

# Phuket Gazette

February 13-19, 2016

Now inside **THE NATION** every Saturday

56 Pages / 20 Baht



The 50-meter M/Y Northern Sun will be one of at least 14 superyachts taking part in the Thailand Yacht Show. Photo: Northern Sun PR

## Superyachts arrive

■ Thailand seeks to be Asean marine hub with launch of inaugural event

By Chutharat Plerin

DEPUTY Prime Minister Tanasak Patimapragorn opened the inaugural Thailand Yacht Show (TYS) in Phuket on Thursday, as the country positions itself to directly, and indirectly, benefit from superyachts and their ultra-wealthy owners.

TYS, currently underway at Ao Po Grand Marina, will run until February 14,

with about 40 yachts and at least 14 superyachts on display.

Gracing the waters will be: 51-meter traditional Indonesian style superyacht *Dunia Baru*; 73m M/Y *Titania*; 50m M/Y *Northern Sun*; 69m M/Y *Saluzi*; 32m M/Y *Nanou*; 41m M/Y *Ocean Emerald* and many more luxury vessels.

The event aims to support the government's move to promote Thailand as the 'Marina Hub of ASEAN', as well as to stimulate Thailand's economy and further develop its marine tourism industry, Tourism and Sports Minister Kobkarn Wattanavrakul told the *Gazette*.

"Most importantly, 'Thailand Yacht Show 2016' will be a powerful platform for Thai entrepreneurs to unveil their products and one-stop services to high-end customers, ranging from yachting financial

solutions to after-sales services," said Minister Kobkarn. "However, many of the benefits and opportunities to the community will flow in after the show, as this is more than just a yacht show. This is Thailand's grand opening for the marine tourism industry."

Early in the development of the TYS, there were murmurs within the industry that 'just another' boat show in Asia was unnecessary. Quick to agree was Andy Treadwell, the managing director of 3L Events (Thailand) Co Ltd and organizer of Thailand Yacht Show 2016, as well as the Singapore Yacht Show.

"The region certainly doesn't need any more boat shows whatsoever – unless they are providing a genuinely...

Story continued on Pages 4-5



### BUSINESS



Battling inertia in order to bring a meaningful boat show to the region.

### PROPERTY



Bill Barnett pairs yachting with the island's luxury property sector.

### LIFE&STYLE



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## LOCAL NEWS

### Briefly

#### Driver charged for injuring Russian divers

THE driver of the speedboat that mutilated two Russian divers on February 3 is being charged with reckless driving causing serious injury.

Adisorn Benmamood, 22, was driving the boat that hit Russian nationals Sergei Dmitriev, 30, and Dmitry Kurnov, 48, while they were diving in shallow water near Maya Bay.

Officers will scrutinize the documentation of the speedboat company, as well as the diving company, to determine whether or not they had all the necessary permits, confirmed police.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

#### Foreigner dies on Soi Bangla, unidentified

POLICE are trying to identify a foreign man who died at Vachira Phuket Hospital on February 8.

The man, estimated to be

about 50 years old, was not carrying any identification when, according to witnesses, he collapsed and hit his head on the sidewalk along Bangla Road.

The man was taken to Patong Hospital and later transferred to the better equipped Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he remained in the Intensive Care Unit until his death.

Anyone who may be able to identify the deceased should contact Vachira Phuket Hospital.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

#### Gov Chamroen to investigate Facebook rant

PHUKET Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada has ordered an investigation into a Facebook user who accused him of taking sides in a dispute over land rights between the sea gypsy community in Rawai and developer Baron World Trade Co Ltd.

The Facebook user, who goes by the screen name Paskorn Jumlongrach, claimed in his February 2 post that the Governor had sided with Baron World Trade and tried to persuade the sea gypsy community leaders to accept settlement terms offered by the developer.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

## Rawai sea gypsies turn to black magic for help



In a last-ditch effort to fend off real estate developer Baron World Trade Co Ltd, nearly 200 Rawai sea gypsies took part in an ancient 'Ah Boi' ceremony, making offerings of boiled chicken, sticky rice and water while chanting and praying – completing the ceremony by burning dried chilies, salt, shrimp paste and sacred earth taken from their nearby ancestral burial ground. For the full story, visit [PhuketGazette.net](http://PhuketGazette.net). Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

a swim alone. He was later discovered facedown in the water by his girlfriend.

Mr Ju was rushed back to Phuket and transferred to Chalong Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

His body was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital to determine the cause of death.

– Winai Sarot

#### Russian driver involved in fatal accident

POLICE have yet to charge a Russian man who was involved in a fatal road accident in Phuket on February 7.

Sakol Kunnui, 20, whose head was crushed in the accident, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Cherkasov Mikhail, 37, told police that Mr Sakol had allegedly crossed into his lane and fell off his bike.

– Winai Sarot

#### Chinese tourist dies in Krabi after boat flips

A CHINESE woman died after the longtail boat that she and her family hired capsized in rough seas in Krabi on February 7.

According to boat driver Niyom Suebhet, 32, the family were all wearing life jackets.

Su Ji Zhen, 64, was pronounced dead on arrival at Krabi Hospital.

Krabi Police have yet to charge Mr Niyom, as they continue with the investigation.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

#### Flyover projects finally garner public approval

TWO major flyover construction projects that were grounded by public opinion last year are clear for takeoff.

Out of the 339 voting participants at the public meeting on February 4, 259 approved the project, a dramatic contrast to the 65% of 95 voters who shot down the plan on August 10 last year.

The flyovers are planned for the u-turn at the first set of traffic lights just north of Thalang Town and the Baan Koh Kaew Tha Ruea u-turn in front of Baan Jee Teng.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

#### Canadian man dies after night out in Patong

POLICE are waiting for doctors to confirm the cause of death of a Canadian man who died in his hotel room in Patong on February 9.

Micheal Jerry Talbot, 28, collapsed at about 5:30am after suffering chest pains and shortness of breath.

Mr Talbot was taken to Patong Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

His family has been informed of his death and are making their way to Phuket to repatriate the body.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

#### Another tourist dies on island speedboat trip

A CHINESE tourist was recovered unconscious from the waters off Koh Racha while on a speedboat trip on February 8.

Ju Zekai, 24, was on a day trip with his girlfriend and 20 other tourists when he went for



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# Missing boy reunited with family

By Chutharat Plerin

TIRELESS efforts made by police, search teams and rescue workers helped reunite a missing three-year-old boy with his family on Tuesday.

Nong DJ was recovered safe and sound on a hill about three kilometers from his home in Wichit, where he went missing on February 3.

"We found him at about 11:40am lying in a shallow waterway, covered by leaves. We lifted him up, covered him with dry clothes and immediately radioed to our team below to inform his mother," said Pattarawut Akanittakron, a member of the Kusoldharm Foundation rescue team.

Search teams were alerted to the boy's general location after a man living in a shack on the hill told the boy's grandfather that he had seen a child matching Nong DJ's description three days earlier.

The search team accompanied the boy to the hospital, describing his condition as weak, but responsive.

"Nong DJ is currently in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit



Nong DJ was rescued six days after he was reported missing from his home. Photo: Kusoldharm Foundation

[PICU] due to a stomach and blood infection," said Jessada Chungpaibulpatana, director of Vachira Phuket Hospital. "At this stage, his stomach is bleeding due to the length of time he went

without food or water. The minerals in his body are imbalanced and he is currently on a ventilator to assist with breathing."

Due to being exposed to the elements for days, Nong DJ's

legs suffered damage from being submerged in water for a long period of time, Dr Jessada said. He has since used two units of A-positive blood during his recovery.

"There is enough blood for Nong DJ right now. However, type A blood is still very limited. Therefore, we are requesting donations," Ampai Saengwichit, a Vachira Phuket Hospital medical technician, told the *Gazette*.

Nonetheless, doctors expect Nong DJ to make a full recovery.

The boy's mother, Saowalak Chaayo, has yet to speak publicly about the rescue of her son.

"I am not ready to answer any questions from the media right now. I just want to keep making merit at the temple for three days, praying that my son gets better," Ms Saowalak said.

Meanwhile, police will continue with their investigation into the boy's disappearance.

"We've come up with two scenarios," said Wichit Police Superintendent Kittipong Klaikaew. "Either Nong DJ wandered off by himself into the forest, or he was taken there by someone close to the family."

Officers will wait to question the boy until he is fully recovered.

*Additional reporting by Kraitsada Mueanhawong*



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## Beaches to be declared 'virgin' if vendors keep breaking law

BEACHES with vendors that continually break beach management rules will be stripped of their 10 per cent zones and designated as virgin beaches, confirmed Phuket Vice Governor Chokdee Amornwat.

The vice governor's comments come fast on the heels of photographic evidence sent to the *Gazette* of beach chairs chained to trees at Kata Beach last month.

"We will do whatever is necessary to make sure beach rules are obeyed," said Vice Governor Chokdee. "If necessary, I will set beaches back to ground zero, as Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada has vowed that he wants Phuket's beaches to be clean and clear."

V/Gov Chokdee noted that it is up to local municipalities to monitor beaches and vendors in their jurisdictions to ensure that they are adhering



Beach chairs are being locked to nearby trees. Photo: Gazette reader

to the rules.

"I have ordered my staff to look into the chairs," said Karon Mayor Thawee Thongcham. "Though we are hesitant to take any action against tourists."

He noted that if the chairs belonged to vendors, the vendors would face legal repercussions.

"However, at this point, our

staff is stretched fairly thin, so we are asking for help from the Provincial Government and the Navy to assist in patrolling Kata and Karon beaches," Mr Thawee said.

To aid with staffing issues, V/Gov Chokdee plans to form beach patrol teams to help with heavily trafficked beaches.

— Chutharat Plerin

# Thailand

From page 1

...international, all-embracing marketing platform for the whole length and breadth of the yachting and boating industry, encompassing all sectors, in a strategically important location. And that is what TYS is going to provide here," Mr Treadwell told the *Gazette*.

Mr Treadwell described the TYS, which is surrounded by some of the best cruising grounds in the world, as the perfect sister show for the Singapore Yacht Show, which is known for attracting business people, but not so much as a yachting destination.

"What is different about TYS is that visitors will be able to get on board boats from some of the biggest and best known brands in the world and take them for a trial sail – even some of the superyachts will be going out on short familiarization trips," Mr Treadwell said. "The show's berthing arrangements at Ao Po Grand Marina allows this. It's a fantastic setting in the middle of Phang Nga Bay and positively entices people to get out on the water.

"At the same time, we will have on-water activities for all the family and water sports enthusiasts from all ends of the scale – paddle boards and jet-skis, as well as sailboats, motorboats and superyachts – plus the opportunity to try them out."

Phuket is the first and the most obvious stop-off point for all the big boats coming to Asia from the Mediterranean via the Gulf of Thailand, the Indian Ocean and the Maldives. There are plenty of superyacht marina berths, hotels, refit and repair facilities and supply chain – and most importantly, it is a world-class cruising destination in its own right," said Mr Treadwell.

"I think there is a genuine

desire among Western yacht owners, captains and charter guests to find somewhere new and less crowded than the Caribbean for winter cruising – and here, even though it's twice as far away, they will find unspoiled and virtually limitless cruising grounds, beautiful beaches and diving spots, as well as great service from friendly, happy people," he pointed out.

Thailand has become the focal point for the superyacht cruising and yachting industry in Asia, and yet it hasn't had a show that caters for superyachts until now, said Mr Treadwell.

"The government of Thailand has been very receptive to our proposals to change the regulations here and allow foreign superyachts to come here to charter," he said. "We believe that is going to change things dramatically here, and will encourage big boats to come here in big numbers and spend big money. This is all good news for Thailand and its economy – it will positively affect the whole community. But

we need a properly-marketed international superyacht show to promote this."

The long-term success of the government's push to develop the marine industry and better cater to superyachts will come down to legislation, concurred Transport Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith.

"We have recently announced the regulations and requirements for the new superyacht charter licence that will allow foreign-flagged superyachts to stay and operate in Thai waters for one year. So far, three superyachts have been presented with the licence," Minister Arkhom said. "In addition, we will collaborate with the Immigration Bureau to facilitate extending the length of stay for crew



**Promoting yachting businesses will create employment and distribute sustainable income to local people.**

— Tourism and Sports Minister Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul

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# to be Asean marine hub

working on board a superyacht to one year, or equal to the yacht's cruising duration. Meanwhile, the tax issue is being discussed among relevant agencies such as the Revenue Department.

"All these efforts reflect the government's commitment to show to the world Thailand's potential to become the 'Marina Hub of ASEAN' and to promote Thailand as an operation base for superyacht charters."

Despite the progress already made, laws and regulations regarding foreign superyacht visits may need to be reviewed, admitted Minister Arkhom.

"The Ministry will discuss the matter with relevant agencies including the Marine Department, the Customs Department, the Revenue Department, and the Immigration Bureau to seek further solutions," he said.

"This year, the Cabinet approved a fund of 15 million baht to organize this event and assigned the Ministry of Tourism and Sports to take full responsibility to ensure the success of the show and promote the good image of Thailand."

The push to develop the marine tourism industry in Thailand comes directly from the Prime Minister, explained



Thailand sees economic potential in better catering for the 'toys' of the wealthy. Photo: M/Y Titania PR

Minister Kobkarn.

Minister Kobkarn was quick to point out that the promotion of the TYS and the support for the marine industry wasn't just Thailand catering to high-net-worth individuals, but in fact was a way to bring additional income into the lives of people of many economic backgrounds.

"Promoting yachting businesses will create employment and distribute sustainable income to local people, while providing constant learning for entrepreneurs and laborers to increase their specialized skills," she said. "Therefore, it can be said that the promotion of 'Thailand Yacht Show 2016' will definitely provide tremen-

dous benefits to Thai economy and society as a whole."

Minister Kobkarn went on to point out that the yachting event would generate no less than US\$200-400 million.

The yacht market in Phuket jumped by at least five per cent in last year, after having shown only a three per cent growth between 2006-2015.

"When a superyacht arrives in Thailand, they need a number of services from us. For example, one yacht might have a budget of about US\$100,000 for flowers alone – those flowers will be supplied by businesses in Thailand," Minister Kobkarn explained. "That is of course, just one simple example."

The Minister noted that the shift toward catering to the superyacht industry was in line with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's move to promote Phuket as a high-end tourist destination, rather than a place for package tours.

"Though each boat will only bring a few passengers to the island, it is likely that each one of them will spend between 1 and 2 million baht per trip. That money will trickle down to the local community," she said. "This is about focusing on quality, rather than quantity, and is a big move toward re-branding Phuket as a luxury destination."

Within the next two to three years, Mr Treadwell expects the show to attract more than 100 yachts, including 30 to 40 superyachts.

"Most importantly, we should be able to get more and more of the right visitors coming who will want to get involved and will charter or purchase a boat," he said.



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# Phuket Gazette

Volume 13 Issue 19 News Desk - Tel: 076-236555 May 13 - 19, 2006 Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net 25 Baht

The Gazette is published in association with

The Nation

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## Candidates prepare for polls - Mission to raise human torpedoes from WWII

### Officials crack down on fuel smugglers

By Nattamon Ratcharak

PHUKET: Marine Police and Customs officers are conducting random inspections of ships in the Andaman region while police officers and Department of Energy officials are inspecting gas stations in a crackdown on smuggling into Thailand.

On Keesari, Director of Port and Shipping Department, Ministry of Transport, announced at a press conference that the department has been working to eliminate the smuggling of fuel into Thailand.

The department will be conducting checks on ships on the Andaman Sea, he added.

The department is also conducting checks on gas stations in the region, he said.

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Improvement of fishing port is almost complete

THAI to increase ticket prices on Bangkok route

RAINY SEASON BLOWS IN

Boats & Marine

Veteran CBC broadcaster dies while snorkeling

Time to reclaim Phuket's roads - with forethought

The main objective of the project is to control the fish transfer procedure from ship to shore so that it is hygienic, says K. Pramual (right).

AS THE *Gazette* plunges in with its first ever Thailand Yacht Show Special Edition, we narrow the gap in 'A Decade Ago' to 9-years-and-9-months ago... for the sake of marine thematics.

Skipping over what is without a doubt a very dry page one at the beginning of the rainy season, let's dive to the depths of a small story on page three of the May 13, 2006 issue of the *Gazette*: Mission to raise human torpedoes from WWII.

Chalong-based marine engineer Capt Chris Parton had requested permission to salvage two World War II Chariots - sometimes known as 'human torpedoes' - from the sea floor off Koh Dok Mai.

The Chariots were British designed manned torpedoes that were carried on a submarine and then launched underwater with two frogmen on board. The Chariot would enter an enemy harbor, where the frogmen would place limpet mines on enemy ships before returning to the submarine.

According to Wikipedia, the only completely successful British Chariot operation occurred in Phuket on October 28-29, 1944. Two crews on MK II Chariots, commanded by Lieutenant Tony Eldridge RNVR, were launched from the submarine *HMS Trenchant* to attack two Italian cargo ships in the harbor of Japanese-occupied Phuket.

After the charges went off, the *Sumatra* sank and the *Volpi* was so

badly crippled that it was abandoned.

The Chariots were thought to have then been dumped on the seabed near Koh Dok Mai, where they allegedly have remained. That was exactly where Capt Parton hoped to find them.

When asked for permission to begin salvage efforts in May 2006, then-Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura told Capt Parton that before trying to raise the Chariots he must produce documentation proving that he has permission from the British government, in particular the Ministry of Defence.

Capt Parton sent off the letter, and the reply was delivered to Governor Udomsak.

The letter from the British Navy read, in part, "Both in UK and International law, wrecked military aircraft and vessels remain the property of the state (in this case of the British Crown), regardless of location or condition. Ownership is not lost with the passage of time.

"Moreover, the provisions of the International Convention on Salvage 1989 do not apply to warships; consequently, in international waters and the territorial waters of other states, the wrecks of British military aircraft and warships cannot lawfully be the subject of salvage.

"[The British government's] permis-

The gift of hindsight

studied in situ."

Though rumors of those hunting the Chariots have cropped up from time to time on the island, no certain proof has been raised from the depths of Koh Dok Mai.

Prior to Cap Parton getting the island excited about the WWII artifacts, Phuket was awash in rumors of a different type of mini-submarine.

"Mini-sub fever, sparked by newspaper reports of a submarine being built in a Phuket shipyard for Sri Lanka's rebel Tamil Tigers, reached a new pitch with reports of another small sub sighted in the waters off Koh Hey Island," reported the *Gazette* in 2000.

A police raid on a boatyard in Rawai turned up three mini-sub, which were very different from a submarine found by the *Gazette* a few days prior.

The owner and inventor of the subs was named as Sithichai Wonsrivijit, who is the owner of Sea Station Partnership, which runs a diving and snorkelling business at Koh Hey.

"He explained that he is also an inventor - he invented a helmet for sea walking and had just completed building his latest invention. He had taken

it out to Koh Hey for a trial run on the day it was spotted," said then-Chalong Police Superintendent Sati Malakanond.

Though mini-sub are renowned for being the vessel of choice for drug cartels and terrorists, police saw no connections between Mr Sithichai's mini-sub and the Tamil Tigers or any other foreign organization.

What happened to Mr Sithichai's design or patent doesn't seem to have found its way back into the *Gazette*. However, there is a real market for mini-sub now - especially compact ones... you know, so it fits on your superyacht.

Companies such as U-Boat Worx now offer some of the slickest, most compact submarines with depth capabilities of up to 300 meters.

"More and more owners of existing or future superyachts are deciding to take a personal submersible on board. This was unthinkable just a short while ago. Submersibles were generally too big and too heavy to operate from a superyacht," explains U-Boat Worx PR.

And you guessed it, that's now changed. So, why not weigh up whether or not the superyacht has a submersible on board when you start looking at which of these luxury juggernauts to charter in Phuket. Or maybe be a bit naughty and go look for your own WWII relic?

- Isaac Stone Simonelli





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# Directing ships of cash to Phuket

AFTER months of reporting one marine mishap after another, the inaugural Thailand Yacht Show (TYS) comes as a refreshing and long overdue reminder of just how important the marine leisure industry is to the island – and why all sides need to work harder to further develop the province into the true marine hub of the region.

Phuket's marine industry has certainly come a long way in recent decades, with a huge expansion in yachting facilities, as well as steady growth in the availability of all the related goods and support services needed to keep these vessels operational, safe and in line with marine-safety regulations.

The island has also witnessed the development of several new, privately-funded marinas, as well as large improvements to existing government facilities, such as the one in Chalong Bay.

There is a well-known adage among recreational boat owners: a boat is a hole in the water into which one throws money.

The saying may be particularly true for private boat owners in more northern climes, where vessels need to be pulled out of the water and dry-docked at the end of each yachting season. However, here in Phuket, the reality is that pleasure crafts can be enjoyed year-round; it is also far less expensive here to outsource some of the more unpleasant maintenance tasks.

While some past governments have eased regulatory restrictions on the industry in order to foster growth, the fact remains that many foreign vessel operators still find existing customs and immigration restrictions on their vessel and crew too time-consuming, confusing and costly to entice them to use Phuket as a home port.

Fortunately, the current government is pushing to further ease restrictions to draw in more foreign charters, including allowing the local charter of foreign superyachts, which bring in a great amount of foreign exchange earnings every time they make a port of call. Far from being 'holes in the water', they are more like enormous, luxurious barges transporting pallets of cash to our shores.

*The Phuket Gazette and PGTV, along with our partner newspaper The Nation, are proud to be the national media partners for the TYS, the country's largest and most lavish annual marine leisure event.*



## Too many marine accidents to count

*Re: Another tourist dies on Phuket speedboat trip, February 8*

Another one? I've completely lost count of the number of marine accidents – mostly involving speedboats or jet-skis – that have killed and maimed so many tourists over the past few months.

Who, if anyone, is in charge of marine safety here?

It seems these so-called 'captains' are just a bunch of uneducated cowboys.

*Scared Stiff of Boats  
Gazette forum*

## Concerned about the lack of safety

*Re: Phi Phi scuba divers mangled by speedboat, February 3*

You have to be concerned at the lack of health and safety issues, the unregulated area of divers, swimmers and the boating industry, mixed together is a disaster.

As far as the 22-year-old captain, does he have a licence to operate a commercial sea boat? Do they have a certificate of competence to take commercial passengers and do they understand the rules at sea?

*Harry  
Gazette forum*

## No plans to come back to Phuket again

*Re: V/Gov to strip 10 per cent zones of unruly vendors, February 6*

## Letters to the Editor

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

Please pass this message on to whatever ministry is involved in the 10 per cent zones.

I am a long time visitor of Thailand, mainly Phuket. Please be informed that I will never visit Thailand again, nor will my family, friends or whoever I have an opportunity to speak about this issue with the 10 per cent zones.

It is ridiculous to shove everything into a small area just to use the basic right to protect yourself from the sun and relax.

*Ozette  
Gazette forum*

## Scuba businesses always under attack

*Re: Diving restricted in Phi Phi following speedboat accident, February 5*

Very frustrating, scuba diving, one of the few tourist industries here in Thailand that strive to conduct their business safely and legitimately, but we seem to be the ones that lose out, though no fault of our own.

When will the powers that be actually start doing something about the problem 'speedboats'?

I have lost count of how many accidents speedboats have been involved in this year already!

*Phil Phelan  
Facebook*

## IDTracker bracelets have great potential

*Re: Aussies tackle unidentified medical patient quagmire in Phuket, Bali, February 9*

If the bracelets could be re-programmed with updated client details, they should be used on the speedboats and tour boats. Then once the trip is done the clients return the bracelet and it can be reprogrammed by the tour operator with the next client's information.

Though, it will depend on where the info is held and how secure the network is, as a lot of this info is private and confidential.

*Simon Murray  
Facebook*

## Preserve history before it's too late

*Re: Phuket governor orders investigation into Facebook 'defamation' post, February 4*

Help give back the land to the Sea Gypsies. It's not their fault that investors didn't do the research and bought land already occupied by people.

I believe they belong there, so the government should help them develop the village and tourists will come to appreciate the culture in a world where everything is disappearing.

Preserve history before it's too late.

*Teresa Jozef  
Facebook*

## Phuket Gazette

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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**Volume 23 Issue 7**

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# Sailing into the future

## FIRST PERSON

THE Thailand Yacht Show is the first time that the Thai government has hosted such an event for luxury yachts. We aim to show that Thailand – and especially Phuket – is ready to host such a big international event and promote the region as a world-class hub for yachts and cruise boats in Southeast Asia.

Phuket was selected as the most suitable province to host the yacht show, mainly because the island has the most marinas and a great deal of expertise hosting yachting events.

Ao Po Grand Marina was selected as the venue for the first yacht show because of its track record dealing with boats of all sizes. Having inspected the site, I am confident that the marina, and Phuket as a whole, is the best choice for holding the yacht show at the moment.

Organization of the event is being handled by the private sector while the government is playing a supporting financial role.

The show is a must-see event for anyone interested in yachting. The yachts on display are stunning, as are the sea and surroundings. It's a real taste of luxury.

It also includes seminars for anyone wanting to learn more about sailing, yacht maintenance and the industry as a whole.



**Omsin Chivapreuk, 64,** is the nation's Deputy Transport Minister. He graduated with a Master's degree in Business Administration from Kasetsart University and studied Advanced Management at Harvard University.

Here he talks about his expectations for the Thailand Yacht Show and how Phuket will benefit from the prestigious event.

Of course, this being the first time we have held an event of this kind, there are many challenges to meet and we hope to learn a great deal from it. However, it certainly won't be the last time, as we are dedicated to making the yacht show an annual event.

We have to take it one step at a time so that we can learn as much as we can from this inaugural event and apply what we learn to future events as we look to promote Phuket as a leading yachting destination.

We are now looking at several ways of promoting Phuket as a yachting hub, including possibly building more marinas – though we are well aware that Phuket is already doing well with the several marinas already in place.

That being said, we are still keen to support developers planning on building new marinas in suitable locations.

We are also looking into building terminals for cruise ships in Krabi, which will serve the Andaman region, and in Samui to serve cruise ships in the Gulf of Thailand.

Many large cruise ships already sail to this region from all over the world, especially from Europe and Scandinavia, so we want to be able to offer a full range of supporting facilities and services, and I believe that we can achieve this over the next few years.

We expect the Thailand Yacht Show to generate a great deal of interest in the yachting industry and generate significant income for the local economy while promoting marine tourism.

There will be more than 30 yachts (under 30 meters) joining the event, as well as many superyachts ranging in size from 30 to 70 meters.

Overall we are confident that the Thailand Yacht Show will be the first of many bigger and better yacht shows in the future and will help put Phuket and the region on the map as a world-class yachting and leisure destination.



Phuket is every yachties' dream destination. Photo: Rose Maitland-Smith

## Beauty, boats, bays

*Rose Maitland-Smith was chosen as the ambassador for the inaugural Thailand Yacht Show, which will take place at Ao Po Marina.*

WAKING up on a boat in Phang Nga Bay fills a person with wonder. Looking out across the bay, a magical, surreal sensation consumes you. It is not waking up from a dream, but waking up into a dream; the calm azure sea weaves its way around countless limestone outcroppings, the karst topography almost an extension of the water's flow.

It gives yachties and their lucky passengers, the sense of waking up in a fantastical museum. The tiny jungle-topped islands are sculptures in front of you, tempting your imagination to explore beyond what seems like reality. As the sun slowly rises up above the horizon and its light starts to play with colors, blues become vibrant – going green in shallow waters and gaining intensity in deeper areas.

With these cruising grounds at our doorstep, it is no surprise that the inaugural Thailand Yacht Show is taking place in Phuket. Of course it is not just the beauty of the region – there are many beautiful places in the world. Thailand is the land of smiles,

with our hospitality being our international cultural signature. And Phuket is a shining example of such hospitality.

Without a doubt, Phuket is a good choice for the Thailand Yacht Show. Equally important, however, is the fact that the Thailand Yacht Show is good for Phuket, and the country as a whole. With the full support of the national government, the yacht show is an important step forward for the country. This show will be ushering in large economic benefits for locals, both directly and indirectly involved in the marine industry.

Though marinas in Phuket are making enormous strides to ensure they have the capacity to work with superyachts, we shouldn't forget that Thailand's 3,219km of coastline is dotted with marinas, each with their own unique charm and utility.

With Phuket at the center of all this marine activity, we are developing a playground for those who feel a deep connection to the sea and the wonders nestled therein.

– *Rose Maitland-Smith*

## Words from the Wise

**“The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever.”**

– *Jacques Yves Cousteau*

**“I have never been able to grasp the meaning of time. I don't believe it exists. I've felt this again and again, when alone and out in nature. On such occasions, time does not exist. Nor does the future exist.”**

– *Thor Heyerdahl*

## Issues & Answers

### Are there licence requirements for my jet-skis?

DO I or any passengers on my yacht need a captain's licence to drive either of the jet-skis that we carry on board?

I have a captain for the yacht. However, I'd rather not have him also be forced to drive me around on the jet-ski. It seems a bit ridiculous.

Nonetheless, I was wanting to know exactly what the law was and whether or not it is enforced.

**Phuripat Theerakulpisut,** acting director of the Marine

**Office Region 5 replies:**

There is no current requirement to have a licence to operate jet-skis, as there is no specific law that applies at the moment.

However, jet-ski owners have to ensure that their vehicles have been legally registered. In your case, the jet-skis should be included with the yacht registration, but please visit our office with your yacht registration documents so that we can advise you on where you should and should not use jet-skis.

With so many boats currently in Phuket and neighboring provinces, we are concerned about the increased risk of accidents on the water.

As a precaution, please ensure that you or anyone using the jet skis already has some experience and safety knowledge and please make sure that the jet-skis are not being used near swimmers.

The Region 5 Marine Office is located at the deep sea port off Sakdideet Road on the way to Cape Panwa.



# Battling new boat show inertia

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

IN A REGION already swamped with boat shows, the development of a new show was not an easy undertaking, confessed Andy Treadwell, managing director of 3L Events (Thailand) Co Ltd and the organizer of the Thailand Yacht Show (TYS) 2016, as well as the Singapore Yacht Show.

The biggest problem with launching such a show is convincing the industry that you know what you're doing, that you have the backing and the resources, and that this time it will be different from those that have gone before. It's an awful lot of hard work not just to launch a show, but to keep developing it and making it work for clients, Mr Treadwell told the *Gazette*.

Mr Treadwell explained that the plethora of small boat shows in the region, that are created and run to sell marinas or surrounding property, are not serving the interests of the industry.

"When there are organizers who don't really have the resources or the passion for success driving them to constantly improve and grow the visitor base every year, it is hardly surprisingly that the in-

dustry is skeptical of anything new. However, I am not mad, and I don't take this kind of investment, which is huge at the beginning, lightly," he said.

The move to launch the TYS was strategically the best move for all stakeholders, including the government, which backed the show financially. Cabinet approved a fund of 15 million baht to organize the event, assigning the Ministry of Tourism and Sports to take full responsibility to ensure the success of the show.

The full support of the government was a key factor in Mr Treadwell's push to launch the show.

"You can't develop an industry such as this one without full support from the government. And here in Thailand it has only taken a year to get exactly that. I have never before worked with such a proactive, enthusiastic and genuinely interested government, that fully understand the benefits that the high-end yacht tourism industry can bring to the country," he said.

Despite this support, finalizing details was more complicated, which led to delayed marketing efforts for the show until January.



Andy Treadwell is the managing director of 3L Events (Thailand) Co Ltd and the organizer of the Thailand Yacht Show 2016, as well as the Singapore Yacht Show. Photo: TYS PR

"So we've only really had a couple of months to get the first edition underway. While this is obviously a very short lead time, we have got an exceptional turnout, there will be around 40 boats, including more than a dozen super-yachts and megayachts. The

management and staff at the Ao Po Marina have also worked flat-out to bring about the modifications necessary to put on a world-class show," he said.

Mr Treadwell expects to see the show growing substantially within the next two or three

years, as it becomes the kick-off event of the year for the yachting industry in Phuket, significantly supporting other forthcoming international yacht events, such as the Bay Regatta, Cape Panwa Hotel Raceweek, Phuket King's Cup Regatta and Asia Superyacht Rendezvous.

## Companies secure 18 dive sites following speedboat accident

PHI PHI officials have agreed to allow 18 dive sites to remain open following an incident on Feb 3, when a speedboat seriously injured two Russian divers.

"After talking to all relevant parties, we have decided to allow diving to continue at many of the current sites in the park," confirmed Sarayuth Tanthien, chief of the Hat Noppharat Thara - Mu Ko Phi Phi National Park.

"However, I must still submit a proposal for official approval to the Department of National



Diving continues in Phi Phi. Photo: Gazette file

Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation. In the meantime, the sites are available for use."

— Chutharat Plerin

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# Maritime Academy sends ambassadors

AMBASSADORS from the Galileo Maritime Academy are showing off their hospitality skills at the Thailand Yacht Show this week.

Founded in 2012 by Brian Murray, a career chief engineer in the British Royal Navy and a superyacht captain for about 30 years, Galileo offers courses combining hospitality skills and specialized knowledge needed for working on superyachts.

"The Thailand Yacht Show is a huge benefit, not only for our academy but also for Phuket, and Thailand in general," said Arisara Sana Pattaramalai, Galileo Maritime Academy's marketing manager. "It's like a domino effect. The Thailand Yacht Show will gather products to supply for the very high-end market. This will generate jobs, circulate income within the economy and educate people



Drive me tenderly. Photo: Galileo Maritime Academy

about the marine industry."

Galileo has academy ambassadors on hand at their booth at the event venue, Ao Po Grand Marina, from February 11 through February 14. They are handing out prizes, including free training courses and scholarships.

"We train Thai and foreign crew, said Ms Sana. "We tested a campaign in December that was promoted on our Thai website and had close to 200 applicants interested in joining or knowing more about the industry and academy," said Ms Sana.

Galileo Maritime Academy is currently the only training school of its kind in Asia that is directly accredited by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (UK government).

Galileos' next entry-level training will begin February 15 to February 29, just after the Thailand Yacht Show wraps up.

"The yacht show will bring more awareness to the general public. The more people that know about the yachting industry, the more people will be encouraged to join the industry, Ms Sana said.

— Katie P Arnold



# Asia Marine moves into motors



Teaming up to expand in the region's marine leisure industry: Asia Marine (Phuket) CEO Vincent Tabuteau (left) and founder of Hong Kong-based Asia Marine Yacht Services Eric Noyel (right). Photos: Asia Marine

ASIA Marine has been building, selling, chartering and managing yachts in Phuket for more than 25 years, and was voted 'Best Asia based Yacht Charter Agent' in the 2007 Asian Boating Awards.

In December last year, Asia Marine CEO Vincent Tabuteau took the company in a new direction by joining forces with Frenchman Eric Noyel, founder of Asia Marine Yacht Services (AMYS), which already has a strong foothold in the yachting markets of Hong Kong, the Philippines and Indonesia; specializing in motor yachts built by Numarine,

Galeon and Hatteras.

"The motor yacht business is a new approach to yachting for me," said Mr Tabuteau, who founded and launched Asia Marine Phuket in 1989.

Mr Tabuteau said he believed he and Mr Noyel were destined to meet. Both are French and have built businesses from their shared passion for the yachting industry.

"After meeting Eric Noyel and learning about his motor yacht business, it was clear our companies and individual areas of expertise were complementary," said Mr Tabuteau.

"AMYS is a regional network. We deal in luxury yachts and as Phuket is the Southeast Asian hub for yachting, we really had to have a presence here," said Mr Noyel.

"Vincent has local knowledge and vast experience in the yacht charter business and the international charter broker network, which benefits us greatly as operators and managers of several luxury charter yachts in the Asia Pacific region," he said.

The new luxury flybridge and hardtop motor yachts from Numarine include the sleek, eye-catching Numarine 78 Hardtop with three en-suite cabins and a loft-style saloon, which is on display at the Thailand Yacht Show at Ao Po Marina this weekend.

Other motor yachts from Numarine arriving in Hong Kong later this year are the Numarine 105 Hardtop and the Numarine 60 Flybridge.

AMYS is also bringing the first motor yacht from Poland-based Galeon Yachts to Phuket and Asia, the 50-ft Galeon 500 designed by award-winning designer Tony Castro.

The luxury leisure craft designed for cruising tropical waters features a unique 'beach mode' function, which extends the width of the cockpit to six meters by dropping down both



The Galeon 500 leisure cruiser has a unique beach mode feature, extending the cockpit to six meters by dropping down both the port and starboard sides. Photo: Galeon



Numarine 78 Hardtop with three en-suite cabins and a loft-style saloon comes only in purple. Photo: Numarine

the port and starboard sides.

The Galeon 500 leisure cruiser created a big buzz at the Cannes Boat Show last year and the first Galeon in Asia was ordered at the Phuket International Boat Show (PIMEX) in January. The motorboat is expected to arrive in

Phuket in September.

Asia Marine Phuket has also expanded its line of sporty water toys with the addition of Lampuga jet-propelled surfboards, which are equipped with 15-horsepower electrical jet engines that can silently propel surfers through the water at up to 32 mph and cause no pollution. Five of these innovative electric surfboards are already in Phuket.

Stop by at the Asia Marine and AMYS booth at the Phuket Yacht Show to see the sleek new 78-ft motor yacht from Numarine and other luxury yachts at Ao Po Grand Marina, Feb 11-14. — *Phuket Gazette*

## Chinese tourists flock to Phuket

RECORD numbers of Chinese tourists are flocking to Phuket this month to join Chinese New Year celebrations on the island.

Phuket International Airport (PIA) has been bustling for the past few days with tourists arriving on extra flights from mainland China and Malaysia, said PIA Director Monrudee Gettuphan.

"An extra 29 charter flights from China to Phuket were laid on between January 25 and February 26 by China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines and Shanghai Airlines, including an additional flight from Penang," said Ms Monrudee.

"There was a peak in arrivals on flights from China

between February 5 and 8, and we have seen an increase in the number of Chinese tourists arriving compared to the same time last year," she said.

"We usually process about 50,000 visitors per day on average, but on February 6 that number jumped to 54,000."

Currently the airport is dealing with about 300 flights each day, mostly comprising Chinese visitors, followed by Russian and Australian visitors, according to the latest airport statistics.

Security has also been bolstered at the airport for the Chinese New Year period by doubling security staff and conducting more frequent patrols.

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## Quattro Design grand opening

The grand opening of Quattro Design Phuket Showroom at Phuket Boat Avenue on February 3 introduced an eclectic collection of world-class furniture, interior design and art-decor to the island's lovers of bespoke designs. The 700sqm showroom is Quattro Design's first satellite showroom outside Bangkok.



(From L-R) Michael Wenk; Kanittha Prasopsirikul; May Pachantabutr; Norarat Kaewsawee, the Quattro showroom's manager; Artitaya Temtripeth; and Pongsapak Upatising.



(From L-R) Sathirapong Na Takuatoong; John Magee; Kornkanok Yongsakul; Quattro Design Managing Director Praowphan Laohapongchana and Design Director Wichada Sritakarin; Boat Development Chairman Boon Yongsakul and Bunjuan Panich.



President of the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA), under Royal Patronage, Pichai Wongwaisayawa (2nd left) and ASA Southern Office Vice President Prachya Sukkaew (3rd left) are joined on stage by guest speakers and exhibitors.

## Architects gather to network, share ideas and inspire at ASA exposition in Phuket Town

Architects from around the region gathered at Limelight Avenue in Phuket Town last month for the Southern Architectural Expo 2016' from January 29 through 31. The architects are members of the Association of Siamese Architects, under Royal Patronage. The event was held under the theme 'Yapp Roi' (South Up), to promote architectural achievements in southern Thailand. The event features architectural exhibitions, free consultations on building maintenance and networking opportunities with suppliers and architectural publications.

## Good vibes at the Gazette



Amari Phuket's Marketing Communications Manager, Penprapa Chooklin, delivers a box of branded treats to Phuket Gazette Managing Editor Isaac Simonelli (left) and PGTV Producer Simon Hand (right).



Soft drink giant Haad Thip Public Company Limited's Phuket Branch Manager Kumpee Maneloke (2nd right) and Waraporn Sirinupong, PR & Marketing (right), deliver branded note pads to PGTV Producer Simon Hand and (2nd left), Phuket Gazette's Event Coordinator, Chantawan Sangkaew (left).



## ents in Paradise

### Bike for DAD photos exhibited at Central Festival Phuket mall



Phuket Vice Governor Kajonkiet Rakpanitmanee. Photo: Southern Life Style

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket Office exhibited winning entries for the recent 'Bike for DAD' photo competition. Some 1,009 photographs were selected out of more than 9,000 snaps, selfies and captures sent in by the public from January 21 through January 24 at the lifestyle mall.

### Tourism Minister on marina visit

On a flying visit to Phuket last week, Thailand's Sports and Tourism Minister, Kobkarn Wattanavrangkura, stopped off at Ao Po Grand Marina to inspect the venue for the inaugural Thailand Yacht Show (TYS) being held this week.



(From L-R) Yacht show organizer Andy Treadwell; John Magee, publisher of the Phuket Gazette, the TYS national media sponsor; HE Kobkarn Wattanavrangkura, Minister of Tourism and Sports; and Rose M Smith, TYS brand ambassador and Phuket Today presenter.

### A red night out in the Limelight

Directors of Phuket Town lifestyle mall Limelight Avenue threw a Chinese New Year party for media and friends at the shopping and lifestyle venue on January 26.



Managing Director of Banthai Beach Resort & Spa, Pong-Anan Suwannakarn (left), and Managing Director of Limelight Management Co Ltd Panee Koaysomboon.



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# Mending our ways to save marine life

## As a top tourist spot, Phuket must protect its fragile ecosystems



**Keep It Green**

**By Patrick Campbell**

ONE could go on *ad nauseam* about the destruction of Phuket's marine environment.

Consider eutrofication, the remorseless process whereby the continental shelf surrounding our emerald isle is laced with chemicals from fertilizer and waste resulting in the growth of algae, and water so depleted of oxygen that few fish will tolerate it. Worse, the cement-laced sediment from land development which has, for example, destroyed 250 rai of coral reef off Cape

Panwa, or much larger areas of coral reef skirting Tang Khen beach. Add to that the impact of over-fishing, especially by trawlers and their drag-nets, which not only continue to deplete near-exhausted fish stocks, but vacuum up everything else from the sea bed. A recent decree to forbid the use of gill nets with a mesh of less than four centimeters has predictably been overturned.

On land, the proliferation of high density apartments in Phuket has massively increased the amount of untreated wastewater entering our once pristine seas, as well as destroying huge numbers of trees. Their roots prevented most of this run-off from entering the Andaman Sea, as

well as breathing life-enhancing oxygen into our atmosphere. Shrimp farms discharge their contaminated water into the adjacent ocean; the obsession with plastic packaging has led to a dump the size of Texas in the Pacific and the likely demise of leatherback turtles who mistake plastic bags for jellyfish.

One might say all of this is inevitable. After all, Phuket is one of the world's top tourist destinations. To most eyes, golden beaches look more appealing than mangrove forests. But these areas of western Phuket, cleared years ago for coastal development,

have largely been created at their expense. Home to 230 species, mangrove swamps are not only nurseries for fish, but offer a bio-diversity utterly unique in the marine world.

Seagrass meadows are almost as important. Home to numerous benthic organisms and essential for fragile marine ecosystems, such as bottom dwelling crustaceans and worms, 149 varieties of fish rely on their existence. So do green sea turtles and dugongs, a distinctive sea-dwelling mammal now so rare that its numbers in the Andaman Sea are estimated to be no more than 150. They are dying, like turtles, not just from speedboat propellers, but from lack of food.

Of course, and as any yachtsman can testify, the is-



The Andaman Sea has about 280 varieties of fish as well as numerous benthic organisms. Photo: Ritiks

land is still, at least in visual terms, an enchanting paradise that boasts some of the most spectacular marine scenery anywhere in the world. Phang Nga National Park, which enjoys some protection, has magnificent limestone islands or *karsts*, which feature towering cliffs, pristine beaches and lush canopies of tropical evergreen forest. The tidal channels run through vast mangrove swamps, the largest remaining concentration in Thailand. And the list of marine inhabitants is still impressive: Bengal and water monitor lizards, banded sea snakes and an avian popu-

lation that includes swiftlets, helmeted hornbills, ospreys and sea eagles. The mangrove forests are home to more than 200 species of mammal including crab-eating macaques, white-handed gibbons and dusky langurs. A cornucopia of riches.

Much of the island is fringed by golden beaches and rocky promontories. Indeed, Nai Harn, with its stately *casuarina* pines, is regularly voted as one of the world's top tourist destinations. Many of the island's northern beaches Nai Yang, Mai Khao and Naithon not only boast world-class resorts such as Indigo Pearl and

Trisara, but are part of Sirinath National Park, 22 kilometers of protected coast plus 68 sqkm of sea. Bang Tao beach is a majestic expanse of sand dunes fully 8km long.

The Andaman Sea still looks magnificent, an azure ocean dotted with lush green islands. There are still 280 varieties of fish in these waters. Whether you travel by longtail boat or under sail, you will be captivated by the beauty of this sceptered isle and its ocean setting.

But just remember that it won't be around for long – unless we mend our ways.

### February 21. Siroj Mini Marathon

The 4<sup>th</sup> Siroj Run for Health Run for Charity Mini Marathon will be held at Phuket International Hospital. The event will feature a 12 kilometer mini marathon for men and women for an entry fee of 250 baht. Winners will be awarded HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Royal Trophies.

There will also be a 4km fun run for men and women for which the entry fee is 200 baht, as well as a 3.5km three-people-team family fun run for an entry fee of 500 baht. VIP runners may register in any category for an entry fee of 2,000 baht. Top finishers will be awarded Phuket International

Hospital trophies.

Registration begins at 4:30am and the race starts at 6am. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

### February 22. Makha Bucha Day

Falls on the full moon of the third lunar month and commemorates the Buddha's ordaining of 1,250 monks who had arrived unannounced from afar only seven months after the Buddha began his teachings. It is also the date the Buddha delivered his Fundamental Teachings just months before his death.

## WHAT'S ON in Phuket

### March 26. Thailand Beach Volley Festival

International amateur beach volleyball tournament with teams from Asia, Australia, Europe, and the Americas competing. Classes are divided into men's 2 x 2, women's 2 x 2 and mixed 4 x 4. Players of all levels are welcome to compete. Entry fee is 2,000 baht. Free admission for spectators.

### April 6. Chakri Memorial Day

Chakri Day commemorates the origins of the Chakri dynasty founded by Rama

I who established Bangkok as the nation's capital. HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty.

### April 13-15. Songkran Festival

Songkran is the Thai New Year Festival also known as the Water Festival. The word Songkran literally means transformation or change. Held during the driest month in Thailand, Songkran is full of symbolic traditions such as pouring water on other people to wish them good luck for the New Year. The festival also includes parades, pageants and paying homage to one's ancestors, among other celebrations.



# Keeping our sharks out of the soup

By Myles Randall

MOVIES and fascinating documentaries depict fierce predators lurking beneath the surface of azure waters just waiting to rip unsuspecting swimmers into fleshy ribbons with their hideous teeth.

Well, that image is just plain wrong, according to Brendon Sing, spokesperson for Shark Guardian, a registered conservation charity.

Brendon visited Palm House International School in Rawai last week to deliver this message to its students. "Public perception of sharks is contradictory to the abundant evidence that supports the benefits people gain by the presence of sharks," claims Brendon.

The children of Palm House School were riveted by the media presentation and the accompanying facts and anecdotes, delivered in a well-paced

fashion, which held their attention throughout.

Sharks have been around four times longer than dinosaurs and with declining shark numbers at the top of the food chain any tampering that causes imbalance in the natural order will have drastic effects for the world. 97 per cent of sharks are actually harmless to humans and of the remaining three per cent, the rare cases of harm caused to humans are over-sensationalized.

Shark attacks usually occur because humans can resemble natural prey; surfers on boards, for example, offer silhouettes from below which correspond with turtles' shadows.

It has been reported that horses are the animal that kills the largest number of people in Australia, yet the absence of "Horse Alert" helicopters seems incongruent. More people are annually killed by the humble kitchen toaster than by sharks.

Asia, and particularly Thai-



Sharks have been around much longer than dinosaurs. Photo: merone

land, have seen dramatic declines in shark populations due to market demands for shark fin soup, and as a result of oceanic pollution. Sightings of Phuket's harmless local Leopard Shark have declined over the last five years, from a few each month to less than one every two

months.

Local floating restaurants have caged some sharks in efforts to draw customers but this practice is being addressed by the Shark Guardian charity by offering assistance in providing other promotional incentives for those restaurants who ab-

stain from caging sharks.

With 12,000 sharks killed each hour and 90 per cent of shark species already extinct, the current pace of shark demise can be countered by the concept of ecotourism and Phuket is ideal for this.

More revenue is generated for the community by one tourist coming to see sharks in their natural habitat than is received from selling a shark as a carcass. Large shark protection areas measuring hundreds and thousands of square kilometers have been designated in other parts of the world.

According to Shark Guardian, Phuket has a great opportunity to cash in on the tourist dollar while at the same time doing something good for the environment.

The students of Palm House School, now better educated about the plight of sharks, now ask, "Can we have a Shark Park, please?"

## Andaman Cruises gets the party going



Guests can enjoy dancing to the tunes of DJ Romain, while perusing luxurious yachts at Ao Po marina. Photo: Andaman Cruises PR


ANDAMAN Cruises will be hosting its 'Blue Party' just in time for the launch of the Thailand Yacht Show.

The event will consist of guests perusing some of the island's most luxurious yachts brought to anchor at Ao Po Grand Marina, while dancing to the sounds of DJs Romain Pelletti and Fabio Vuotto.

Andaman Cruises offers a chance to cruise around the waters of the Phuket archipelago aboard yachts ranging from a 23-ft craft up to a fully-appointed 135-ft superyacht. The yachts are available for private charter.

The Blue Party will kick off this Saturday, February 13, at 8pm.

— *Phuket Gazette*



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# Battle the dark side of gourmet toothfish dishes

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THERE are a number of reasons that toothfish, more commonly known at the dinner table as Chilean Sea Bass, are coveted by chefs at world-class restaurants and on superyachts.

"Chilean Sea Bass has a fabulous taste and an almost sinful mouth-feel.

Its high-fat content keeps it moist during cooking and gives it a rich, moist, tender flavor profile that melts in your mouth. It has white flesh with large, tender flakes," explains chefs-resources.com in its flavor profile of the delicacy.

The fish, which is traded in more than 100 countries, is primarily eaten by diners in the United States and Europe.

"Toothfish is mainly a fish for consumers in a wealthier economic group, given that it is one of the world's most expensive fishes to eat," said Captain Siddharth Chakravarty

of the Sea Shepherd ship *Steve Irwin*, which is currently part of the hunt for the toothfish-poaching vessel, *Viking*.

Toothfish are slow-maturing, apex predators of the Southern Ocean.

"Just like sharks in tropical reefs, they maintain the health of the ecosystem," he said.

"In addition to this, the Southern Ocean is one of the last remaining healthy ocean systems on this planet and, while we are still a long way from

learning everything about it, we know that every single species there plays an important part in keeping it functioning."

Nonetheless, a strong consumer demand for the delicacy remains. Poaching of the species in the Antarctic is fuelled by the high demand for the fish and legal limits on catches, which are put in place to ensure the sustainability of its populations.

The Convention on the Con-



Toothfish is commonly called Chilean Sea Bass. Photo: Barbara Glickler Notarile



The fish is primarily eaten by diners in the United States and Europe. Photo: Sea Shepherd

servation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) has set an annual quota of just under 25,000 tons of toothfish caught per year. However, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) poachers targeting the species are doing incalculable damage to the populations as they attempt to meet market demands.

"A Catch Documentation Scheme has been implemented under the CCAMLR to improve the traceability of the toothfish from the ocean to the plate. This has helped a lot. However, the trade of the illicit catch remains a mystery and sufficient gaps remain in ensuring 100 per cent seafood traceability," explains Capt Chakravarty.

One such vessel, *Kunlun*, was apprehended in Phuket after it falsely reported off-loading 182 tonnes of ille-

gally caught Patagonian toothfish, valued at 179 million baht, as 182 tonnes of grouper, valued at just 15mn baht. After months of detention, the ship was able to flee the port.

However, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society this week announced that authorities in Senegal have detained the internationally wanted toothfish-poaching vessel.

Since escaping Phuket, there have been concerns that the vessel would be off-loading its catch and returning to Antarctica. However, with its detention in Senegal, it is confirmed that the *Kunlun*, renamed *Asian Warrior*, did not return to the Southern Ocean after it was pursued by the Sea Shepherd ship *Sam Simon* last February.

"In previous years, illegal

vessels would simply change their names and flags at will and use international loopholes and the lack of international cooperation to survive and remain in operation," said Capt Chakravarty. "It is incredibly satisfying to know that the *Kunlun*, which was chased out of the Southern Ocean by my vessel in February 2015, has been unable to resume its illegal fishing operations."

Consumers wield an enormous amount of influence and power over the way the industry is regulated and the way governments respond to IUU operations in the fishing business, said Capt Chakravarty.

"Consumers should first be aware of the food choices they make and secondly demand transparency and traceability for all seafood."

## Small-scale fishermen seek changes to limitations ushered in with Article 34

REPRESENTATIVES of small-scale fishermen in 22 coastal provinces on February 5 filed a petition with Agriculture Minister Gen Chatchai Sarikalya calling for an amendment to Article 34 of the Fisheries Decree, which limits them to 'inshore fisheries' within three nautical miles of the coastline.

Sama-ae Jehmudor, chief of the Association of Thai Fishermen Federation, said Article 34 – one of the measures implemented to eradicate illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Thailand – would adversely impact their livelihood.

It also limits the right of the sea of small-scale fishermen, who account for more than 80 per cent fisherfolk in 22 coastal provinces, he said.

"Small-scale fishing is the



Local fishermen protest against Article 34. Photo: The Nation

foundation of the community economy, which provides food security and generates income for these people. It is a good practice that produces good quality products and is environmentally responsible," Mr Sama-ae said.

Limiting them to inshore fishing is not good in the long run because the coastal area is supposed to be a nursery ground for fish and the habitat of rare marine life, he said.

This decree also allows commercial fishermen to fish from the coast up to the exclusive economic zone's 200-nautical-mile territory.

Since the problems stem from destructive fishing practices, a more sustainable solution would be banning dangerous fishing equipment such as trawling and push nets as well as electrical tools for catching fish, Mr Sama-ae said.

– The Nation

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# The case for in-water zones



On Deck

By Duncan Worthington

PHUKET'S ten per cent beach rule and the issue of beach and sea zoning has received a lot of attention recently and yet here we are mid high season and it's easy to see the problems haven't been fixed.

Head down to Patong Beach any day of the week and you will see roped off swim areas. You might actually have to look a little harder than expected as the non-roped off areas cover much more space and these are set aside for jet-skis, parasails and the such. Essentially, they're non-swim zones.

A few years ago I was in Boracay – a stunning island in the Philippines popular with tourists from all corners of the world. I was there for a windsurfing event on White Beach; what amazed me most was the organization of the beach. I don't mean Singapore-esque organization, but a simple and effective way of organizing beach use locally, that seemed to work.

All the resorts were separated from the beach by a sand or dirt path. During the day, on the beach side of this path there were temporary stalls selling everything from textiles, trinkets, knick-knacks, drinks and snacks.



Marine vehicle zones seem to dominate Patong Beach. Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

The system was apparently managed by the local authority. People followed the rules and everything was kept clean. Simply put, it worked. It worked for the local businesses and the tourists. And the beaches remained spotless.

I was blown away by this and still don't understand why Phuket cannot come up with a sensible, workable approach.

For the windsurfing event on White Beach, we set up marquees up on the beach and we had to get permission to do that, and pay for a permit. The permit allowed us to use that space only between

certain times. Similarly, we had to get permission for the windsurfers and speedboats used for race management and media to access the beach, and again we had to purchase a permit, which stipulated the hours we were allowed access. This meant we had to finish racing by a certain time, so all the water craft could get back to the beach before the validity of our permit ran out.

Sounds harsh? Not at all. It was very successful. There was even on-water support from the local authority keeping other boats and swimmers away

from the area we were using thereby ensuring the safety of the other people using the area.

Something else I noticed in Boracay was that catamarans, parasails, jet-skis and speedboats all used the beach too. There were three set stations on the beach where they were based. Tourists had to walk along the beach to these stations to get on the craft and the craft could only leave the beach from those points. They would then head straight out to sea to avoid swimmers; after which they could have fun. All craft would then have to return to the same station on the beach.

A simple and effective system. There was no need for swim areas as swimmers could swim anywhere they liked and it was obvious to swimmers they didn't want to swim near the three watersports stations, and they took up probably less than ten per cent of the whole beach.

I haven't been to Boracay since that trip, but perhaps Phuket and Thailand's authorities should.

*Duncan Worthington is a long-time Phuket resident and through Infinity Communications ([www.infinity-comms.com](http://www.infinity-comms.com)) consults for leading consumer brands, hospitality and marine clients in Thailand. In his 'spare time' he runs the marine portal [www.MarineScene.asia](http://www.MarineScene.asia). #OnDeckPhuket*

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# Twinning yachting and property



TWINS in any language are a strange brew, whether actual biological pairs, or the symbiotic kind. Whether it is yin, or yang, or any manner of kinship, there remains an undeniable connection. As I travel often between Asia's resort islands, I'm fortunate to have a clear perspective of what's right and what's wrong with Phuket.

Connecting the dots between tourism, real estate and yachting has always been an interesting task, but when you shift up to the luxury property sector the attraction clearly exists.

History is one of my favorite reference points, as indicated by demand for a certain product, brand or location. Phuket's pairing of upscale property and yachts takes us back to the formative years of the Amanpuri Resort, where a jet-set crowd was anxious to get out of the box and snap up Adrian Zecha's inspired tropical-modern seaside villas.

Over time the domino effect had real estate buyers wanting to either bring their own mega yachts to Phuket, or else go out and purchase a new one. Bring on Aman Cruises, where hotel



While Bali and Phuket continue to spar in the global tourism wars, Boracay keeps ranking as one of the best beaches anywhere. Photo: Angelo Juan Ramos

management got their feet wet and understood the fundamental link between both products.

Geography is always important and Phuket's fabulous location, with the east coast being a safe haven, has seen a steady surge in marinas over the years, including: Boat Lagoon, Yacht Haven, Royal Phuket Marina and Ao Po Grand Marina. Finding a parking spot these days for an expensive ocean-going toy is like trying to find a parking

space at Central Festival on a busy weekend.

While Bali and Phuket continue to spar in the global tourism wars, Boracay keeps ranking as one of the best beaches anywhere – from Samui to China Beach, but none of these has the yachting facilities and infrastructure of Phuket. Is it just a coincidence that we also boast Asia's largest set of multi-million-dollar vacation homes in any of these leisure markets?

In my line of work, we call the peripheral gray areas 'demand-drivers'. For tourism it's a no brainer – airlift capacity is all-important. When developers I meet in other resort locations try to understand what is unique about the top end of Phuket's property market, one key factor is always the existence of a large-scale marine sector. Chalk that one up as a no-brainer.

Sure, geography has blessed us with easy travel times to

Hong Kong and Singapore, yet there are many other locations that have similar attributes that have not been able to cash in on the golden fleece. Once an industry gains momentum, the reality is that a magnetic attraction draws abundant like-minded individuals to the same parade. No-one ever said that the rich wanted to go to a party of one.

With the yachting set gearing up for a bigger and better 2016, I think it's time the real estate players tip their hats, or at least take off their Ray Bans for a moment, and acknowledge what an important part marinas, yacht dealers and charter operators play in the economic success of our island. A hard working set of dedicated professionals have brought us world class products, events and a wide range of services, that only continue to grow.

It's often too easy to point out where Phuket gets things wrong, or gripe about an urbanizing resort trend, but the truth is that the marine trade is one of our banner industries. For the top-end sector, it's heaven-sent and sometimes it doesn't hurt to shout about it from the rooftops. A yin without a yang after all isn't the kind of twin to which you'd want to get close.

## Land, building tax criteria finalized

THE finance ministry has finalised criteria for collection of land and building taxes, which will target land speculators, and plans to propose it at policy level for consideration.

Somchai Sujjapongse, permanent secretary of the ministry, said the revised legal draft would focus on collecting tax from speculators to push them into making their land available for use.

Local administrative organisations will also earn more, and then the government would have to spend less to support them, he said.

At present, most government revenue comes from personal and corporate income taxes and value-added tax. Property tax accounts about one per cent of govern-

ment revenue.

Amendments to personal income tax, which are close to finalization, will widen the base of taxpayers, and are expected to be proposed to the Finance Ministry this quarter.

An anonymous source from the ministry said that earlier, the Fiscal Policy Office had proposed a legal draft for four types of taxes on land and buildings. If approved, the current bill will take effect on January 1, 2017.

According to the bill, land for agricultural purposes will be taxed at a ceiling of 0.2 per cent of its appraisal price, land and buildings for residential purposes will be taxed at a ceiling of 0.3 per cent, and land and buildings for commercial or industrial purposes will be taxed at a ceiling of one per cent.

– The Nation

## Big players driving up land prices in Bangkok

TOP property firms in Bangkok bought land worth 16 billion baht in the last two months of 2015, and the next land deal, worth at least 8bn baht, will be completed by the end of this month, a source close to the deal said.

In November, 33 rai (5.3 hectares) on Ratchadaphisek Road worth 9bn baht was purchased, amounting to 170,454 baht per square meter.

In December, a deal for 40 rai on Vibhavadi Road near Hong Wang School was closed for 7bn baht, was purchased by a joint venture between BTS Group Holdings and Sansiri.

This month's deal is for 700 rai near Krunghthep Kreetha Road, owned by Bangkok Land, which is negotiating for a sale



BTS Group Holdings and Sansiri recently joined forces to snap up 40 rai of prime real estate worth 7 billion baht. Photo: Diliff

worth not less than 8bn baht with leading property firms, the source said.

He added that the demand among big companies to buy undeveloped land was still growing as they saw potential to develop residential and commercial buildings in locations near the mass transit system.

"This year will be a difficult year for small and medium-

sized property firms to do business when leading firms, especially the big conglomerates such as Singha Group, TCC Land, CPLand, and Central Group, began expanding their investment in the property market last year, driving the demand for land. This is also pushing up land prices this year," he said.

– The Nation



# Marina across the bay

By Nick Davies

KRABI Boat Lagoon opened in late 2012 as one of the province's first residential marinas, adding a new freehold option for foreign investors with The Cleat Condominium – a collection of 45 waterfront condominium units in three low-density buildings overlooking the marina's 80 yacht berths.

Built by Boat Development Co Ltd, the same developers behind Phuket Boat Lagoon, the marina caters to the increasing number of visitors choosing Krabi as an international yachting and leisure destination.

"Krabi Boat Lagoon is aimed at boat owners and investors, or anyone who loves being near water and next to nature," said General Manager Thana Tharadolaparb.

"Krabi Boat Lagoon is located in a natural mangrove area, easily reached by a 15-minute drive from Krabi International Airport, about two hours by car from Phuket International Airport or just



The government is looking to support the development of marinas along Thailand's more than 3,000km of coastline, including the coasts of Krabi and Phuket. Photo: Krabi Boat Lagoon

one hour by speedboat. Boats can come and go freely through the sea entrance, which has a minimum tide depth of 1.5 meters."

Starting at just over 3 million baht, The Cleat Condo comprises one-bedroom Studio (37.74sqm) and Grand Studio

(47.28sqm) units, two-bedroom suites (81sqm) and a Duplex Penthouse (74.36sqm).

The units come with garden or marina-front options and rooms with a view of the mangroves.

Two of the buildings are complete and fully-furnished

units are available. Construction of the third building is scheduled to be completed this year.

As well as the 80 berths for yachts, the marina has hard stands for up to 100 boats serviced by a 50-tonne travel lift, workshops and contractor

services.

The marina provides good shelter during the Southwest monsoon season.

The Cleat Condominium is sold under a freehold strata structure, meaning that foreign nationals can own up to 49 per cent of the units outright. Owners who are not always at home can take advantage of the developer's rental management service and benefit from rental returns. The rooms can be rented out on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

"Permanently living at The Cleat would be an ideal option for boat owners and retirees seeking privacy, tranquility and convenience," said Mr Thana.

There is a clubhouse with a swimming pool, fitness center and library. Also, there are plans to open a beach club exclusively for residents later this year.

Plans for the beach club include a bar and restaurant, cycling track, tennis courts and another swimming pool, as well as on-site kayaking and sailing lessons.

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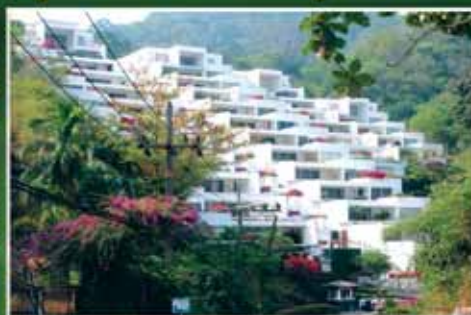
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2 bedrooms with aircons, 2 bathrooms, 90sqm, WiFi, cable, maid. 11,500 baht per month. Minimum 3 months. For more information, please call 084-716 0502.

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## KARON OCEANFRONT LUXURY APT

5-star 1 bedroom, sea view, 100 sqm, pools, gym. Available on March 1st. Tel: 087-531 1124 (English). Email: dfenocchio@hotmail.com, <http://karonhill.altvista.org>

## B.L. APARTMENT

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

## CONDO FOR RENT / SALE



2-3 bedrooms at Laem-Ka Beach, Rawai. Please email to bnarakamon@gmail.com

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Lee Marine office at Ao Po Grand Marina is looking for Thai female/male cook. 30-45 years old. Cooking Thai & Western food (fresh food, organic provided for serving our staff). Driving is preferable. Negotiable salary. Tel: 076-681015.



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Golden Buddha Beach Resort is a very special eco destination, located on the western shore of Ko Phra Thong, Phang Nga Province. Our claim is "the luxury of nature". We are looking for an enthusiastic, nature loving Front of House Manager to replace Khun Pena who is leaving us after nine years.

The role involves constant contact with guests before and during their stay, organising their transfer from the airport by car and long tail to the island, welcoming them from the boat, introducing the resort and facilities to each of them, and making sure they have a pleasant stay with us. The Front of House Manager is in charge of booking records, daily bills, and general correspondence. He/she is also directly responsible for the kitchen and bar staff, as well as housekeeping.

#### Requirements:

- Fluency in English, both written and spoken
- Perfect command of Microsoft Excel, Word, and generally computer literate
- Problem solving personality, pleasant and service oriented
- Male or female, Thai national
- Experience preferred

Interested candidates should apply in writing, including a resume and photograph, and stating expected salary. Email to Khun Pissa at [pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com](mailto:pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com) Tel: 081-892 2208 or 081-895 2242.

Please refer to our website prior to applying  
[www.goldenbuddhaharesort.com](http://www.goldenbuddhaharesort.com)

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- Interested in sports & PE are an advantage

#### Cook's Helper ( 1 position )

- Thai national
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#### System Technician ( 1 position )

- Thai national
- Vocational Certificate / higher in maintenance or related field
- At least 1 year experience in maintenance is preferable

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), [nussaran@bisphuket.ac.th](mailto:nussaran@bisphuket.ac.th)



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Project Owner : Anawatt Limited Company's registered no. 0105646144265. Head office : 475, Sri Ayudthaya Road, Thaniot, Phayathai, Rajbhui, Bangkok, 10400. Registered capital (THB) : 10,000,000. Paid up capital (THB) : 2,500,000 (as of date 3 August 2015). The President : Mr. Saeetha Thavasin. The Project : Baan Mai Khao Condominium's registered no. 3/2558, Land title deed no. 6235, approximately area 13-2-60 Rai, located at Mai Khao Sub-District, Thalang District, Phuket Province, as a Condominium of 3 (storeys) of 6 (buildings) and 5 (storeys) of 3 (buildings), total of 206 units, (for residential : 206 units, and for commercial : units). The Land and building have been mortgaged with Siam Commercial Bank P.L.C.. Condominium units promptly to be transferred within 30 days upon the purchaser has paid the unit price in full together with the sinking fund, common fee, tax and other fees as prescribed by Project Owner or the Condominium Juridical Person subjected to the Condominium law. \*Terms and conditions apply. / Featured images consist of photography on location with simulated atmosphere and surroundings. For any questions regarding the images, please contact our customer service staff or visit the project site. Tel : +66(0)2 201 3999.

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