentley Special Speed 8

and a 1938 Jaguar SS 100. The oldest car among them is a 1907 Parigi Italia.

The field is divided into six

sections: Vintageants – Pre-1932 type cars; Vintageants – Pre-1941 type cars; Classics – Pre-1962 type cars; Classics Pre-

1970 type cars; Classics – Pre-1975 + Porsche 911 and Mustangs; and Touring Category (4x4s – Untimed).

The racing, which has seen a number of time trials, mostly on unpaved roads, has had two crashes.

A 4.5-liter Bentley flipped on wet roads. The husband-and-wife team were taken to hospital in Singapore.

A Ford Customline Saloon also got banged up, though not nearly as severely. The car went into a ditch, damaging the front fender and lights. However, its team carried on.

After enjoying a rest day in Khao Lak with the *Phuket Today* crew, the drivers and navigators are back in their seats and ready to race.

For a detailed report and final results for this ERA event keep your eyes on the *Phuket Gazette*.



The 1929 Bentley Special Speed 8 shows some use as it pulls into Khao Lak.



The 1929 Bentley Special Speed 8 is ready for the steep slopes of Myanmar.

Pushing the limits

By Maciek Klimowicz

SOME restaurants are defined by their menu, others by their location or wines. Iniala's Aziamendi is difficult to define. It gets everything right – the menu, the location and the wines. But, if there is one thing that sets it apart, it's the boundaries that it breaks.

Where to begin? Take the chef, for a first example. Eneko Atxa began his career at the age of 15, which is not exactly unusual in his profession. It took him only five short years to win his first Michelin star and in 2012 he had three, an impressive achievement which made him Spain's youngest-ever three Michelin Star Chef.

To keep up the pace, Atxa opened a new restaurant just north of Phuket in 2013 at Iniala Beach House and called it Aziamendi. Two years later, it is safe to say that Aziamendi is the Mecca for Phuket foodies. While exploring the island's culinary delights, we all dream to take the 10-kilometer ride north and sit at one of Aziamendi's tables.

My chance to experience Aziamendi came recently, during a wine lunch organized by Fabulous is Needed (FIN), a company



The chefs at Aziamendi are always pushing the limits, so dishes are never boring. Photo: Maciek Klimowicz

that deals in wine imports, tailor-made travel and event planning. This particular lunch even featured the wines of Weingut Wittmann, a well-respected producer from Germany's Rheinhessen region.

Spectacular wines are nothing out of the ordinary at Aziamendi, whose head sommelier Fabien Etienne recently won an award for

the best wine list in Thailand. And neither is spectacular food. Dining at Aziamendi is a feast for the eyes, with each dish a little masterpiece. From the raspberry infused cherry tomatoes served straight from a bonsai tree in Iniala's gardens, to the dessert of strawberries and roses served in a rosewater mist, everything looks

– and tastes – fabulous.

"Aziamendi keeps the soul of the food. The dishes might look unusual, amazing, but when you eat the duck, it's still duck, and when you taste the foie gras it still tastes like foie gras. The flavors are there," explains FIN managing director Benjawan Wisootsat.

Indeed, they are. But this is not food to be simply digested; it is to be tasted, savored and experienced. Each plate at an Aziamendi table straddles the line between dining and art.

Aziamendi's mission to push its boundaries even further is nowhere near complete, that is, according to Wayne Milgate, Iniala's general manager.

"We have an amazing product that we want to present to people. Not everybody has time to come to Aziamendi for a long, degustation dinner," he explains.

"We also already have a bakery down in Chalong and we are going to open two more within the next six months. We don't want to contain our brand just to this location," explains Milgate.

Even on their own home ground, within the premises of the spectacular Iniala Beach House, the Aziamendi team never ceases to experiment. Some of chef Eneko Atxa's dishes have been on his menus for more than eight years, but none have remained the same. They have all improved and evolved. In this dynamic landscape, with the unexpected always around the corner, one thing is for sure – things never get boring.

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Safety net for Patong's workers

On Your Mind

By Patrick Mattimore

WHEN I moved into the condo I rented last year, I paid a security deposit in addition to the first month's rent. The purpose of a security deposit is twofold. If a renter damages the dwelling, money paid from the deposit covers the costs of repair. Second, if a renter breaks the lease and the landlord is forced to look for a new tenant, the deposit covers the costs incurred by the landlord when the room is vacant. The security deposit is a way to ensure that a tenant holds up his or her end of the bargain by leaving the premises in good condition and at the appointed time, or suffers a consequence for failing to do so.

When a buyer contracts to purchase land or real estate, he or she pays earnest money which is held in escrow. The purpose of that money, which is then applied against the purchase price, is to ensure that if the buyer reneges on the obligation to buy, the seller will be compensated for the loss of the sale and the obligation not to sell the property during the escrow period.

A surety is a guarantee by a third party to pay another party's "debt" if that second party fails to meet a



Are those in the nightlife industry really being protected from, or by, their employers? Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

contractual obligation. Often this situation arises in the construction industry, when a contractor agrees to do something and a bank guarantees the contractor's performance.

Hold on. There's a point here. Recently, some French acquaintances of mine, who knew

I had lived in France, asked me if I preferred living in Thailand, France or my native country, the United States. I answered unhesitatingly: Thailand. The reasons are not relevant here, but despite my preference for Thailand there are things here that bother me. One of them is that

there appears to be very few protections for workers.

In the US, employment situations vary a great deal, but generally there are laws which prohibit employers from arbitrarily dismissing employees and sanctions to impel employers to meet pecuniary obligations they incur.

France is an extreme example of employee favoritism in which it is very difficult to fire even the worst employees.

I was sitting at my favorite bar on Bangla Road in Patong playing Connect Four with one of the dancers the other day when a man who had been appointed by the foreign owner to oversee the bar in his absence excused himself, and asked to speak with my playing partner. He spoke with her for about a minute, got up and left and our game then resumed. As we were playing, she told me that the man had informed her that the bar was closing that night and that she was not being paid for the past month's work. As I looked at some of the other employees, I noticed tears in their eyes, as they had obviously received the same news. No notice; no compensation.

This is unfair, but there is a solution. The owners of the bars, massage parlors and other service facilities in Patong should have to make a bank deposit when they purchase or rent their businesses.

The money would be put aside as a guarantee of payment to the employees when the facility ceases operations. Like a surety or security deposit, those employees would then have a safety net that they desperately need and deserve.

Diary of a sex slave



Co-authors Julia Manzanarez and Derek Kent taught English in Thailand and found themselves drawn to the story of Lon. Photo: The Nation

DESPITE countless campaigns by tourism authorities to promote the county's numerous cultural and natural attractions, Thailand remains known to many would-be visitors, particularly men, as a sex paradise, a place where girls – or boys – of any age can easily be found at prices often cheaper than a decent hotel room.

That sordid face of the Thai tourism industry is clearly documented in *Only 13*, an English-language book penned by American teachers Julia Manzanarez and Derek Kent in 2006. The book documents the true story of a 13-year-old prostitute called Lon. It has been translated into eight languages and has enjoyed considerable success, selling more than 80,000 copies.

Now translated into Thai by Nanmeebooks, its authors, as well as foundations involved in helping sex workers, are hoping that

it will promote further discussion on human rights.

Only 13 exposes one of the root problems in Thai society that sees young girls, often from poor rural areas in the Northeast, flee to Bangkok or Pattaya and be swallowed up by the sex-tourist industry.

Lon, as the title implies, was just 13 when her childhood ended and she was forced out of her village after being blamed for her father's death.

A multitude of topics are covered in the book, among them is the difficulty of gaining back any notion of self-worth after working in the sex trade. Lon mentions sending money back to her mother, giving her wealth and "face" in her community, and paying for her sisters to attend school so they would not follow her into the sordid career.

– Kupluthai Pungkanon,
The Nation

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Kid activists take on Taiji

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

A LETTER presented by a group of children from Phuket's Gecko School was accepted by the Taiji Mayor's Office, which in the past has publicly supported the annual slaughter of thousands of dolphins.

"We will pass down the history of our ancestors to the next generation. Preserve it. We have a strong sense of pride about this," Mayor Kazutaka Sangen told *The Associated Press* in an exclusive interview in 2010. "So we are not going to change our plans for the town based on the criticism of foreigners."

Nonetheless, Mr Sangen's office accepted the letter presented by the Phuket children on February 5, which began:

"I would like you to take immediate action to end the hunting of dolphins in Japan, including the bloody and inhumane slaughter of dolphins that takes place in Taiji. Japan's international reputation is severely damaged by the continuation of these barbaric hunts that are as disturbing to many Japanese as they are to the rest of the world..."

This was the first such letter to be accepted in years, explained Dolphin Project Cove Monitor and Phuket mother, Vicki Kiely.

The school got involved with the Dolphin Project and organized a six-day trip to Japan in response to a dolphinarium being set up in Chalong, which is to house dolphins from the Taiji Cove.

Tracy Harper, the children's teacher, had originally planned on joining Ms Kiely to be trained as a Cove Monitor. However, once the children got wind of what was going on, they insisted on joining,



The students were at Taiji Cove during the 'Red Cove' days, when the water turns red with dolphins' blood.

Ms Kiely explained.

"What we have done, what the kids have done, is pioneer work. Bringing the kids here and letting them bear witness to the atrocity, and use their voice for change – the fact that they brought the letter to the mayor – these are all things that no children have done before," said Ms Kiely.

"There was no sugarcoating Taiji for these children – it's impossible to do that. They did everything we [Cove Monitors] do."

Three of the five days that the children were present were "Red Cove" days, the days in which the cove water turns red with blood from the slaughtered dolphins. Some of the dolphins' lives are

spared. However, those dolphins are sent to perform in aquariums and dolphinariums throughout the world.

Renowned dolphin rights activist and founder of the Dolphin Project, Ric O'Barry, encouraged the children to participate in the campaign to stop the annual slaughter.

"As Nelson Mandela said, 'Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.' These brave kids – students from Thailand who have joined the Dolphin Project in Taiji, Japan – are the future of activism. More proof that the 'future' starts today," Mr O'Barry wrote.

The children have been working with Ms Harper and Ms Kiely for almost half a year on their "passion project", which focuses on understanding the issues surrounding the captivity of dolphins, the slaughters at Taiji and preventing the Nemo dolphinarium from opening in Phuket.

"It's good we see this because we are the new generation. Our ancestors said, 'Ah the new generation will fix it.' So, let's fix it!" wrote Lou Mouille, who joined the trip, along with his mother Michelle and brother Lee.

Cove Monitor and Director of Shine PR Phuket, Natasha Eldred, joined the Gecko School students for the trip after having encouraged them to take part in an American Chamber of Commerce Thailand (AMCHAM) meeting in November, which focused on marine tourism and the proposed dolphinarium.

"Here we are, the Phuket Pod. Standing tall and proud against the Phuket dolphinarium. Now we all truly understand the trade that is behind these abuse parks all over the world. Say no to captivity. Don't ever buy a ticket," Ms Eldred wrote on her Facebook page.

"My team, the incredible Gecko Pod from Phuket! Love these people, all of them, like family. We are standing together as one and joining forces with Japanese activists with the same vision"

Donations requested of homes for hermit crabs

IN AN effort to inspire a love of nature, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) organized a Valentine's Day event aimed at donating shells for hermit crabs.

Hermit crabs have soft, spiral-shaped abdomens which are vulnerable to predators. They protect themselves by salvaging the empty shells of other crustaceans and other objects, sadly sometimes including beer cans and plastic containers, which they make into their own "homes".

"We are calling on everyone who wants to join us on Valentine's Day to give something back to these fascinating little creatures," Santi Pawai, director of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Phuket office told the *Gazette*.

The event is to involve two visits to Racha Yai Island on February 14-15 where participants will throw donated shells into the sea for hermit crabs to use.

"So far about 200 people have



Donate your shells. Photo: WilliamBKH

signed up for this project, but there are still seats available if you would like to join us," said Mr Santi.

"We are asking people who take part to donate shells for the trip, so that we can provide homeless hermit crabs with protection.

"Valentine's Day is a good time to share your love. Besides loving yourself and your loved ones, please share your love with nature – we get a lot back from it.

"Little things can go a long way – especially if we act to do them together – and this will give us a beautiful Phuket for the future."

– Chutharat Plerin

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The birds and the bugs



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

WHEN I rise early – which is not often these days – the calling of early birds fills the air. Not the blended dawn chorus of an English spring, but a number of separate and distinctive sounds: the musical “sui su” of the magpie robin, the bubbly “chic chic chic” of the yellow-vented bulbul, the soft “woo-croo” of spotted doves and above all the booming and resonant “poop poop poop” of the coucal.

The coucal, or crow pheasant, is a striking bird. Large and long-tailed, with vivid chestnut-colored wings and back, these features contrast with the rest of its plumage, which is glossy and purplish blue. I welcome the coucal in my garden not just because it is eye-catching, but because it has learned how to seek out and consume the oleander hawk moth caterpillars, which can, undetected, reduce my – and your – *tabernaemontanas*, *adeniums* or *periwinkles* to a mere shadow of their former healthy selves.

The fact that these huge, emerald-green larvae are extremely poisonous and hide underneath leaves, doesn't deter this clever member of the cuckoo family, especially at this time of the year when it has a family to feed. And

unlike the European cuckoo, it is not a brood parasite, which lays its eggs in the nests of smaller birds. The coucal is, moreover, pretty omnivorous, since it also feasts on the glossy green toxic fruits of the yellow oleander (*peruviana*).

Yesterday, I watched another visitor, a blue-throated bee-eater dive-bombing from an adjacent high wire. Amazingly efficient, it hunts exclusively on the wing and can spot flying insects 60 meters away.

A beautiful, multicolored bird, it returned to its perch with a victim every twenty seconds or so, often repeatedly abrading the unfortunate insect on the wire with its bill – in case it had a sting. And, if you will pardon the pun, here's the rub. Its diet consists almost entirely of wasps and bees. So I have very mixed feelings about a bird that can rub out a hundred bees in an hour.

Bees are not just sources of honey: they are by far our most precious pollinators, and without them many trees would not fruit, many crops would be decimated.

Most other insects don't rate highly as friends of the gardener or farmer. On the macro level, take the hispine beetle, which in both its larval and adult forms is slowly but surely destroying the coconut palms on this island.

A leaf miner, the beetle feeds on the tissue of developing,



Photo: Lip Kee Yap

And, if you will pardon the pun, here's the rub. Its diet consists almost entirely of wasps and bees. So I have very mixed feelings about a bird that can rub out a hundred bees in an hour. Bees are not just sources of honey: they are by far our most precious pollinators and without them many trees would not fruit, many crops would be decimated. /



Watch out for brown looper caterpillars around your crown of thorns plants. Photo: Ezra Katz

unopened leaves, starting at the crown of the tree. Unchecked, an infestation will cause extensive defoliation and ultimately the death of the palm. Witness all those gaunt, leafless trunks in Phuket's coconut groves.

Despite its enormous value as a food source for people throughout Southeast Asia, the coconut palm is not usually on a gardener's “must-have” list on account of its size. However, smaller plants are just as vulnerable to a whole range of pests.

For example, my potted *euphorbia milli*s (crown of thorns) get chewed up by brown looper or web-forming caterpillars, and the Indian milkweeds by the hairy larvae of the monarch butterfly

and its relatives. The lotus leaves are disfigured too by leaf rollers, which eat large sections of leaves and curl up underneath. Additionally, grasshoppers make unsightly holes in my *ixoras*.

However, perhaps the most pernicious insect pests are aphids and mealybugs, partly because they can multiply so rapidly and consequently inflict massive damage on even mature trees. They are also often protected by ants, that most damaging enemy of the gardener.

Both mealybugs, which are tiny, white, wingless wax-covered creatures that en masse resemble a layer of *kapok*, and aphids (greenfly, whitefly or blackfly) give off a sweet excretion euphe-

mistically called honeydew.

Ants feast on this substance and act as guards in preventing predators such as ladybirds from attacking the pests. So the critters continue to suck the sap and to feed on the growing shoots of ornamental plants as varied as gardenias, hibiscus and *jatrophas*. Even worse, the honeydew attracts a fungus called sooty mold, so you suddenly have two problems for the price of one.

What to do? Next week we will consider ways of coming to terms with these invaders.

Catch Patrick online at PhuketGazette.net Sunday morning next week, when he reveals how to deal with pests.



Ants are the most pernicious enemy of the gardener. Photo: L Shyamal

Tip of the Week

Facts about herbs

THE word “herb” applies to many plants valued for seasoning, medicine, fragrance or general use. Some have the word “officinalis” attached to their botanical name. It means of medicinal value. On one hand, with some herbs, the bulb is used (garlic or onion); with some, the tuber (turmeric, ginger and galangal) is used and with others, the seeds are of primary value (cumin, pepper and chili). On the other hand, lavender is prized for its tiny scented flowers.

It is best to harvest leaf herbs such as basil, coriander or mint when the flowers begin to open and the oils are most concentrated.

Cut sprigs or branches, tie them together at the cut ends and hang them upside-down out of



Lavender is prized for its flowers. Photo: Riley Huntley

direct sunlight. When the leaves are crisp and crumble easily, strip them from the stems and put them in airtight jars to preserve the aroma.



The PSS Under-12 team placed third against their international rivals.

Kids soccer tourney scores big

MORE than 250 players from throughout Southeast Asia joined the Phuket Soccer Schools (PSS) 5th International Youth Tournament at Thanyapura's Stadium Pitch last weekend.

Players in Under-8, Under-10, Under-12 and Under-14 age groups competed through 12 hours of football involving 28 teams over the two days.

PSS alone entered 28 players in three squads in the Under-8, Under-10 and Under 12 divisions, noted PSS head coach Martin Hill.

"This tournament brings together youth footballers from across Southeast Asia to share their love of the game while displaying their talent and sportsmanship," Hill said.

The PSS U10 team placed second, while PSS U12 finished third and PSS U8 finished sixth.

PSS player Tayvantook was rated Most Valuable Player (MVP) in the U10 group, as voted by coaches from other teams.

"This tournament would not be successful without sponsoring from our Academy parents, such as The Irish Times in Patong and their volunteering over the whole weekend," Hill added.

Always a Finnish on the long greens

Finnish golf pro takes a swing on Phuket

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

PHUKET's Loch Palm and Laguna Phuket golf courses were tested out last week by Finnish pro golfer Peter Puhakka.

Puhakka spent the last three-and-a-half months playing courses in Pattaya and Bangkok, taking part in the Bangkok Open Championships (finished 30th with a 151, seven over par) and the Singha All Thailand Tour (finished 50th), before falling short of qualifying for the Asian Tour 2015.

It isn't easy to make ends meet for an up-and-coming golfer who needs to be playing regularly and is still paying full prices to get on the green, Puhakka confesses. The blogging and television hosting are ways to help bolster his income.

"The island is a perfect place for a holiday. Playing [golf] is a bit expensive, you are really paying for the whole Phuket experience," Puhakka told the *Gazette*. "The courses aren't really that much better than in Hua Hin or Pattaya, but those are much cheaper."

Though the green fees and mandatory caddy fees took a toll on Puhakka's experience, he had to admit that as a holiday golfing destinations, Phuket was second to none in Thailand.



Finnish Golf Professional Peter Puhakka tees off at Loch Palm Golf Course. Photo: Phuket Golf Leisure Co Ltd

"The positive thing is that when you add all the other aspects of the island to your experience, and compare this to other golfing destinations, you start to see why people come here. I would really like to organize some bigger events or pro-am [professional-armature] in here," he said.

"There is so much more than

just golfing. On Saturday, we went scuba diving for the first time, and I fell in love with that sport.

"I want to come back to Phuket to take part in all kinds of activities that the island has to offer – this is truly a holiday paradise."

Having enjoyed his time in the sun, Puhakka explained that it was time to get back to the green for

work – something he can't afford to do in Phuket.

"Now it is time for some practicing at Hua Hin before I go back to Finland for a little while," he told the *Gazette*.

"I will be coming back to Thailand to play in some local competitions. The weather here is perfect for golfing."

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>Phuket Cable Coverage: All of Phuket Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10.30am, 6pm, 9pm Saturday-Sunday: 10.30am, 9pm</p> <p>Rawai Cable Coverage: Rawai, Kata, Karon Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10am, 1pm, 7pm, 10pm</p> <p>KDTV Coverage: Phuket's West Coast from Patong to Cherng Talay Channel: 10 Daily: 8.30am, 2.30pm</p>	<p>MCOT World</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>Tuesday:</td><td>12.05pm & 7pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday:</td><td>6pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday:</td><td>1pm & 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>Thaicom 5 Sat 3520H</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td>Tuesday:</td><td>12.05pm & 7pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Wednesday:</td><td>6pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday:</td><td>1pm & 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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Australia's David Warner (3rd left) argues with India's Rohit Sharma (2nd right) at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on January 18. Photo: Reuters

No sledging please, we're world-class cricket players

By Ian Ransom

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) will crack down on excessive sledging between players at the World Cup, to start this weekend, saying first offenders can expect heavier fines while repeat offenders face suspension from matches.

ICC chief executive David Richardson also said players with already poor records of on-field behavior could face immediate match bans if found guilty of a single breach of the ICC's code of conduct during the tournament, to be held from February 14 to March 29.

"That issue has been addressed at all the pre-event team briefings," Richardson told reporters in Melbourne on Tuesday.

"I suppose it started a few months back already that the behavior in some matches by some players was deemed to be unacceptable and not a good example to young fans watching the game.

"I think there's been something like 12 to 13 code of conduct charges laid in the last few months in bilateral series.

"So the crackdown had already started. I think the teams are



Indian opener Suresh Raina is in fine form for the world cup. Photo: Reuters

going to be told that the umpires intend to remain firm, that the penalties handed out by the match referees will be perhaps a little bit more serious or higher than before, but that hopefully everyone will be treated equally and fairly.

"For a first offence, you'll likely end up with a fine which no players likes, handing back most of his match fee.

"But certainly a repeat offence, not only in this tournament but

some players already sitting with offences behind their name, will be punished with a suspension."

The crackdown may give Australia opening batsman David Warner some pause before charging into a verbal altercation given he has been found guilty of breaching the code of conduct twice in two months.

There were a number of flashpoints in Australia's recent home series against India, with

Aussie opener David Warner fined on one occasion after an angry confrontation with Rohit Sharma in which he told the Indian batsman to "speak English", reported the BBC.

India batsmen Shikhar Dhawan and Virat Kohli were also fined for conduct breaches in December during the occasionally ill-tempered test series with Australia.

Pundits have suggested a soccer-style yellow and red card system to better stamp out poor on-field behavior, but Richardson said cricket would continue to rely on post-match reviews with on-field umpires and off-field referees to analyze incidents and lay charges where necessary.

"That idea has been debated at a number of previous cricket committee meetings that I've attended and probably will be debated again," he said.

"We don't necessarily want to follow the way that football goes. A lot of these decisions are taken after a measured response by match officials reviewing footage of the match afterwards.

"That obviously cannot happen when you are brandishing a red or a yellow card on the spur of the moment."



Famed All Black hooker Keven Mealamu will miss the first rounds of the Super Rugby. Photo: Reuters

World Cup looms over Super Rugby

NEW ZEALAND's World Cup defence looms large over a Super Rugby season that starts this weekend, and will serve as a swansong for a gilded generation of All Blacks hoping to defend the Webb Ellis trophy in England.

All five New Zealand franchises have been asked to juggle their resources so the All Blacks are not overworked or worse, injured, and each international will miss at least two rounds.

Others, like number eight Kieran Read and hooker Keven Mealamu, have exercised clauses in their contracts that allow them an extended break from 2014 and will not return until at least the fourth round.

"We need to find the time to give them those two weeks off," Auckland Blues coach John Kirwan told *Fairfax Media* last month.

"That will be a challenge, but our coaching staff will look at the season and particular games. It will put a huge emphasis on the whole squad."

— Reuters

MATCHES: FRIDAY: Crusaders v Melbourne Rebels; Brumbies v Reds; Lions v Hurricanes. **SATURDAY:** Blues v Chiefs; Sharks v Cheetahs; Bulls v Stormers. **SUNDAY:** Waratahs v Western Force.

SIX NATIONS

THIS WEEK'S MATCHES

Saturday, Feb 14

England vs Italy – Twickenham – kickoff 9:30pm Phuket

Ireland vs France – Aviva Stadium – kickoff midnight Phuket

Sunday, Feb 15

Scotland vs Wales – Murrayfield – kickoff 10pm Phuket

Formula 1 cars to breach 1,000bhp barrier

FORMULA 1's Strategy Group agreed at its meeting in Paris last week to allow the engines of the most powerful single-seat racing cars in the world to breach the 1,000bhp limit.

The move is to be achieved by lifting the fuel flow rate limit and maximum fuel allowance, rather than scrapping the current V6 hybrids entirely. Engine manufacturers have since been asked to draw up detailed proposals to see if the move is a realistic goal.

Other aspects considered by the group, which met to discuss in detail proposals to overhaul the look and speed of F1 cars over the next two years, included how teams were looking at ramping up performance for the upcoming season through added downforce, better-looking designs and wider tyres.



Teams are testing new-shaped cars. Photo: Reuters

One source noted that cost was the key driving factor.

"What is being investigated is the incremental cost over and above what we would normally be doing."

— Autosport

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