

# Phuket Gazette

November 7 - 13, 2015

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‘I KNOW SOME PEOPLE OBJECT TO THE FACILITY’

## Show time

■ Controversial dolphinarium creates splash with first shows

By Chutharat Plerin

A NUMBER of local schools and orphanages were invited to join the soft opening of Phuket's highly-contested dolphinarium last weekend.

Though the manager of the Dolphins Bay Phuket facility declined to detail exactly how many invitations went out, the five dolphins, two seals and their trainers debuted on Saturday to a packed 900-seat house.

“We actually had to add a 2pm show on both Saturday and Sunday because there were so many people coming to the attraction. We did not want to turn them away and ruin our reputation,” said Dolphins Bay Phuket General Manager Supreecha Suthamanondh.

The event was the first time for many people in Phuket to see a dolphin and seal performance, as most have not visited such facilities before, explained Warattaya



The trainers and dolphins ‘wowed’ the packed 900-seat facility on Saturday and Sunday.

Suanpon, the managing director of Dolphins Bay Phuket.

Despite the widespread knowledge of the soft opening and a very active local movement by members of the ‘Phuket Says No to Dolphin Shows’ Facebook group, there were no protesters blocking the gates to the facility.

“It is not our objective to publicly protest, as there are potential risks involved,” the group explained to the *Gazette* on Facebook.

“Our objective is to raise awareness and educate the community about the cruelty of dolphin captivity and to lobby relevant government and private sectors.

“We are working tirelessly to do this. We have visited Taiji [Japan] and have seen first hand the truth behind the lucrative captivity trade. We have successfully implemented an online awareness campaign that is strengthening daily and captured the attention of the community.

We are working toward more visits to schools.

“We will be continuing to do this, as we believe wholeheartedly that education and awareness are the key drivers to help people make better informed decisions about whether or not they want to visit such shows. We also believe that what we are doing strengthens our community in Phuket.”

Nonetheless, the response from those community members who attended the show was beaming.

“This was my first time seeing a dolphin. It was a good chance for me and I would like to thank my teacher and the dolphin show owner who let us see the show for free,” said an 11-year-old from SOS Children's Villages Thailand.

Jeerawat Siribumrungsook, the director of SOS Children's Villages Thailand, brought about 100 children...

*Continued on Page 3*

### Quick action taken after taxi complaint heats up online

THE Phuket Governor has ordered all relevant officials to keep a stricter eye on airport taxi services after a customer complaint posted on Facebook went viral.

*Full story Page 3*

### BUSINESS



Being ‘hyperlocal’ appears to be paying dividends for GrabTaxi in Phuket.

### PROPERTY



MontAzure teams up with Twinpalms for new luxury development.

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## LOCAL NEWS Briefly

### Island gains 200 more officers

A FLOCK of new police officers arrived on the island adding 200 more bodies to Phuket's force.

The new recruits, who recently graduated from the Provincial Police Training Center Region 8 in Surat Thani, were welcomed to the force on November 1, confirmed Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Peerayuth Karajedee.

"With more officers we will be able to increase our capability and efficiency, as right now we are struggling with the large number of tourists compared to our small number of officers," said Col Peerayuth.

The new recruits will be placed at stations throughout the island as needed.

— Chutharat Plerin

### Police catch up with alleged ATM skimmers

THREE alleged ATM skimmers were arrested in Chalong after police tracked them down using

# Police given quotas for drunk driver arrests



Phuket Provincial Police Commander Teeraphol Thipjaroen gave police officers the green light to pull over and arrest anyone suspected of drunk driving in Phuket, after he was revealed that they would now need to make more than 150 drunk driving arrests a month. For the full story, visit [PhuketGazette.net](http://PhuketGazette.net). For more on Col Teeraphol, see page 9. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

the GPS signal from a stolen iPad on October 31.

Brazilians Lucidio Firmino Da Silva Junior, 24, and Juan Pablo Da Costa Varao, 21,

along with French national Phellipe Andre Dias, 26, were apprehended in their rental room in Chalong. The arrests followed Koh Tao Police informing local officers that a tourist's stolen iPad had been taken from the east coast tourist island to Phuket.

Inside the room, officers found three ATM skimming devices, a laptop with customer card information, three ATM cards and the stolen iPad.

The three men were charged for electronic card fraud, as well as theft.

The men denied all charges, but admitted to bringing the skimming equipment from Brazil to Thailand.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

### Belgian expat found dead

A BELGIAN expat was found dead at his rental room in Patong on November 1 after he was allegedly unable to pay rent for his businesses.

Ronald Desruelles, 60, was found hanging by a rope in his bathroom at Prince Edouard Seaview Apartments and Resort by his girlfriend Paween Sooksan, 30.

Ms Paween told police that Mr Desruelles owned three restaurants in Patong and that he was having trouble paying the rent and employees' salaries, confirmed Lt Col Jongserm Preecha of the Patong Police.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

### Bangkok push expedites light rail project

OFFICIALS are rushing to get Phuket's light rail project chugging down the tracks, confirmed Sirigate Apirat, the project secretary for the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning (OTP), on November 3.

Following a number of adjustments made to the project in September by officials from the OTP, Mr Sirigate explained that the plan, excluding the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) proposal, would be finished by the end of the year. However, pressure from Bangkok has pushed everything forward by one month.

With several investors already interested in the project, Mr Sirigate expects the public transport system to be fully

functional by 2021.

— Chutharat Plerin

### Reveal of beach management plan delayed

LOCAL officials are still wrangling over how to manage Phuket's beaches, forcing Vice Governor Chokdee Amornwat to postpone revealing details of the new plan beyond his self-imposed November 1 deadline.

V/Gov Chokdee admitted that the release of a concrete plan regarding the future of the island's beaches would be delayed for at least another two weeks.

Until a permanent plan can be laid out, the current 10 per cent zoning rules will remain in place.

— Chutharat Plerin

### Killer of loved wild bovine surrenders

THE killer of a much-beloved gaur, a protected species of bovine, surrendered to police in Krabi after a warrant was issued for his arrest.

Preeda Paklaw, 41, presented himself, along with his shotgun, to the Plai Phraya Police.

Mr Preeda told police that while he was hunting, he saw something in the dark that looked like a serow. He then shot twice. Mainland serow is a species of goat antelope native to the region. Adults reach an average weight of about 150 kilograms.

The 800-kilogram gaur, named *Jao Kai Dam* (black eggs boy) by locals, had migrated to the area from Khao Sok National Park last year.

Mr Preeda was charged with possession of a firearm, carrying a firearm in public without permission and killing a Category 2 protected species.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

### Anti-trafficking training starts

AN INTERNATIONAL e-learning program designed to train law enforcement units to tackle human trafficking was launched in Phuket on October 29.

About 40 Phuket officers will be the first in all of Asia to undergo the training developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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# Dolphin show plays to full house

From page 1

...to the dolphinarium on Sunday.

"We received the invitation to see the dolphin show for free. I think it's good for students to have the chance to see real dolphins, as some of them have never been able to before. We received good feedback from the children – they enjoyed the show," Mr Jeerawat said.

However, not everyone who was invited decided to take Dolphins Bay Phuket's offer.

"The organization 'Phuket Says No to Dolphin Shows' came and told us about dolphins being kept in captivity. After they told us the story about how bad they [people] treat the dolphins, no one wanted to go there [the Phuket dolphinarium]," said Susanne Janson, the manager of Barnhem, a post-tsunami orphanage.

In February this year, a group of children from Phuket's Gecko School presented a letter to the mayor of Taiji denouncing the annual slaughter of thousands of dolphins in Japan, which is used to secure a select few dolphins for dolphinariums around the world.

Early protests against Dolphins Bay Phuket focused on the 'Taiji connection'.

Sea Shepherd Conservation Society confirmed to the *Gazette* in 2014 that the original marine

animals slated for shipment from Ukraine to the Phuket facility had a direct connection to the annual slaughter of thousands of dolphins in Taiji.

However, Mr Supreecha assured the *Gazette* that the dolphins that were eventually brought to Phuket had no direct connection to Taiji.

"People need to know that we aren't torturing the animals. They were born in captivity and raised by humans," Ms Warattaya explained. "Please be assured that they are well taken care of by specialists."

To ensure that the Dolphins Bay Phuket was being set up legally, the Department of Fisheries committee invited members of the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) to review the company. The team had two primary objectives: ensure that the facility met national standards and check the import licencing.

"We checked the venue several times and made clear what changes were necessary to best take care of the dolphins. Once they met all national standards, we were able to sign off on the facility. We also looked into the documentation of the dolphins themselves and were able to confirm that there were no conflicts with CITES [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora]," said Dr



Those against the show have vowed to continue educational campaigns within the community. Photos: Kongleaphy Keam

Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong, head of the endangered species unit at the PMBC.

"Dolphins are social animals that need to learn from their parents and friends how to survive. As these dolphins were born and raised in an aquarium, they are well adjusted to this environment and would not be able to survive in the wild," Dr Kongkiat said. "We can not just decide what is best for dolphins based on our feelings."

The venue also succeeded in garnering local support in

Chalong, with Chalong Moo 2 headman Thanakrit Kaewlipon explaining to the *Gazette* that he was proud to have the dolphinarium on the island.

"The dolphinarium will bring tourists to the village and supply jobs for locals. It's not that we don't understand those who are against the facility, but we don't have a problem with it. In fact, we are proud to have it here and to welcome tourists to our area."

However, renowned dolphin trainer-turned-animal rights activist Ric O'Barry, well-known

for his role in the Academy-award winning documentary, *The Cove*, lashed out against the facility following its soft opening.

"It is my hope that the new dolphin abuse [sic] park in Phuket also has a soft closing. We [Dolphin Project] will continue to support the local environmentalists and support their effort to educate the tourists and encourage them to not buy a ticket to the dolphinarium," he told the *Gazette*. "I feel confident that the abusive animal act will eventually close and be replaced with some sort of cruelty free entertainment. It's just a matter of time."

Mr Supreecha acknowledged that it was unlikely for there to be an understanding between his operation and the stance taken up by those who support 'Phuket Says No to Dolphin Shows'.

"I know that those against the dolphinarium will continue to protest our attraction. However, as I have made abundantly clear from the start, we are following legal procedures and ensuring that the animals are being well taken care of by specialists," he said.

"At the end of the day, we are giving adults and children the opportunity to see real dolphins at their convenience, as finding them in the wild is not that easy."

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## Beach clubs to be demolished in January

AFTER much controversy and delay, Surin beach clubs are expected to be torn down in January, confirmed Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada to the *Gazette*.

Cherng Talay Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) President Ma-ann Samran is now working together with local authorities to remove the buildings, the governor added.

"I am aware that some people may think this is bad for tourism. The buildings were funded by the government to provide tsunami victims with a place to conduct their business after their previous properties was destroyed. However, they are now in the hands of big private business owners," Mr Ma-ann said.

"I do not have much choice but to take the land back so that no one can make money off of it."

— Chutharat Plerin

# Airport taxis in hot water

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

PHUKET Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada has ordered all relevant officials to keep a closer eye on airport taxi services after a customer complaint went viral on October 31.

Montira Sakorn's Facebook post alleged that the taxi she hired from the airport to Patong failed to bring her and her boyfriend to their destination. Instead, it left them waiting at the taxi company's building in Thalang for an undisclosed amount of time.

The driver supposedly told them that he had to sign in at the company. When the taxi driver didn't come back, Ms Montira called the police, who instructed her to take photos of the licence plate number, get details of the taxi company and hire a tuk-tuk to get them to their destination, even though they



Governor Chamroen ordered an investigation into an incident that left two passengers stranded at a taxi company's building in Thalang.

had already paid for the taxi.

Government officers took quick action after learning of the incident, holding a meeting with Santi Pawai, director of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS) Phuket Office; Chanuchan

Cholsuwat, the superintendent of the Thalang Police; and Jaturong Kaewkasi, the chief policy adviser from the Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO).

The taxi driver, Muhammad Arobee Mooshor, an employee

of the Airport Limousine and Business Service Cooperative Co Ltd, was also asked to join the meeting.

"According to Mr Muhammad, the customers paid for their taxi at the Infinity Tour service counter at the airport," Mr Jaturong said. "He said that he wasn't sure of how to get to the destination, so he stopped by the company's building in Thalang to ask for directions. However, when he returned the customers were gone."

MOTS and PLTO officers are in the process of investigating both the Infinity Tour Company and the Airport Limousine and Business Service Cooperative Co Ltd to clarify the problem.

Regardless, Mr Jaturong fined Mr Muhammad 1,000 baht and suspended his licence for one month for failing to bring his passengers to their final destination.

## Speed cameras keep up

THE four speed cameras that came online at the end of 2013 are booking about 10 drivers a day, confirmed Phuket Provincial Police Commander Teeraphol Thipjaroen on November 2.

Motorists caught speeding in Phuket face a fine of up to 1,000 baht, but have nearly one month to come to the police station and pay.

"If they fail to do so, the Phuket Land Transportation Office will cancel their driver's licence," explained Col Teeraphol.

The cameras, which only photograph the licence plate of the speeding vehicle, are in undisclosed locations: one within Phuket City limits; one on


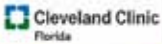



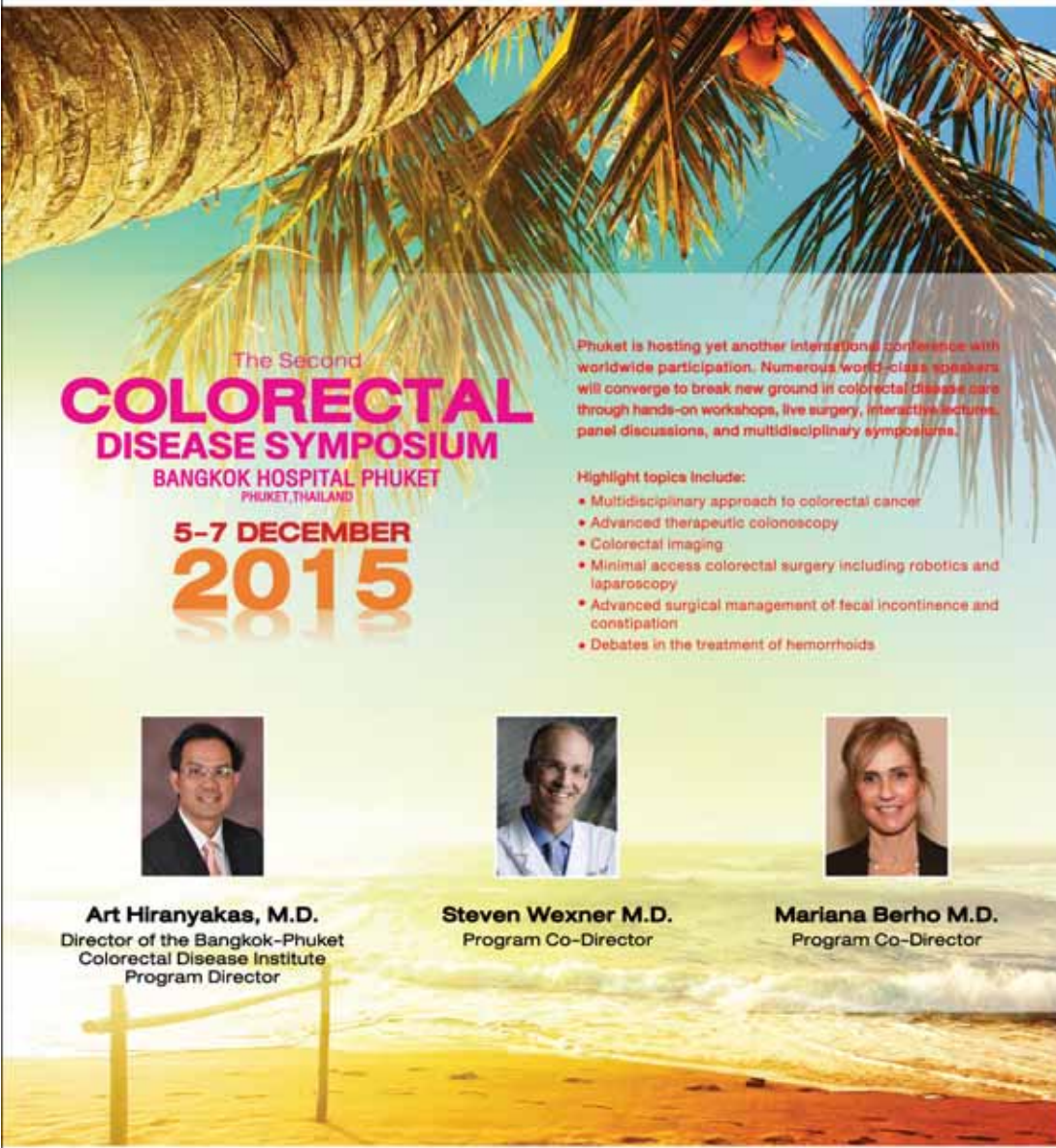
Cameras are placed in four undisclosed locations. Photo: Gazette file

the bypass road; one on Thepkrasatri Road in Thalang; and one in Tah Chat Chai.

The licence plate number is then run through the police database to allow them to find the name and address of the owner of the speeding car. A ticket is issued within 15 days.

— Kongleaphy Keam



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**Police arrest 7-Eleven robbery gang**  
By Anongnat Sarpisut

PHUKET CITY: Police have rounded up a seven-member gang – three of them women – in connection with armed robberies of four 7-Eleven convenience stores over a five-day period starting October 21.

Four of the gang were paraded before the press and identified as Jaria Tunrat, 26; Rangralee Kaewcha, 27; Momy Lao-ngam, 18; and Komsa Pornlert, 27. All are from Trang Province.

The other three suspects not presented to the media were identified as Trang natives Decha Keitthong, 27; Anutawee Keangsong, 27; and 32-year-old Soda Boonkaew of Krabi. Police said they were kept away from the cameras in order not to jeopardize an investigation into other

**Airport taxis: Gov takes tough line**  
Tsunami siren test declared

**Austrian in bizarre suicide**

**Jetstar begins flights to Phuket**

**French resident found hanging**

**THE TIME machine**  
News from the past

**Large-scale stink**  
From the Phuket Gazette, issue of November, 1995

THALANG: A passing motorist has reported that the stretch of highway from the Thalang Police Station to Laem Phrao, a distance of approximately 10 km, was covered in a red fish mush. A load of fish, reportedly escaped out of a semi-trailer truck, was scattered by vehicles and mixed with cargo then mixed with rain to form the stinking paste.

Canine volunteers cleaned up, making a major meal of it.

AS PHUKET continues to stumble through the fog of beach rules following the National Council for Peace and Order's cleanup last year, it is refreshing to look back on simpler times

at Patong Beach. Just a decade ago, as the island geared up for its first high season after the tsunami, a total of 1,000 masseuses rolled out beach mats and got to work on 1,000 tourists for what was reportedly the world's longest massage. There is something striking about the photo; no beach umbrellas, chairs or loungers. And despite the presence of more than 2,000 people on the beach, it looks beautiful.

The lead story, however, has nothing to do with the picture on page one. It is, in fact, that masochistic, perhaps even necrophilic, dead horse that just keeps on keeping on: airport taxis.

Ah, yes, even with the taxi mafia allegedly being swept up in island-wide raids last year, the issues of taxis to and from the airport continue to rage on. Nonetheless, the November 5-11 issue of the *Phuket Gazette* marked an important step forward: meter

taxis were to be granted a desk inside the arrival hall of Phuket International Airport and three cabs at a time were given room to park outside the hall – the sacred territory of the island's

airport limousines. Of course, how many years it took to get the metered taxi drivers to use their meters was a completely different issue.

Then-Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura took a strong stance at the time, saying he wasn't worried about limousine driver protests – something that nearly every governor since has had to face for one reason or another – as his main concern was that tourists and other airline passengers should have a fair selection of transportation options in Phuket. What were we saying about dead horses again? See support for GrabTaxi, monorail, yellow-roofed tuk-tuks, roaming metered taxis and the list goes on... yet traffic congestion congeals and personal transport options remain everyone's primary way of moving throughout the island.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli

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## Prayut defends Article 44 use in rice-pledge investigation

THE enforcement of Article 44 of the interim charter in the rice-pledging scheme was mainly to grant legal protection to members of committees working on related cases, Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha said on November 3.

The need to quicken the process was crucial, as the cases will be considered by the civil courts and have only one-year prescriptions, PM Prayut said.

The order will also protect rightful officials from 'dark authority', the premier added. PM Prayut invoked his special power to guarantee officials protection against legal and disciplinary actions while they work on cases related to the managing of rice in government stockpiles and the selling off of rice stocks.

Such actions during the Yingluck Shinawatra administration were considered illegal.

## Backfiring joke could put flier behind bars

A 23-YEAR-OLD passenger found himself in legal trouble for a 'bomb joke' that backfired on an air stewardess after boarding his first flight on November 1.

Pichit Boondaeng boarded the Hat Yai-bound flight at Don Mueang Airport to attend a friend's wedding ceremony in Songkhla. Once inside the aircraft, an air stewardess told him he needed to put his carry-on bag inside an overhead luggage bin. He responded by handing his bag to her and jokingly saying, "Be careful with the bag. It may explode."

"I wanted to tease her because she's pretty," Pichit Boondaeng said at a press conference on Monday. "I had no idea that it would cause



serious damage."

The comment caused panic inside the Lion Air plane and eventually led to a serious flight delay.

Mr Pichit was charged with spreading false information that might cause panic at an airport.

If convicted, Mr Pichit could face up to five years in jail, a fine of up to 200,000 baht or both.

## Trawlers may lose licences in IUU crackdown

THE owners of more than 8,000 trawlers in 22 coastal provinces may lose their commercial fishing licences as the authorities consider cracking down on those whose licences don't correspond to the vessel size or fishing activity, and those who have failed to renew their licences for several years.

As the country aims to comply with the regulations on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, the Marine Department, the Fisheries De-

## NATIONAL NEWS Briefly

partment and the Command Centre for Combating Illegal Fishing yesterday said a recent survey found a total of 8,024 problematic licences of first, second and third-class fishing vessels, ranging from 0.2 gross tons to 602 tonnes.

The list of offending vessels will be submitted to the National Council for Peace and Order to issue licence-revocation orders, after which the continued use of those trawlers for fishery purposes would be subject to jail terms and fines.

## Hundreds take on Hua Hin oil spill at beach

A CLEAN-UP operation with 500 officials and members of the public was launched on October 28 after the beach in

Prachuap Khiri Khan's Hua Hin district was hit by an oil slick.

The slick began washing up along the 10-kilometer stretch of Hua Hin early last week. With the sand and seawater covered with foul-smelling black oil and garbage, the authorities warned tourists to stay out of the water and away from the beach until it was cleaned.

## Bomb attacks 'linked to peace talks' in South

A SERIES of blasts in Yala at the end of last week was an attempt by insurgents to boost their negotiating power ahead of the resumption of peace talks early next month, an intelligence source has said.

Unrest in the deep South has flared for more than a decade. Talks with insurgent groups to try to achieve peace were begun by the previous government.

Southern Border Provinces Police Operations Centre commissioner Police Lt Gen

Chalermphon Ajaraboon said the group Ubahira RKK may be behind the recent bombings.

## Officers arrest lese majeste extortion gang

IN ONE of the biggest crack-downs on a 'lese-majeste gang' this year, police are investigating a famous fortune-teller and his alleged accomplices over suspicions they demanded sponsorships and bribes, which they claimed to be for the Royal Family.

The suspects identified during a press conference were named as: fortune-teller Suriyan Sujaritpolwong, better known as Mor Yong; his secretary Jirawong Wattanathewasilp; Police Major Prakrom Warunrapha, who died in detention on October 30; and Sukkho Tarnseree. They will face trial in the Military Court on charges of lese majeste, illegal possession of weapons and having unlicensed radio communication devices and a station.

Police expect more suspects to be identified and more arrest warrants issued.

## Resort owners to be hit with civil lawsuits

GOVERNMENT officials are preparing to file civil lawsuits seeking compensation from 10 resort operators found guilty of encroaching on or misusing land in Phu Tub Berk, a popular destination in Phetchabun province, the director of the Forest Protection and Fire Control Office said on November 3.

Attthapol Charoenchansa said the Royal Forestry Department had also assigned Manop Sai-Unjai, head of the Forest Resource Management Office 4, to ask the provincial public prosecutor to file a request for legal execution to the Lomsak Provincial Court in order to make way for the demolition of the resorts.

# Israeli minister proposes deporting stray dogs, cats

CLAWS were out on Monday after an Israeli cabinet minister proposed sending stray dogs and cats to another country as an alternative to government-funded efforts to sterilize them, reported Reuters. A novel idea that has surprisingly not been tabled in Phuket – despite some nearby countries being

so eager for Thailand's pups as to illegally smuggle them out of the country for the meat trade.

"Use the budget to transfer stray dogs and/or cats of one gender (all the males or all the females) to a foreign nation that will agree to accept them," Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel suggested in

a letter leaked to the press.

A spokesman for Mr Ariel said that the proposal had been rejected after initial consultations within the Agriculture Ministry.

Nonetheless, the idea was heavily criticized by animal rights activists and many an amused member of the oppo-

sition political party.

The report in *Yedioth Ahronoth* said Mr Ariel, a member of the far-right Jewish Home party, views spaying and neutering as possible violations of God's directive "to be fruitful and multiply" and ritual law that prohibits animal cruelty.



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A Member of Central Group



## Last train to thug-free public transport

MORE glimmers of hope have emerged that the days of the island's notorious 'tuk-tuk and taxi mafia' may be numbered.

Issues of democratic development aside, one of the National Council for Peace and Order's (NCPO's) greatest achievements has been its no-nonsense approach in breaking up the tourism-killing stranglehold that thuggish, self-entitled transport syndicates have maintained over the island for decades.

Unbeknown to many expats, Phuket's well-deserved reputation as a tourist rip-off destination is just as prevalent among Thai tourists as foreigners – especially where public transport is concerned.

A glimmer of hope shone through earlier this week, when police launched an investigation into a claim by a recently-arrived Thai tourist that her taxi driver abandoned her and a companion in Thalang after being picked up at the airport by a member of the Airport Limousine and Business Service Cooperative.

Interest in the case mushroomed after the victim's Facebook account of her experience went viral. Although just a single incident, the subsequent investigation shows the rising power of social media to expose such events and exert influence over the law enforcement community, compelling them to take action.

Another step forward comes with the increasing popularity of smartphone applications that enabled taxi services like GrabTaxi and Uber, as well as the introduction of yellow-topped tuk-tuks offering 30-baht rides in Phuket Town.

Even more positive news came when the NCPO's efforts to speed up the establishment of a light rail system for the island hit headlines this week.

While there are some technical concerns with the existing 23-billion-baht proposal, especially as it relates to Phuket Town, we fully endorse the introduction of a light rail service along the island's main north-south corridor, with a loop linking it to Phuket International Airport.

Now is the best, and possibly last, chance for Phuket to take advantage of all these technological developments and for the island's public transport to move forward, relegating our shameful past to the history books.

If we don't, there will no doubt be a whole new generation of self-entitled street thugs ready to slide in and fill the void.



## Hoping that education is the answer

*Re: Opinion: Fighting Andaman trash, October 28*

I don't know what the answer is, but I hope education helps. Unfortunately the polluting and littering fines are antiquated and polluters choose to pay the fine if caught rather than change their ways.

It's a community and culturally based problem and certainly isn't helped by a judicial system which rarely imposes maximum fines, especially when the culprits simply confess and get off with a 500-baht fine.

*Skip  
Gazette forum*

### Kids deserve a life, not to be trafficked

*Re: UNODC anti-human trafficking program launched in Phuket, October 30*

Can someone explain how the cute little girls that sell the flowers get changed out once they hit puberty and get an attitude after being made to work the bars until the early hours selling flowers?

Sisters, or just more kids shipped down from the villages?

Every kid deserves a life and education, not to be a trafficked money making machine.

*Johnny Murray  
Facebook*

### Being responsible for your weapons

*Re: Gaur killer surrenders to police, October 30*

I don't think this is the whole

### Letters to the Editor

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

story, but I'm glad he came forward. I'm especially glad that it was not a human that he shot, but still sad about the beloved gaur.

It is okay to hunt for food, but you must be mature and responsible with your weapons.

*William Moynihan  
Facebook*

### Asking customers what they want

*Re: Phuket beach management plans delayed again, October 31*

If you want to sell a successful product, you talk to the experts in the concerned field and ask customers what they want.

Make a survey among them in this case and ask the tourists if their needs are met. They will go back and tell their friends and associates about the good vacation they had.

Mouth to mouth propaganda is still the best.

*be wise  
Gazette forum*

### Virgin beaches will fix many problems

*Re: Phuket Vice Governor's virgin beach dream, October 31*

Returning the beaches to their 'virgin' condition will also solve many of Phuket's other

problems.

Much less traffic, crime, pollution, graft, hotels, condos, income, money and tourists.

*Oh well  
Gazette forum*

### Encouraging folks to reduce, reuse

*Re: Phuket Challenge: stickk to no bags for a week, November 1*

Good idea. The hardest fight in conservation is to engender public awareness.

But you set your sights too high. No one can live in the modern world without any plastic bags.

How would you line your bin? Or pick up after your dog? Successful campaigns encourage people to reduce plastic bag use, and re-use the bags if possible.

As with all human waste, it's Reduce. Reuse. Recycle.

*CaptainJack  
Gazette forum*

### Prebook your taxi

*Re: Governor clamps down on airport taxis, November 3*

I thought they stopped this a few years ago. I have had this happen to me and I just lock the doors and refuse to get out of the car until they start to drive again.

But these days I don't take too many airport taxis in Phuket, I make sure I prebook it as I've had too many experiences where they renegotiate on the way to my house. It's not worth the hassle.

*John B Williams  
Facebook*

## Phuket Gazette

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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# Creating camaraderie

## FIRST PERSON

I HAVE basically worked in Phuket since I first graduated from the academy.

My positions thus far have included Phuket City Police Investigator and Traffic Police; Tah Chat Chai and Patong Police Superintendent; Koh Lanta Police Superintendent; Krabi City Police Superintendent; and Surat Thani Deputy Police Commander, before coming back to the island as Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander at the beginning of this year.

I have known people on the island for a very long time. However, Phuket is constantly growing and new people are always coming in, which means our problems are more complicated than in other parts of the Kingdom.

When I accepted this position as the police commander of the island, the only thing I could think about was how I wanted to make it better. I will use my experience to help me accomplish this.

I am not afraid to work hard, but I can only do so much. There are many projects happening on the island right now, so the challenge is to ensure that Phuket police officers are happy with their work. I truly feel that if they are happy with themselves, then they will ensure that the people of Phuket are happy too.

To achieve this, I will look closely at their welfare, resources and support systems to see what I can do to improve those areas and give my officers more confidence in their work.

I want to build a strong team. As a leader, I will coordinate



**Phuket Provincial Police Commander Teeraphol Thipjaroen**, 56, is a Prachinburi native. He graduated from the Royal Police Cadet Academy and has been working in Phuket since 1983, except when he was transferred to take posts in Krabi and Surat Thani.

Here he talks about how building trust and offering support to Phuket's police force will help create a happier working environment for officers, which in turn will foster a better relationship between police and residents of the island.

with other departments to work together with us and drive us towards success. We cannot hope to be successful without the support of others.

I aim to be more than just a commander to these officers, more like a coach and avid supporter. I believe that if they see how hard I work for them, then they will work hard for me, and for all of Phuket.

When people become police officers, they understand what the job entails. However, I think that Phuket is a rather complex place to work and also has a higher cost of living than other places.

In addition to the local community, we are constantly attracting tourists and expats who live and work here, as well as Thai people who are not registered as residents.

Compared to the number of people in Phuket, the number of officers is hardly enough. We only have about 1,200 police officers taking care of about 12 million tourists a year in addition to the locals and expats.

If we do a rough calculation

using only registered residents, there is roughly one police officer per 250 people. However, we are doing our best and utilizing the services of police and civil defense volunteers to support our ever-growing network.

As for what the officers need to focus on, criminal activity is always a major problem. A lot of this is related to drug use.

The drug situation in Phuket is quite disturbing and it is spreading quickly among teens. Most of the time it is linked to family problems due to the worsening economy.

That being said, police cannot fix this problem alone. Arresting drug users and dealers is only an end result, not a solution.

I find that in Phuket, the community is always helping each other and looking out for crime, and in turn, it helps the police to do their job more efficiently.

If we can create an environment where we all try our hardest and everyone helps one another, then we can make Phuket the best that it can be.



Something as simple as going to see the sunset can be rejuvenating.

## Surviving the slump

HAVING lived on the island for three years, I have seen my fair share of people come and go. It's easy to get in a slump when all of the friends you originally moved here with move on to new adventures, get married or become homebodies.

The mentality of 'been there, done that' is rather consuming. So you end up going to the same five restaurants and bars, having the same conversation over and over with newcomers and don't really venture out to all of the places that kept you here in the first place.

It wasn't until recently when all of my original crew came back to the island to celebrate the wedding of one of our dearest friends, that I started going out to do all of the things I did when I first came here.

I must admit that the thought of having everyone around me again felt overwhelming and I was anxious that I would have to do the standard Big Buddha, Bangla Road, Phi Phi Island run around. But once they arrived, I realized that those are adventures that they had already been on and we could just enjoy the small things that we loved doing together.

My three-year-slump in activity disappeared and I began to appreciate things like, sitting at a restaurant on Thalang Road watching people pass by dur-

## Island View

By Katie P Arnold

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

ing the Walking Street Market; trying new dishes when you realize that your usual fried rice man is no longer there; driving to the beach at 10am with a 20 baht Thai iced coffee and 30 baht fried chicken and sticky rice for breakfast and then going to get a massage even though you are all sandy.

Though the time has come that my visitors are now going back to their lives in other countries or start new ones with their new husbands, I feel revitalized and lucky to live here.

My advice to anyone who is feeling in a slump is to be adventurous, even if that means laying on the beach with a book, trying a new restaurant, or taking a day off to treat yourself with a massage and coffee. The hardest part is telling yourself that you will enjoy it.

My goal is to keep enjoying these small things and appreciate the fact that I have the ability to do them, even if it means doing them solo, because when you live in a beautiful place like Phuket, you are never alone.

## Words from the Wise

**"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."**

— Nelson Mandela

**"Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."**

— Oscar Wilde

## Issues & Answers

### Are surrogacy services available in Phuket?

MY HUSBAND and I are reproductively challenged and have been trying in vitro fertilization in order to conceive. Unfortunately we found out that my body is unable to carry a child throughout the entire pregnancy. Are there any places that offer surrogate mother services in Phuket and if so, is it legal?

Allison Terrell  
Kamala

Ms Sumita Pakdeevirod of

**Bangkok Hospital Phuket replies:**

We do provide this service and it is fully legal. However, there are many details and legal processes related to this issue that will need to be addressed before making an appointment.

First, each couple must provide a marriage certificate to show that they have been married for at least three years, as well as all medical documenta-

tion that provides details of their specific fertility challenges.

Additionally, the couple must find a surrogate on their own, as we do not provide one or offer services to locate one. The surrogate must then be able to pass our physical, medical and psychological exams.

Once everything is in order, you will then be able to make an appointment with us. The doctor deals with each couple on a case by case basis.



# Growth stocks to benefit portfolios



GROWTH stocks are always popular with Wall Street and retail investors alike because they are companies with sustainable positive cash flows along with revenues and earnings that are expected to grow at an above-average rate relative to the stock market.

Here are a couple of individual growth stocks that could be a good fit for your portfolio:

Gilead Sciences, Inc (NASDAQ: GILD) is a large cap biopharmaceutical stock with a nearly US\$150 billion market cap. Gilead Sciences' portfolio of products and pipeline of investigational drugs includes treatments for HIV/AIDS, liver diseases, cancer, inflammatory and respiratory diseases and cardiovascular conditions. In other words, a fairly well diversified portfolio covering some of the most common ailments faced globally, plus shares had an attractive 1.68 per cent dividend yield as of late September.



Growth stocks tend to come with a catch from incoming seeking investors. Photo: Andyhill8

However, there could be an additional risk for investors in biotech/pharmaceuticals to consider as, although the next US Presidential election is still one year away, the political silly season has already begun with a Hillary Clinton tweet railing against drug prices.

Enanta Pharmaceuticals Inc (NASDAQ: ENTA) is a small cap biotechnology stock with a market cap nearing US\$700 million. It is focused on developing drugs for viral infections and liver diseases, including hepatitis C virus (HCV) and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis

(NASH). An estimated 130–150 million people globally have chronic hepatitis C infections, while NASH is becoming more common in developed countries affecting two to five per cent of Americans, possibly due to rising rates of obesity.

Enanta Pharmaceuticals is also positioned for growth as it developed one of the two direct-acting antivirals used in AbbVie's (NYSE: ABBV) FDA approved Technivie treatment for hepatitis C (as well as another AbbVie hepatitis C combo therapy) and it's therefore entitled to milestone and

royalty payments on net sales of the drugs.

Synaptics, Incorporated (NASDAQ: SYNA) is a small cap tech stock with a market cap around US\$2.4 million. It is a worldwide developer of custom-designed user interface solutions such as touch, display and biometrics products that are designed for mobile computing, communications and entertainment devices in the mobile, PC and automotive industries. Synaptics itself would also be an important supplier to both Apple and Samsung or any

other device or technology makers in Asia.

Growth stocks also tend to come with a catch for income-seeking investors, as they usually don't pay dividends because management is focused on reinvesting any retained earnings into capital projects to keep up the growth momentum.

Finally, individual growth stocks may also be held by the ETFs and other funds that you own – meaning you could have exposure to them without realizing it. That's why you should always consult with an investment advisor who will make an appropriate asset allocation based upon your entire portfolio.

*Don Freeman, BSME is president of Freeman Capital Management, a Registered Investment Advisor with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC). Based in Phuket, he has over 15 years' experience working with expatriates, specializing in portfolio management, US tax preparation, financial planning and UK pension transfers. Don can be reached at: 089-970-5795 or email: freemancapital@gmail.com.*

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# Hyperlocal strategy to grab taxis

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

MYTEKSI, an on-demand taxi booking service in Malaysia, quickly diversified its branding and services offered by successfully expanding throughout Southeast Asia. MyTeksi remains the leading taxi-booking application in Malaysia, but is better known in Phuket, and much of the rest of the region, as GrabTaxi.

The company continues to work hand-in-hand with local government offices, after garnering the support of the former Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong earlier this year, as it establishes its brand and pushes any competition (such as Uber) to the side. The most recent campaign saw the company team up with the Patong Municipality for the annual Patong Carnival, when it offered rides anywhere on the island to and from the party town for 100 baht.

The key to the company's penetration into the infamous Phuket-taxi market is their focus on being 'hyperlocal'.

"This means that we understand local issues and are able to leverage this local knowledge to build a viable business model that suits each community. For example, in Phuket, GrabCar (private hire vehicle service) passengers can key-in their address in English, but the drivers,



The company's key strategy is to understand local issues in each community it services. Photo: Tech in Asia

who mainly only understand Thai, will see the address in Thai," a GrabTaxi representative, told the *Phuket Gazette*. "Our call center personnel also speak Thai, English and Chinese to aid coordination between drivers and tourists. Our drivers and passengers love this value-added service."

"GrabCar is still new in Phuket, having launched only in September this year. Our focus now is on growing both supply and demand in Phuket, as well as on expansion plans. Regionally, we have over 141,000 drivers on the GrabTaxi network – inclusive of taxis, private hire

vehicles and motorbikes."

Since its launch in 2011, MyTeksi has expanded to 26 cities in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand. The company has also diversified the services offered to include taxis (GrabTaxi), private hire vehicles with drivers (GrabCar), motorbike taxis (GrabBike) and delivery services (GrabExpress).

Two of these services are currently available in Phuket: GrabTaxi and GrabCar.

"Response has been positive from both drivers and passengers. Passengers love the convenience and safety fea-

tures that comes with the app. They know who their driver is and can also see the fixed fare upfront. They can easily get a ride without the need to haggle. It has made travelling around Phuket much more convenient and stress-free," the representative wrote to the *Gazette*. "The drivers are also seeing increased earnings. They don't waste time sitting idle anymore as they have a continuous stream of bookings."

With the support of former Phuket Governor during their launch, the company has coordinated its price structure to match the requirements of the

Phuket Land Transportation Office.

Meter rates start at 50 baht, with an additional 30 baht booking fee. However, the meter doesn't start until after the driver has picked up their passenger, GrabTaxi's website explains. In case of traffic jams, when the taxi cannot move more than 6 kilometers per hour, the fare is charged at 1 baht per minute. For airport pick ups, which cost an additional 100 baht, passengers are required to make advance bookings, anywhere from two hours to seven days ahead of time.

The pricing strategy is adjusted for every market, taking into account the local dynamics of the area. This can be seen by reviewing the frequently asked questions section of its website.

"Right now, we're really just focused on Southeast Asia. We want to be present in more cities and towns in this region. We're aggressively hiring people to join us," the representative wrote. "We want to do great, not just good, and for that we need not only the best minds but also the most passionate people who believe in GrabTaxi's cause – that is, changing the way that 630 million people in Southeast Asia commute, and providing them with access to safe, affordable and reliable rides."

## Affiliate marketing



Business Buzz  
Simon Wetherell

AFFILIATE Marketing is where people earn commission by marketing and promoting other people's products.

This has become very popular in the online world, as people who have the expertise at creating products often do not possess the desire or the marketing skills required, and also often the budget, to successfully market them properly.

Depending on the platform or organization, the commission may range from a small percentage to, in some cases, 100 per cent.

So this can be quite a lucrative business and something that people can do full time for real income, or just part time to keep idle minds engaged and earn a few extra dollars.

The most well-known com-

pany that engages affiliates is Amazon, and in Thailand the equivalent is Lazada. There are a number of companies that specialize in connecting sellers with marketers, and one of the better ones is Clickbank.

Some people I know earn hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, but the average person can easily make an extra US\$1,000-2,000 a month while working part time.

The great thing about affiliate marketing is that anyone can do it. It is very easy to get started.

There will be an Affiliate Marketing course held this month. If you would like to learn more go to <http://bit.ly/AffiliatePhuket>.

Simon Wetherell is a social media expert and lawyer. He trains businesses and individuals on how to profit from the social media industry. For more information: Visit [PhuketOnlineMarketingSchool.com](http://PhuketOnlineMarketingSchool.com) or call 095-085 3355.



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## To the bride and groom

Managing Director of the Andaman Embrace Resort Patong, Salisa Limsakul and her groom, Sompob Kiattisin, were married at the resort on Nov 1. The wedding was decorated with elegance and included a beautiful flower arch. More than 500 guests came to celebrate with the happy couple.



**BRIDE AND GROOM:** Salisa Limsakul, managing director of the Andaman Embrace Resort Patong with her groom, Sompob Kiattisin.

## The Deck moving in

Sansiri PCL invited the media and real estate agencies to an exclusive viewing of The Deck on Oct 30 and hosted the 'Live it up on Patong: The Deck rooftop pool party'. The recently completed condominium is located in the heart of Patong and has already sold 70 per cent of its condos.



**Uthai Uthaisangsuk**, senior executive vice president of business development and project development division (condominiums) for Sansiri PCL welcoming guests with an opening speech at the event.



(From L-R) Santi Pawai, director of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports Phuket Office; Prapa Hemmin, event director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels PLC (Laguna Phuket); and Nohn Suvachananonda, general manager of Sport Spot Thailand (TYR).

## Challenge Laguna Phuket Tri-Fest press conference in Bangkok

Banyan Tree Hotel in Bangkok, along with Laguna Phuket held a special conference on October 29 discussing the Challenge Laguna Phuket Tri-Fest event, which will see thousands of athletes from around the world descend on the island for the legendary Laguna Phuket Triathlon on November 22. In addition to celebrating its 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary, this year Laguna will be welcoming back the Challenge Laguna Phuket on November 29.

The Challenge Laguna Phuket race will see both its champions from the men's and women's fields, Swiss Olympian Ruedi Wild and world champion Melissa Hauschildt of Australia, defending their titles from last year's race.

## Stay for Good Program: Feeding Communities Together 2015

In celebration of World Food Day, Banyan Tree Phuket and Angsana Laguna Phuket associates and guests hosted a lunch for underprivileged children at the Child Watch Phuket Foundation on October 28. The activity was part of the Stay for Good Program: Feeding Communities Together 2015 campaign.



Banyan Tree Group representatives, along with Rungtawan Pattarasuwannakit, CSR manager (right), Michelle Alejo, assistant marketing and PR manager (center) and guests, together with children and staff from the Child Watch Phuket Foundation.

## TSL Auto visits Phuket Gazette

TSL Auto Corporation Co Ltd visited the Phuket Gazette at the Phuket Reporter Club office to introduce their PR and marketing team on October 30.



**GETTING TO KNOW YOU:** (from L-R) Komson Angkuthothum, TSL Auto marketing manager; Woranut Pechdee, PGTV reporter; Supanan Supawong, Phuket Gazette assistant sales manager; Pornthip Absungnern, TSL Auto customer relations management officer; Viran Sombutsakul, Phuket Gazette advertising and sales representative.



History made by  
Laguna’s youngest  
hole-in-one  
champion

Laguna Phuket Golf Club recently celebrated another extraordinary achievement – with its youngest member, six-year-old Louise Landgraf, becoming the youngest golfer ever to achieve a hole-in-one on the newly upgraded golf course.



Louise finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the Six and Under Division of the IMG Golf Junior World Championship held in San Diego in July.



Louise Landgraf swinging at the upgraded Laguna Phuket Golf Club during its first Junior Golf Tournament held in June.

Bangkok Hospital doctors  
visit Oregon Health and  
Science University

Doctors from Bangkok Hospital visited Oregon Health and Science University, a global leader and research institute in Portland, Oregon, to present research topics to its staff and research team.



WORKING TOGETHER: (from L-R) Dr Art Hiranyakas, director of the Bangkok-Phuket Colorectal Disease Institute and Bangkok Hospital Phuket; Leah Cronn, assistant professor and assistant director of OHSU Global – SE Asia; Dr Jeanette Mladenovic, provost and vice president of OHSU academic affairs; Dr Kongkiat Kespechara, CEO and managing director of Southern Group of Bangkok Dusit Medical Services; and Dr Justin Denny, director of OHSU Global – SE Asia.

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## Weighing in at Phuket Classic Bodybuilding



Wilaiporn Wannaklang

THE weigh in for this year's Phuket Classic Bodybuilding Event will be held between 2pm and 4pm on November 7, at the Dara Hotel.

The following day, spectators can expect the same visual delights of well-toned and well-oiled bodies strutting their stuff on stage on the ground floor of Central Festival Phuket.

When asked if she will be displaying her wares, organizer and world female title holder, Wilaiporn Wannaklang laughed.

"No. Exercising my brain to ensure this year's event is more successful than last year's is all the training I need for this occasion. My body remains fit, but my brain is even sharper."

This year, foreign contestant numbers have increased with a handful of well-known international names participating, Ms Wannaklang noted.

— *Phuket Gazette*

## Island readies for inaugural 'Bike for Dad' event

MORE than 800 Phuket residents made their way down to Phuket Provincial Community Hall on November 2 for the first day of registration for the inaugural 'Bike for Dad' event.

For the Phuket event, participants will bike for 29 kilometers from Provincial Hall to Wat Chalong and back through town to Saphan Hin, before completing the loop

back at Provincial Hall.

Bike for Dad is being held to express loyalty and gratitude to HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej in honor of his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday, as well as to promote unity throughout the nation.

"I am very glad to see so many people showing respect and joining the event organized for HM The King," said Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada.

The governor also noted that registration dates have been shortened from the entire month of November to November 2-10.

People who wish to register may do so in person at Phuket Provincial Community Hall from 8:30 to 4:30 with their identification card or passport, or online at [www.bikefordad2015.com](http://www.bikefordad2015.com).

— *Kongleaphy Keam*



More than 800 people showed up on the first day. Photo: PR Dept

## Laguna Tri-Fest warms up

CHALLENGE Laguna Phuket's Tri-Fest event will see hundreds of international athletes come to the island for the legendary Laguna Phuket Triathlon (LPT) to be held on November 22 and Challenge Laguna Phuket on November 29.

The event was presented to organizers and sponsors for media last month at a conference chaired by Santi Pawai, director of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports Phuket Office; Nohn Suvachananonda, general manager of Sport Spot Thailand; and Event Director Prapa Hemmin.

Laguna Phuket Triathlon and Challenge Laguna Phuket are linked by a Tri-Fest of training and social activities held at Laguna Phuket during the week between the two races.

"The enduring appeal of Laguna Phuket Triathlon and



RACE READY: (from L-R) Santi Pawai, director of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports Phuket Office; Prapa Hemmin, event director; and Nohn Suvachananonda, general manager of Sport Spot Thailand.

the unique challenges of Challenge Laguna Phuket are attracting entries from leading international pro-athlete personalities, as well as age groupers worldwide," said Ms Prapa.

"To date, a combined 1,300 athletes have signed up for the two main races. Registration for both races is open until November 15, and a total of approximately 1,500 athletes are expected to sign up this year."

With hundreds of athletes, each with three to five followers, family members, friends, partners, media, sponsors or supporters travelling together to Phuket from around the world, the event is projected to generate more than 93 million baht in tourism revenue.

As is the annual tradition, athletes are being asked to raise funds through donations and sponsorships for the resort's long-established 'Laguna Phuket Foundation' to operate its various charitable programs.

Over the years, millions of baht have been raised for projects, such as renovations for local schools, survival swim courses, a Community Learning Center, Seedlings Phuket and a mobile learning center.

— *Phuket Gazette*



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Join the Laguna Phuket Triathlon (22 Nov) and the Challenge Laguna Phuket (29 Nov).

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

#### November 14-15. Affiliate Marketing Mastery Workshops

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Join AMCHAM for their Thanksgiving lunch. Photo: Tim Sackton

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#### November 26. Celebrate Thanksgiving at Special AMCHAM Event

The Greater Phuket Chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) and Angsana Laguna Phuket will hold a special Thanksgiving networking lunch on November 26 from noon until 3pm.

Whether you are an American or any other nationality, come and enjoy the very special meal with your friends, colleagues or family.

The event will be held at Angsana Laguna Phuket's poolside Bodega & Grill restaurant, which offers both air conditioned and open-air seating. Entry is 1,100++ baht and is open to the general public.

For more information contact Ryan at 076-324 101.



# Understanding Bangkok blast point

## Looking Back

By Anand Singh

THE Erawan Shrine is a revered place of worship located in the heart of Bangkok. Flanked by some of the capital's best malls and five star hotels, the shrine is frequented by hundreds of Thai and foreign devotees every day. On a typical day, the shrine is usually crowded with devotees who come to offer their prayers. There is a thin haze of smoke that lingers permanently from the burning incense sticks. Outside the gates of the shrine, vendors sell flowers, food, incense sticks, even caged sparrows. The sparrows are sold to devotees, who set them free in the belief that this will bring them good karma.

On most days, a troupe of traditional Thai dancers can be seen performing in front of the statue of Brahma, the Hindu god who created the universe. To many people, the Erawan Shrine is a sacred and inviolable place.

But the shrine has been the center of tragedy more than once. In 2006, a man was beaten to death after he used a hammer to smash the statue, breaking the bust and shattering the entire body. Later it was revealed that the perpetrator was mentally unstable. Then, on August 17, a big explosion caused by a bomb hidden in a backpack, ripped through the front gate of the Erawan Shrine. The merciless act of terrorism resulted in the death of 20 innocent people who were praying, and many more were injured on that fateful day.

The history of the Erawan Shrine is shrouded in mystical belief. Ratchadamri Road was built in 1902 during the reign of King Rama V. Ploenchit Road was built to form the Ratchaprasong intersection 18 years later.

During the 1950s, Bangkok was modernizing and the number of foreigners that visited the city for business and leisure was on the rise. It was during this period that Pol Gen Pao Sriyanont, chairman of Saha Hotel Group got the idea to build a new hotel on Ratchadamri road, in order to cater to the increasing number of visitors.

Although Bangkok was modernizing fast, most Thais still

held deeply-rooted beliefs about spirits, omens and many other superstitions that defined how things were done and when.

When the Erawan Hotel opened for business in 1956, it was said that there had been many accidents that had occurred during construction of the hotel. This was attributed to the belief that the land on which the hotel was constructed was sacred. The construction had disturbed many of the ancient forces that had always been there.

The hotel executives therefore invited Rear Admiral Luang Suwichanpat, a naval commander and well-known shaman, to find an auspicious opening date for the hotel. On visiting the site, Luang Suwichanpat remarked that the hotel had never performed a rite to ask for permission from the sacred deities that resided in the area. The

hotel's name, 'Erawan', was also the name of the god Indra's three-headed elephant. According to Luang Suwichanpat, all this required a proper ceremony to be performed in order to pay respects to the gods.

This was why the Erawan Shrine was built in the year 1956, according to historian Siripoj Laomanacharoen.

In the following decades, belief in the shrine's spiritual power grew among devotees. Many people flocked to the shrine with their prayers. Some came asking for solutions to their problems. Couples came to ask for children. Students came to ask for good grades. Devotees believe that if their prayers are answered, they must bring a wooden elephant to the shrine. Today there are scores of wooden elephants of all shapes and sizes placed there by happy devotees.

During the decades that followed the installation of the Erawan Shrine, the surrounding Ratchaprasong area went through a period of remarkable commercialization. In the 1960s, Thai-Daimaru department store opened just across the street from the shrine. Thai-Daimaru was reputed as the first building in Thailand with an escalator. Many more department stores followed in the coming years, including the World Trade Center, which today has been renamed as Central World.

Although these commer-



The Erawan Shrine, site of the recent Bangkok bombing. Photo: The Nation

cial centers were characterized by rapid modernization and consumerism, the owners still believed in the mystical forces of the area. When the World Trade Center opened

for business in the 1990s, it was believed that the cosmic vibes of the Erawan Shrine were so intense that the storeowners installed an additional shrine for Phra

Trimurati, another Hindu god, as a counter force.

In recent years, operators of several commercial buildings in the area have decided to build shrines to Hindu gods for this very reason. The Amarin Plaza has Lord Indra, the king of the Hindu gods, at its entrance. Gaysorn Plaza, another luxurious mall across the street, has a shrine built for Phra Lakshmi, the wife of Lord Vishnu, the sustainer of the universe.

Due to the sacred shrines devoted to the gods and the hundreds of devotees who come to pay their respects daily, the Ratchaprasong intersection has become known as the 'Intersection of the Gods'. Despite the fact that it is one of the busiest and most developed spots in Bangkok, it is still believed that the area is filled with sacred forces that need to be revered and respected.



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# You're not a camel, drink up



**Excuse Buster**

By Craig Burton

'YOU'RE not sick; you're thirsty. Don't treat thirst with medication,' says Dr Fereydoon Batmanghelidj, the author of the acclaimed book *Your Body's Many Cries for Water*.

We all know that water is essential to life and that in fact it makes up more than 70 per cent of most living things. We also know that although we can survive weeks without food, a person will die within a few days without water. That should say it all.

I agree with Dr Batmanghelidj and believe that most people are suffering from dehydration especially in a climate like Thailand and that this is making a lot of people weak, tired, sick and yes, even playing a role in them being overweight. Let's look at

water's functions to support these points."

Water regulates all body functions including: our chemical messengers, the hormones; dealing with the slow killer – inflammation; nutrient uptake – you are what you assimilate, not just what you eat; cell activity and energy production – that is why starting the day with a coffee instead of water is such a bad idea; detoxification – water is the cheapest and most powerful supplement to get rid of toxins.

I could continue, but I expect you get the point.

According to Dr Batmanghelidj a 'dry mouth is one of the very last indicators of dehydration of the body. By the time dry mouth becomes an indicator of water shortage; many delicate functions of the body have been shut down. This is exactly how the aging process is established – through



Dry mouth is one of the very last indicators of dehydration of the body, says Dr Batmanghelidj. Photo: Clara Sanchiz

a loss of enzyme function. A dehydrated body loses sophistication and versatility.'

So, instead of focusing on

the symptoms of dehydration, simply focus on building the habit to never get even close to that stage.

Here are my water rules:

1. Start the day with a minimum of two medium-sized glasses of clean, pure water
2. Drinking is amazing for curbing hunger, so before reaching for food, drink some water
3. Drink more water at the start of the day as drinking too late at night may disturb your sleep by getting you up often to go to the bathroom
4. Try not to drink too much during meals, as it can dilute the stomach acid, which is used to break down your food.
5. And finally: watch out for over-consuming caffeine, sugar and alcohol, which can dehydrate the body.

Craig Burton is a Certified Sports Nutritionist (CISSN) with a Bachelor of Science degree (Sports Science) and a National Academy of Sports Medicine (PES) certification.

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## Risk of dense breasts

WHILE the average age of American women diagnosed with breast cancer is in the late 50s, in Thai women, it's a decade earlier, averaging out at 48.

Screening should thus start earlier and experts now recommend an annual check up from the age of 40.

For Thailand, that means conducting screenings of more than 16 million women every year and therein lies a major problem. Radiologists are in short supply in the kingdom, with the current number standing at a meager 1,332 nationwide.

Dr Poonpit Thongchai of the Thanyarak Breast Centre at Siriraj Hospital's Faculty of Medicine, notes that Asian women – and that includes Thais – have denser breasts than western women. While there is nothing abnormal about



Asian women tend to have denser breasts than western women. Photo: Bill Branson

this, a dense breast makes cancer harder to detect.

Breast tissue consists of fatty and fibroglandular tissue. If more than 50-per-cent of your breast is made of fibroglandular tissue, then your breasts are classified as dense.

And dense breasts, Dr Poonpit explains, means more thorough check-ups.

– The Nation

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## New director takes reins at Banyan Tree



**Nampetch Tipaxsorn**

NAMPETCH Tipaxsorn has taken up the position of director of marketing and communications for Banyan Tree and Angsana Laguna Phuket.

In her new role, Ms Nampetch will manage all marketing and public relations activities, including marketing strategies to generate revenue and brand awareness for both properties.

Ms Nampetch has more than 15 years of experience in both sales and marketing on the island. Prior to joining Banyan Tree Group, she was the director of marketing and communications at Movenpick Resort and Spa Karon. However, the vast amount of her experience comes from her work as sales and marketing communications manager for Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa.

– *Phuket Gazette*

## Twinpalms teams up with MontAzure for new luxury development project

PHUKET'S MontAzure, a mixed-use community in the Kamala district, has teamed up with leading hospitality company Twinpalms to launch a branded residential project on one of the last direct beachfronts on the west coast of the island.

Twinpalms Residences MontAzure will comprise 75 luxury condominiums, with 100 meters of beachfront located between Millionaire's Mile and the Amanpuri headland. After its 2017 completion, it will be operated and managed by Twinpalms.

The project presents the first phase of MontAzure's 15-billion-baht plan on a 454 rai site, which will feature a branded five-star hotel, four beach clubs for public and private use, 13 private hillside estate villas and a 200 rai nature reserve.

"We are genuinely excited to enter into this agreement," said MontAzure Managing Director Roland Bleszynski. "The Twinpalms brand is synonymous with a refined resort experience, and this combined with consistently exceptional standards of hospitality has created strong recognition and, above all, an extremely loyal following worldwide."

The multi-award winning



**MontAzure Managing Director Roland Bleszynski (left) and Twinpalms Managing Director Carl Langenskiold shake on it.**

Twinpalms resort operates in Surin and is the brand behind the Catch and Bimi Beach Club's, as well as the Palm Seafood Restaurant.

"There were simply too many synergies to ignore,"

said Twinpalms Managing Director Carl Langenskiold. "We were looking for growth opportunities and MontAzure offered a perfect solution for us to extend our brand and management capabilities into

a project designed by the same designer as ours. So it was a strong fit."

Twinpalms Residences MontAzure was designed by Martin Palleros of Tierra Design, who also designed MontAzure. The sales gallery will open in December this year and will feature a beachfront Twinpalms restaurant in North Kamala.

MontAzure is the brainchild of three of the most prestigious property and hotel investment groups in Asia – Arch Capital (Hong Kong), Philean Capital (Singapore), part of Pontiac Land Group and Thailand's Narai Group.

Twinpalms Residences MontAzure will offer one and two-bedroom units with penthouses having access to a private roof top and pool. Prices range from 8mn baht to 93mn baht.

Buyers will also have the option of combining unit types to create a three-bedroom unit with a private rooftop and pool.

Facilities include a residents' lobby, beachfront restaurant and bar, gym and yoga studio, spa pavilions, library, lounge, outdoor event space and on-site management office.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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# Slippery slopes of landscaping



## Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

I WAS recently consulted about changes to a large, established garden of some four rai in Laguna. Nothing unusual about that, but here's the catch. The villa itself, in the throes of major renovation at the behest of a new owner, is sited on a steep hillside, and the front garden – mostly Malaysia grass – slopes steeply down from the adjacent swimming pool, then suddenly levels out as a flat expanse. Originally designed as a play area and bordered by mature rubber trees, this level ground slopes briefly away again to the boundary wall. At the right-hand limit of the property, a natural barrier is created by a bamboo screen about two meters tall.

Despite its dramatic situation and south-west aspect, the garden lacks color.

Moreover, the most precipitous slopes are becoming denuded of grass because the soil has been leached away, leaving bare patches of reddish and sterile subsoil. In places, more robust, local grasses are



Stone terracing is not a new solution for steep slopes, as can be seen on the mountains of Machu Picchu, Peru. These terraces were built in the 15th century. Photo: PCLVV

taking over. Lower down, the problem is compounded by the overhanging branches and exposed roots of mature trees, which means that here too grass is struggling to survive.

Part of my proposed solution – a traditional one – is to erect dry stone terracing from natural materials on the steepest inclines, and to add new top soil to the areas behind the walls. These beds could then be planted with shrubs, succulents

or perennials. My personal preference would be for low-upkeep, colorful shrubs such as *ixoras*, *cuphea* and *lantana*, or for succulents such as *adeniums*, *agaves*, *yuccas*, *sedums*, or *bromeliads*. These would not only add color but also interesting sculptural shapes to a presently featureless area.

A less expensive alternative, especially if the terraces are not intended to be continu-

ous, is to create one or more rock gardens across the gradients. Like the terraces, these would have a dual function: both retaining pockets of soil that could sustain a variety of plants, and adding interest and color. Such rocks need to be partially embedded in the existing slope, with any striations running horizontally to create a natural effect. Impermeable rocks, such as granite, that do not stain, are the best bet.

The single existing steep stone path down to the flat area needs to be made more substantial and set on a diagonal, so that it is less difficult to clamber down. It could then usefully be continued along the base of the hill until it reaches the proposed 'sala' at the end of the play area.

As for the mature trees in the garden, sadly some need to go, or at least be subjected to drastic pruning. Overgrown rubber trees and devil trees (*alstonias*) add little or nothing to the appeal of the garden. They could be replaced with small ornamental trees that flower all year round, by adding colorful *plumerias* to the existing white ones, or by adding palms that not only allow grass to flourish but also add an exotic feel. My choice of palm would be the elegant foxtail palm – both at the top of the slope below the swimming pool to provide a tropical vista from the house, and maybe at the lower edge of the lawn.

If you have gardening questions, email [drpaccampbell@gmail.com](mailto:drpaccampbell@gmail.com). Many of Patrick's creative and academic publications can be found at Green galoshes Wordpress.

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

## Phuket Gazette

As part of its expansion into national markets, the Phuket Gazette seeks two advertising sales representatives.

## Advertising Sales

- ▶ Thai, age at least 26, with an outgoing personality
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in marketing or related fields
- ▶ Experience in sales and marketing
- ▶ Good command of spoken and written English
- ▶ Must have own transportation and driver's licence
- ▶ Alert, self motivated and goal driven

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV and writing sample by email to [Anna@PhuketGazette.Net](mailto:Anna@PhuketGazette.Net)

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## CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANT

Asia Pacific Representatives Ltd is an international company dealing with customers in Asia and Australia, as well as decorative surface suppliers from Europe. We are looking for Customer Service Assistant. 30-35 years old. Thai national. Excellent English. Chalong. Tel: 076-281341. Email: jobs@aprpfeiderer.com

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For private 19m MY based in Phuket and cruising South China Sea. Hands on personality and experience as skipper - first mate is mandatory, a technical background would be helpful. Please submit your CV and phone number by email: [ulrichkuhl@gmail.com](mailto:ulrichkuhl@gmail.com)



## Marketing Staff Wanted

Staff needed to join a promotions team to work in Real Estate. Thai female with good English communication skills.

Please call 095-429 6653. Email: [info@arthouse.asia](mailto:info@arthouse.asia)



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International School, Phuket

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

## School Nurse ( 1 Position )

- Thai national
- Bachelor's degree of nursing or higher with active licence
- At least 2-year experience in nursing
- Computer literacy is essential
- Good spoken and written English
- Service minded
- Interpersonal and problem solving skills
- Challenge job-oriented
- Team player

## Human Resources Officer ( 1 Position )

- Thai national
- Bachelor's degree in human resources, administrative, business laws or related fields
- Some experience in staff recruitment, responsible for taking care of long-term visa for foreign teachers and administration work
- Proficiency in using computer and able to read and speak English
- Good personality, human relation and service-minded person

## Library Officer ( 1 Position )

- Thai national
- Bachelor's degree in library studies
- Experience in library system databases
- Good communication and interpersonal skill
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Proficiency in MS office
- Good team player and service minded
- New graduates are welcomed

Please send a short letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, recent photograph by email/fax and telephone contacts of referees to

**British International School, Phuket**

59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Road, Koh Kaew, Muang Phuket 83200  
Tel: 076-335555 Ext.2113 Fax: 076 335573.

Email: [sirirats@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:sirirats@bisphuket.ac.th), [kojchapani@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:kojchapani@bisphuket.ac.th)



## PROPERTY FOR RENT

**FURNISHED HOUSE FOR RENT**

2 bedrooms with aircons, 2 bathrooms with hot water, garage, village pool, tennis courts, and fitness park. Wichit - Phuket Town. Tel: 086-267 7380 (English & Thai), 086-007 4010 (English). Email: dave.bare@gmail.com

**STUDIO - 33SQM 6,000 BAHT**

33sqm studio for rent. Kitchen, furnished, 6,000 baht per month. Cosy and cheap. Chalong/Phuket Town. Email: cagnes surmer2@gmail.com

**ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE****PATONG LUXURY APT.**

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For sale (2.8 million baht) or rent (12,000 baht/month) in Supalai City Hill Estate, Phuket Town. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, quiet, convenient location, furnished, full kitchen, decor, garden, car park, 2 aircons. Available from Nov 2015. Tel: 089-874 0061, 086-291 4115. Email: stephenfein@gmail.com

**STUDIO ROOM FOR RENT**

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

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

**CHEAP RENT HOUSE**

Fully furnished 1-3 bedrooms, aircons, WiFi, starts from 6,000 baht / month. For more information, please call 081-892 4311. <http://panwagreen.weebly.com>

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**4-BEDROOMS 5-BATHROOMS POOL VILLA**

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**CONDO FOR RENT**

Furnished condo on 7th floor view over Chalong Bay and near Home Pro Shopping Center, swimming pool and car park access. Short/long term rent. 10,000 baht per month. Contact Kitipong. For more information, please call 081-677 8638 (English & Thai). Email: emedward@hotmail.com

**CHALONG BEACHFRONT HOUSE**

1-bedroom house for rent. For more information, please call 089-649 9939. Email: siri\_phuket@changrunner.com

**APARTMENT PATONG**

140sqm, modified, furnished, quiet, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, storage, spacious living room / dining room, full western kitchen, large balcony, full aircon, free wifi, LCD / satellite. Tel: 084-185 8536.

**LOVELY APARTMENTS FOR RENT**

Please contact 081-539 9612, 087-633 1472. Email: chrisspalmer56@gmail.com For further information, please see our website at <http://pukeyomefc2.web.fc2.com/phuketcondorent.htm>

**PROPERTY & RENTAL MANAGEMENT**

CJP & property management services. Resolution of compliance issues. Kata, Karon - Phuket. Email: development@AssetManagementSolutionsPhuket.com

**2-BEDROOM BEACH HOLIDAY APARTMENT**

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2 air-conditioned bedrooms, 1 bathroom, a living room, furnished house, kitchen, near Phuket Zoo. Chalong, Soi Palai. Tel: 081-537 9878 (English & Thai). Email: tiwus@hotmail.co.th

**CONDO FOR RENT**

34sqm, 1 bedroom, a living room, fully furnished, opposite Central Festival Phuket. Phuket town. Tel: 081-537 9878 (English & Thai). Email: tiwus@hotmail.co.th

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- Year of Manufacture: 2002
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- Engine: Rotax 912-80hp 350hrs. Tel: 081-840 8418.

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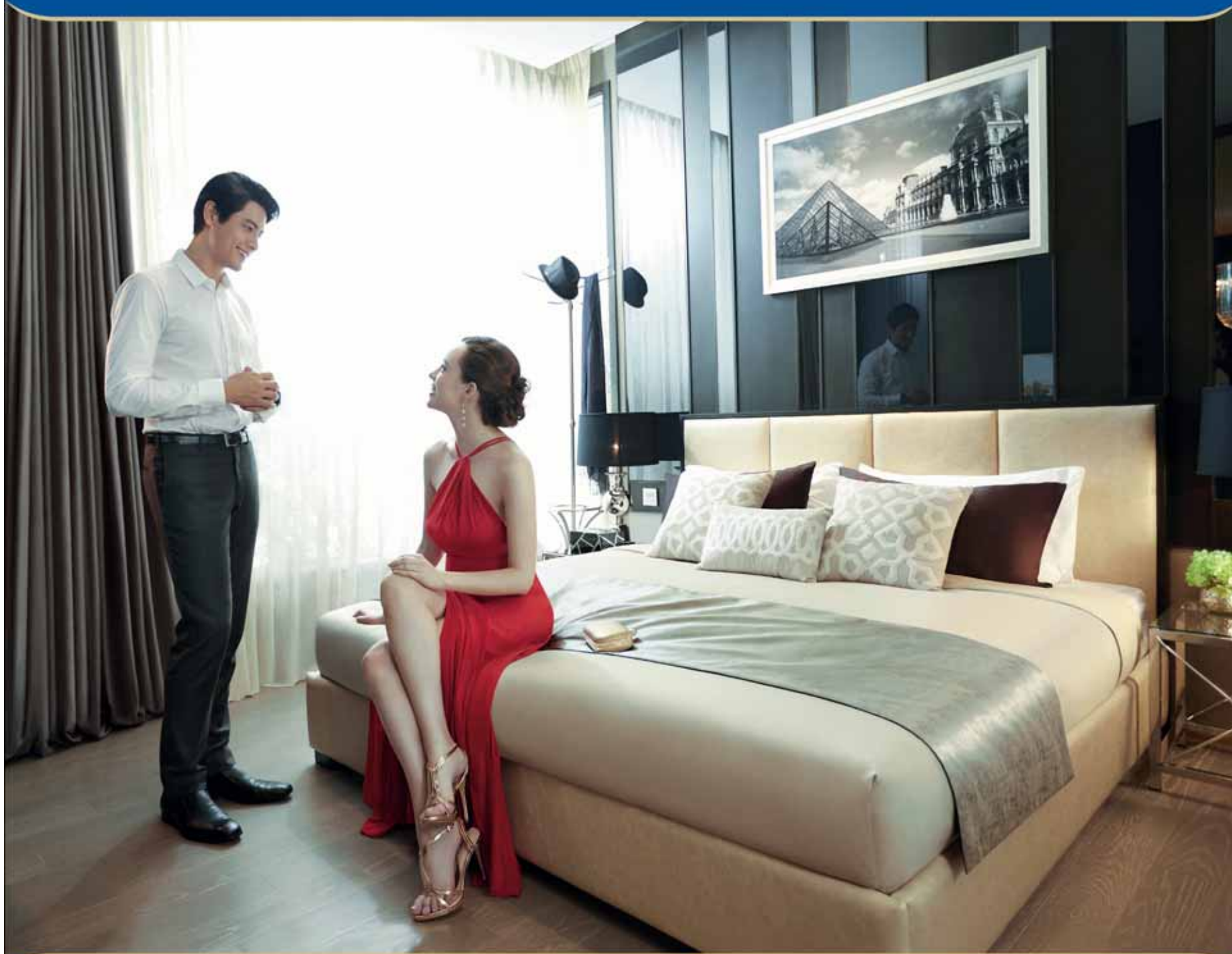
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# THE ESSE ASOKE



## LIVE LIFE SIMPLY

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SINGHA ESTATE

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THE ESSE ASOKE: Project and land owner: Singha Estate Public Company Limited, registered no. 0107547000443, registered capital 7,346,290,796 baht, paid-up capital 5,715,337,268 baht, located at 198/11 Chu Lang Building 20th Floor, Rama IV Rd, Siam, Bangkok, Bangkok 10500. THE ESSE ASOKE, the 55-story condominium with 419 units. Project location: 333 Sukhumvit 21 Rd, Khlong Toei Nua, Wattana, Bangkok 10110. Total area is approximately 2-3-74.4 sq. Land title deed no. 2653, 2654, 2655 and 2656. Expected construction begins: March 2016. Expected completion: December 2016. The project may be supported by financial institution in the future. The project will be registered condominium once construction is completed. Purchaser is responsible for the sinking fund and maintenance expenses as stated in the rules and regulations of the juristic person.

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