

# Phuket Gazette

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‘HER PARTNER CARRIED HER UNCONSCIOUS BODY ON HIS OWN JET-SKI’

## LICENCE TO KILL



Phuket's beaches are littered with jet-skis and vendors hoping to lure inexperienced tourists into a five-minute joyride. Photo: Gazette file

### Partner of jet-ski accident victim awaits trial for her death

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

A 20-YEAR-OLD Australian woman was killed in a jet-ski collision with her partner at Kata Beach on the evening of February 6, for which he was charged with reckless driving causing death and is awaiting trial in Phuket.

The victim, named Emily Jayne Collie, suffered severe injuries to her head, neck and shoulders.

“Other beachgoers came to her aid and lifeguards administered CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) while waiting for police and rescue workers to arrive,” said Lt Col Patiwan Yordsuan of Karon Police.

Ms Collie was rushed to Chalong Hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Her body was then transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital for an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

“The couple were staying at a hotel in Karon and had rented two jet-skis to ride together to Kata Beach. After their jet-skis collided, Ms Collie’s partner, Thomas Keating, 22, carried her unconscious body on his own jet-ski, shouting for help,” said Col Patiwan.

Mr Keating suffered minor injuries. The Australian embassy was informed of Ms Collie’s death and her family has arrived in Phuket to repatriate her body back home.

“Mr Keating paid for Ms Collie’s family to travel to Phuket, as well as all the expenses of repatriating her body,” said Karon Superintendent Col Sanya Thongsawad.

Ms Collie’s family is entitled to 50,000 baht (about AU\$1,287) under an insurance policy taken out for the couple’s jet-ski rental. They are now waiting for the embassy to process the documents that will allow them to return home with her body, while Mr Keating is required to remain in Thailand for at least a month, while awaiting a court case verdict to determine whether he will be convicted of reckless driving causing his partner’s death.

Officials believe the accident was caused by the couple’s ‘reckless behavior’,

but jet-ski rental operators have been under public fire for at least 20 years in Phuket due to numerous deaths, injuries, legendary scams and brutish local operator behavior.

Despite the volume of complaints from tourists, local residents and hotel managers, there has been no success in shutting down the jet-skis – or even in curtailing, or simply regulating, their use on Phuket’s beaches.

Marine Office Chief Surat Siriasaiyas said that his office is working closely with the marine police and navy to keep a closer eye on jet-ski operations in Phuket.

“At this stage, we have found no illegal jet-skis in Phuket. However, we will call in the jet-ski club members and president to talk further about safety measures, including warning tourists about reckless driving,” said Mr Surat.

“Accidents happen due to reckless behavior. We will try to promote safety and ensure that tourists follow it. The same goes for jet-ski operators; we will track them to see whether they are legally registered and have valid insurance,” he added.

*Additional reporting by Kongleaphy Keam and The Nation.*

### Lifeguard in Phuket quits after vendors ‘claim’ beach

UMBRELLA VENDORS forced a lifeguard to remove his government-issued tent at Laem Singh Beach, despite it being declared a ‘virgin’ beach by the Phuket V/Gov last year. Currently, the beach has no visibly marked lifeguard tent.

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### BUSINESS



Active stock selection adds value to your portfolio but also adds to overall risk.

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### PROPERTY



Real estate developers now aim to differentiate and compete on innovation.

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### LIFE&STYLE



Expatriate living in Phuket plans to push for more young sailors and sets up warehouses to manufacture Moth boats.

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## LOCAL NEWS

### Briefly

## Speedboat crashes into longtail

THREE people escaped serious injuries after a speedboat crashed into a longtail off Phi Phi on February 6.

Capt Paramin Maikul of Phi Phi Police received reports of the collision at about 2pm.

"The incident occurred near Maya Bay. The longtail had two Japanese tourists and a captain, named Somsak Sangpaen, on board. The captain sustained minor injuries, while the tourists are safe," said Capt Paramin.

"The speedboat had 21 passengers on board, none of whom sustained injuries," he added.

The longtail was left in pieces and its passengers flung into the water. Asanee Raden, the captain of the speedboat, navigated back to the victims and pulled them out of the water before calling the police.

"The speedboat was heading from Maya Bay to Phuket, while the longtail was on its way to Maya Bay from Phi Phi," Capt Paramin told the *Gazette*.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

## Local killed in horrific crash at Central Festival

A RAWAI local was killed on February 6 when his truck crashed into an electric pole in front of Central Festival Phuket.

"We arrived with rescue workers at about 4:40am to find the heavily-damaged brown Toyota Vigo pick-up truck flipped over to its left side and smashed into the pole," said Lt Patcharee Wongboon of Wichit Police. "The entire roof of the vehicle had caved into the cabin, and its canopy had been

## Flowers placed on Turkish tourist's crash site



A Turkish tourist was killed nearby Kathu Floating Market after he crashed his motorbike on metal sheeting and consequently hit an electric pylon. He received severe head injuries and was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he was pronounced dead after about 2 hours. The next day, flowers were placed in his remembrance, an unusual sight to see on Phuket roads. Photo: Zohaib Sikander

ripped off due to the impact."

The driver, named Aroon Keekas, was lodged inside and already dead when the officers arrived. Rescue workers had to use Jaws-of-Life to pry Mr Aroon's body out of the truck.

"Witnesses told us that Mr Aroon was coming from Naka and turned at the Darasamuth Intersection. They said they heard a tire blow-out, and then saw the truck jump the road divider to the other side in front of Central Festival before it crashed into the pole."

The truck was carrying more than 10 large boxes. Police said that they were not sure whether it was specifically the truck's speed, the tire blowout or the heavy load that caused the crash.

— **Winai Sarot**

## Teens stabbed during robbery

TWO teenage boys were stabbed by a gang of teenagers who allegedly tried to rob them at Bang Niew Dam Reservoir in Thalang on February 3.

Police and rescue teams arrived at the scene to find the two boys injured and bleeding. Worrayuth Kahapana had stab wounds to his left arm and lower rib. The second victim had multiple stab wounds on his back and body.

Both victims gave statements to police at Thalang Hospital after they stabilized. "They said that they rode their bikes to the reservoir, where they were enjoying a picnic when 5-6 teenagers approached them on motorbikes. At first they said they just wanted to talk, but then one of them brandished a knife and asked them to hand over their possessions," said Maj Chaleam Nhoochuay of Thalang Police.

"The teens resisted, so the suspect(s) stabbed them and fled."

Passersby saw the injured boys and called the police.

— **Winai Sarot**

## 2nd bomb scare in Phuket Town halts traffic

THE Explosive Ordnance Unit (EoU) responded to a bomb scare at Yi Teng Intersection in Phuket Town on February 3.

Phuket City Police received reports of a suitcase that had been left near a garbage bin.

Traffic came to a standstill as police arrived at the scene and blocked all incoming traffic to the area for examination.

"A garbage collector told us he had found the suitcase, but already knew that it was empty," said Lt Col Chatchai Nhoochum of Phuket City Police.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

## Two killed by electrocution in Patong

TWO men were killed in two separate incidents of electrocution in Patong on February 3.

The first victim was an elevator engineer named Detch Gamlhong, who was called in to fix an elevator at a hotel on

Prachanukror Road.

"We received a report of the incident from staff at Patong Hospital at about 1pm. The victim was rushed to the emergency unit but was pronounced dead soon after arrival," said Lt Col Weerapong Rakkhitoe of Patong Police.

Half an hour later, a similar report was filed regarding a hotel near Tri Trang Beach.

The second victim was a Myanmar national, named 'Pao'. He was called to fix an air-conditioning unit and was also pronounced dead soon after arrival at Patong Hospital.

— **Winai Sarot**

## Foreign man stabbed at a Rassada pier

CONFUSION prevailed at Phuket's Rassada port when a Burmese man ran amok with a deep knife wound in his back on February 2.

The 28-year-old man, named only as 'Mutesui', was part of a fishing boat crew and was seen running from a boat docked at the pier at about 11:45pm.

"A witness told us that he was walking past the area when he saw Mr Mutesui, with a mouthful of blood, running toward the car park and crying out for help," Col Komol Osiri from Phuket City Police told *Gazette* reporters. "He was bleeding profusely and collapsed near the witness."

Mr Mutesui was already dead when police and rescue workers arrived.

"Upon searching a boat named *Aong Ponchai 1*, we found blood on the floor and slippers. We are now looking for the runaway suspect," col Komol added.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

## Plant paste used for stings

A QUICK-thinking Surin life-guard used his basic knowledge of beach vegetation to treat a young boy and two adults stung by jellyfish on February 2.

Sayan Bureerak, head of Surin Beach Lifeguards, made a paste out of Morning Glory plants and rubbed it on their stings. The plant is called Goat's Foot Creeper or Phak Boong Talay.

"It is advisable to apply the paste and take the victim to the nearest hospital for more serious cases," he explained.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

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# Vendors scare off lifeguard Bangla timetabled



The lifeguards' tent was removed – the beach now has no visibly marked lifeguard station. Photo: Daren Jenner

By Sahar Aftab Paliwala

A LAEM Singh lifeguard quit his job last month after a group of angry umbrella vendors reportedly asked him to remove his government-issued lifeguard tent, claiming the space as theirs.

The vendors said they were 'locals' and were authorized to use the space to set up umbrellas and mats for rent.

Fearing a violent confrontation, the lifeguard on duty disassembled his stand and finished his shift elsewhere. At the end of the day, he turned in his gear and quit his job.

A lifeguard supervisor first reported the incident to the

Kamala OrBorTor and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization, and also informed the chief of the Phuket Lifeguard Service.

Lifeguard Supervisor Viroon Chuasaman told the *Gazette* that they removed the tent in order to avoid a conflict with locals and wish to co-exist with them in order to do what's best for visitors' safety.

At this time, no visibly marked lifeguard station is available at the beach. It is isolated from neighboring beaches by rocky headlands on both sides, with limited vehicle access.

"After a rescue, victims who can't walk must be carried up a steep rocky trail on a

backboard to reach the nearest road," Daren Jenner, a volunteer lifeguard at Surin Beach, told the *Gazette*.

"In order to serve the beachgoing public, lifeguards must place their shade kiosk where they have the best view of the beach. If we can't see you, we can't help you," he added.

Sayan Bureerak, head of Surin Beach Lifeguards, confirmed that Laem Singh now has only one lifeguard on duty, who shares an umbrella with umbrella and jet-ski renters.

"We would send him reinforcements from Surin, but the guards at Surin already have their hands full," Mr Sayan told the *Gazette*.



Venue owners have complained of monetary losses. Photo: Gazette file

A PROPOSAL to extend the operating times for nightlife entertainment venues in Phuket will be prepared and presented to Prime Minister Gen Prayuth Chan-o-cha, Phuket Governor Chokchai Dejamornthan has confirmed.

The Governor did not reveal an exact date, but asked for strict cooperation from restaurant and bar owners in the 'meantime'.

More than 20 night entertainment venue owners met with Phuket Vice Governor Teera Anantaseriwiidhya last week to express their concern regarding closing times of bars and clubs on Soi Bangla, Phuket's famed nightlife district.

"I understand that it impacts nightlife and tourism, but we need to follow the law. We are working on the extension request to be submitted to the Prime Minister as well as the

Ministry of Interior," said Gov Chokchai.

"We know most visitors to Patong are tourists and that they come there to enjoy the nightlife, but the rule regarding closing times has to be applied universally – all restaurants must close at midnight and bars at 1:00 am.

"Patong already falls under the 'tourist zone' – it's imperative for officials to understand that businesses here will suffer huge losses if they are forced to shut down at 1:00am," said Patong Entertainment Business Association President Weerawit Krueasombut.

"We're imploring the government to resolve this issue as soon as possible, so we can be allowed to operate until 4am. This is the time during which we conduct the highest volume of business."

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

## Brit found suffocated after tiff with partner

A BRITISH man from Liverpool was found dead on February 2 with a plastic bag taped around his neck at a house in Rawai.

His partner, Rasamee Khaigarb, contacted Capt Somkiet Sarasit of Chalong Police to report the incident. Police arrived at the scene with rescue teams.

"We found the 55-year-old man lying face up with a black garbage bag over his head. He was naked, but covered by a blanket. A roll of electrical tape also lay nearby, which had been used to keep the bag in place as well as to avoid air from going in or out," Capt Somkiet told the *Gazette*. "There were also five nearly empty packets of pills nearby, of which 45 had already been used."

Police confirmed that there

were no injuries or bruises on his body.

The victim's partner told police that the two of them had had an argument on February 28, after which she left the one-storey house.

"Ms Rasamee said that when she returned after five days, she found the door locked and did not get a response when she knocked. She broke into the house to find his body on the bed," confirmed Capt Somkiet.

A note was also found at the scene that read: "Meaw I love you so much, but I can't live with this problem. Love."

The man's body was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for further investigation. At press time, his family was not notified of the incident, so his name was withheld.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



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## Missing car salesman found in morgue

THE body of a Bangkok car salesman, who went missing and was feared dead, has been discovered in Siriraj Hospital's morgue.

Rattaphum Pimjaisai was found in a delirious state on December 20, then had a seizure and passed out on a traffic island on Borommaratchachonnani Road. He was later taken to a hospital. Earlier the same day, he had called his manager for help, saying he was in a soi in Bangkok's Thawee Wattana district before he went missing.

He then went into a coma and died in the hospital 10 days later, but as he had no identification on him, his body was kept at the morgue – until his identity was confirmed on February 7.

Forensic expert Dr Papanu Sitthiprasit said an autopsy on the man's body revealed no signs of assault and Mr Rattaphum had died from liver and kidney failure, possibly from methamphetamine found in his blood.

Strands of the man's hair have been collected to determine the amount of narcotics he consumed and how long he had been taking it. Dr Papanu said the man's state of deliriousness may have been caused by the drug.

Mr Rattaphum's father Laeard Pimjaisai, 65, said he has no doubt about his son's death and does not want another autopsy to be conducted on the body.

Taling Chan superintendent Colonel Thanawan Taraka said witnesses had seen him with drug overdose symptoms.



## Death threats coming in from Laos

ASSASSINATION threats against two of Thailand's top leaders came from lese majeste suspects who are now living in Laos, National Security Council (NSC) secretary-general Thawip Netniyom said February 6.

Last week, Prime Minister Gen Prayuth Chan-o-cha ordered a manhunt for people who posted death threats on social media against him and Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan.

Sec-Gen Thawip said the death threats were a result of the government's plan to re-

## NATIONAL NEWS Briefly

quest the extradition from Laos of dissidents who were wanted on lese majeste charges.

"I personally ordered a probe [to determine] whether we can additionally charge them with threatening to attack important figures or not," Sec-Gen Thawip said.

He plans to discuss the extradition issue with his Lao counterpart at the Ministry of Public Security when he visits Vientiane in the near future.

Gen Prawit said it was not necessary to tighten security for important figures as he believed current measures were adequate.

He said: "I'm fine and not frightened. Don't worry. It would be better to worry about those who posted the death threats, but I don't know where they are."

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry has contacted Thailand's Embassy in Vientiane and consulate in Savannakhet province to track down the dissidents, a source at the ministry said.

The source said Thailand had an extradition treaty with Laos, but to proceed with an action, the ministry and its embassies needed to be contacted by concerned agencies and arrest warrants issued by a court.

## Australian sentenced for murder

PATTAYA Provincial Court on February 7 sentenced Antonio Bagnato to death for murdering a fellow Australian and former 'Hells Angels' member, Wayne Schneider two years ago, the BBC reported.

Schneider, one of New South Wales' 10 most-wanted fugitives in 2006, was abducted by masked men from his home in the seaside city in 2015.

His naked body was found days later in a jungle grave.

"The first defendant is found guilty of all charges and according to the criminal code, the penalty is execution for the murder and deprivation of liberty, plus a year in prison for hiding the body," Judge Sirichai Polkarn was quoted by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation as saying.

## Police poised to seize 20 supercars

POLICE ARE preparing to seize more than 20 supercars for examination on suspicion that they might be related to ill-gotten gains from drug trafficking.

"We are in the process of gathering evidence," Narcotics Suppression Bureau (NSB) chief Pol Lt General Sommai Kongwisaisuk said on February 7. "Each of these vehicles is worth more than 20 million."

Police have already taken custody of a Lamborghini Gallardo SuperLeggera, which the famous motorcycle racer Akarakit "Benz Racing" Worarojcharoendet claimed belonged to him.

Maj General Chatree Paisansilp, a deputy chief of the NSB, said Mr Akarakit's information contradicted the statement of Nattapon Nakkam, who was arrested earlier this month for allegedly facilitating a drug-trafficking ring connected to high-profile Lao man Xaysana Keopimpha.

"Mr Nattapon has told police that the car belongs to him. He has just used Mr Akarakit's name to buy it," Gen Chatree said.

Police suspect that Mr Xaysana, who reportedly owns many luxury vehicles, ran a large-scale drugs trafficking network but sought to portray himself as a rich and well-connected man.

The racer is not the only prominent figure that has been pulled into the Xaysana scandal after Pai Leeke – the high-profile son of a former politician – also had to report to the NSB in connection with the same Lamborghini.

Mr Pai, who is also known as "Pai One Point", told police that he did not know Mr Nattapon or Mr Akarakit personally.


"A friend asked me to help to find the type of car they were looking for. I am an expert in the supercar field," Mr Pai said.

He said he met Mr Nattapon on the day the car was purchased for 14 million baht through a payment plan, with the down payment being between 5 million and 6 million baht.

As the investigation expanded, Gen Sommai said that Mr Xaysana's network could also have exported illicit drugs to various other countries.

Police have said Mr Xaysana has extensive connections in Thailand and at least two immigration policemen are facing investigations for allegedly having links to him.

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# Markets favor active selection



Finance

By Don Freeman

THERE is value in having an active stock selector as your money manager – especially right now when individual stocks are starting to break out and the market in general is favoring them over more passive investment in ETFs and indices. Consider some of the following stocks that are on my watchlist or in my client portfolios as of late January.

Small cap Internet services stock Tucows Inc (NASDAQ: TCX) has broken out from US\$30 to US\$48 in a very short time (just 2 to 3 months). My clients or I don't yet own this stock, but it's been on my watchlist for some time as a potential breakout candidate.

Mid cap networking technology stock Ubiquiti Networks (NASDAQ: UBNT) is a stock that my clients and I own. Its technical charts shows a strong "cup and handle" formation where 2014 was the previous high before shares fell off to form a "cup" and then rallied (with a short pause) to form a handle on the chart. Shares have since broken out above their 2014 highs to form a new all-time high and look poised to go higher.

Large cap Alphabet Inc



Investing in ETFs saves the risk and trouble of monitoring individual stocks. Photo: energpic.com

(NASDAQ: GOOGL) hit a new all-time high after Trump's inauguration when they broke above the US\$840 level. Alphabet Inc's chart also shows a nice "cup and handle" formation that shares have already broken out of and I suspect are heading higher towards the US\$950 level.

Large cap T-Mobile US (NASDAQ: TMUS) has been surging for some time now to an all-time high and has been in my client portfolios for several months now.

Large cap Netflix, Inc (NASDAQ: NFLX) had been trading in a tight sideways range, before bolting to a new all-time high. Shares are now consolidating above the ex-

tremely volatile and choppy range they had been trapped in for some time.

Keep in mind that if you don't want to take the risk of owning or go through the trouble of monitoring individual stocks, you can always just own index and sector ETFs that will have exposure to individual stocks poised for breakout or actively breaking out. In a market that favors passive ETF or index investing, this strategy will work just fine and help to lower your risk.

However, many of the stocks on my watchlist or in my client's and my own portfolios are starting to outperform. In fact, since early September,

these stocks have started to outperform the S&P 500 index – meaning the current market has shifted towards favoring active stock selection rather than passive ETF or index investing.

Of course, selecting and holding individual stocks will come with additional risk, as stocks don't always move in a favorable direction. That's why you need to have a plan in place that takes into account what will happen should an individual stock hit above or breakdown below certain target prices.

Stop loss orders are an effective tool to limit losses on individual stock or for that matter, just about any investment holding. For instance, you can set

a stop-loss (sell) order for 10 per cent below the price at which you buy an individual stock.

Barring an extreme market meltdown, this should allow you to exit at the desired price – assuming that the stock is not thinly traded. Likewise, you can set a target price above current share price levels where your stop-loss order becomes a market order to sell shares when that desired target price is reached.

When placing clients into individual stocks, I always have a plan in place for each holding that usually includes a stop-loss order to limit downside risk (especially if the client is risk adverse).

Likewise, the other major benefit of stop-loss orders is that they prevent you from falling in love emotionally with any individual investment as it forces you to make rational investing decisions.

*Don Freeman, the President of Freeman Capital Management, is a fee-only Phuket based Registered Investment Advisor with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) who has over 15 years experience providing personal financial planning and wealth management advice with an emphasis on investing in low-cost ETFs to both working and retired expatriates.*

## Insurance disallowed

FINANCIAL difficulties in the healthcare system are leading to pregnant migrant workers in Phuket being denied access to Universal Coverage (UC) health insurance scheme, which they had previously been allowed to buy at 2,100 baht annually.

This has led to many migrant families facing bankruptcy or are being forced to abandon their babies. The Provincial Public Health Office (PPHO) stated that hospitals will be overburdened with expenses if it allows pregnant workers to buy insurance.

Sumana Pakburawat, coordinator of Migrant Worker's Network in Phuket (MNP), says that many pregnant migrants were unable to renew or buy UC insurance at Phuket's public hospitals and that this has been a serious and chronic problem in Phuket for almost six years now.

According to MNP, there are

about 300,000 migrant workers in Phuket, nearly half of whom have not registered with authorities or have UC insurance.

Dr Prapornsri Narinrak, PPHO deputy director, said that the Public Health Ministry had a policy to help migrant workers receive affordable medical services, but that hospitals should not be "financially irresponsible" and properly manage finances to ensure their own survival.

She admitted that doctors at public hospitals in Phuket could exercise discretion on whether or not to sell UC insurance to pregnant migrant workers as they "cannot work" and their medical expenses are very high.

The PPHO disclosed that in the 2016 budget, Vachira, Patong and Thalang Hospitals spent a total of 94.11 million baht on medical (including neonatal) services for migrant workers.

– The Nation

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**Phuket Gazette**

# Drawing lines in the sand

THE lack of any significant official response to encroachment at Laem Singh Beach seems to indicate that those behind it are well-connected.

The fight to save our beautiful beaches from the forces of corruption is no doubt as relentless and difficult as that against global climate change.

Recent developments at Laem Singh, therefore, justify urgent action to set an example that all island beaches shall remain public property, with reasonable public access, in perpetuity.

The ongoing beach encroachment at Laem Singh is well documented and indisputable. Declared by the government as one of Phuket's so-called 'virgin' beaches, the recent high season has seen Laem Singh once again monopolized by self-described 'locals'.

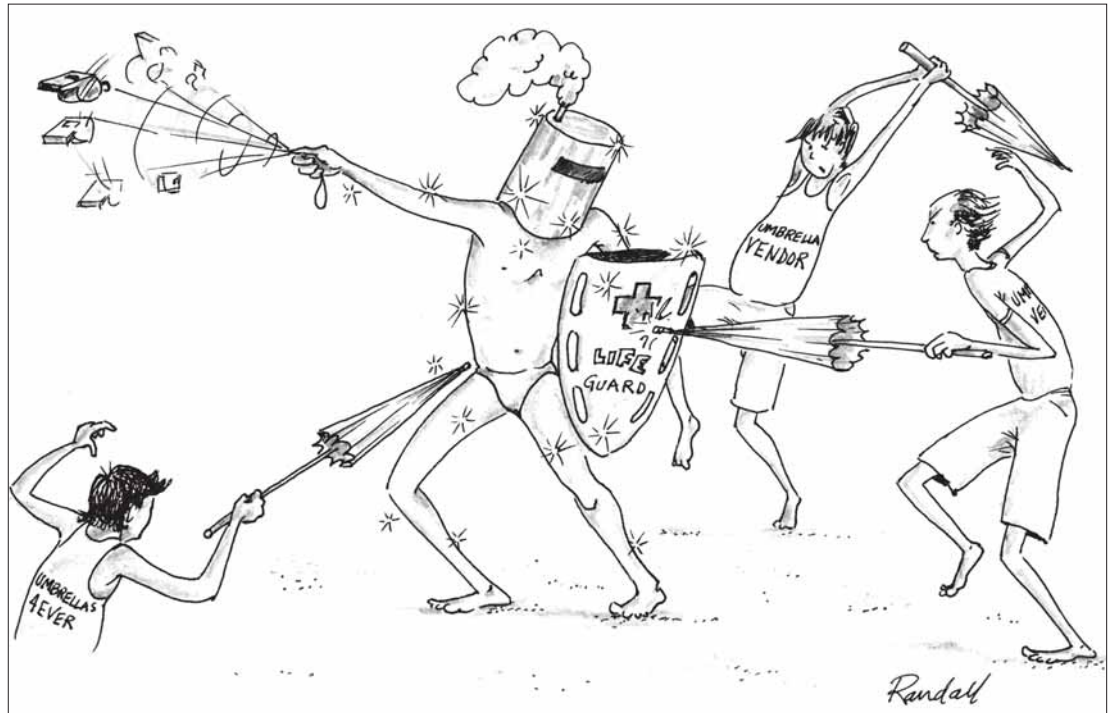
We have been down this retarded *cul-de-sac* many times before. This time, however, is perhaps the most depressing because it comes just after a painfully necessary national 're-start' that has further detoured an already long and winding path to something resembling functional democracy.

Even as the country's reputation was subjected to international scorn, bewilderment and embarrassment, the *Phuket Gazette* has always in this space recognized the need to bite the bullet and take the bitter pill, much like a cancer patient making the decision to accept chemo.

We were also encouraged by the fact that our island's beaches were made a top priority by the national government in its ambitious, and we still believe sincere, effort to create a more civil society – of the kind that can actually sustain a functional democracy.

The ongoing encroachment at Laem Singh is a direct challenge to this effort and the progress it has achieved so far. To maintain an important precedent, the national government correctly took a stand against sand beds at Patong Beach. It might be possible that Laem Singh is small enough of a strand to have remained off the radar so far, but we are now calling on the government to recognize and rectify the situation.

Remove all the clearly illegal beach furniture and give us back our lifeguards – and ban jet-skis while you are at it, please.



## Safety always comes first

*Re: Holiday nightmare: Aussie tourist killed in Phuket jet-ski collision, Feb 6*

Too many young foreigners without a license to operate a jet-ski in Thailand, which is required by Thai law, are riding these powerful and dangerous machines.

And one of them, a young lady, has lost her life because those responsible for enforcing the law have long insisted on not doing so – for reasons of their own. *Mai Pen Rai*, dereliction of duty by civil servants, is okay locally.

Asterix  
Gazette forum

I was on Bang Tao Beach recently and got very worried when the local jet-ski hire operators were letting jet-skis ride very close to groups of swimmers. My children were also swimming.

The people riding the jet-skis were very young and who knows what experience they have. When I complained to the jet-ski operator he got very angry and said, "This is MY sea".

Chris  
Gazette forum

### Earthing necessary for all electronics

*Re: Two killed by electrocution in Phuket, Feb 4*

This is tragic news and highlights the lack of supervision and safety by those companies who send technicians to fix electrical devices.

Earthing is so important for all fixed power devices, but in Thailand it seems that the

### Letters to the Editor

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

safety procedures needed to help service people avoid unnecessary early deaths are lacking. The families of these two men will suffer their loss for years to come. RIP

seht1912  
Gazette forum

### Good job by police and explosive unit

*Re: Abandoned luggage causes bomb scare in Phuket Town, Feb 4*

Good to see the police and explosive unit doing a great job. The idiots who left the suitcase there should be punished as these are serious offenses, if done deliberately.

babin  
Gazette forum

### Self preservation should've kicked in

*Re: British man found suffocated in Phuket, Feb 3*

I'm not experienced enough to make judgement on this, but I think it would take some doing to place a bag over your head, tape it up around your neck, then suffocate yourself.

Surely self preservation would kick in and you'd rip it off? Obviously forensics will check for finger prints on the tape around his neck? Also, the

roll of tape used can be checked for finger prints. Or is it just me?

Paul Cherry  
Facebook

### 'Mafia' has taken over the beaches

*Re: Phuket lifeguard quits to protest vendor takeover, Feb 3*

The local 'mafia' has retaken this beach with impunity.

Loads of big bikes roaring and racing through Kamala in the evening as revelers return, but of course a certain element of the local infrastructure is significantly absent. At least the ambulances are busy.

Mister Ree  
Gazette forum

### A better helmet can save your life

*Re: Another foreign tourist killed on Phuket's roads, Feb 3*

That's not a helmet, it's an eggshell. Anyone using one of those cheap pieces of junk doesn't care about their own safety. A real helmet might have saved him.

John  
Gazette forum

### No vision for safety

*Re: Another teenager killed, and a second seriously injured in Phuket road crash, Feb 8*

What a sad story. Unfortunately most Thai drivers don't have a vision for safety. RIP, Wasin Thongsom.

Chris Joubert  
Facebook

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Editor: Janpen Arno  
Executive Editor: Simon J Hand  
News Editors: Sahar Aftab Paliwala & Zohaib Sikander

Contact us:

Editorial: editor@phuketgazette.net  
Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net  
Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net  
Website services: anna@phuketgazette.net

Telephone: 076 615244 | Fax 076 615240  
79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Kaew, A. Muang, Phuket

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# Innovation is the new battlefield

CREATING more value for residential projects by collaborating with innovative tech firms, providing services that match new-generation demand, and guaranteeing a high return for those investing in property for rental purposes, are ways to boost sales during a continuing period of intense competition, according to leading property firms.

Property developer Sansiri has announced what it terms a Property Tech business model focused on innovation and the digital ecosystem, including plans to establish a venture-capital subsidiary to expand investment in property-related business, and to improve its property business service.

The investment focus will be on business that is innovative and technology to support the company's core business of developing residential projects for sale.

New businesses identified under the strategy can either improve the process for conducting its core business, or be innovative business that will provide added value to Sansiri's core operations, Sansiri presi-



Left: Peerapong Jaroen-Ek, CEO of Origin Property, which launched 'Your Digital Butler'. Right: Chanond Ruangkritya, CEO of Ananda Development, which is collaborating with innovative start-ups. Photos: The Nation

dent Srettha Thavisin said.

"We believe this is a new era for the [residential] property sector, during a period when the market faces intense competition," he added.

Ananda Development is also launching a new business model to collaborate with start-ups and innovative firms to provide new technology and more services to its customers.

"That is the challenge for

doing business when the market faces high competition," Ananda CEO Chanond Ruangkritya said.

The developer has already joined hands with enterprises such as Hubba, Seedstars, Sasin and Builk, he said, adding that it is offering the first pilot project under this collaborative approach – the Haupcar car-sharing service – at its 'Ideo Q Chula-Sam Yan' and 'Ideo



Mobi Sukhumvit' properties.

Ananda Development also plans to set up a venture capital fund to invest in start-up and other innovative businesses, with a view to providing more services to customers in the future.

This is the way to do business for the long term, Mr Chanond said.

Origin Property, meanwhile, is offering its latest service, *Your Digital Butler*, as it fo-

cuses on innovation and after-sales service as strengths to satisfy the new generation of customers, CEO Peerapong Jaroen-Ek said.

"We are not like normal butlers, but one with innovation. We apply digital technology in services. This is our new strength and will help us to grow sustainably," he said.

Based on this concept, the company will provide service applications for consumers with a digital lifestyle, while also providing hotel-type services that offer efficiency and safety. It will also join hands with partners to provide privileges for condo residents, Mr Peerapong said.

Property developer Nusasiri has also launched a new marketing strategy by offering a health and wellness program and life insurance for customers as well as a campaign to guarantee an annual ROI of 5-8 per cent a year for those who buy units for rent.

"These innovations are the way to boost sales now that the market is so highly competitive," said Siriya Thepcharoen, deputy CEO of marketing and sales at Nusasiri.

– *The Nation*



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# There's a flying moth in town

By Zohaib Sikander

THERE'S a new bird in town that goes by the name of 'Shadow'. Light as a feather and built entirely with carbon fiber, the *Shadow* is equipped with hydrofoils that allow it to 'fly' up to a height of at least 5 feet.

The idea of the 'Moth' dates back to 1928 when the first of the class was built. Following the standardization of international specifications, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej constructed three of his own designs, namely 'Mod', 'Super Mod' and 'Micro Mod'. Yassine Darkaoui, the man behind this elegantly-designed craft, is one of many inspired by his work.

"What's special about this type of boat is that it's open source – hundreds of people build them in their houses," says Mr Darkaoui.

"It was a heavy wooden boat, but after about 90 years of development, now its one that can fly," he adds.

This is the first modern moth built in Thailand – the first in Phuket, in a warehouse in a quiet part of Cherng Talay, surrounded by nature – a location many only



The *Shadow* has been crafted of carbon fiber and Yassine Darkaoui (left) is calling all moth sailors from around the world to to set up a moth sailing boat racing event in Phuket. Photo: Supplied

dream of. The *Shadow* is built in line with international specs, measuring 3,355mm in length, beam size 2,250mm and sail area 8 square meters.

Mr Darkaoui was involved

in numerous sailing activities in Tangier, Morocco, and moved to Phuket with his wife Adelaide Casta about 5 years ago. While he manages the development, team and design of

the *Shadow*, Ms Casta makes sure her husband stays focused and on plan.

"Yassine wants to do a lot and that makes me happy. However, I help him organize

and channel his thoughts into ideas, and ideas into physical form," she says.

Mr Darkaoui goes back a long way when it comes to sailing. In 2014, he set a world record in Phuket for the longest distance sailed with a Laser – 77 hours non-stop.

"I have sailed for my country in many international championships, but I don't have prior experience of building boats."

"The boat is in a permanent evolution phase, you cannot relax and say it's okay, lets go for holidays. The market is ultra competitive, and these boats are getting more and more popular ever single day.

"Moth racing is a worldwide sporting event, and I would like to invite people to help bring this exciting phenomenon to the Phuket King's Cup Regatta soon."

"Once it is officially launched, it could bring in a lot of money via sailors, spectators and followers of the event. I'm also working toward making sailing more accessible to young people by investing my time and energy into a yacht club, along with handling everything else," he says.

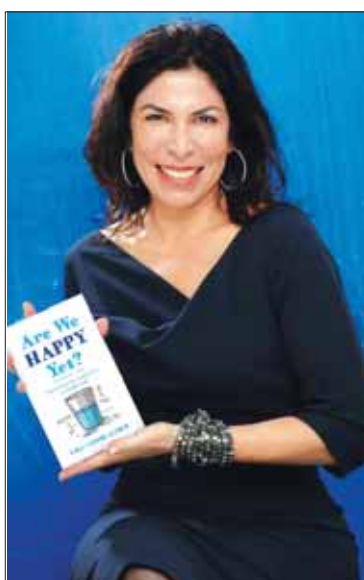
## Understanding your place on the happiness scale

THERE is no single key to happiness that will work for every single person out there, which is what makes Lisa Kamen's holistic approach to understanding where we are on the happiness scale, and where we want to be, so insightful.

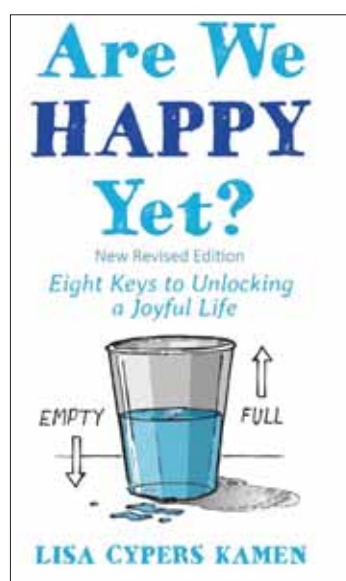
*Are We Happy Yet? Eight Keys to Unlocking a Joyful Life* is a hands-on guide to changing the way we understand what makes us happy and how we can continue down that path. Though I cringe at the term self-help book – what book doesn't put us on the path of self help? – Kamen quickly connects to her readers, as she encourages us to help ourselves and treat ourselves as we want to be treated.

"If I were to ask you what makes you happy, would you be able to answer? Don't worry if you could not. You're not the only one who's struggling right now to find your happiness, and how can you find it if you don't quite know what it looks like?" writes Kamen.

From the beginning Kamen



Lisa Cypers Kamen lists and breaks down eight keys to happiness in her insightful book 'Are We Happy Yet?'. Photo: Gazette file



has her finger on the pulse of the middle-class world dominated by people who seem to have no reason to be unhappy: they have The Job, The Life Partner, The Beautiful Kids, The House and The Car, but they're missing something.

With an increased awareness of the suffering in the world

brought about through 24-hour news and globalization, it's hard to take our problems of divorce and depression toe-to-toe with genocide, starvation and refugee crises – yet we are still unhappy. Drawing lessons from upheavals in her own life: divorce, loss of investments, homelessness with two chil-

dren and so on, Kamen lays out a simple path toward self-mastery in her book.

By sharing her personal battles with depression, Kamen avoids sounding like a lecturer, but rather sounds like a dear friend, who knows that her path to happiness might not be yours, but that there are some universally applicable guidelines that will steer you toward discovering joy rather than simply avoiding pain.

Before jumping in on her eight keys to happiness, Kamen provides exercises for each reader to establish their unique foundation for building a happier life. There is the 'Happiness Factor' and 'The Positive Currency Bank'.

"Discovering your H-Factor is a means to uncovering our authenticity and showing up for life by giving ourselves full permission to experience unadulterated," writes Kamen. Think about the happiest viral YouTube videos: Double Rainbow Guy, Cup Staking Girl, The Guy Overly Excited About

Trains and so on. That's the sort of unadulterated happiness we want, right?

Plainly written, concise and insightful, *Are We Happy Yet?* has the potential to adjust our attitudes toward happiness as we look inward at what we can do day in and day out in its pursuit.

"You see, happiness is our birthright but not our entitlement. Each of us came into the world happy. It is human nature. Entitled to be happy? Who said? Entitlements are for those of us who believe we are owed something. Some outside source does not grant happiness to us. Happiness is ours to claim at any time and any place, regardless of external circumstance," concludes Kamen.

So, step up to the plate, read the book, do the exercises and allow yourself to harness the transformative power of self-mastery as you become a happier person.

Lisa Kamen presents 'Harvesting Happiness' every weekend on Gazette Radio.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli



# Consequences of holiday revelry



Law & Order

By Robert Virasin

THERE are numerous 'dek khrueng' or 'half-children' born to women who work in Thailand's red-light districts. Many men from foreign countries come to Thailand for a short holiday to spend their time with Thai women. Some of them leave without knowing that they have a child. Others know about their child and still decide to return to their home country. These women are left with a difficult choice in a country where intentionally terminating a pregnancy is illegal except in certain circumstances.

In Thailand, abortions are only allowed to save the mother's life, preserve her physical or mental health, or if the pregnancy is a result of a forced illegal act. The illegal acts that allow the intentional termination of pregnancies are where the pregnancy was a result of rape, incest, forced prostitution or seduction of a girl under the age of 15. Abortions can only be legally performed



There is a definite social stigma attached to being a half child if the father is not around. Photo: Madalinlonut / Pixabay

by a licenced medical physician.

Many hospitals do not provide this procedure because of the controversy over the issue, further complicated by the fact that 95 per cent of Thai people are practicing Buddhists and believe in intent and the value of life. There is a strong social stigma to intentionally terminating a pregnancy in Thailand.

The primary option for children born from prostitution are

their extended families. Generally, Thai women who work in red light districts come from poor families and have low education levels. If they have a child, he or she is usually sent to back to their home province to be cared for by the grandparents.

The family is interwoven into most Thai social support networks. Most households are multi-generational where grand

parents, adult children, and grandchildren all live in the same home. For the poorer rural areas, the family network is a necessity for living.

There is a social stigma attached to 'luk khrueng' if the father is not around. The children are considered consequences of immoral activities. In a socially conservative country, these fatherless children are noticeable in a rural province where few foreigners reside.

Even if the biological father is interested in caring for the child, it is difficult for them to obtain access. Fathers who are not married to the mother at the time of the child's birth, do not have rights to the child unless the mother legitimizes the paternity through a filing at the local amphur or through a court judgment. Foreign biological fathers can be placed in the difficult position of marrying the mother or never seeing their child.

When the mother refuses to allow the biological father access, he must file a petition for legitimization through a local family court. A court where proceedings are conducted in a foreign language with foreign

laws. If the man is found to be the legitimate father of the child, he is bound by law to provide for the child.

The father has the right to make decisions in the best interests of the child. The court will also provide custody and child support orders as part of the judgment. However, the foreign biological father cannot take the child outside of Thailand without the mother's consent. The passport offices require the consent of both parents for a child to apply for a passport or a government document stating that one parent has sole custody.

Many visitors come to Thailand to party, drink and engage in debauchery. Short term relationships during holidays can lead to life-altering consequences such as unwanted children, broken families and lifetime obligations. Travellers to Thailand should be cognizant of these issues when they enter into holiday flings.

Robert R Virasin is a licenced US Attorney and managing director of Virasin & Partners. He can be reached at [www.virasin.com](http://www.virasin.com).



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# Fulfilling her lifelong dream

By Sahar Aftab Paliwala

Phuket native Pamela Pasinetti was recently crowned 'Miss Grand Krabi 2017'. Poised and elegant in her gown and tiara, Pamela spoke to Simon J Hand of *Gazette Radio* to talk about her pageant experience.

Now 23 years of age, Pamela has always had big dreams.

"I've always wanted to be a pageant queen," she smiled. "It's something every young girl dreams of. I'm very grateful that I won, as this could have been one of my last shots at it."

Pamela, along with the runners-up and other participants, went to Krabi to compete, but that didn't stop them from having some fun.

"It was a little bit tiring as we only went there for three days and didn't have much time to visit Krabi Old Town, but we did get to visit Laem Sak and Ao Nang Beach. We even did some rock climbing and canoeing. Overall, it was a lot of fun," said Pamela.

Of the 12 contestants in Krabi, a panel of judges chose the top

five and then the top three.

"There was a beautiful show where we danced and catwalked, and then there was the questions round. I have to say I didn't answer the questions very well, but I still won. There was a huge uproar on social media about it because I completely blanked out and didn't know how to respond," said Pamela.

"The runners up definitely performed better than me, but they still chose me as the winner and I'm really honored for that. I want to thank all the judges that they gave me this opportunity. I'll do my best at Miss Grand Thailand and be more prepared for the pressure. I was just too excited in that moment, it happens to the best of us."

With the final competition slated for June, Pamela has plenty of time to prepare.

"Between now and June, I have to make sure I look great in a bikini," she laughed. "All the girls there will look splendid. If I'm lucky enough to be in the top five again, I'll make sure I prepare better for the questions round and keep my cool. I will fight for Krabi as they have given

me the biggest opportunity, which is to be able to compete for Miss Grand Thailand. They've given me a second chance, so I can't miss it."

Pamela has very ambitious plans for her future, including going to Italy to train as a chef, starting her own business and helping children and others in need.

"I've always wanted to help people in need. This is not something I'm saying because I won Miss Grand Krabi – it's something I've been planning for many years. Competitions like Miss Grand Krabi have given me the tools, exposure and opportunities I need to help people," she said.

Asked if pageants objectify women, Pamela answered in the negative.

"I don't think pageants objectify women or set unrealistic beauty standards. Some people compete to be beautiful, others compete for different things. Many women who want to be in this pageant work very hard to improve themselves, and it's a great learning experience," she said.

"People can't see you if you don't believe in yourself. You lack a certain 'aura' if you don't have self-confidence. I don't think you have to be the most beautiful girl in the pageant to win this. Rather, you have to show the judges that you really believe you're going to make it."



I want to  
make Krabi  
proud /

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Bassinetti, Miss  
Grand Krabi  
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