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Phuket Gazette

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Tsunami towers 'unsound': Locals

By Atchaa Khamlo

OFFICIALS in Bangkok say all 19 tsunami warning towers in Phuket are operational and functioning correctly, yet some local residents say they haven't heard the sirens sound for months.

The towers are supposed to be tested by a playing of the national anthem at regularly-scheduled times twice a month.

But Siriprapa Auychai, a 29-year-old masseuse who works at the south end of Patong Beach, told the *Gazette* that no one she knows has heard the tower near the bridge at the south end of the beach sound since about December last year.

"Actually, the towers need to be taken care of and need to be cleaned. They are located near the beach, where they are prone to rust - but they are just being left," she said.

The other two towers along Patong Beach appear to be operating normally, however.

A lounge chair operator working near the police box at the end of Bangla Road said he heard the anthem played on schedule on May



Locals in Karon say they haven't heard the warning tower in front of the Hilton sound off for months.

1, while two motorbike taxi drivers in front of Kalim School confirmed they heard the tower at the nearby Sunset Beach resort sound at the same time.

Down in Karon, people report hearing a variety of sounds emitted from the tsunami warning tower in front of the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa Hotel, including the sound of crackling static.

Taxi drivers in front of the tower, one of two in Karon, said it had been months since they heard a recognizable noise from the tower.

"The last time we heard the national anthem played from the tower was about two months ago," said Udornporn Jaipiang, 39.

"Sometimes I hear noises coming from the speakers that sound like an electrical short circuit inside," he added.

"So we just keep an eye on sea instead to see if a tsunami is actually coming," he added.

The other warning tower in Karon, located near Karon Park near the Nong Harn Lake, also appears worse for wear.

"The speaker is rusty. I've heard that officials will fix it, but I haven't seen any of them yet," said one beach guard.

Despite these accounts, officials deny the warning towers are in need of repair.

San Jantharawong, chief of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM-Phuket) that is responsible for maintaining the towers, told the *Gazette*, "The

Continued on page 2



LITTLE FIGHTER

Phuket babe Tuptim is back on the island after a year-long battle to stay alive. Now her parents and close friends look forward to rebuilding their lives together. Photo: Dean Noble
 See pages 14-15 for full story

B30mn of cocaine seized in airport arrests

By Atchaa Khamlo and Steven Layne

SIX kilograms of cocaine were seized by officers in two separate arrests at Phuket International Airport this week.

Swiss national Peter Balmer, 47, was arrested on Monday after being found in possession four kilos of cocaine in the form of "black cocaine" mats.

In the second bust, about 11pm Tuesday night, Thai national Pimpisa "Ja" Piangyotha, 39, was nabbed by officers with two kilos of pure cocaine in her luggage. She was reportedly bound for Bangkok.

Lt Col Prawit Engchuan of Phuket City

Police said officers were tipped off by an unnamed informant that a large drug shipment from South America was expected to arrive in Thailand via Phuket Airport this week.

City police then coordinated with airport immigration and customs officers, along with officers from Tah Chat Chai. All were



Peter Balmer

on high alert, he said.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pekat Tantipong said police believe the two suspects were part of the same network.

However, Balmer and Pimpisa claimed not to know each other before their arrest.

Balmer told the *Gazette* that he didn't know the "black stuff" was cocaine until the police told him.

He arrived at Phuket airport about 4pm. Customs officers became suspicious after scanning his luggage. A thorough inspection revealed the two black sheets of cocaine, each weighing two kilos, concealed in the sides of his suitcase.

Pimpisa also claimed ignorance. She told

the *Gazette* that a friend she identified only as "Mike", a black man she barely knew and met only six months earlier, sponsored her a two-week holiday to Brazil, covering all expenses. He gave her US\$2,000 spending money, she said.

On the day of her return, a Brazilian friend of Mike placed a bag into her luggage to be delivered to Mike when she returned to Bangkok, she said.

Officers said the drugs from both busts had a combined street wholesale value of 20 million baht.

At going rates, the combined haul had a maximum street retail value of 33mn baht, they added.

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This Week

News



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An iPad2 is 20 per cent cheaper in Thailand than the west. **Page 12**

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Going my way?



The local government expands its pink bus network. **Page 23**

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Bangkok Airways must renovate or lose their grande dame. **Page 31**

Sport

Liverpool Legends update; FC Phuket slip to seventh; why FIFA should embrace technology; and much more. **Pages 45-47**

Saturday



Sunday



Monday



Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Investigation continues into tourist diver's death

By Janpen Upatising

POLICE have yet to make any arrests in the investigation into the death of Japanese tourist Hitomi Shibata, Chalong Police Duty Officer Attawat Suwannarat confirmed this week.

"We have not arrested or pressed charges against anyone as we still have to question the boat driver and the crew about what happened first," said Lt Attawat, who is leading the investigation.

Lt Attawat said Miss Shibata, and the friend she was diving with, booked a diving course with a company in Japan that sold tours affiliated through global tourism operator Kon Tiki.

However, after arriving in Phuket, the couple's dive tour booking was transferred to a local operator as the dive tour



Hitomi Shibata was killed when a boat propeller struck her face during a dive tour.

originally offered was full, he explained.

Miss Shibata, her friend and their dive instructor were placed on board the boat *Aqua Art 3*,

belonging to local company Marine Project, along with about 20 other divers, he added.

The three were diving at a depth of about 12 meters at Ao Kluay ("Banana Bay") off Koh Racha Noi when the accident happened, Lt Attawat said.

"The dive instructor said Hitomi suddenly started floating toward the surface because she accidentally pressed a switch on her suit, which let air into the suit," he said.

"She died instantly when her head was hit by the propeller of the boat, which was moving slowly to pick up groups of divers," he added.

"Her body was transferred to a speedboat and rushed back to Chalong Pier, arriving at 2:30pm. It was then taken Vachira Phuket Hospital for further examination," he said.

Karon beachfront cabling keeps tourists tumbling

THE project to install power and telecommunications cables underground along the Karon beachfront is causing accidents on an almost daily basis, local residents have told the *Phuket Gazette*.

"Most of the victims are foreigners on motorbikes who are not used to the road," said one female local taxi driver.

The dangerous strip, about two meters wide, stretches more than three kilometers along the beachfront.

"We receive complaints every day from both local residents and hotels as they don't know what is going on," Karon Mayor Tawee Tongcham told the *Gazette*.

"The project is to install all telecommunication and power cables underground, but it involves many different organizations, such as TT&T, TOT, CAT and cable TV companies.

"These companies do not have the budgets for their parts of the project available at the same time," he said.



Tuk-tuk drivers blame foreign tourists' lack of local road knowledge as the reason so many end up in hospital.

Each time one of the companies finally has the budget available, municipal workers have to dig the road up again to install that company's cables, he said.

"Most recently, CAT and TOT asked us to dig up the road to put their wires underground," Mayor Thawee said.

"Right now, power cables and water supply pipes are already

underground, but we're waiting for the telecommunication wires to be installed," he added.

The bad news for motorists is that the road will not be paved until all the cables have been installed, the mayor said.

That is not likely to happen before June, when the project is scheduled for completion, he added. **- Atchaa Khamlo**

Tsunami warning towers: The sound of silence

From page 1

warning towers are tested by playing the national anthem on the 1st and 16th of every month.

"The towers still work. We have not received any reports otherwise, not from our own officers or from local authorities or from local residents."

Chief San added that the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC), which is responsible for issuing tsunami warnings, has confirmed that all 19 warning towers in the six Andaman provinces were operational.

NDWC Director Somsak

Khaosuwan told the *Gazette*, "We have not received any complaints about the warning towers, which we regularly inspect."

However, he added that the alarm currently used by the towers sounds the same as an ambulance siren or other emergency vehicle.

"This might confuse people, so we will change the alarm so people will instantly recognize what it is," he said.

Director Somsak urged anyone who notices a tsunami warning tower in need of repair to report it by calling the NDWC hotline Tel: 192.

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Pirate raids net 11 vendors, B6mn in goods

RAIDS on shops selling pirated DVDs and CDs in Patong last week ended with 11 arrests and evidence worth up to 6 million baht seized.

Led by Royal Thai Police Assistant Commissioner-General Lt Gen Krisada Pankongcheun, the raids targeted 13 shops, some along the beach road and others at OTOPI Plaza on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road.

Accompanied by Provincial Police and representatives of the company with the copyright for the products, the officers came with 13 search warrants.

The operators of two stores evaded arrest.

Many of the stores had "secret rooms" with remotely locked doors, police said.

- Yodsak Jarana

Local candidates line up

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

RAEWAT Areerob of the Democrat Party has announced he will contest the "Phuket 2" constituency in the July 3 national elections.

The Phuket 2 constituency covers more than half of the island and includes Thalang District, Kathu District and Koh Kaew and Rassada subdistricts in Muang District.

Contesting the Phuket 2 constituency against Mr Raewat will be Jirayus Songyos for the Bhum Jai Thai Party, which opened its Phuket office near the Heroines' Monument in Thalang last Thursday.

Mr Jirayus is FC Phuket manager and a consultant to Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) President Paiboon Upatising.

Mr Raewat also confirmed that fellow Democrat Tossaporn



Raewat Areerob

Thepabutr will not be contesting the seat for the Phuket 1 constituency, which covers the rest of the island.

Mr Tossaporn is the husband of Anchalee Vanich Thepabutr, who was Secretary General to the Prime Minister before Parliament was dissolved on Monday.

Asked who will contest the



Jirayus Songyos

Phuket 1 seat, Mr Raewat said, "More time is needed to determine the appropriate person."

Contesting the Phuket 2 constituency for the Pheu Thai Party will be Saman Kebsap.

Pheu Thai Party Southern region leader Pichet Sathirachawal declared Mr Saman's candidacy for Phuket 2 at the opening of Mr



Saman Kebsap

Saman's office, located opposite Thalang Hospital, on Tuesday.

A Phuket native originally from Patong, Mr Saman runs real estate business with offices in Patong and Rawai.

Mr Saman is also deputy director of the Pheu Thai Andaman Operations Center, which is based in Phuket.

Light rail investors eye regional links

THE latest delegation to approach Phuket Governor Tri Augkarakacha with ideas for Phuket's light-rail project on Monday highlighted the need for developing transport links with other provinces.

"If the routes in Phuket are linked with routes in other provinces, rather than only focusing on light rail within Phuket, it can be a profitable investment," said independent investor liaison Pranom Phuangkanok.

Mrs Pranom, representing Bangkok-based developer Roongwadee Construction 1991 Co Ltd, headed the delegation that met Governor Tri to discuss developing a light-rail system in Phuket.

Mrs Pranom explained to the Gazette that she is acting as facilitator between Roongwadee Construction and Chinese investors ready to fund the project.

She is also involved in a project to develop light-rail links between Surat Thani and Phang Nga provinces, Mrs Pranom said.

Governor Tri said the Chinese investors had already transferred



Gov Tri (left) with Mrs Pranom.

US\$100 million into a Thai bank to show they are prepared to invest in Phuket's light rail project.

However, Roongwadee has requested 15 days to perform a thorough assessment of the Phuket light-rail project as they said the information currently available was not detailed enough to propose to the investors ready to fund the project, he noted.

If the Chinese investors agree to go ahead and fund the project, investors and engineers will be invited to Phuket for further discussions.

"If everything goes well, I will move to have a draft contract drawn up," Gov Tri added.

- Janpen Upatising

Old Town 'wireless' by November

MUNICIPAL workers will start pulling down power poles lining the streets of Thalang, Dibuk and Theprasattri Roads in the heart of Old Phuket Town by November, if all goes according to plan, Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupapana recently announced.

Speaking at a meeting at Phuket City Municipality offices last Friday, Mayor Somjai said that stage two of the project to install underground all power and telecommunication cables in Old Phuket Town was ready to begin.

Phuket City Municipality has held two public hearings seeking feedback from local residents, she said.

So far the feedback has been positive, with most people living in the area satisfied with the project, Mayor Somjai said.

Stage II is budgeted to cost 39,740,900 baht, comprising 26,476,600 baht from the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA)



The ugly cables are to be buried by November. Photo: Pimwara Choksakulpan

and 13,264,300 baht from Phuket City Municipality.

The project also requires involvement from TOT, CAT and TT&T as telecom cables belonging to those companies will also be installed underground, said Mayor Somjai.

Work will start with the PEA

burying cables along Dibuk Road in June, with Krabi Road, Phuket Road and part of Theprasattri Road next in line.

"The work to be done will be much like that already conducted along Thalang Road," Mayor Somjai said.

- Chutharat Plerin

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UFO sighting signals disaster



The evidence. Photo: The Nation

A PHOTOGRAPH allegedly showing a flying saucer in the sky above the mountains of Chiang Mai is causing a stir in this northern province, with more superstitious residents claiming the UFO is a warning of impending natural disaster.

Manun Meksuwan, 33, who took the picture, told *Daily News* that on May 6 he and some friends went on a trip to Samerng District, an area of mountainous jungle.

They stopped at a point on the Samerng-Mae Rim Road to enjoy the view. Mr Manun took three pictures one after the other, he said.

There was nothing out of the ordinary in the first two pictures. But when he looked at the third, he was shocked to see some-

thing strange in the sky over the mountains.

Mr Manun said he was sure the thing was a UFO. He said it couldn't have been an earth-based flight as it was too high in the air.

He also dismissed the possibility that it was a helicopter or plane, because there was no sound of engines in the air.

The picture has become a sensation after being forwarded from friend to friend via email.

- *Daily News*

Burglar caught with keys to police HQ

POLICE last Friday presented a man who has allegedly confessed to committing no less than seven break-ins in Phuket Town recently.

One of the homes robbed was that of Capt Thapakorn Hanu-mard, who is the assistant to Phuket Police Commander Pekad Tantipong.

Capt Thapakorn's house is located directly opposite Phuket City Police Station in a police apartment block.

Police said they arrested Uthai Suandokmai, 33, at his rented room in Phuket Town, on May 5.

In his room they found many items identified as stolen, including the keys to Phuket Provincial Police headquarters and to Capt Thapakorn's car.

In tracking down Uthai, officers identified a laptop computer for sale at KPP mobile that was listed as stolen, for which the receipt was issued to the suspect, said police.

Police said Uthai confessed to seven counts of burglary.

He targeted houses with no one



BURGLER: Commander Pekad (left) and Capt Thapakorn survey items allegedly stolen by Uthai (seated).

home and stole only valuables that could be easily carried away and easily converted to cash, police said.

Uthai needed money to buy drugs, police said.

He reportedly took about five to 10 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills a day (300 baht each) and one "dose" of *ya ice* (crystal meth) a

day (4,000 baht per gram), police quoted him as saying.

Police added that Uthai previously served 18 months in jail for buying a stolen motorcycle.

He was charged for the seven break-and-enter crimes he confessed to, said police.

- *Pimwara Choksakulpan*

Phuket Governor to remarry 'Baba style'

PHUKET Governor Tri Augkaradacha and his wife Nalinee will renew their wedding vows as part of a Baba Peranakan (Straits Chinese) mass wedding ceremony in June.

The news was announced on May 9, when Gov Tri met a delegation from the Thai Peranakan Association led by its President Dr Kosol Tang-Uthai.

During the meeting, which focused on details of the upcoming "3rd Baba Wedding 2011", Dr Kosol popped the question to Gov Tri: Would he and his wife join the festival and renew their wedding vows?

The governor gave his nod.

Dr Kosol explained that the event, to be held on June 10 and 11, had already gained the support of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) office in Phuket.

The first day will be spent as an orientation session for couples taking part.

On the morning of June 11, the couples will gather at the Governor's Mansion on Narison Road in Phuket Town, where they will start their parade through the streets in full Baba Peranakan wedding attire.

The colorful procession will then travel along Thalang Road, ending at Thai Hua Museum at noon.

In the evening, wedding celebrations will be held at Hongyok Mansion on Thepkrasattri Road.

The two venues were chosen as both mansions exemplify Sino-Portuguese style, Dr Kosol said.

Packages for couples to be wed



Last year's event was a success.

during the festival cost 50,000 baht, including a one-night stay at the Phuket Merlin Hotel on June 10, the wedding ceremony, wedding attire and a "honeymoon stay" on June 11 at a beach resort yet to be determined, he added.

"Six couples, including Thais and foreigners, have already registered to take part.

"We expect between 10 to 15 couples in total," Dr Kosol said.

More information will be released at an official press conference on June 1, he added.

"This is not for money. We want to preserve Phuket culture," Dr Kosol affirmed.

Any couples interested in joining the mass wedding are asked to call the Thai Peranakan Association at 076-224316, the TAT Phuket Office at 076-212213, Dr Kosol at 081-8927014 or Thai Peranakan Association Vice President Asst Prof Pranee Sakulpipatana at 081-6933576.

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‘Mangrove’ road one step closer

THE National Environment Board, chaired by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, has approved the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the Koh Klong Pee road to traverse mangroves on the edge of Phuket Town.

The decision was made at a meeting at Parliament House on May 4, announced Phuket City Municipality Mayor Somjai Suwansupapana.

At the meeting, PM Abhisit was informed that the estimated budget for the project was 185 million baht, Mayor Somjai said.

The project aims to build a 600-meter road connecting Saphan Hin to Sakdidet Road, with an elevated section spanning over mangroves.

The next step for the project is to present the EIA report to the Cabinet so it can decide whether or not to allow the project to go ahead despite its national ban on mangrove encroachment instituted on July 23, 1991.

The blanket ban on mangrove encroachment allows one exception: projects deemed to be “for public benefit”.

A long quest for identity

Phuket’s stateless sea gypsies inch forward in their decades-long struggle to become Thai citizens

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

THIRTY Phuket sea gypsies recently took the first step in the daunting process of applying for Thai citizenship.

Their plight as stateless people was one of many issues raised during a May 4 meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Chaired by Vice Governor Weerawat Janpen, the gathering was intended to discuss ways to preserve sea gypsies’ traditional lifestyles in a rapidly changing world.

Providing some background, Rawai sea gypsy representative Niran Yangpan said a list of 80 sea gypsies seeking citizenship was submitted to Phuket Provincial Office in a naturalization process that began in 1994.

When the process ceased in 2009, there were still 16 Rawai sea gypsies on the list, he said.

Urging all relevant government offices to work together to resume the process, Mr Niran asked those present to consider the difficulties stateless people experience on a daily basis.

“Without an ID card, they don’t have the right to medical treatment

in government hospitals, nor can they apply for jobs.

“Some poor sea gypsies died penniless waiting for their ID cards, and after they died it was impossible [for their relatives] to request a coffin for them from any public foundation,” he said.

A representative of the Phuket Provincial Cultural Office said there was a total 30 Phuket sea gypsies without ID cards, the 16 from Rawai and 14 more from Sapam.

Sumran Yukunthorn, deputy chief of the Phuket Provincial Office Administration Group, is responsible for overseeing the effort to get the sea gypsies ID cards.

He told the *Phuket Gazette* a week after the meeting that he had already submitted the list of 30 names to Muang District Office along with a request to proceed with the approval process.

“The Muang District Registrar will question each applicant, relevant witnesses and consider all the submitted documents before submission to the Ministry of Interior.

“It might take some time since this is a national security issue,” said Mr Sumran, adding that he would update progress on the matter every month.



A NEW WORLD: Semi-nomadic sea gypsies are facing ‘sedentary’ challenges. Photo: Stephen Michael Fein

New incinerator ‘half-finished’

WORK on Phuket’s second solid waste incinerator is nearly half-complete. When finished, the facility will house the highest capacity trash-to-electricity plant in the country, Phuket City officials say.

The news follows a progress meeting on Tuesday attended by Tawarat Sutabutr, deputy director of the Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency (DEDE); Phuket Mayor Somjai Suwansupapana; and Prachoom Suriya, head of the municipality’s environmental division.

Mr Tawarat said the Ministry of Energy would buy the power



An image of what the completed project will look like. Image: PJT

produced by the gasification facility, which is costing about 100 million baht to build.

Work on the plant is about 45 per cent complete. When finished, its two burners will be capable of

incinerating 700 tons of solid waste per day, he said.

However, the completed project will not mark the end of Phuket’s solid waste management problem.

“The amount of solid waste produced in Phuket has increased to 570 tons per day, a seven per cent increase over the last year. The capacity of the existing incinerator is only 250 tons per day,” Mayor Somjai said.

The remainder continues to pile up in the landfill behind the project.

Work on the project is scheduled for completion next year.

– MCOT/The Nation

Man found dead in water well

PHUKET Police are treating as an apparent suicide the drowning death of an elderly man whose body was found at the bottom of a water well last Friday.

Thalang Police were notified of the tragedy by residents of Ban Nai Khlam in Cherng Talay, many of whom were gathered around the well by the time police and Kusoldharm Foundation rescue workers arrived.

Thalang Police duty officer

Yosaphat Suwannasit identified the deceased as local resident Sutham Douangrat, age 65.

Relatives told police that before he went missing a day earlier, Mr Yosaphat had told them he was under stress from a variety of physical ailments.

Resuming their search for him Friday morning, they found his sandals near the well before discovering his body at the bottom under about nine meters of water.

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Army leads post-flood rebuilding

A SPECIAL committee to assist flood victims is coordinating efforts to rebuild and repair homes damaged or destroyed by the March 31 floods and landslides.

The floods and ensuing landslides, mostly in the Khao Phanom Bencha area, claimed at least three lives and displaced thousands.

The rebuilding is being rolled out in two phases, explained Nuntawan Prathumsuwan, an officer at the Krabi office of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, told the *Gazette*.

"We are receiving support from the Royal Thai Army 5th Infantry Division and 4th Development Division. They are rebuilding homes using plans from the government," said Ms Nuntawan.

"Our target for the first phase is to finish 45 houses each month, completing all 136 houses desig-

ACROSS THE
bay

nated for rebuilding within three months," Col Nopawong Suravichai, commander of the 5th Infantry Division, told the *Gazette*.

"We have 45 teams, each comprising 10 soldiers. Three houses have already been completed," he added.

The second phase of the homebuilding project focuses on having families affected by the disaster to move from risk areas to safe ground, said Ms Nuntawan.

"We have already received approval from Bangkok to build 59 houses as the families already have



Soldiers from the 5th Infantry Division have already completed three of the new homes. Photo: Royal Thai Army

land in safe areas on which to build the new homes," she said.

Families in 55 homes to be rebuilt are still trying to secure land in safe areas, said Ms Nuntawan.

"We are trying to help them with this," she added.

Both phases of the disaster-relief project are being coordinated by the Committee for Assistance

to Flood victims (CAF) set up by the Krabi Governor's Office.

"The Krabi Governor will receive disaster-relief funds from Bangkok and he will then allocate that money for buying construction materials. We will not be handing out cash," she said.

Providing extra funds to help build the homes are the Thai Red

Cross and Thai TV Channel 3, Ms Nuntawan said

Families receiving assistance under the program are being allocated 190,000 baht for houses for small families of not more than three people, 240,000 baht for houses for families of four people or more, she added.

— *Phuket Gazette*

China trade deal moves ahead

By Gus Reynolds

REPRESENTATIVES from the Shanghai Tourism Organization with about other 300 Chinese will arrive in Krabi in June following the signing of an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is expected to provide a huge tourism boon for the province.

A trade delegation of Krabi officials and business leaders traveled to China on April 18 to 23 to develop business and developmental ties.

Leading the delegation was Krabi Vice Governor Uten Tantreeboon and Chuan Phukao-luan, Chief Development Policy



Nathapol Khantahiran (right), Deputy Consul-General of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Shanghai welcomes a delegation led by Krabi vice Governor Uthen Tuntreeboon.

Adviser to the Krabi Governor and a former Krabi Town Mayor.

The group of 22 traveled to the city of Nanjing, in Jiangsu Province, and later to Shanghai.

The team comprised tourism, agriculture, livestock and education officials and representatives from the Krabi Governor's Office. The team met their Chinese counterparts to exchange ideas for joint ventures and exchange programs.

An MoU was signed between representatives of Jiangsu and Krabi provinces and discussions were conducted on education exchanges and direct flights from Nanjing and Shanghai to Krabi.

In June, the first charter flight will bring the 300-strong entourage from China for their first visit to Krabi. A video about Krabi will be produced for CCTV and covered by mass media in China.

Second Krabi Airport expansion underway

CONSTRUCTION is underway on a new international terminal at Krabi International Airport to boost capacity for international arrivals.

The new terminal, covering 7,955 square meters, is expected to increase international passenger throughput by 50%, up to 500 passengers per hour.

Currently, both domestic and international services, including immigration, customs and ticketing, are all handled in the one building.

Other improvements being made include extra aircraft parking, namely two more parking bays for Boeing 747-400 aircraft and four more parking bays for Boeing 737-400s.

The capacity for helicopters will remain unchanged at two.

The expansion, which will allow additional international direct



The new international passenger terminal is scheduled to open next year. Photo: Krabi International Airport

flights to Krabi, and scheduled for completion in 2012.

Krabi Airport was subject to a huge overhaul completed in 2006 at a cost of 743 million baht.

— *Gus Reynolds*



At "Into the Sea", the signature restaurant at the Evason Phuket & Bon Island, chef Thomas Jakobi's Modern Logical Cuisine showcases his latest innovations in the form of new, creative interpretations of a cuisine that has both visual and textural appeal. The taste and focus on fresh, wholesome and local ingredients are paramount.

The wine program, created by our sommelier, Harry Haan, has been granted the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence for the second year in a row.



Facebook.com/EvasonPhuketAndBonIsland
Facebook.com/IntoTheSeaRestaurant



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& BON ISLAND

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www.sixsenses.com

Youth proud to be a 'Zero'

A "Zero Waste Camp" was held at Kasetsart University's campus in Neua Klong on the weekend of April 30 to May 1 to raise awareness among young Thais of the benefits of renewable energy, recycling and environmental issues.

Eighty children took part in the program, which was co-organized by the National Science Museum of Bangkok and headed by campus Director Dr Sombat Chinawong.

Dr Sombat has long championed sustainable development and renewable energy projects throughout southern Thailand.

The children were grouped into teams and took part in projects such as making biofuel from palm tree fronds, methane fuel from goat farm waste and bricks from waste products.

Among the exhibitions on show to the students were solar energy and wind power demonstrations.

Campaigning Pheu Thai MP shot in politically-motivated attack

IN A shocking start to the election campaign that left observers wondering whether worse was to come, opposition MP Pracha Prasopdee was shot and wounded by gunmen on a motorcycle in Samut Prakan on Tuesday.

Mr Pracha sustained three gunshot wounds to the back and shoulder in the attack, which happened as he was driving his car in Phra Samut Chedi district.

On Wednesday, Thai Police Commissioner-General Wichan Pote-phosree said the attack was politically

motivated, *The Nation* reported.

Police have collected forensic evidence at the scene and are hunting for unidentified attackers.

Police have been ordered to provide tighter security in the run up to the elections, the report said.

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva visited Mr Pracha at Rama IX hospital in Bangkok on Wednesday and said he is in better condition, but "needed rest".

Mr Pracha, 51, was elected for the first time as Samut Prakan MP in 2001 under

the banner of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai Party. He has close links to the exiled billionaire.

"I believe the gun attack on my brother was politically motivated because of fierce campaigning in the constituency of Phra Pradaeng and Phra Samut Jedi," Mr Pracha's sister and fellow MP Naruemol Thandamrong said on Wednesday.

She said Pracha had been re-elected several times, speculating that his rival candidates might have found it impossible to defeat him.



A policeman examines Mr Pracha's car after the shooting. Photo: AFP

Elections set for July 3

PRIME Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has announced the dissolution of Parliament, paving the way for high-stakes elections on July 3 that many analysts expect to be the most hotly contested Thailand has ever seen.

Mr Abhisit described the polls as a new beginning for the Thai people.

"I believe this house dissolution is the beginning for Thailand to move forward in order to effectively solve problems through democracy.

"That's why I did it willingly," he said.

The elections are expected to be a close race between Mr Abhisit's Democrat Party and the opposition Pheu Thai Party, controlled by former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Mr Abhisit's government, which steered Thailand's economy to 7.8 per cent growth last year despite some heavy political turbulence, has nevertheless been dogged by claims it lacks legitimacy.

The current coalition, led by the Democrat Party, was stitched together in December 2008, allegedly under pressure from the military, following controversial judicial decisions that dissolved two parties associated with Mr Thaksin.

A sense of injustice resulting from those decisions – and likely financial support from Mr Thaksin – led to the growth of the anti-government red shirt movement, which staged weeks of protests last year to demand Mr Abhisit dissolve Parliament.

The army forcefully dissolved the protests on May 19 in a bloody crackdown. At least 92 people died during the demonstrations amid claims the army shot unarmed protesters. Armed elements among the protesters, the so-



called black shirts, have also been blamed for provoking the troops.

Critics claim the red shirt movement and Pheu Thai are merely vehicles aimed at bringing Mr Thaksin back to power.

The former telecoms billionaire, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006, lives in self-exile abroad to escape a graft conviction.

Those claims gained traction recently when it emerged that Mr Thaksin's younger sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, is likely to become the Pheu Thai Party's candidate for prime minister in the polls.

Mrs Yingluck, who has no political experience of her own, applied for inclusion on the Pheu Thai Party's party list on Tuesday.

Analysts say Mrs Yingluck's candidacy may be a double-edged sword.

The attractive businesswoman might prove an attractive alternative to the handsome, Oxford-educated Mr Abhisit.

Other voters could be put off by her association with Mr Thaksin, who remains a highly divisive figure.

Most observers believe it unlikely either Pheu Thai or the Democrats will win the 250 seats in the House of Representatives that would give them a majority.

That will set the stage for political horse-trading with smaller parties. With claims that the military is still attempting to influence politics continuing to resonate, few believe the polls will bring an end to the political turbulence of the past five years.



FEMME FATALE?: It is believed that Mr Thaksin's younger sister, Yingluck, will be Pheu Thai's candidate for PM in upcoming polls. Photo: The Nation

Bug spray suspect in hotel deaths

AN INVESTIGATION by a New Zealand television show may have uncovered the cause of several unexplained tourist deaths at Chiang Mai's Downtown Inn earlier this year: bug spray.

Five tourists died within weeks of each other of symptoms resembling food poisoning while staying at the three-star hotel.

Several other deaths were also linked to the hotel.

An investigation by the 60 Minutes show found traces of the chemical chlorpyrifos, used to kill bed bugs, in the room where Sarah Carter stayed.

United Nations scientist Ron McDowall said that the symptoms suggested those who died were over-exposed to the chemical.

"The fact traces of chlorpyrifos were found three months after Ms Carter's death and after the room was cleaned suggested there was a high concentration when she was staying there," he told the program.

"I think she has been killed by an overzealous sprayer who's been acting on the instructions of the hotel owner to deal with bed bugs," Dr McDowall said.

The revelations will embarrass the Chiang Mai authorities, who claimed the deaths were just a "co-incidence" amid accusations of a cover up.

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I can see it in your power lines

Re: Gazette online, Phuket to endure more blackouts this month, May 10

The quality of power lines is the best example of the quality of the country that you live in.

It truly reflects the standards of workmanship and forward thinking that the country is capable of.

Power lines are the lifeline for the country's future.

They reflect the care the people have for their surroundings and the care the government demonstrates for investment and progress. Need I say more?

A Williams
Gazette forum

A 'Hail Mary' for democracy

Re: Gazette online, Election set for July 3, PM Abhisit to address nation, May 9

For the good of the country and its people, let us all pray these elections are performed in a fair and transparent manner.

There has been too much strife in other countries over so-called democratic elections, with results violently contested.

Thailand's recent political history has not been encouraging, so let us all hope this is change for the better.

Logic
Gazette forum

Dumbfounded

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Crime: A special report on teen gang violence in paradise, May 7

Just idiotic. They don't know why, but they live in another

Pink bus punches the right ticket

THE recent expansion of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) *poh thong* public transport service to the people of Koh Sireh is not only great news for some of the poorest residents of Phuket Town, but also gives long-suffering tourists an overdue, low-cost travel option.

The latest route's eastern terminus at Laem Tukkae will be a blessing for many, from the poor sea gypsy community there to guests at the upscale Westin Siray Bay Resort who want to explore the city's many interesting sites in an authentic, comfortable way.

Until the new service was launched earlier this month, guests at the resort seeking a way into town were forced to pay a "standard fare" of 300 baht for the five-minute trip, with popular destinations such as Bangkok Hospital Phuket, Big C and Tesco Lotus even higher at 400 baht, or 600 baht by van.

Now those wanting to reach these destinations – or just about anywhere else in Phuket Town – will be able to do so for 20 baht.

To the best of the *Gazette's* collective knowledge, this marks the first time guests at a seaside resort hotel in Phuket have been given reasonable access to the kind of safe, efficient, reasonably-priced travel options available to people in virtually every other part of the Kingdom.

Best of all, they will be able to explore the entire town and all of its interesting sites at their leisure, without being continually hounded into buying overpriced jewelry or being overcharged

neighborhood so they don't like each other?

We have the same problem in the US with Mexican gangs, exactly the same thing and it never ends – just a cycle of revenge.

More education is needed for these parents and for

Phuketians in general.

No shortage of ignorance here for sure. I suggest to maybe start caring about something instead of just "mai bpen rai" about everything.

Absurd Tribal Instincts
Gazette forum

Phuket Gazette

for rides to ripoff tourist attractions where foreigners are charged 10 times the amount locals pay.

But while the *poh thong* are proving to be a big hit with local residents and gaining recognition nationally after winning an award for "Local Innovation" from the Prime Minister's Office last year, only a small minority of passengers who currently use them are foreigners.

The *OrBorJor* has done a good job of making the service more accessible to foreigners, such as by posting English-language information at bus stops.

Unfortunately, the zig-zagging routes are notoriously difficult to remember. Even lifelong Thai residents of the town, including many senior citizens who would otherwise stand to benefit a great deal from the service, find it nearly impossible to figure out how to get from Point A to Point B easily if it involves a transfer.

The *Gazette* would like to encourage its readers to familiarize themselves with the routes, begin using the service and recommend it to others.

Who knows? Some day we might even see the trademark *poh thong* transporting satisfied tourists around Patong or between that town and Karon.

Then again, perhaps not – but dreaming never harmed anyone.

China: No need to apply

Re: Gazette online, Phuket light rail investors push for Surat Thani, Phang Nga links, May 10
What excellent foresight,

Issues & Answers...

Can I get paid?

If someone has their own company but is hired by another to work for them on a freelance basis, is said worker entitled to severance pay from the employer?

Severed
Phuket

An officer at the Phuket Provincial Labor Protection and Welfare Office replies:

This depends on the agreement between you and your employer.

For example, if you work from home and send your work to someone who pays you, we don't call them an employer.

Payment depends on the agreement you had from the beginning of your work with them.

If you work part-time or even casually in an office and follow the company's regulations and schedule, that company can be called an employer.

You should get benefits exactly as if you were full-time staff.

The employer must report you to the Social Security and Revenue

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

department and pay you at least the minimum wage in Phuket which is 221 baht per day.

Varatda Thongsombat of the registration department at the Social Security Office Phuket replies:

It depends on the worker's actions.

If the worker follows the company's regulations like working times or public holidays, then the employer must give the same benefits as they do full-time staff.

If the worker sends work to a company or organization, they are not considered an employee, but a freelancer.

linking to other links and provinces.

Wonder how our homegrown taxi and tuk-tuk drivers would react?

Also, I have seen these China-biased projects in Africa, and Thailand certainly has the engineers to see this through without having to be tied in with the Chinese engineers who I know are also perfectly capable.

It's me
Gazette forum

Census concensus: Failure

Re: Gazette online, Phuket population 'only' 525,000: Census, May 9

I waited and waited and waited for the census people to arrive, but alas to no avail.

There are six people living in my house and someone is always at home.

My neighbors had the same experience.

So the lady is correct when she said it is not a true reflection of the population in Phuket.

Phuket Stan
Gazette forum

Confused on the flesh issue

On a visa run to Penang recently, a middle-aged man was told to change his tank top for a t-shirt as a matter of respect to the consulate.

Two women in front of him were wearing flimsy string tops baring their shoulders fully.

I thought both men and women were to cover up in these places.

Bunny Reynolds
Kalim

Phuket Gazette

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Running out of gas

I have lived in Patong now for 10 years and during that time I have seen a massive increase in the number of motor vehicles being used in this city.

One thing that I just cannot understand is that there is only one gasoline station in the entire city of Patong and this closes at 8pm.

I came from a very small town in the United Kingdom, about one-tenth the size of Patong, but even in that small town there were five large gasoline stations.

I think Patong needs at least two more stations. Can you tell me why there is only one?

Peter O'Connor
Patong

Sompol Khwanyuen, director of the Public Works Division of Patong Municipality, replies:

In order for a gas station to be built, two permits from local organizations or municipalities are required: a building permit and a permit to sell petrol.

Dolphin park plans should be canned

FIRST PERSON

THE 90-million-baht dolphin park is a bad investment for Phuket and will bring nothing but negative publicity.

The Earth Island Institute has a long-standing relationship with the multi-billion-dollar dolphin-safe Thai tuna industry.

I have informed the Thai Food Processors Association (which represents the Thai tuna industry), Thai Union Group (the largest single tuna company in the world) and several other large tuna companies in the country that Earth Island will not stand by and allow for yet more dolphins to be captured from the wild and imported into Thailand.

The Fisheries Ministry is on notice of this problem as well. This ministry will have to clear any imports with CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) in addition to dealing with negative publicity if permits are issued.

Earth Island has a firm policy against the live dolphin trade and will actively campaign to state that Thailand's multi-billion-dollar tuna industry is at risk if this dolphin park is allowed to proceed.

Earth Island is the third-party certifier for dolphin-safe tuna [www.dolphinssafetuna.com] and will launch a consumer campaign in the US and Europe – major consumers of Thai canned tuna – if necessary, in conjunction with



Mark Berman is Associate Director of the Earth Island Institute's International Marine Mammal Project, an umbrella organization that campaigns for a range of environmental causes at the highest level of negotiations. The Earth Island Institute was deeply involved in the making of the world-renowned documentary *The Cove* on dolphin hunting in Japan. Mr Berman is also director of the Dolphin-Safe Tuna Monitoring Program, the organization that certifies tuna as "dolphin safe". Here Mr Berman explains how staunchly opposed Earth Island is to the 90-million-baht dophinarium proposed for Phuket.

calling for a tourism boycott of Phuket and the entire country.

Earth Island has extensive contacts due to our involvement in the academy-award-nominated documentary *The Cove*.

I will bring Ric O'Barry [of *The Cove* fame] to Thailand to join in this opposition as he is world-renowned.

Major networks such as CNN, Fox, and talk-show hosts such as Oprah will cover this story, as they are continually interested in our work to stop dolphin dealers that source dolphins from Taiji, Japan, the Solomon Islands and elsewhere.

Ric O'Barry and I also challenge the developers of this bad investment to a public forum debate on the issue.

We challenge the mayor and other officials to learn the truth behind keeping dolphins in captiv-

ity, which is a form of slavery, not education or research.

Phuket needs to know the truth, not some promise of big money under a bogus excuse for research and education. If tourists want to see dolphins, then get on a boat and watch them in a respectful way that allows them to be free.

Earth Island is prepared to do what it takes to make sure no additional captive dophinariums are built in Thailand or elsewhere.

In 2008, the Thai Fisheries Ministry was notified of a potential import of wild-caught Solomon Island dolphins to Safari World Bangkok. We convinced the ministry at that time to not issue any import permits for dolphins.

The ministry will hopefully do the right thing in this case.

Police inaction calls for action

Island View

By Grace Walters

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

MY FAMILY and I moved from the US to Phuket last June and our second rented house in Nai Yang was burglarized the first week of November, a month and a half after we took residence there.

My husband was on one of his business trips then and I was home with my seven-year-old son. Fortunately, we were unharmed.

We live in a two-storey house. All of my stolen items (an iPod, my watches, camera and wedding rings) were on the kitchen counter on the first level.

I had a very busy morning with the police. As I don't speak much Thai, I enlisted my Thai neighbor to help with the translation.

Two days later, my friend and I went over to the Thachatchai Police Station to obtain the police report that they never gave me, as I wanted to put in a claim for my stolen items with our US insurance company.

I was told by the officer in charge then that it would take about a month before I would hear back from them.

My neighbor called them after a month and was told that they had sent all evidence collected to Bangkok for analysis and to be patient, that they were still working on the case.

After the second month, we called again. We were told that the Bangkok police were in Phuket and investigating and that they would contact me soon with details.

It has been five months now and I have not once received a phone call from any Thachatchai Police officer. As Phuket is a touristy place



The thief got in through the kitchen window.

for many foreigners from all over the world, it would be a shame if they were to encounter a horrendous crime like I did. It will give the impression that Phuket is a dangerous place to visit, and moreso when the police are seen to be inefficient or even disinterested.

Unless the security forces of Phuket put in a concerted effort to solve these crimes and bring justice with haste and efficiency, the image of idyllic, peaceful and safe Phuket will be tarnished.

I hope that no one will suffer the trauma and pain like I did of losing their prized possessions while being kept in the dark on the outcome of the investigations.

On the other hand, I hope the police force here would prove me wrong in my judgment of their inefficiency and recover my stolen possessions. That would be a dream come true.

...asking the questions that affect you...

According to a regulation of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's Territory and Environment Protection Measures for Phuket Province BE 2553 [2010], it is prohibited to have any gas station within 50 meters of the sea.

According to the current issue of the "principle city plan" of Phuket [2005], in Patong, gas stations are only allowed in "orange zones", classified as medium population density zones. Orange zones cover areas on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road, Phang Muang Sai Khor Road and some parts of Nanai Road.

So, technically, even the single petrol station, Esso, on Phra Barami Road is illegal because it is in a "red zone", classified as a commercial and high population density zone.

The gas station, however, has been there for a long time – before those regulations were made – so it is still permitted to operate.

Another issue is the high land value in orange zones near the beach or easily in accessed areas. This makes investment in a gas station infeasible.

For example, one square wa [4 square meters] sells for about 300,000 baht. That's 75,000 baht per sqm.

One rai [1600sqm] is not large enough to build a gas station. The Esso station in Patong takes up about four rai.

Land alone can cost as much as 480 million baht. Is it worth it just to build a gas station?

Fireworks light up my ire

Are there any laws restricting the sale and setting off of fireworks to recognized festivals, such as New Year's Eve and HM The King's Birthday?

Residents of Surin are being constantly disturbed by late-night fireworks, often after midnight. Is there any action that can be taken to stop this, or at least limit the lighting up of fireworks to say 10:30pm?

Graham Briggs
Surin



Fireworks are common on Phuket beaches. Photo: Rene Ernhardt

A "public relations" Officer at Cherng Talay Police Station, who declined to give his name, replies:

We often get calls from residents complaining about fireworks. Sometimes when we go to the location specified in the complaint we catch the people setting off fireworks. Other times the people have

already left the area.

If we catch people illegally setting off fireworks we only warn them to not to do it. We do not fine or arrest people for setting off fireworks.

You have to remember that these people who set off fireworks in isolated incidents in the middle of the night are not the same re-

sponsible people who first obtain a permit from the District Office.

Aporn Meechol, an officer at Thalang District Office, replies:

Any person wanting to set off fireworks as part of an organized celebration, such as HM The King's Birthday or New Year, must first obtain a permit from the District Office at least two weeks before the event.

Regulations covering the setting off of fireworks do not restrict it to specified areas or times, so we approve each permit on its own merits according to what the occasion is, where the event is being held and what time the organizers want to set off the fireworks.

Usually, we allow fireworks to be set off between 7pm and 10pm.

However, some special occasions, such as New Year and HM The King's and HM The Queen's birthday celebrations, people may be allowed to set off fireworks later in the night, depending on the District Chief's approval.

Loans, savings rise in unison

By Anand Singh

STATISTICS published last month by the Bank of Thailand (BOT) suggest that people in Phuket are saving more compared to previous years.

The data showed that overall savings (including current accounts, savings accounts and time deposits) in Phuket banks totaled 83.5 million baht in February, an increase of 7.7 per cent from February last year.

Bank savings rose by 2.65 per cent year-on-year (YOY) in February, whereas in January the savings rate grew by 4.79 per cent YOY.

The number of bank branches in Phuket also rose from 122 to 125 branches between February last year and this year.

Banks in Phuket also achieved a healthy YOY loan growth of 2.66 per cent in February. January's loan growth was even higher at 2.87 per cent, suggesting that local investors are taking a more confident stance toward Phuket investment.

Comparing these figures to the same period last year, banks in Phuket were only able to achieve a loan growth of 0.78 per cent in February and 1.93 per cent in January. Total bank loans in Phuket in February this year reached 100,594 million baht, passing the 100,000 million mark for the first time, according to the BOT.

The BOT data also breaks down the business sectors that received the most bank loans. Although the data published is only available until the fourth quarter (Q4) of last year, it provides a good indicator of the level of confidence in some of Phuket's most important industries.

The business sector that received the most bank loans in Phuket, not surprisingly, was the hotels and restaurants sector.

Total bank loans for this sector increased by more than five per cent since the third quarter (Q3) of last year, reaching 28,568 million baht, which demonstrates a healthy investment growth in the industry.

Another sector that received substantial bank loans was the real estate sector, receiving a total loan of 11,705 million baht by the end of the Q4, comprising about 10 per cent of total bank loans in Phuket.

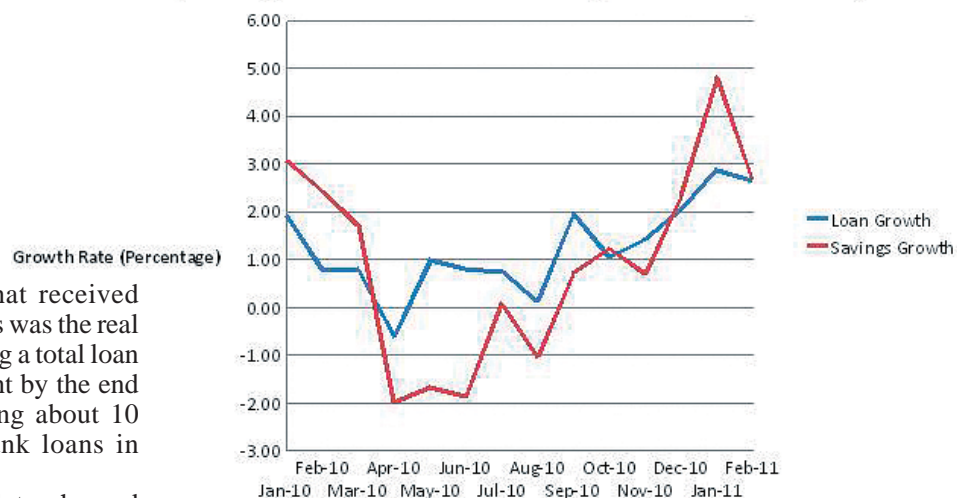
However, BOT data showed bank loans have been falling by roughly 1.5 per cent for the real estate sector since the Q3 of 2010, indicating a slowdown of investment in Phuket's real estate sector.

Bank loans to Phuket's real estate sector declined significantly during the second half of 2009, falling by more than eight per cent during this period, according to the BOT.

Loans for personal consumption comprised the highest percentage of total bank loans in Phuket – about 45 per cent. Bank loans for personal consumption rose by almost four per cent in Q4 of last year according to BOT data.

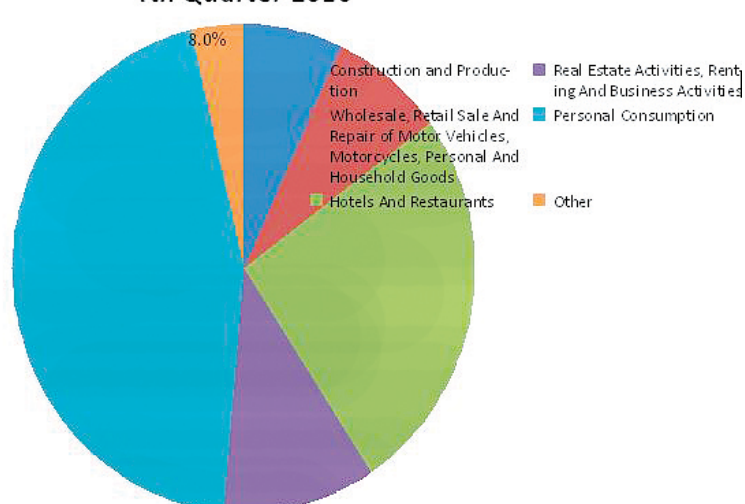
Such significant growth rates for personal consumption loans are an indicator of rising consumer confidence in Phuket.

Loan / Savings Growth Rate in Phuket (Jan 2010 - Feb 2011)



UPWARD TREND: Loans and savings have been increasing in Phuket over the past year, signalling confidence and stability in the economy.

Sectors That Received the Most Bank Loans in Phuket 4th Quarter 2010



Kajonkiet International School opens this month

THE Kajonkiet group of schools is preparing for a major shift in island demographics and greater demand for English-language education by opening its first international school this month, the school has announced.

Permkiat Ketkul, manager of Kajonkietsuksa School and Chairman of the Phuket Private School Association, said the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plan to lift cross-border travel restrictions and become a unified economic unit by 2015 was a major factor in the school's decision to open its Kajonkiet International School Phuket (KISP) on a 45-rai hillside site in Kathu.

The school is expected to cater to an increasingly international island when the grouping of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia,

Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam takes effect.

According to the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) plan, in 2015 there will be a free flow of goods, services, investments, capital and skilled labor amongst the 10 countries.

Once companies within ASEAN are able to move freely within the region, Phuket will become home for new workers and their families, said Mr Permkiat.

This leaves Phuket's education market with two important responsibilities.

First, schools will have to plan for the influx of new students. Second, they will have to prepare their current students for a future where the English language and a global awareness are of utmost importance, he said.



KISP: From left; Head of Primary Nicola Chokkuea, Head of Early Years Gemma Sloan and Head of Business Administration Vipaporn Korjarunchit

Kajonkietsuksa School is preparing itself for the AEC by opening its own International Program at its Kajonkiet International School Phuket (KISP), which opens this month.

The school will offer an all-around education program using the British National Curriculum

from pre-nursery to Year 6.

Kajonkietsuksa now offers various educational opportunities in the form of its Thai, ESC (Thai and English) and English Programs. The English Program, popular with expat residents, follows the Thai curriculum, but with instruction in English.

Each program serves its own unique purpose. KISP will be there to help prepare children for the changing economic profile of not only Phuket and Thailand, but the world, he said.

Kajonkietsuksa School was established in 1954 in order to further educational growth according to the national policy.

When knowledge of the English language became more of a necessity, the school expanded opening its English Program in 1999.

KISP is the school's latest attempt to meet the needs of Phuket's ever-changing society.

Mr Permkiat asks parents what their plans are for the future of their children when determining which of the four programs is most suitable.

Creating strong-minded individuals who will become leaders in tomorrow's international community is the primary goal, he said.

KISP's facilities include swimming pools, football fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, a large activity field, indoor and outdoor playgrounds.

The school is completely fenced and equipped with CCTV security systems.

"We will be offering a preparation course for all students joining KISP. This will enable a smooth transition into a new program and new curriculum," he said.

The preparation course, Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm, runs from May 23 to July 22.

— Jennifer Juneau



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In brief...

Housing Bank overwhelmed by first home buyers

ISLAND residents hoping to get their first home loan queued up at the Phuket branch of the Government Housing Bank as early as 6am on Monday last week.

Monday was the first day of receiving applications under the government loan campaign targeting first time homeowners.

Welcomed by lower and middle-income earners, the scheme promises zero interest during the first two years of loan repayments.

The policy is expected to be a success in Phuket, where there is a large market for new properties priced under three million baht.

Within the first half hour of opening its doors, the bank reportedly issued more than 100 queue tickets.

Home loan applicants queuing up were mainly civil servants, eligible to borrow up to 2.5 million baht, and non-government workers who qualify for loans between 750,000 and 2mn baht.

- Steven Layne

TAT try to revive Thai - Japan tourism market

JALPAC Tour and Travel Co, a leading operator serving the Japanese market, has halted its inbound unit due to a lack of demand from Japan following the earthquake, tsunami and radiation crisis.

Surapol Sritrakul, managing director of the company, which is the partner of a Japan-based firm, said the group recently suspended its subsidiary, Jal Pac International Co, which focuses on inbound travel from Japan to Thailand.

"This sister company was established years ago to cope with the growth of inbound business from Japan. It is being frozen now but may resume service once Japan tourism has recovered," he said.

To help restore the Japanese market, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) offices in Osaka and Fukuoka plan to organize a familiarization trip to Thailand for 10 to 15 travel operators May 11 to 15.

The operators are scheduled to visit key tourist destinations including Phuket, Krabi, Samui and Chiang Mai to meet local agents.

The TAT office in Tokyo will also work with major travel companies like JTB, HIS, Hankyu and NTA to host a tourism recovery project called "Smile Japan" to encourage Japanese into Thailand. Small-item spending for packages will be deducted to encourage people.

The TAT reported that 323,435 Japanese visited the country from January to March this year, up 5.8 per cent year on year.

The Japan market was expected to rebound by 70 per cent during Japan's annual holiday, Golden Week, April 29 and May 8.

- The Nation

Busy time for pawnshops as price of gold rockets

By Chutharat Plerin

AS SCHOOLS prepare for the start of a new academic year, Phuket parents are hawking their gold to cope with the rising cost of commodities and school fees.

During this time of economic uncertainty, the pawn shop business is flourishing in Phuket.

With what is anticipated to be a record breaking "Back to School" season upon us, Phuket City Municipality Mayor Somjai Suwansupapana has announced that the Phuket municipality pawnshop has prepared 140 million baht in funds, a surplus of 40 per cent of the expected budget projections for May.

Comparing to May last year, when about 5,700 loans valued at 91.5 million baht, this May's loans are expected to exceed 100 million baht, she said

140 million baht should be more than sufficient to cover all loans, she added

Over the summer break, about



CASHING IN: Business is on the up at pawnshops around the island.

5,700 pawn loans equaled 99.3 million baht in March, while in April, roughly the same amount valued 97.7 million baht.

The rising value of gold is believed to be one of the main factors in the increased budget demands. About 98 per cent of pawn

loans were exchanged for gold jewelry and ornaments, while the other two per cent for electronic equipment such as laptop computers she noted.

The municipality pawnshop currently loans 16,800 baht per one baht weight of gold, (one baht is equal to approximately 15 grams). This time last year, the rate was 14,000 baht, which equates to an increase of about 17 per cent.

"Rates paid [by the municipality pawn shop] are almost equal those paid by privately-run pawnshops; however, the [government] interest rate is lower," she said.

For loans under 5,000 baht, the interest rate is 0.5 per cent, while loans between 5,000 to 30,000 baht are charged an interest of one per cent, and for loans between 30,000 to 100,000 baht, 1.25 per cent.

According to the Gold Traders Association of Thailand as of May 7, the price of gold is 21,350 baht per baht weight of gold.

Blue Flag fair a hit as commodity prices soar

WITH commodity prices sky-rocketing, an Internal Trade Department fair with more than 90 booths selling cheap "Blue Flag" goods was a hit in Phuket last week.

Everyday goods such as rice, oil, eggs, fruit and clothes were all on sale at prices 20-30 per cent lower than normal.

The "Blue Flag Price Savers" fair, which took place from May 4 to 6 near the central stage of Saphan Hin Park in Phuket Town, was organized in co-operation with the private sector.

The event was aimed at ensuring ordinary people could afford everyday goods. The prices of many commodities are rising rapidly due to a number of factors

including high crude oil prices and this year's severe flooding, which damaged agricultural land in the south.

Last month, prices in the food and beverage sector grew 8.59 per cent year on year, due to eggs and milk rising 6.76 per cent, fruits and vegetables 20.61 per cent, and seasoning products 13.03 per cent, *The Nation* reported.

The price of non-food-and-beverage items rose by 1.35 per cent, from higher transport costs.

Supatcha Bunphalit, acting head of Phuket's Internal Trade Office, said the event had been arranged by her department together with relevant agencies and distributors to help contain the soaring cost

of living. The fair received a very good reaction from Phuket people, she said.

Last week, *The Nation* reported that Thailand's year-on-year inflation rose to 4.04 per cent in April, the highest rate in 15 months.

The Commerce Ministry said the prices of 198 of the 417 items in the basket of goods used to calculate the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose in April, mainly fresh fruits and vegetables, rice, oil, eggs and pork. The prices of 155 items were unchanged, while those of 64 products dropped.

"Higher headline inflation is [according to] the ministry's projection after the impact of flooding, which destroyed farm

goods," said Yanyong Phuangrach, permanent secretary of the ministry. "However, inflation is under control by the government, which will ensure that annual inflation will be under the target of 3.2 to 3.7 per cent this year."

Commerce Minister Porntiva Nakasai last week asked Cabinet to approve a budget of 200 million baht to hold more Blue Flag fairs nationwide.

- Phuket Gazette

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iPad2 a steal

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand should take out a full-page ad in the *New York Times*: "Fly to Thailand," it could say, "and get a 20 per cent discount on a new iPad 2."

Hard to believe, but the iPad 2 is significantly cheaper in Thailand than in the US – and the savings are even greater if your point of reference is in Europe.

I wrote about the iPad 2 a couple of months ago in the *Phuket Gazette*. People who lined up for the iPad 2s initial release in the US at that time still, with rare exception, sing its praises: faster, lighter, two cameras (not particularly good ones, but good enough), and that glorious display. Apple's iMovie only works on iPad 2, and Real Racing 2 HD crawls on the original iPad, so there are reasons – besides Angry Birds Rio – for upgrading.

In Beijing, a fistfight broke out in the Apple store during the iPad 2 launch last Saturday: four people injured and a demolished glass door. Apparently a scalper tried to cut in line, and an Apple employee took umbrage. Hey, in China, even fake iPad 2s sell out.

Here in Thailand, all of the ma-



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

major Apple shops in Bangkok sold out of iPad 2s on the first day, some within hours of opening. Surprisingly, several Phuket locations still had full stock available on Saturday. I checked the PowerBuy located on the second floor of Jungceylon, and they had all of the models available (WiFi and "3G" HSPA), with all of the memory options (16 GB, 32 GB and 64 GB), and both colors (white and black). At the Computer Clinic last Sunday, I heard that several other Phuket Apple shops had stock as well. If you want one, grab it quick.

Here's how the pricing turned out. In the US, Amazon.com lists many retailers with the entry-level 16 GB iPad 2, WiFi only, at US\$599, plus shipping. That's 18,100 baht at current exchange rates. Plus shipping and/or local sales tax. In Thailand, the 16 GB WiFi iPad 2 lists at 15,900 baht – and they're widely available at that price. Do the math, and you'll see

that buying an iPad 2 in Thailand is 12 per cent cheaper than in the US. Moreover, the list price here includes VAT, so if you're a tourist and you claim the VAT refund at the airport, you get a discount of just under 20 per cent compared to the US.

If you commonly buy your electronics in UK, hold onto your Bowler. Amazon.co.uk lists the iPad 2 16 GB WiFi at GB 489, plus shipping. That's a whopping 24,200 baht. Buy the same iPad – exactly the same, no differences at all – from your local Phuket dealer, and you save more than 34 per cent. Add in the VAT difference, and local Limeys save more than 40 per cent by buying an iPad 2 in Thailand.

TAT should take out two full pages in *The Times* or *The Guardian*. It'll probably get more attention than page three of *The Sun*.

People commonly ask me why the iPad is cheaper here in Thailand than in the US or UK or Europe. As best I can tell, Apple set the price of the original iPad back when exchange rates weren't as friendly as they are now (er, "friendly" depending on



IPAD 2 HAPPY: Apple officially released the iPad 2 in Thailand a week ago. Compared to prices overseas, the iPad 2 in Phuket is a bargain.

how you look at it, I guess). Apple has continued to sell iPad 2s at the original iPad price, all over the world. The result is a windfall for buyers in Thailand. See, there are hidden benefits to living in Phuket.

To see what Woody's up to in the international press, and to keep on top of the latest patches and problems with Windows and Office, drop by AskWoody.com. Follow Woody on Twitter: @PhuketPC.

Investing in Africa: foolish or full of foresight?

WILL AFRICA become the next BRIC country (Brazil, Russia, India, China)? Or will it sink like a stone unless all the political turmoil on the continent is resolved? Not long ago people were saying the same things about BRIC countries and they have not exactly done badly over the past decade or so.

African markets have been volatile during the past 10 years, and if you invested more than 15

per cent of your portfolio in them then you were brave indeed – but your courage should have been rewarded by now.

Some fund managers and investment companies are now saying the same thing about Africa, despite the ongoing turmoil in the African Mediterranean countries.

People who think investing in Africa is nothing short of pure madness should remember that



Island Investor

By Graham Macdonald

there are companies registered in places such as the US, UK and Europe that invest in Africa but are headquartered elsewhere. This should help with any transparency issues of where your investment is going, if nothing else.

However, if you are thinking of expanding your investments and want to include somewhere new, like Africa, in your portfolio, then there are ample opportunities out there.

The most important thing to remember is keep your investment liquid, as market volatility will make for an interesting ride.

Some of the fund management companies that are currently looking at investing in Africa are also taking into account factors such as sustainable investments that ensure that a company is actively exercising environmental control, social welfare and good governance, altogether ensuring that it is not just the company's owners who benefit from outside investment.

Look for a fund that has experience of Africa and, preferably, has offices there. The fund managers should know the countries they are investing in and will be looking for good companies with excellent prospects.

Obviously, there are geopolitical aspects to consider. To put it bluntly: Africa is huge. There are 54 countries on a single land mass that can easily accommodate the US, China, the European Union and India with room to spare.

However, there is no point in investing in some place like Zimbabwe right now unless you know something that the rest of the world does not. However, other countries may be worth a look.

According to the US Geological Survey, Africa has:
89% of the world's platinum
74% of the world's chrome
60% of the world's diamonds
51% of the world's phosphates
23% of the world's gold
12% of the world's oil
9% of the world's natural gas

It is also highly likely that the last two sets of figures are a massive understatement as new finds are being made all the time.

Also, this list will only get longer as more investment is piled into the continent. A lot of this is being led by China, which is buying up large swathes of land in many African countries so they can take advantage of the potential mineral wealth on offer.

The Chinese are not daft, but remember that this type of investment will be very volatile and, unless you like risk, should only be a small part of your portfolio.

As mentioned in previous columns, emerging markets can be very lucrative, but they are fraught with danger. Over the past decade the MSCI developed markets grew by 32 per cent, compared with emerging markets, which grew by 350 per cent.

But it must be pointed out that this phenomenal growth was accompanied by the latter phenomenal stress for investors.

Graham Macdonald, MD of MBMG Group. E: graham@mbmg-international.com. MBMG Group will not accept any liability for errors or omissions in above article

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THE NATION



Phoning a friend the 'smart' way at airports



BEATING THE JAM: A man stands speaking on the phone at a major European airport with long check-in queues below. With new smartphone technology, long lines at airports could become a thing of the past. Photo: AFP

Faster check-ins and airport shop discounts is what passengers want in the palm of their hands today

AIRPORTS, including Phuket International Airport (PIA), are as much retail businesses today as they are facilities for aircraft to land and take off from. And as many people using Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport know, they are also sites for long, frustrating arrival and departure lines.

With regard to shopping, most airports, including PIA, handle more people daily than the average shopping mall – and that's saying something on Phuket, where shopping is a major incentive for tourists to visit.

So in recent times PIA's shopping, restaurant and concession business has grown considerably in line with global aviation industry trends.

Last year a record 3.5 million passengers passed through PIA, so the retail has expanded to meet the increased demand.

Letters to the editor of local English language newspapers testify the frustration

of travelers with immigration lines at Suvarnabhumi, which last year, had 42 million customers, making it the 17th largest in the world in terms of passenger numbers. That is a lot of potential retail therapy and long lines.

So what better way for retailers at PIA and elsewhere to substantially increase their turnovers, and for passengers to be able to spot the smallest line before joining it than by being able to use WiFi technology to track in real

time where airport travelers go and what they do while waiting for takeoff or transiting?

This is now a reality. Copenhagen Airport in Denmark is experimenting with a system run by aviation communications and technology company SITA. Dots on the screen of a laptop show different colors for arriving and departing passengers.

The system enables travelers to download a Copenhagen Airport iPhone application to receive location-specific

information on their devices about the shortest security line or special deals being offered at nearby shops.

Imagine how useful something like this would be at Suvarnabhumi Airport, with its vast array of shops and eating and drinking facilities spread over a huge area as you either wait to board a plane out of Thailand, or have a few hours in transit en route to Phuket? At PIA it would also work, but on a smaller scale.

In terms of privacy, only devices are followed, not individuals, so there is no intrusion. For retailers it will mean they can contact travelers directly through the WiFi system and even make offers, discounts over the iPhone. This, in turn, would lead to increased retailer turnover, which benefits the airport and, hopefully, the passengers

with improved services in the long run.

In this new digital age, such iPhone-based applications are entirely feasible.

At Copenhagen Airport an estimated 20 per cent of air travelers own devices that emit WiFi signals.

Add in other applications, such as using a smartphone to purchase goods and display bar codes to board planes – which is already becoming a widely used – and the new-age, smartphone traveler has arrived

Passengers who use this new technology – it is close to being rolled out – will find themselves in the shortest lines, holding the best bargains from the shops, all due to their trusty smartphone.

This is new age traveling at its best.

FLYING SENSE: Smartphones like this Blackberry device are revolutionizing the way we travel.



Aviation
By Alastair Carthew

THAI boost with 60 extra flights for Haj

THAI Airways International has prepared 60 direct flights for some 9,000 Muslim Thais to join the annual Haj pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca this year.

Dullayapong Sukhanusas, executive for strategy and business development, said last week that the chartered flights would start departing on September 29 from four airports – one from Suvarnabhumi, one from Krabi, two from Phuket and 26 from Haad Yai in Songkhla.

The return trips from Jeddah City were scheduled from November 12-28.

The fares, as approved by the Civil Aviation Department, range from 45,500 to 48,500 baht, excluding airport tax.

For next year, the flag carrier could extend the service to Narathiwat Airport if the runway was to be extended to 2,650



THAI Airways will put on more flights for Haj.

meters, a safe distance for the Airbus A330-300 aircraft.

More than 300 Haj pilgrims want to leave from the southern province of Narathiwat for Saudi Arabia, he added.

– The Nation



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Baby Tuptim's year-long

By Neil Quail

LITTLE Tuptim Jadngooluem has faced more peril in her first year of life than most people will encounter in an entire lifetime. Last week her family celebrated her first birthday party, which Tuptim enjoyed blissfully unaware that just a few months earlier her brave mother was willing to risk her own life to save hers.

Tuptim's story of survival from a life-threatening liver condition captured the hearts of not only Phuket residents, but gripped readers around the world. Tuptim was diagnosed with a terminal liver condition, known as biliary obstruction, when she was three months old. Last December, aged seven months, she was

admitted into the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Ramathibodi Hospital Bangkok with internal bleeding. Doctors did not expect her to see the new year.

But following heartfelt support and donations, Tuptim in January this year underwent a parental donor liver transplant, a complicated 18-hour surgery during which a portion of the mother's liver was removed and placed inside her child.

Both mother's and daughter's surgeries were a success. Last week, as Tuptim celebrated her first birthday on the island, the *Phuket Gazette* went to visit the family and hear their remarkable story of hope and unconditional love.

TUPTIM is happy in the arms of her doting father Rattanachai "Kru Nai" as the *Gazette* arrives at Tiger Muay Thai in Chalong, where Kru Nai works as a trainer. A throng of beaming family friends faun over little Tuptim, eager to learn of her welfare.

The eyes of Tuptim's mother Soisuda "Nit" Pile are trained on her daughter, monitoring her closely in the way only a mother does and wary of her fragile child in the midst of an adoring mob.

Will Elliot, manager of Tiger Muay Thai, is there too. Over the past year he has played a major role in helping the family get the treatment needed to save Tuptim's life.

Nit recalls the day, in December last year, when doctors told the family that seven-month-old Tuptim needed a liver transplant to secure any hope of survival.

"Tuptim was taking medication for several months after her condition was diagnosed, but doctors at Ramathibodi Hospital in

Bangkok said this was a temporary measure and an operation was needed quickly," Nit said.

"Pleas for help were published in the *Gazette* and other media. A benefactor came forward and offered to pay for the surgery. We were so grateful, but unfortunately he couldn't provide the money.

We're not angry at this, if anything we appreciate the fact that he put the fund-raising in motion," she said.

The family needed 1.5 million baht (about US\$50,000) for the operation.

Will, who is a close friend, remembers the turn of events shortly after that initial financial letdown.

"Grainne Farrell and Jackie

Singer offered her support, doors were knocked on and many articles were published around the world. Tuptim's story was even aired on CNN. A PayPal account was set up to receive donations and it was being hit every 10 minutes," Will said.

"A guy posted a rant on the Facebook page of Dana White (owner of the Ultimate Fighting Championship franchise) to the extent that Dana should not only get involved with

fund-raising, but should pay for the operation in full," Will added. "Surprisingly, a few days later Dana's assistant posted that he would take care of the matter. Sure enough, 10 days later the full amount was paid to Dr Sumate

'I had made it clear that my life was not important. As long as Tuptim had a chance of living I wanted the surgeons to keep going, to take all my organs if necessary.'

— Nit Jadngooluem



IN THE RING: Rattanachai 'Kru Nai' with baby Tuptim at Tiger Muay Thai.

Teeraratkul, the specialist responsible for the operation," Will said.

With financial worries out of the way, the next, more daunting step for the family was the impending surgery.

On January 19, two operations were performed simultaneously to transplant a section of Nit's liver

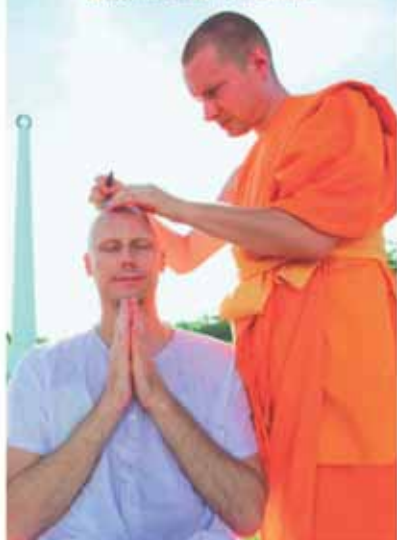
into Tuptim. A second operation took place to transplant veins from Nit's leg to Tuptim, whose own veins were too small to support circulation to her new liver.

Nit's surgery lasted four hours. At the time, Tuptim was eight months old. Her operation lasted for nearly 14 hours, a deeply har-

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fight for life a tale of love



FAMILY STRENGTH: The Jadngooluem family at Tiger Muay Thai in Chalong following baby Tuptim's 1st birthday.

LITTLE FIGHTER: Tuptim takes to the ring. Photos: Dean Noble

rowing and nail-biting period for family and friends alike.

As the *Gazette* listens to Nit recount her story about the surgery, husband Kru Nai clutches Tuptim closer to his chest, pressing his cheek to her head. He reaches tenderly for his wife, placing his free hand on her knee and gives a comforting squeeze.

Nit carries on with her story.

"When I woke after the operation, I immediately asked about my daughter. I had made it clear that my life was not important. As long as Tuptim had a chance of living I wanted the surgeons to keep going, to take all my organs if necessary," she told the *Gazette*.

To her relief, doctors told her both operations had been successful, but Tuptim's condition would have to be monitored closely to see if her body would accept the new liver.

Over the next three months, Tuptim's recovery suffered many setbacks. The most serious was a lung infection, which doctors said most likely set in as a result of medication used to suppress her immune system and reduce the risk of organ rejection. Unfortunately the drug also opens the door to infections normally fended off by a healthy body.

"Apart from the 23 types of medication she must take for the rest of her life, she was also prescribed medicine to fight the lung infection. This cost 10,000 baht per day and had to be taken for a month," Nit said.

The added expense put more strain on the family.

Kru Nai sold almost all of his worldly possessions, as did family members to help with the mounting medical costs.

And another good Samaritan, Antonio of Hollywood Nightclub in Patong, came forward to help.

For three long months after her surgery, Tuptim was kept in the ICU in Bangkok. For this entire period, visiting was kept to a minimum by doctors concerned of Tuptim's vulnerability to infection. While Nit stayed with Tuptim in hospital her father's visits were restricted.

The period of separation was obviously tough on Kru Nai, who lovingly cradles Tuptim in his arms throughout the *Gazette's* time with the family.

Looking to the future, the prognosis is good for Tuptim. Despite the prospect of having to take medication for the rest of her life – more for infections than anything else – Tuptim will likely be able to live a relatively normal life.

And reassuringly, at such a young age, she will bear no mental scars from her tumultuous first year, only scars on her skin.

In years to come, Tuptim will learn of the thousands that contributed to help give her the most precious gift of all. Her story is a tribute to these people, but especially to unconditional love and a brave mother willing to give her life so her child could live.

Her story is a tribute to these people, but especially to unconditional love and a brave mother willing to give her life so her child could live.

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GILIS GALORE: The Gilis overlook the volcanic island Lombok, making for spectacular sunsets. Photo: Tess Eaton



TRIO OF TREASURES: Three islands comprise the Gilis. Photo: Flickr

Bypass Bali, go for the Gilis

The *Phuket Gazette* finds out what makes a holiday to the Gili Islands so special

By Alexandra Andersson

BALI is a bit overrated these days, having been bombarded by *Eat, Pray, Love*-inspired hippie wannabes and Australians on their version of spring break. From Ubud to Kuta, Bali's understated charm is morphing into commercialized hell.

But there's a way to escape this: Bail on Bali and head to the Gili islands. The "Gilis" comprise three small islands about an hour boat-ride from Bali, located right next to the volcanic marvel of Lombok Island.

The Gilis embody the natural beauty of Indonesia while providing you with a variety of comforts to meet all your holiday needs, from snorkeling with turtles in the day to enjoying extravagant barbecue buffet dinners at night.

The Gilis are not particularly cheap, but you can save a rupiah or two if you travel sensibly – starting with getting there.

Hawkers in Bali will try and take you for a ride when buying a boat ticket. Many "starting prices" will be at the one-million

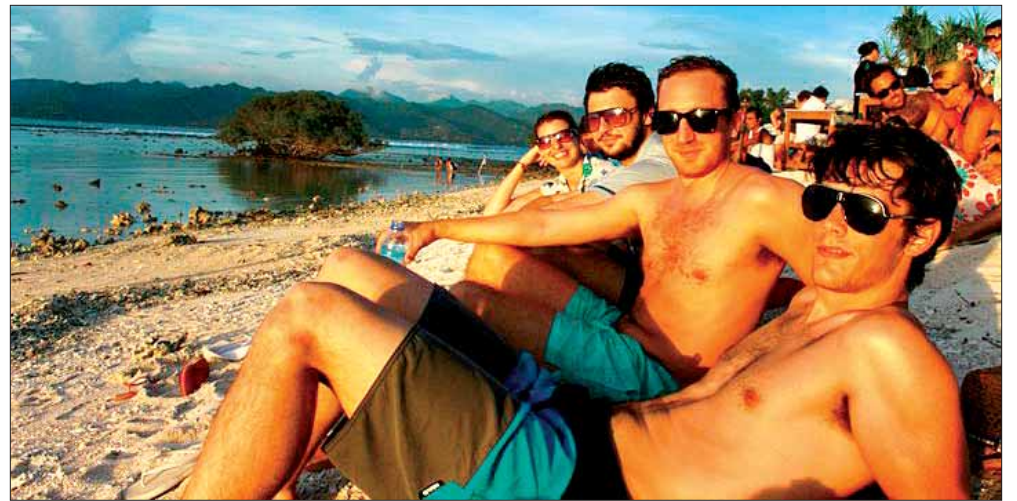


OLD SCHOOL: The main form of transport on the Gili islands. Photo: Tess Eaton

rupiah (about 3,500 baht) mark one way. This is outrageous.

Ask to go with the "GiliGili" boat tour company and tell them you have used their service previously for 250,000 rupiah (about 900 baht). You will quickly find that such a ticket, has magically become available.

It's advisable to first visit Gili Trawangan, the largest of the islands, and



CHILLIN': Unlike many of Indonesia's volcanic sand beaches, the Gilis are blessed with white sand, and they are surrounded by coral reefs. Photo: Tess Eaton

then move on to the quieter and more romantic Gili Air and Gili Meno.

Once at Gili Trawangan you will find a variety of accommodation available – from upmarket family resorts with swimming pools to budget traveler dorms and guesthouses.

If you want to hold on to your cash as much as possible, then visit the Buddha Dive guesthouse. For 100,000 rupiah (350 baht) per person you can get a fan room that sleeps three to four people a night.

All three Gili islands are small enough to stroll or cycle around – activities made easier by the fact there are no motorized vehicles.

However, you will find carriages drawn by pygmy horses intermittently bombing down the dusty ringroad. These are another fun and cheap way to get around.

Rent a bike from one of the many rental shops and pedal your way around the island as a fun day activity.

The road gets a bit sandy in places, and the trip will take about an hour or more depending on how many beer breaks you take at



Cycling around the island on a rented bike is a fun activity for the day. Photo: Sarah Wales

the island's countless beachside cafes.

Stop at the Sunset Bar at the northernmost tip of the island and watch the sun go down behind Lombok's volcano across the water for a truly memorable experience. If you're really lucky, the skies will be clear and the milky way like you have never seen it before – will reveal itself.

There is something for everyone: plenty of restaurants serving quality western and Indonesian fare, white sandy beaches, ragga bars, diving trips, surfing, yoga and more to enjoy at the Gilis.

Let's just "pray" Hollywood doesn't make a movie about them anytime soon.



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Guenter Bellach

GUENTER Bellach is an avid cyclist. He has logged over 8,000 kilometers on his bike, cycling through Asia and Central America, much of it in the past five years. His record is especially impressive when you consider that he will be 80 years of age this year.

He has lived on Phuket with his Thai wife for most of the past 15 years, on a property near Thalang where he cleared the land, built his house and dug a pond where he swims almost every day. He is the picture of health and vitality.

Guenter is a land surveyor and still works on contracts in Laos on big hydroelectric projects.

He was born in 1931 in Eastern Germany. After the war, Guenter and his father crossed into West Germany several times in darkness.

"We wanted to move to the West for work and a better life. We had to sneak across a river into the West and return without getting caught. We were jailed once by the East German police but they let us go.

"By 1948, by using false papers, my mother was able to join my father and the family was reunited in West Germany."

The young Guenter was eager to emigrate abroad. In the early 1950s, he applied to live in Venezuela, Australia and the USA but was rejected as he had little

EXPAT gallery

By Bruce Stanley

formal education or training.

Finally in 1953 he was accepted to work in Canada as a farm laborer.

"I eventually got a job in construction in Toronto and was chosen to work with the land surveyor. I found it interesting work and took a correspondence course to gain a qualification. I had very little formal education and taught myself English by reading books."

Guenter then went to work for civil engineering and surveyor companies. His goal was to become the most qualified surveyor in Canada, and he eventually received certification in seven provinces.

He worked on topographical surveys and measured subdivisions, but what he really wanted was to work out in nature.

"I asked to be sent to survey the border between the Northwest Territories and the Province of Saskatchewan. We had to work in the freezing winters when the ground was frozen solid, and we only had two to three hours of daylight to do our work.

"It was so cold that the camp

cook had to sleep with the eggs to keep them from freezing. I had to wear four sets of gloves and could barely see as my breath would turn to ice on my glasses."

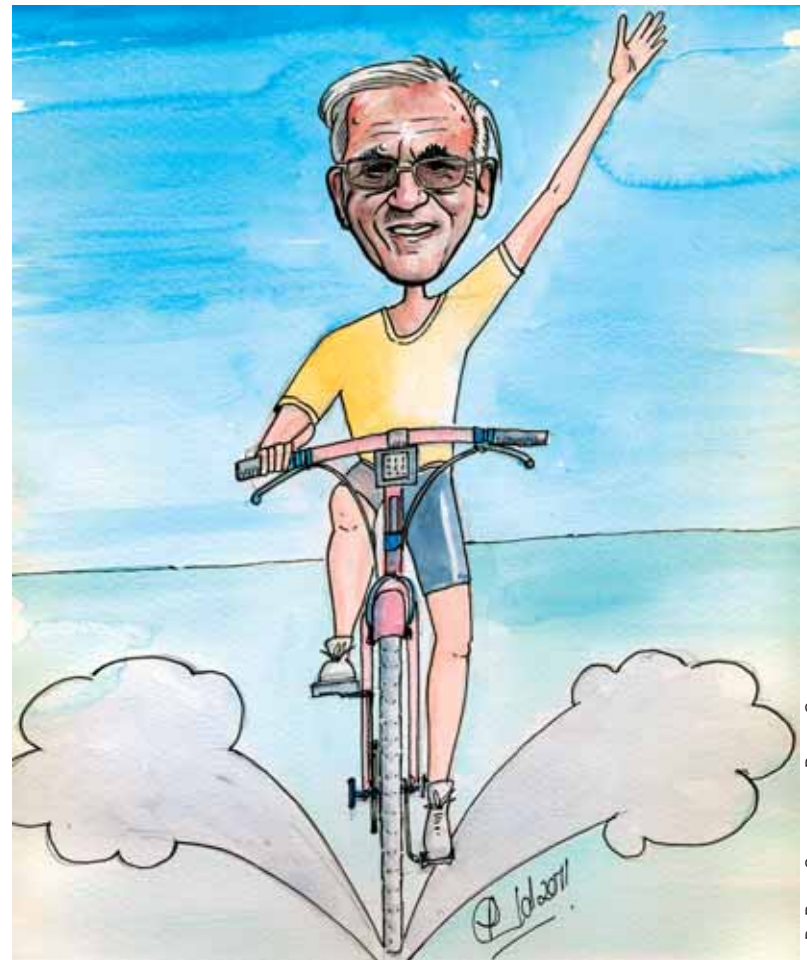
Guenter has had a lifelong urge for what he describes as his freedom. He negotiated with his companies for long winter holidays so he could travel to remote tropical places. He took a two year posting to the Bahamas because he wanted to learn to sail. He bought a 23 foot sloop and became a competent sailor.

By 1991 he was ready to cross the Pacific Ocean alone in a sailboat. He left from San Francisco and arrived in Thailand several challenging months later.

Guenter has worked surveying oil wells in Guyana, Saudi Arabia and Oman. While on a break from the Middle East, he invited his son to join him on a bike tour around Southern India. Together they covered over 1,000 kilometers, from Chennai to Cochin.

He also joined his daughter and her family on a 500 kilometer bike trip around Eastern Germany and Western Poland, the region where he spent his childhood.

"I love living on Phuket. I am surrounded by nature and I think the Thai people have the most enjoyable attitude toward living in the entire world."



By PETER CHILD FOR THE PHUKET GAZETTE

About Expat Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Expat Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket, and for having made those contributions in successful partnerships with Thais. For many, the contributions have entailed significant investment, often in the mid-80s and 90s when the rules of business were, ah, not always clear. Some are not in business at all, but all have one thing in common: if there were a *Who's Who in Phuket*, they'd be in it.



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Thor thunders at box office

Film

By Scott Phillips

Thor

Director: Kenneth Branagh
Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Tom Hiddleston, Anthony Hopkins
Genre: Action
Gazette Rating: 3/5

LONG gone are the days of superheroes like Spiderman and the X-Men being solely debated by skinny guys with large glasses and wardrobes supplied by their mothers. The birth of the comic book blockbuster has officially marked the death of one of the most sacred refuges of comic nerds.

Thanks to the likes of the *Spiderman* trilogy, *Iron Man*, and *Thor* – the latest comic hero to hit the silver screen – these once beacons of nerdity have become as mainstream as McDonalds.

For anyone who manages to avoid the hype of Hollywood hoopla, *Thor* is the latest chapter from Marvel Studios to introduce a character from the classic comic *The Avengers*. This is part of one of the largest projects in film history: to introduce each of the superheroes from *The Avengers* in their very own film, then have them join forces in a culminating blockbuster.

The Avengers is due to be released in 2012 and will bring together the characters from the *Hulk* (the Edward Norton version from 2008), *Iron Man*, *Captain America* (due for release later this summer), and *Thor*, which just raked in US \$66 million in its opening weekend. The effort has already generated more

than US \$1 billion in revenue.

The interesting thing about Thor is that he is by far the most peculiar member of The Avengers crew. All the other characters are more-or-less products of science fiction: The Hulk found a serum that makes him green and ripped. Iron Man is just a fancy suit created by a super-genius engineer. Captain America is the result of a top-secret military project.

Thor, on the other hand, is a straight-up god. The god of thunder, to be exact. He lives in another world, travels to earth via wormholes and flaunts an omnipotent set of powers. Thor can fly, seemingly sustain almost any physical injury, and has a hammer that could challenge the bolts of Zeus. For these reasons, he might be a bit out of place amongst the rest of the Avengers, but he will certainly ensure that special effects are never in short supply.

For anyone confused by the trailer's images of armies in a golden-esque land full of horses and shimmering galaxies, the film does take place in two different worlds. The first is ours; the second is Thor's home planet of Asgard. Think of Asgard as a place where Lord of the Rings meets Norse mythology. It has beaming golden towers, shiny crystals and no atmosphere, which allows it to float in a surreal galaxy.

A cocky heir to the throne of Asgard, Thor possesses a renowned recklessness that earns him several warnings from his father, King Odin (Hopkins).

After Thor reignites a war with Asgard's ancient enemy, the king is forced to come up with a creative punishment, and earth becomes destination banishment. That doesn't say much about



HAMMERTIME: Watch out for the hammer-wielding warmonger Thor, in his self-titled film all about him.

what Asgard's people think of earth, but oh well – earth is always in need of a hero.

Director Kenneth Branagh is a lifelong fan of the Thor series. Best known for his roles in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and the 1996 *Hamlet*, he's right at home with *Thor*, and he ensures that the film remains true to its comic book origins.

That kind of dedication is typically the key to a successful comic book adaptation, but Thor's godly status makes him a different icon to moviegoers. He is unlikely to connect with a wide audience the way Spiderman or Iron Man can. As a matter of fact, his hard-edged Viking talk is so limited that Thor actually has very few lines in the



EYE, EYE: Anthony Hopkins plays King Odin in blockbuster 'Thor'.

film, despite being on screen for the majority of it.

Still, no ensemble of superheroes would be complete without a completely dorked-out member, even if he looks like he needs to

be screened for steroids. So nerds rejoice – you have your devout addition to The Avengers crew. The rest of moviegoers have a superhero movie that's big on special effects but short on substance.

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Governator keeps his promise – he's back!

POOR Arnold Schwarzenegger is having a tough time of late. His political career is over and he was recently named "one of the worst governors to have served in the United States" by an ethics watchdog group. Oh, and he also split from his wife of 25 years, Maria Shriver, earlier this week.

Tough times indeed for the Austrian Oak, which may have prompted his decision to return to film, again. Let's hope his next film is better than last year's *The Expendables* a la Sly Stallone.

It has been reported that Arnie will develop a television show and comic based on his political alias "The Governator".

There are also rumors buzzing around the internet about a new Terminator movie that Arnie is pegged to appear in. Makes sense, he did warn us in 1984 he would be back.

– Blair Christopher

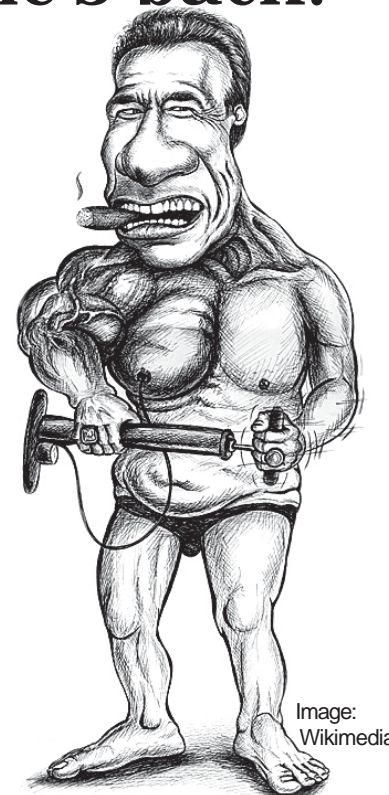


Image:
 Wikimedia

Sound of Surin: Cue the music

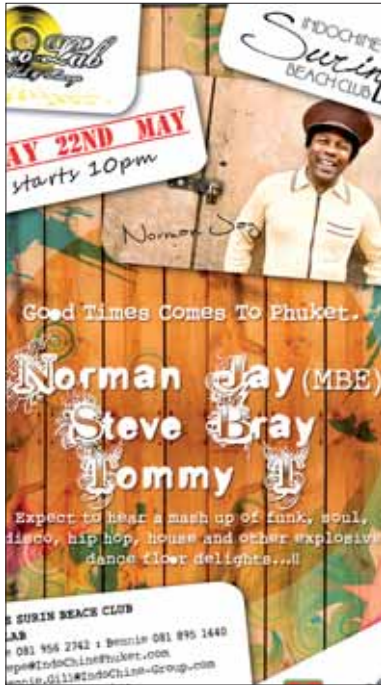
TWO TOP DJs are coming to the island later this month on a whirlwind tour.

On May 22 and 28, at newly-named Indochine Surin Beach Club: StereoLab, British DJ Norman Jay and American DJ Frank Richards will take to the turntables.

In the past few months Phuket dance music fans have been treated to some big names in the industry, with Dirty Vegas, Bob Sinclar and Roger Sanchez having graced the Patong club circuit.

Now it's the turn of Surin to place the party scene firmly back in its court – if only for a few nights.

On May 22, DJ Norman Jay, MBE (Member of the British Empire) of West Indian parents born in London will bring his eclectic mix of jazz, blue-beat, ska, rock, reggae and R&B influenced by Sly Stone, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder,



COMING TO SURIN: Music this month coming to Indochine at Surin.

Marvin Gaye and James Brown.

At the same nightclub on May 28, DJ Frank Richards from Las Vegas will play to what is expected to be a packed out crowd. He has been a mainstay of house music in his hometown since 1992 and a major force in Las Vegas nightlife. DJ Frank has played around the world, including Bangkok's Q Bar in recent times.

The two top DJ visits are part of a program by Indochine Phuket to bring a host of DJs to its Surin and Kalim sites.

Giusseppe Viva, Indochine's food and beverage manager said: "We will bring top DJs to Phuket on an ongoing, regular basis. They will meet an increasing demand for this type of entertainment on Phuket and add a great deal of color and excitement to our Surin Beach Club: StereoLab and Kalim Beach operations."



The Nation scoops design and photography awards

THE Nation Multimedia Group, of which the *Phuket Gazette* is a part, won two key prizes at the 10th Asia Media Awards ceremony in Bangkok recently.

Photographer Watcharachai Klaipong won gold for his photo (above) of emergency relief being delivered to stranded flood victims. "After seeing all the entries in this award category, I feel very proud of my achievement," said Mr Watcharachai.

Adul Daengmool, chief designer of the Nation Group's Thai-language daily *Kom Chad Luek*, won silver in the "Best In Design" awards in the "Newspaper Front Page Design" (above) category.

The award presentation ceremony, held at the Shangri-La Hotel, was presided over by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. The event was organized by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

The Spy snoops in the bookstore

IT'S INDEED a most pleasant surprise to find an English bookstore tucked in the midst of hamburger and pizza places at the Tesco Cherng Talay arcade.

The Bookazine is small but carries a good collection of books. Past the many titles proclaiming sex and the steamier side of life, you can still come across some classics in the Thailand section. They may not be always available, but four of them are particularly worth mentioning.

Though the *Kingdom of Make Believe* by Dean Barrett also has its share of sex, it's a story told with commendable sensitivity. A New York publisher returns to Thailand after 20 years to help his brother's widow. After many a turns and twists he discovers that "nothing in Thailand is what it seems" and in the end enters monkhood to seek the truth. (A different reaction from that of a character in Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet* who says that "If things were always what they seemed, how impoverished would be the imagination of man.")

In *Mai Pen Rai Means Never Mind*, Carol Hollinger gives an entertaining account of her experiences in Thailand almost four decades ago as a housewife, mother and teacher.

Her main message remains equally relevant today – to live happily in Thailand you must absorb the spirit of *mai pen rai* used by the Thai as a "secret weapon".

If you absorb this spirit, you will happily accept such things as "creative driving" and clocks that chime *mai pen rai* instead of the hour.

The subtitle of *Successful Living In Thailand* by Roger Welty is self explanatory: *Feel at Home in Thailand*, at *Ease with the Thais*, and at *Peace with Yourself in Unfamiliar Surroundings*. The advice ranges from how to cope with stress to living with house lizards or geckos. Called *chingchok* in Thai they are thought lucky to have around the house. It is considered bad form to kill them.

The fourth book *Falcon At the Court of Siam* contains an unforgettable account by John Hoskin of a Greek – Constantine Phaulkon – who rose to great heights as King Narai's favorite courtier at the end of the 17th century, higher than any other foreigner before or since.

He was, however, seen as a conniving man by his enemies who were consumed by jealousy and anger at his ambition. Constantine was eventually beheaded.



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Third route gets going

For all those in Phuket who support public transport, a new route for the 'poh thong' buses may leave you feeling tickled pink



IN THE PINK: The pink 'Poh Thong' have proven popular with people in Phuket Town.

By Steven Layne and S Fein

THE PHUKET Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) launched the third service route for its expanding fleet of pink *poh thong* public transport vehicles early this month, expanding the coverage area onto Koh Sireh in Rassada.

Poh thong comes from the Hokkien name for the kind of "wood-framed" transport vehicle known in Thai as *sawngtaew*, literally "two rows" [of benches]. The use of the term *poh thong* to describe the vehicles harks back to earlier times, when Phuket's unique island dialect and extensive use of Hokkien vocabulary made it very difficult for off-islanders to understand.

On a linguistic note, the *poh thong* bus should not be confused with the similarly spelled, and more commonly used Thai words *po thong*, which mean "golden fig."

As for the distinctive color of the vehicles, pink was the color of

the surprising victory of current *OrBorJor* President Paiboon Upatising and is now the trademark of all things associated with the current administration, from water trucks to the new *OrBorJor* Hospital in the east of Phuket Town.

Since their inception in September 2009, the city's two inaugural *poh thong* lines have for the first time allowed passengers to cheaply and safely travel to many parts of Phuket Town proper, as well as parts of the surrounding subdistricts of Rassada and Wichit.

The two routes are basically the same as the routes plied by the fleet of old, mechanically-troubled and notoriously-unreliable green minibuses, introduced by the previous *OrBorJor*, that passengers sometimes had to wait up to one hour for. In sharp contrast, the new *poh thong* leave at regular intervals and even have GPS monitoring systems.

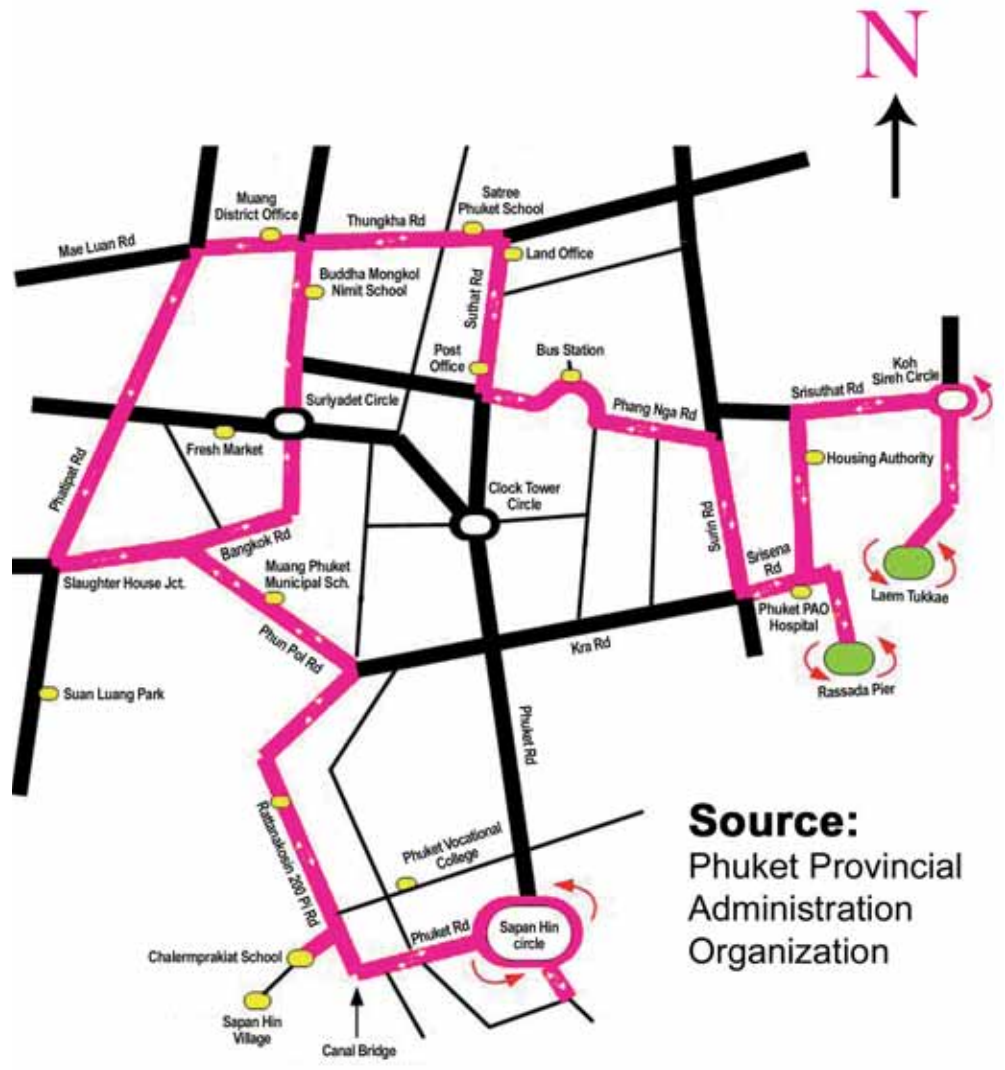
Route 1 runs between Saphan Hin and Big C, while Route 2 connects Laem Chan Health Station

with Supercheap. Both routes cross paths at the Phuket Provincial Bus Terminal and again along Chumphon Road, where Phuket City Police Station is located.

For just a 10 baht flat fare (free for young children and uniformed students), even for foreigners, the *poh thong* buses run daily at 30 minute intervals between 6am and 7pm, not 8pm as reported elsewhere.

The latest addition, Route 3, provides service between Saphan Hin at the south end of town, then works its way through the city center and onto Koh Sireh in Rassada, with its terminus at Laem Tukkae, at the southern point of the island.

The new route is welcomed by thousands living on Koh Sireh and other parts of southeastern Phuket Town and neighboring Rassada, which are home to the Kan Keha (National Housing Authority) public housing project, the Saphan Pla fish pier, the new *OrBorJor* hospital as well as Rassada Harbor,



Source: Phuket Provincial Administration Organization

NEW CONNECTIONS: The new route will connect Saphan Hin to Koh Sireh.

another *OrBorJor*-administered Phuket Bus Terminal 2 on Thepkrasattri Road southbound in Rassada, presumably along Rassadanusorn Road.

Unfortunately the new bus station, which will be the terminus for all off-island buses after it opens, has sat dormant for almost a year-and-a-half as neither the *OrBorJor* or Rassada Municipality are prepared to operate it.

For more information on this new route, the pink bus initiative, and public transport on Phuket in general, see the *Phuket Gazette* editorial on page 8.

The terminus at Laem Tukkae is home to a large community of low-income sea gypsies, who will certainly welcome the service.

The *poh thong* service won a Prime Minister's Innovation Award last year. That success still firmly in mind, the *OrBorJor* is seeking to continually expand the network. The next route under consideration is one that would connect Phuket Bus Terminal 1 on Phang Nga Road with the "new"

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The whole world's gone mad

Five months into 2011 and already so many ridiculous events have taken place around the world. Here are five howlers to have been unleashed upon planet Earth so far

By Blair Christopher

LOL, OMG given the nod: Oxford English Dictionary recognized “lots of love/laugh out loud, “oh my God” and a “love heart” symbol as words worthy of recording into history in February this year. Words escape most of us – and Oxford – it seems on this call.

Every reason to endorse these words leans on preposterous and verges on insane. The stalwart gatekeepers of the English language in the UK have finally lightened up it seems, loosening their grip on the English language.

But does giving slack to such words open the “text-message-lingo” floodgates? Yes, it does.

Oxford seems to be playing “cool dad” and trying to get all the “young ones” to like him.

Maybe next year, Oxford will introduce a smiley face :) – wouldn't that be something.

Oxford, please preserve our language and act your age.



LOL is a real word according to Oxford – OMG! Photo: See Ming Lee

Making light of suffering: American comedian Gilbert Gottfried was made to apologize for jokes he made on Twitter about the Japan earthquake and tsunami in March.

Since 2000 Gottfried was the

voice of the quacking duck in Aflac's commercials, shouting “Af-LAC!” at opportune moments.

That was until he was fired after the following ill-timed, ill-humored jokes about the Japan disaster: “I just split up with my girlfriend, but like the Japanese say, ‘They'll be another one floating by any minute now.’”

The unsavory “tweets” have since been deleted from his Twitter.

This was not the first time Gottfried has offended millions with his below-the-belt humor.

Just two weeks after the 9/11 attacks he was quoted saying that it was hard to get a direct flight from New York to California because “they said they have to stop at the Empire State Building first,” according to the *New York Observer* at the time.

Exhuming the real Mona Lisa: In April researchers in Italy began their hunt for the remains of the woman who “might” have been the model for



MODEL BEHAVIOR? Since Osama bin Laden's death, the internet has been alive with thousands of sites selling bin Laden merchandise. Photo:AFP

Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

Why? Their hope is to unravel the mystery of the woman who inspired one of the world's most infamous paintings, that experts guess Da Vinci painted between 1503 and 1506. Still the reason why lingers.

The researchers say that if they can find her skull, they will be able to reconstruct her face and compare it with the painting. They will use radar equipment to identify objects underneath the church she is thought to be buried. Yeah, yeah, but why? Is it worth it? Can't she be left in peace?

This strikes us as one of the oddest news stories so far this year. Actress and writer Natalia Strozzi upon hearing the news told *Reuters*: “Let her rest in peace. What could finding her remains change to the charm of Leonardo's painting? To look for her bones seems a sacrilege to me.”

We would have to side with Natalia. Sometimes things are just best left alone.

Bin Laden revelry: Since Osama bin Laden's killing by US Navy Seals on May 1, Americans in their thousands have been placing orders for “Osama merchandise” to mark the occasion.

The website Zazzle, which allows customers to submit designs for t-shirts, badges and mugs has been inundated with orders following bin Laden's killing. It has been reported that even baby clothes with bin Laden's image are being sold online. Vengeance

it seems, is a form of consumerism this month. Such sad times we live in.

iPhone and a weighty issue: A new iPhone application unwrapped last month allows users to take a photo of their food and the app issues a calorie read-out. Badged “MealSnap”, the app cross-references photos of your food with over half a million food items in its database within seconds.

The app then estimates how many calories, proteins, fats, carbohydrates and vitamins are in your meal.

The creators of the app believe there is a niche for the product due to the “lengthy process of manually counting calories”.

This is the last straw. Smartphones are officially smarter than humans – or so it would seem to the mass audience.

If anyone thinks this app and many others like it on smartphones are over-the-top, please raise your hand.

Our phones now run our businesses, synchronize our phone and email contacts, turn our friends into dithering idiots incapable of face-to-face conversations, and now it seems, they also keep us slim and trim.

The day will come when smartphones will walk our dogs and mow the lawn.

If you spot something utterly bizarre out and about in Phuket, we want to hear from you. E:editor@phuketgazette.net

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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

May 14-15. The BIS Phuket FF International Swim Meet

Welcome to the 3rd Annual International Swimming Invitational at the British International School, Phuket, organized by its swim team, the Flying Fish. This year 21 teams from seven countries have registered, and around 382 athletes are expected to compete. Events are seeded by time to ensure quality heats and a full pool for every race. The competition is held in the school's 50-meter-long course pool, while the 25m pool will be open for warm-up use. Food and refreshments will be on sale all day long, making for a fun day out at BIS. Contact Cyrus Crews at T:076-238711 E: ccrews@bisphuket.ac.th or visit W:bisphuket.ac.th.

May 14 and 21. Saturday brunch @ Two Chefs

Every Saturday Two Chefs proudly presents their Saturday brunch with a Scandinavian touch from noon to 3pm. Eat all you can for only 395 baht. Add only another 300 baht and you can drink as much as you want from our wide choice of free-flowing beverages. During each brunch, MJ & Megan provide the entertainment with their lovely voices. Contact Two Chefs Restaurant at T:076-330065 E:katacenter@twochefs.com or visit W:twochefs.com.

May 14. Central Festival Phuket New Look Celebration

Central Festival Phuket cordially invites you to Central Festival Phuket New Look, a celebration for an evening of fun by many

May 22. Soi Dog Charity Brunch



Come along and show support for the ongoing efforts of the Soi Dog Foundation and join us for a fabulous brunch at Evason's Into the Beach. Tickets are 2,000 baht and all proceeds go directly to the charity. There will be free-flow drinks, delicious cuisine, plenty of entertainment, great company and all for a worthy cause. Contact Cristy at T: 084-0544367 E:suaysiam@gmail.com or visit W:soidog.org See you there!

super stars and models at 4:30 pm. Grand Hall, Level 1, Central Festival Phuket. After the party, join us for Shall We Sing & Dance Ballroom dancing at the Pimento Bar on first floor at Lanlon Bar Circle. Also win many prizes with every 1,000 baht purchase, 6-29 May. Contact Siromanee at T: 076-291111 E:KoSiromanee@central.co.th

May 15. Sunday Brunch at M venpick Phuket

Gourmet Sunday – an indulgent Sunday with all the trimmings: imported meat, fresh seafood, cheeses, sushi and sashimi, outdoor barbecue, pan-fried goose liver, Swiss specialities, M venpick ice cream, M venpick coffee and so much more. Every Sunday, from noon to 3pm at our

Pacifica restaurant. 1,800 baht+ per person, inclusive of selected wines and cocktails. 1,500 baht+ per person for food only. Prices are subject to 10 per cent service charge and seven per cent government tax. Contact Guest Service at T: 076-396139 E: reservations.phuket@moevenpick.com or visit W:moevenpickphuket.com

May 15. Thanyapura Arts & Farmer's Market

Come let the healthy and artful pleasures of the Thanyapura Arts & Organic Farmer's Market turn Sunday into something special for you and your family. Load up on Phuket's freshest organic produce, farmer's market style, and sit down to taste the gourmet organic pleasures of the newly DiVine restaurant. Activities include art exhibitions and pottery shows; KidzSole Walk on Water and live music. Contact Nanapen at T:076-336000, E: napapen.k@thanyapura.co.th or visit W:thanyapura.com

May 17-23. HomeWorks Home Paradise

First home decor exhibition in Phuket. You are invited to view home and garden designs, trends, ideas, solutions, tips and best products – all at the best prices for real estate companies. There is nothing homeowners cannot find or learn in this exhibition from

10.30am to 10pm. Don't miss it! Grand Hall, Level 1, Homeworks Phuket. Contact Siromanee at T:076-291111 E:KoSiromanee@central.co.th

May 19. PIWC Monthly Lunch

The May lunch of the Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC) will be held at Tawai Restaurant, Lagoon Road, Cherng Talay, from 11:30am to 2pm. All are welcome and prior booking is essential. Price 500 baht for members and 650 baht for non-members. Contact Carole Dux at T:076-200730 E:info@phuketiw.com or visit W:phuketiw.com

May 20. Indian Feast at Royal Phuket Marina

Enjoy an "Indian Feast" at Les Anges from 7-10pm. Homemade Indian food will be prepared and served by Padam Kahtri, Phuket's finest Indian Chef. Price 495 baht

net per person (including VAT and service charge). Contact Les Anges or Murat at T:076-360803, 081-9680738 E: muratc@royalphuketmarina.com or visit W: royalphuketmarina.com

May 20. Curry Fridays

Curry Friday is held every fortnight. Here is your chance to enjoy a lavish Indian curry buffet. Selections include all-time favorites chicken tikka masala, very hot mutton vindaloo, juicy kebabs, goan fish curry, chickpea curry and much more. Served with nan bread and basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett. Draught by the glass just 50 baht nett. Special discount on beverages. Venue: Navrang Mahal India Restaurant at Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa. Time: 7pm to 11:30pm. For reservations, please call: 076-286464, ext 4.

May 21. Salsa Night at Royal Phuket Marina

After the overwhelming success of our first and second Salsa Nights, and by popular demand, we are happy to announce the 3rd Salsa Event at RPM. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba Live on the Boardwalk outside Les Anges Restaurant. May 21 from 8pm onwards Entrance: free of charge. Dress: colorful. South American snack buffet available from 8pm to 10pm at 350 baht+ per person. Contact Anna or Didier on T:084-0517455, or Mr Murat, Events & Group Manager at T:081-7973364 E: muratc@royalphuketmarina.com or visit W:royalphuketmarina.com

May 22. BIS Tennis Plus Doubles Tennis Tournament

Social Tennis Tournament. Ladies' and men's doubles at 900 baht per team, lunch included. All teams will get at least two matches. Entries close on May 15 at 5pm. Contact Dianne at T:089-4698100 E:didee51@yahoo.com.au

Free Computer Clinics

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June 5 – Patong
June 12 – Laguna, starts 10am.

For more info contact Woody at T:076-290468

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Charity ball a winner for all



ON STAGE: Vicky Coburn, Natalie Ellet, Sara McCarthy and Cristy Baker

By Bruce Stanley

THE latest of many great parties to support a worthwhile charity was held last Saturday when friends and supporters of the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation held their second annual fund-raising dinner and dance party at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Beach Resort.

If you weren't there, you missed a really good time. The Sheraton presented a stunning four-course sit-down dinner that was expertly delivered. Glasses of the happy guests were kept full with selections of sparkling, red and whites from the Andaman Wine Club and Wine Connection.

Bill O'Leary returned to the stage as Phuket's premier Master of Ceremonies while Kathy Davies and Chantal Fernandes, who co-ordinated the evening, rushed about selling raffle tickets and ensuring that every guest was happy. Not to worry. A few hundred of Phuket's movers and shakers were having the time of their lives.

Eighty-seven-year-old Al Chapple, an American who has retired to Phuket, held center stage with his classic piano tunes, Helene and "Rihanna" from the Boat Bar got nearly everyone dancing, and groovemaster DJ Jay Le Shark also rocked the ballroom.

Two million baht was raised through ticket sales, auctions and raffle tickets. Everyone went home with either a great prize or a feeling of satisfaction that they had a very good time for a very worthy cause. The *Phuket Gazette* was proud to be one of the many sponsors of this event.

The Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation provides English language training to over 600 students in Kamala and Kalim schools. The late Tom McNamara, founder of the Baan Rim Pa restaurant group and the Foundation, believed giving local children training in English would help them lead better lives on Phuket.

To check out the Foundation's activities and how you can help, check out W:phukethasbeengoodtous.org



Klaus and Joyce Christandl



Chantal Fernandes and Peter Webber



Jason Friedman and Eleanor Hardy, general managers of Siam BKK and Datai Langkawi



IT'S RAINING RIHANNAS: A tribute pop act took to the stage.

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YOUR
Phuket

Dawn of the water dragons

RAWAI-NAIHARN dragonboat club held their first-ever race event on Nai Harn lake last Sunday. A large crowd gathered around the lake to watch the Panwa Dragons cruise to victory by a 10-second lead against the Rawai-Naiharn Dragons in race one. But that wasn't the end of the day's water bouts.

Team Novotel, a team of Thai nationals, were joined by four expat women racers, who defeated the Rawai-Naiharn Dragons in race two.

Race three saw the Rawai-Naiharn Dragons go head-to-head, paddle-to-paddle, against the Panwa Dragons once more. Despite a valiant effort, and by a small margin, Panwa took victory for the second time. The Rawai-Naiharn Dragons did manage to pick up a consolation prize after hatrick of losses: They signed up 10 new members for their team. For more information on dragonboat racing visit W:Phuketdragonboats.com. Photos: Dean Noble



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The IMPOSSIBLY POSSIBLE QUIZ

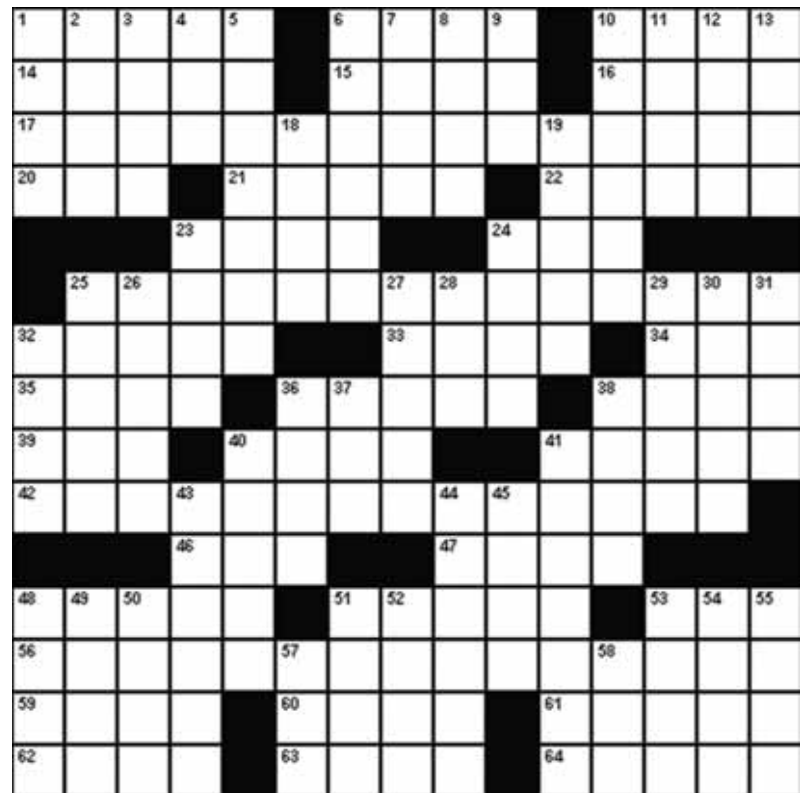
General Knowledge

1. What is the name of the longest highway in the world, and how long is it?
2. Which country accounts for nearly one-third of the world's teak population?
3. This country is also known as the "country of copper". What country is it?
4. The river Volga flows into which sea?
5. The coldest place on Earth is?
6. The river Jordan flows into which sea?
7. The first prime minister of Bangladesh was?
8. The name given to the border that separates Pakistan and Afghanistan is what?
9. What is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea?
10. What is the longest river in the world?
11. Which country is the largest coffee producer in the world?
12. What is the largest desert in the world?
13. What name was Thailand formerly known as before 1932?
14. What year was the Grand Palace in Bangkok built?
15. Thailand is the world's ____th largest country?

Quiz solutions on page 39

- Across**
1. Less common
 6. Capital of Calvados, in NW France
 10. __ _ colada
 14. Declaim
 15. Lhasa _ _ _
 16. Agog
 17. Reserved
 20. Aurora's counterpart
 21. Chose
 22. Queues
 23. Pizazz
 24. Junior
 25. Forebrain
 32. _ _ _ there yet?
 33. Horne solo
 34. Female sheep
 35. Honeycomb unit
 36. Spoil
 38. Expel gas or odor
 39. Wreath of flowers
 40. River to the Moselle
 41. Golf clubs
 42. Unyielding
 46. Born
 47. Slaughter of baseball
 48. Anatomical cavity
 51. Gastropod mollusk
 53. Riled (up)
 56. Empiricism
 59. Milk source
 60. Actor Auberjonois
 61. Rich cake
 62. Formicary residents
 63. Clairvoyant
 64. Singer John;


- Down**
1. Libertine
 2. Florence's river
 3. X-ray units
 4. Hot time in Paris
 5. Regret
 6. Small territorial district
 7. Church recess
 8. Cornerstone abbr.
 9. And not
 10. Film on copper
 11. Victor's cry





12. Actress Campbell
13. Citrus coolers
18. Mayberry moppet
19. Hawaiian greeting
23. Basin
24. Roasting rod
25. Primp
26. Museum piece
27. Capital of Egypt
28. Directional ending
29. Yellowish citrus fruit
30. Due (to)
31. Devices for fishing
32. Legal rights org.

36. Record with a VCR
37. Swiss river
38. Goddess and sister of Ares in Greek mythology
40. Campaign tactic
41. Quarantine
43. Beginnings
44. More nasty
45. Monogram ltr.
48. Goat's milk cheese
49. Farm team
50. Petty quarrel
51. Hook's helper
52. Branta sandvicensis
53. Java trumpeter
54. This, in Tijuana
55. Revenuers, for short
57. Apr. addressee

*Provided by BestCrosswords.com
Used with permission
Puzzle solutions on page 39*

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):  What is broken can be more easily fixed this week. The astral atmosphere will support Taureans who need to put something right, whether this is a material matter or a personal issue. Your luck with finances is strong, but a jealous air sign acquaintance could try to take advantage this weekend. Those with a birthday in the week ahead will see that the truth is on their side during the coming year.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):  Geminis should guard against speaking in the heat of the moment this week. The chances of saying the wrong words are particularly strong on Wednesday and this could result in a bureaucratic tangle. Your luck in romance picks up during the second half of May. Those who are single should discover that they are on the same wavelength as an earth sign. The number six brings good fortune this weekend.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):  A positive week lies ahead for most of those born under the sign of Cancer. Romance could move into the fast lane during the second half of May. Those who are still carry-

ing emotional baggage from a relationship that failed earlier this year may want to put a new liaison into a slower gear for a while. Monday is the most auspicious day to have a heart-to-heart conversation.

LEO (July 24-August 22):  Spending your hard-earned money on a whim of the moment is highlighted to set Leos back financially this week. The stars suggest that you avoid being under the influence of friends who have more cash to splash. An offer of employment sparks your interest, but you may need to bargain for a better salary. Hot days for romance are Tuesday and Wednesday.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23):  The stars indicate that certain Virgoans are holding on to a situation or person because of misplaced emotions. It's likely that this matter will come to a head during the coming week, forcing you to take action. The stars indicate that you will be back on track by the end of May, ready to embrace all the good fortune that June will bring.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23):  Delegating responsibilities proves to be easier than you feared

YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

this week. Librans who have been considering asking a water sign to help out are forecast to receive proof that this person is capable. A fire sign is less reliable. Your tendency to try to move mountains needs to be addressed – small, steady results are forecast to be attainable during May's second half.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22):  An offer concerning employment that seems too good to be true needs examining with a fine toothcomb. Scorpions who are tempted to jump in at the deep end are advised to take advice, even if this involves contacting people who they prefer to keep at arm's length. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, you could have to admit to making a mistake this weekend – making a romantic gesture should help keep the peace.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21):  Sagittarians are predicted to be somewhat hot-tem-

pered this week. The stars advise caution, particularly when communicating with figures of authority later in the week. Answers you receive may not be written in stone and there is good chance that mistakes will be rectified at a later date. A partner's sour mood could affect your relaxation this weekend. If cheering them up doesn't work, retreat into your own space.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20):  Capricorns should hear news that will make their day early next week. A stressful start to the month will now give way to a calmer period. Where business is concerned, you have the golden touch until the end of May and there are signs that financial success is imminent. Those who are tired of being in the shadow of an overconfident fire sign colleague have a perfect opportunity to emerge.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19):  Deadlines are forecast to push Aquarians to the limit this week. The stars recommend resisting the temptation to party this weekend and focusing on rest and relaxation. In the realm of romance, there are signs that taking time out to think about

what you really want will also be a good thing. It appears that crossed wires are affecting communication with an air sign partner. The number two is lucky on Monday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20):  Getting to the root of a problem could cause Pisceans to feel frustrated this week. It's unlikely that you will get honest answers from another water sign, but an air sign is ready to open up. Where work is concerned, the stars suggest that removing your sunshades could show that opportunities are right in front of your eyes. Romance is forecast to be lighthearted, with emphasis on flirtatious fun this weekend.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):  Your imagination could lead you up the jungle path this week. Arians are advised to focus on reality, especially in the area of personal relationships. Where employment is concerned, the stars suggest that you have more influence than you think over other people, but this needs to be used wisely. Wear the color amber to encourage a more down to earth outlook. The number eight can bring good fortune this weekend.

PROPERTY Gazette

News | Construction | Gardening | For sale | For rent | Classifieds

First Patong Sino-styled resort to open

ONE OF the largest four-star Patong beachfront hotels is to undergo a complete transformation into a contemporary sino-styled resort and spa under new ownership.

The seven-story Club Andaman Beach Resort closed its doors on April 30, after more than 20 years of service, allowing major renovations to begin, which will transform the hotel into a modern-day revival of Old Phuket Town's historical Sino-Portuguese architecture and reopen as the Andaman Embrace Resort & Spa this December.

Located opposite Loma Park on Patong Beach, the newly-branded

10-rai resort is to be operated by Phuket-based hoteliers Limsup Grand Co Ltd.

As well as completely redesigning the hotel's interior and refurbishing the 200 guest rooms to give the resort an entirely new contemporary sino-colonial look, the resort's transformation into the Andaman Embrace Resort & Spa includes the addition of a 570 square-meter swimming pool, an independently operated spa and a new restaurant.

But popular features set to remain in place include the resort's tropical garden dotted with 18 "lotus cottages"



SINO-STYLED: Rooms at the Andaman Embrace Resort & Spa fuse elements of Sino-Portuguese architecture with contemporary clean lines.

surrounding an ornamental pond.

Andaman Embrace Managing Director Salisa Limsakul said the existing cottages and garden will stay but will also be completely revamped to fit the Sino-Portuguese architectural theme and give guests a modern hotel experience with a traditional twist.

"Our priority is to ensure guest satisfaction by providing luxurious facilities and excellent hospitality at affordable prices. A key factor in achieving this is Limsup Grand's generations of experience in the region as a top-quality resort developer and service provider," said Ms Limsakul.

"Andaman Embrace will open

with an entirely new dedicated team of experienced managers and staff to ensure a smooth launch in time for the high season and provide five-star services at four-star prices, and we'll be offering low-season rates throughout the 2011-2012 peak season until October next year," she said.

The brand new Andaman Embrace poolside spa will feature individual massage and beauty treatment rooms, each with a spa bath in a private garden.

The guest rooms are spacious and modern with subtle elements of Sino-Portuguese tones and architecture in the decor and furniture.

Ms Limsakul said she expected

78 guest rooms on the two lower floors to be operational in time to accept guests during the peak season, giving guests a choice of three room types: Andaman Rooms, Andaman Deluxe and Balcony Deluxe rooms.

"Even the entry-level Andaman Rooms are designed to be comfortable and spacious and styled to give our guests a luxurious and refreshing experience of modern convenience," said Ms Limsakul.

The expansive first-floor lobby will feature a Sino-Portuguese style shopping arcade – a modern version of Old Phuket Town – with 13 boutique shops.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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Property Watch
By Bill Barnett

THE Getaway is a classic movie directed by Sam Peckinpah and stars the epitome of cool, Steve McQueen.

The film is renowned for its out-of-control high-speed car chases, with more gear changes than an AK-47 has bullets.

Getting away from the sometimes feverish pace of life in Phuket is easily done these days by taking the road over the Sarasin Bridge and escaping into a world with fewer of life's pressures.

"Destination unknown" might sound like a good idea, but come sundown you may wish to tuck into a nice cold beer and start thinking about where you want to lay your head for the night.

First stop is north of well known Natai beach, with its multi-million dollar ultra villas, and the sleepy little area of Bo Dan, just past the hot spring and Aleenta Resort and Spa.

Here sits the charming Water-jade Resort (water-jade.com) on a private natural lagoon. It's a mix of cheap-chic with a small assortment of attached hotel rooms and bungalow villas with decks extending over the water.

Dining comes easy with the casual Svirave restaurant and its great assortment of seafood and local Thai specialties.

Activities include biking and canoeing or you can wander down to the nearby beach and soak up a sunset.

Of course Phuket is all about options and some getaways are best served by visiting nearby islands.

Just off Phuket's east coast is Naka Yai Island, which harbors the



GO ESCAPE: Mango House in Koh Lanta is one of many comfortable, quaint and affordable places to stay in Phuket's surrounding areas.

plush Six Senses Sanctuary resort. While this remains a stunning establishment, there is also a nearby, little-known alternative named the Tenta Nakara (tentanakara.com).

Here is a boutique, 16-unit offering, featuring luxury tents.

Organic gardens and no electricity give a Robinson Crusoe flair to an overnight stay, while a pristine white-sand beach and stunning views of Phang Nga Bay

provide all the scenery anyone could desire.

Taking a wider view of Greater Phuket, our journey leads us to Krabi's Koh Lanta Old Town.

Here, a stay at the Mango House (mango-houses.com) with its oceanfront suites and houses complete with hammocks, fans and mosquito nets, is an experience to remember.

Chinese-style wooden pole houses with over-water accommodation provide a unique base from which to explore Koh Lanta and its environs.

Last stop on our road trip is the Khao Sok Tree House Resort

(khaosok-treehouse.com). Here, you can wake up to the sounds of a babbling brook and a chorus of frogs combining for a jungle jam session.

An eclectic selection of rustic and "more bark for your money" tree houses have something for every escapee's budget.

There you have it. Hopefully your appetite has been stirred to explore and experience some of these recommendations just over "the bridge".

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through www.c9hotelworks.com.



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In brief...

The Shangri-La Bang Tao update

PART of the former Shangri-La mixed use resort project in Bang Tao, which stalled during the global financial crises a few years ago, has been put up for sale by CBRE.

On offer is 70 rai of the 139 rai original site with 160-meter beach frontage.

The owners, Indonesian firm PT Jakarta Setiabudi International Tbk, reportedly have no immediate plans to develop the property.

The parcel of land remains one of the most strategic hotel development sites on the island and remains attractive given its proximity to destination resort Laguna Phuket.

Further up the road in Layan, Japanese firm Kajima are working on multi-million dollar ocean view villas that could enter the market by the end of this year.

Luxury residential village rising near Laguna Phuket

NEW UPSCALE integrated residential project The Odyssey will rise on the doorstep of Laguna Phuket in Cherg Talay.

Located on 57 rai, and bought in March of this year, the site is where the former Explorer development was located.

The project will be launched in the third quarter of this year, includes 260 luxury apartments with two, three and four bedroom configurations. Buildings will be seven stories, with swimming pools atop each structure.

Unit areas range from 140 square meters up to 325sqm for the 44 penthouses with private plunge pools. Recreational facilities include three tennis courts, squash courts and a large sports center.

Tawan diversifies

LOCAL property firm Tawan Property continues to spread their business model into growth sectors.

A recently announced partnership between Tawan Cruises and Sunseeker for the management of the latter's 18 boats is an example of shifting business paradigms.

Another Tawan initiative was the start of up tourist friendly high speed rigid-inflatable boats for trips to the East Coast and nearby islands from Ao Po Grand Marina.



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Bangkok Airways 'grand old dame' needs some love

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

BANGKOK Airways may lose the rights to use a classic building in Phuket Town as its office over fears of dilapidation.

The two-storey building, located on six rai in the green enclave of the provincial offices on Damrong Road, has stood empty for seven years.

Officers, led by Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosutthirak, inspected the building on May 4 along with Thamrong Thongtan, chief of the Phuket Treasury Office, who owns the building.

Mr Thamrong explained that Bangkok Airways signed 30-year lease on the building in 2004. Under the conditions of the lease, the airline was to restore the building to its former glory.

Although the airline has fulfilled its rental payments of nearly one million baht a year, Bangkok Airways has failed to renovate the building and has not occupied the



PUTTING HIS FOOT DOWN: Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosutthirak

premises or used them as an office, as was originally intended, said Mr Thamrong.

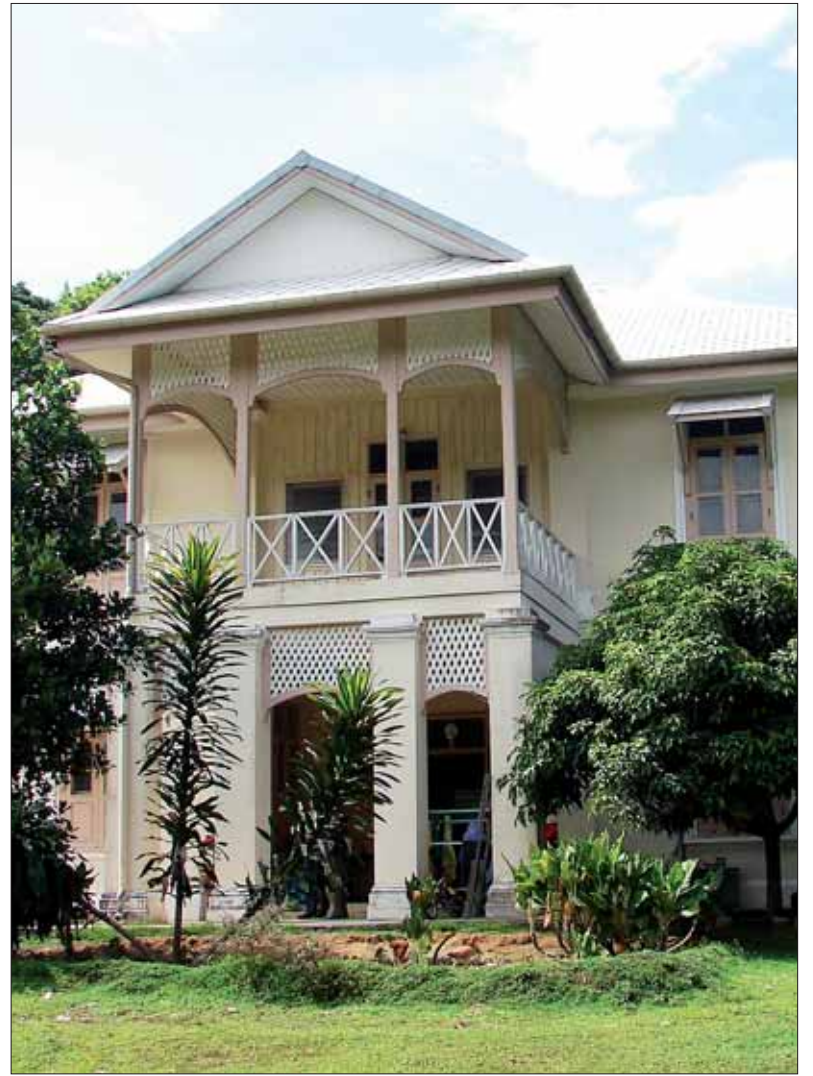
Now his office is considering reclaiming the property in order to preserve the building, he said.

“As I see it, Bangkok Airways did not uphold the contract. We have to fairly consider whether or not to continue or cancel the contract,” said Vice Gov Somkiet.

“If they [Bangkok Airways] want to continue to lease the building, we will consider whether or not to levy a fine. If they want to cancel the contract, we will turn this property over for other use,” he added.

Bangkok Airways Business Development Manager Watchara Umnuayraksakul told the *Gazette* that continual economic upheaval since 2004 was the main reason the airline had been unable to move into the property as planned.

“Since 2004 we have faced one economic crisis after another, from the aftermath of the tsunami, to the [yellow shirts] forcing the airport to close in Bangkok, to the red-shirt protests last year. All this means we have been unable to follow through with the contract as planned,” Mr Watchara said.



IN NEED OF REPAIRS: Bangkok Airways Phuket Town property.

“But now our financial situation is getting better and we are looking into continuing the project, although we will have to first discuss with provincial officials about revising the contract before moving ahead,” he added.

Mr Watchara said that if Bangkok Airways does go ahead with renovating and occupying the building, the project will include construction of a two-storey building at the site as accommodation for employees.

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Little lily love in the tropics



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

BOOKS on tropical gardening contain little information about types of lily. In fact, few ornamental varieties are mentioned. There is plenty about the *allium* branch of the family – onions, chives, garlic and the like – but little on flowering lilies.

The problem is that though they have been around for 4,000 years, the majority of lilies grow only in temperate or sub-tropical regions.

Indeed, most Asiatic hybrids or Oriental lilies, despite their names, exist here only as imports. These are especially prized as cut flowers destined for hotels and drawing rooms.

But there are varieties that can grace your Phuket garden. Take the spider lily (*Hymenocallis littoralis*) as an example.

It is used everywhere on the island as a bedding plant, usually planted in massed ranks to create a dramatic effect. The spider lily is ideal as ground cover, since it has attractive strap-shaped leaves, and distinctive star-shaped flowers with long spidery petals emerging from a white hub – hence the name spider lily.

It is a neat plant, unlikely to exceed two feet in height. Because of its popularity, it has spawned a number of cultivars, including a form with attractive variegated foliage, and



VARIATION ON A CLASSIC: The spider lily is well suited to Phuket because it flourishes in prolonged exposure to sunlight. Photo: Amy the Nurse

another with much narrower leaves. The flowers tend to appear at the same time, and last quite a while.

But perhaps the lily's main selling point is its good nature. For it will tolerate a range of soils, and though it flowers most easily in sunny conditions, it will also put up with deep shade.

Moreover it will, if left alone, multiply and provide an ever larger patch of blooms.

It is an excellent starter flower for the new garden.

One lily-lookalike that flourishes outdoors in Thailand's dry season is a variety of *hippeastrum*. No longer classified as a true lily, the *hippeastrum* belongs to the larger genus of *amaryllidaceae* that includes the lilies.

Right now, it is in flower around Phuket, a distinctive, single-stemmed plant crowned by four lily-like, trumpet-shaped flowers in an unusual shade of deep salmon pink. The blooms face to the four points of the compass – hence the colloquial Thai name translating as “facing four ways” or “compass plant”.

It grows about 18 inches tall, and looks particularly decorative when grouped as a border plant. Give it time and the bulbs will multiply unseen. A roadside bed near Nai Harn Lake is evidence of that.

Most other species of *hippeastrum* will struggle in Thailand's heat. So it is usually sold here – as in Europe – as a massive bulb, which you then plant in a container with the top third projecting above the soil.

Give the bulb a rich potting mix, with a pH no higher than 6.5. A

slow developer, it will, like its outdoor Thai cousin, take up to 10 months to flower, and will only do so once it has produced a least four, characteristic, strap-like leaves.

However, the results are truly spectacular – voluptuous, trumpet-shaped blooms at the top of thick, fleshy stems, and a range of colors from deep red through salmon pink to cream and white.

There are many striped and bi-colored forms, as befits a plant that has been extensively hybridized. And one stem may produce anything from two to a dozen

blooms. But if you want your *hippeastrum* to flower again, you will need to put the bulb in cooler conditions for a few weeks before re-potting.

I am currently growing one in a container outdoors. Placed in a shaded area next to the house, it already has several leaves, so it should flower in due course – fingers crossed. But the real test will come if, and when, it is transferred permanently to a flower bed.

If you have a garden that you would like to be featured on this page, please email: pcampbell45@gmail.com



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Tip of the week

The tasty grass

AMONG the top choices for starting a herb garden is lemongrass (*Cymbopogon citratus*). It is a distinctive plant that resembles a small version of pampas grass with its sharp-edged, long, flat leaves.

Known as *takrai* in Thailand, it grows in dense clumps and contains the same essential oil as lemon peel, a characteristic that gives it a citrusy tang.

Its slightly bulbous lower stem and root top is the part used in dishes throughout

Southeast Asia, forming a key ingredient in many coconut-based curries and soups.

Freely available in fresh markets year-round, cut roots can be transplanted into moist soil, where they should take.

Lemongrass is very hardy. It grows wild on the island and lives for three or more years. It is said to repel mosquitoes.

Propagation and harvesting are normally done by dividing the root stock every few months.

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Thai-style modern townhouse with land. Size: 10.50m x 10.85m. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with living room, dining room, kitchen and car park. Single house on land size: 15m by 10.85m. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with living room, dining area/kitchen, terrace and car park. Soi Mountain View Kathu Waterfall. Tel: 081-535 7585, 084-1194262, 081-356 9754. Email: peecho74@hotmail.com

**2.95M RAWAI HOUSE
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Totally renovated house, 50m from Rawai Beach in quiet, safe street. Comes furnished. Tel: 088-451 5540. Email: ben@boomingbox.com More info on this website: www.bb3.be

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Only 4.9 million baht for quick sale. No agents please. Tel: 088-472 9601.

COMPLETE CONTENTS

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SEAVIEWS NAI HARN**

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If you are looking for a single house or townhouse or condominium in Phuket. Tel: 081-677 7773. Email: phuketnewhome2010@hotmail.com Visit our website at www.phuketnewhome.com

HOUSE IN NAI YANG

4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, with mountain view. Rent: 25,000 baht per month. Sale: 4.5 million baht. Tel: 080-265 0211. Email: jywan@hotmail.com

**PA KHLOK HOUSE
FOR SALE**

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 70sq wah. Community pool, 2 aircons, fully furnished, Western kitchen. Price: 2.5 million baht. Tel: 080-265 0211. Email: jywan@hotmail.com

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 - Kohler genset
 - Cruiseair AC unit
 - Simrad chartplotter
 - Flat screen TV and DVD
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- Jeanneau 52.2 (2002)** \$349,000 USD
- Sea Ray Sunsport 290SS (2006) WITH AIRBERTH** 3,500,000 THB
- Jeanneau Leader 805 (2006)** 1,650,000 THB

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Dealership Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Martin Holmes
Tel: 076 238 803
Fax: 076 273 319
Email: info@leemarine.com

Brokerage Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Andrew de Bruin / Marcus Overman
Mobile: 081 894 1530 / 081 968 1437
Tel/Fax: 076 239 729
Email: andrew@leemarine.com

Yacht Haven Marina Office
The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket
Contact: Jim Poulsen
Mobile: 081 891 3237
Tel/Fax: 076 206 260
Email: jim@leemarine.com

Pattaya Office
Ocean Marina Jomtien Beach
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6 double cabins, 105sqm. Sails. Built 2010 in composite. Price: 1.4 million baht o.n.o. Tel: 087-461 8089.

URGENT SALE 2 MILLION BAHT
2010 Speedboat for sale. 35ft, fiberglass, 2x250, with Suzuki 4-stroke engine, all navigation systems, VHS, fully equipped for diving and fishing. Tel: 083-636 1758.

15HP YAMAHA OUTBOARD
Old, not used for the past 2 years, was running before that. Price: 9,500 baht. Tel: 083-388 3145 (English). Email: sy.tombatu@gmail.com


VAN DE STADT 38' YACHT
Ashore at Langkawi Port, due for inspection in March. Photos and spec on request. Price: US\$45,000. Tel: +60-125-531 4030 (English). Email: brianralphgoodwin@yahoo.com

16M KETCH SAILING YACHT
Cutter ketch rigged, center cockpit, fully equipped VanderStad sailing yacht for sale. Tel: 081-842 3961, 087-276 7997. Email: gj.bijlsma@gmail.com Website at: www.phuketbutler.com/node/1238

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SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

Crossword puzzle:



Impossibly Possible Quiz answers:

1. Trans-Canada, 8,000 kilometers
2. Burma
3. Zambia
4. Caspian Sea
5. Verkoyansk, Siberia
6. The Dead Sea
7. Mujibur Rehman
8. Durand Line
9. Sicily
10. Nile
11. Brazil
12. Sahara
13. Siam
14. 1782
15. 50th

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- Degree level, and management qualification [MBA] desirable
- Professional HRD qualifications, preferably internationally recognised desirable
- Accustomed to working at a senior level and as part of a wider team who is used to managing a demanding workload
- Excellent communication skills (written and oral) and possessing a coaching qualification would also be beneficial
- Demonstration of strong leadership and the application of good commercial skills and prepared to challenge and question at all levels
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To deliver a proactive and customer focussed HR service across Thailand with particular emphasis on creating a centre of excellence through the development and implementation of HR strategy, policy and practices to support the delivery of Absolute's strategic aims and objectives incorporating:

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For the right candidate we offer an excellent salary and benefits for this challenging and exciting role. Please apply quoting "Head of HR", with your Resume to:

Absolute Sales Corporation Co., Ltd. HR Department, 42/11 Taveewong Road, Patong Beach, Kathu, Phuket, 83150 Thailand
 Tel: +66 76 341 427 Fax: +66 76 341 425 Email: hr@clubabsolute.com

DETOX / YOGA CONSULTANT

Atsumi healing are looking for a Thai National to work full time in our detox department and teach yoga. Must have excellent verbal and written English skills. Degree and yoga certification an advantage. Tel: 084-051 7455, 086-905 2947 (Thai). Email resume to shell@atsumihealing.com

BOAT TECHNICIAN WANTED

for new catamaran. Responsible for all maintenance. Must be able to sail, swim, dive and drive dinghy. Will be a long time out of Thailand. English necessary. Starting September. Email: sh@vetliner.com

COOK / CHEF WANTED

Cook wanted for a private house in Surin. Must have good spoken English and a driving license. Good salary and benefits. Please contact Chitchamon for more information. Tel: 086-282 9449 (English & Thai). Send email: ct.trakarn@gmail.com

OFFICE SECRETARY

Real estate agency requires an office secretary. Experience is a plus. Tel: 076-384664, 087-898 8647 (English). Fax: 076-384665. Email: mundo@ayudhya.net

TEACHER WANTED

QSI Phuket has a vacancy for an experienced and qualified PE teacher/sports coach. Schedule: 9am - 5.15pm and occasional weekends. Requirements: native English teacher with BA, certification, experience and demonstrable abilities to motivate students and work with other schools in Phuket. Write to alan-siporin@qsi.org and lbfhaber@aol.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT & PROPERTY RENTALS

Wanted. Outgoing and polite, with excellent work ethics and good English. Full training provided for real estate activities. Experience in Office systems, filing and emailing is a must. Own transport required with driving license. Office outside Laguna. Good benefits and work environment. Email: info@phuketrealty.net

BARISTA & CHEF PASTRY

in cafe bar. Wanted in Phuket Town

- Good salary
- Must have at least 2 years' experience

- Aged between 20 and 45

- Start immediately
- Tel: 089-866 6003, 081-979 7811. Email: tanya_eyu@hotmail.com

Phuket Gazette

As part of its continued expansion, the Phuket Gazette seeks two advertising sales representatives.

Advertising Sales

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

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV and writing sample by email to Anna@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
 79/94 Moo 4, Thepkrasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
 A. Muang, Phuket 83000
 Tel: 076-273555 Fax: 076-615240



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 West Sands Vacation Club is seeking additional outgoing, motivated individuals to join our growing fun-filled family. Competitive salaries and benefits.

Assistant Line Manager	1 Position
Cold Line Reps	3 Positions
Receptionist	1 Position

Send resume or CV with recent photo to mark@west-sands.com

YACHT SALES EXECUTIVE

Requirements: Experience as luxury motoryacht sales executive of over 3 years, fluent in English, and any other languages, excellent computer and communication skills, knowledge about luxury motoryachts, engineering, maintenance, etc. Tel: 081-9799911. Email: vrit@boat lagoonyachting.co.th For further details, please see our website at www.boatlagoonyachting.co.th

DETOX WELLNESS MANAGER

Seeked by Samui detox resort.
 Tel: 088-491 1462 (English). Please send CV via email: fasthealing@yahoo.com

DRIVER AND OFFICE STAFF

Jobs available for minivan drivers and office staff. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-282506, 088-080 3820 (English). Email: peter@orientalphuket.com

SALES CONSULTANTS REQUIRED

Club Asia Fitness requires Sales Consultants. Thai national – English speaking an advantage. Earn 20,000 baht ++. Tel: 076-354027, 087-275 3614 (English). Email: info@clubasiaphuket.com For further details, please see our website at www.clubasia.phuket.com

FUN IN THE SUN

Marketing promoters wanted for Patong Beach. Earn 20,000 baht a week. English speakers only. Work permit+ visa provided. Call Jonny. Tel: 086-596 7322. Email: jonnythailand69@hotmail.com

Construction Project Manager

Successful luxury villa developer in Cherg Talay, Phuket urgently seeks a Project Manager to start immediately

Candidate Background

- Thai national
- Bachelor's Degree in an engineering discipline
- At least 7 years in project a management role
- At least 10 years construction industry experience
- Good command of English, PC literacy & some knowledge of CAD
- Pro-active, highly responsible, organised & able to work under pressure

The Role

- Ensure high quality, on-time delivery of villas
- Manage team of 2 Project Engineers
- Coordinate between Owners & Contractors
- Measure monthly progress & approve contractor claims
- Use & adapt current paperwork systems to ensure proper audit trail

Competitive salary for the right candidate!
Immediate start

Interested Parties are invited to submit their resume together with current & expected salary to cherngtalaydevelopment@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP CONSULTANT

Phuket's Premier Health Club requires a self motivated and organized female Thai national with excellent English, and with previous experience in sales, membership role. Salary plus commission. Tel: 076-360885, 089-926 5543 (English). Fax: 076-360887. For further details, please see our website at www.rpmhealthclub.com email your CV and covering letter to the GM at darren@rpmhealthclub.com

TEACHER WANTED

QSI Phuket has a vacancy for the position of teacher. For children 5-6 years old. Requirements: native English speaker with BA in education, proper certification and experience. This is not an ESL position. Write to alan-siporin@qsi.org and lbfhaber@aol.com

MAID AND GARDENER (THAI)

Wanted, with hotel experience for farang-owned house in Rawai. Tel: 081-797 7898.

50,000 BAHT PER MONTH

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Female teacher needed to teach 3-5 year olds. Native speakers only. Love for children and dedication is a must. Tel: 076-521550, 084-847 0732. Email: intlicense@yahoo.com

SCPLAW ASSISTANCE

Paralegal services. Qualifications:
 - Fluent in English, both written and spoken
 - Excellent English communication skills
 - Good attitude and work well under pressure
 Tel: 081-893 3212, 081-968 0230. Email: Rodriguez.l@scplawassistance.com

MARKETING JOB

Looking to recruit English speaking Thais for our marketing company in Chiang Mai. Tel: 053-282079, 085-473 4207 (English). Email: sastravelmarketing@gmail.com

STAFF NEEDED

One maid for cleaning and one motorbike mechanic/repairman. Experience needed. Tel: 083-634 5772 (English & Thai). Email: info@husiphuket.se

SWEDISH STAFF

Part-time work for Swedish-speaking female 20-30 years old. Send your CV in English to rainforestjob@gmail.com

VIDEO PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Travel video production assistants wanted by Internet Travel TV station based on Phuket. Open training opportunities for beginners with knowledge of photoshop or basic video cutting softwares. Flexible working hours and a good learning attitude is important for the internet multi-media work. Tel: 082-323 9315 (English), 082-784 7271 (Thai). Email: andre@web62.com For further details, please see our website at www.web62.com

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- **Human Resources Manager**
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- **Front Office Manager**

Profile:

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- ▶ At least 3-5 years' experience in the field
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- ▶ Strong in analytical, problem solving skills, and execution of work

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- ▶ Accommodation as per your position category at resort

An exciting career awaits creative professionals along with a competitive benefits package. Please send application together with a detailed resume, transcripts, current and expected salaries to:

Human Resources Department
Resort: 11 Moo 8 Laem Tong, Koh Phi Phi, Ao Nang, Muang, Krabi 81000 Thailand
Tel. 075-627000 ext. 1400 or 1401 Fax. 075-627025 E-mail: hr@zeavola.com & pa@zeavola.com



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Sales Executive – Luxury Boats

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Our Phuket office is looking for a Sales Executive to boost the sales team. Selling both new and used, power and sailing boats, you will work within a small sales team. We require someone who is highly motivated, customer oriented and results driven. You will have either previous marine sales experience, or strong sales results from another industry – perhaps even selling luxury products.

You will be based in Phuket and will be paid a base salary, uncapped commission, as well as paid annual leave and medical insurance.


Candidate Requirements

- An interest in, or current strong knowledge, of the marine industry.
- More than 3 years of direct sales experience, with the ability to close sales.
- Good negotiator.
- Computer literate.
- Very well organized, able to work in a fast pace environment and multi task.
- Ability to work without supervision or guidance.

Interested candidates should email their resume (English) in MSWord format/PDF to hr@simpsonmarine.com.

Only short-listed candidates will be notified. Applicants not invited for an interview within 2 weeks, should consider their applications unsuccessful.

All information received will be kept in strictly confidential and only for employment-related purposes.



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Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree with interest or emphasis in mathematics, economics, marketing, computer science, or related field
- A minimum of 2 years hands on SEO experience gained either in-house or agency-side to include: Technical SEO and Link Building
- Proven track record of delivering SEO results in competitive sectors such as travel, insurance, financial services etc
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Be active within the online SEO community
- A genuine passion for the web and social media

Russian Editor

Qualifications:

- Female, native Russian language speaker
- Fluent in English
- BA or MA in Sales and Marketing or related fields
- 2 to 3 years work experience in related field
- Understands how Russians use the internet to find hotels and travel information
- Experienced in translating English to Russian language
- Able to work late
- Able to deliver results under pressure
- Ability to work effectively as a team member

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. Please send current resumé or CV listing complete employment experience, a recent photograph, references and current remuneration package or salary expectations to jobs@hoteltravel.com. Or call 076-282808 and ask for HotelTravel.com's Director of Operations, Khun Arnupab Satakorn, for further information. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Real People, Real Service, Real Choice

ADMIN STAFF WANTED
Admin staff required by real estate agent in the Laguna area. Must be Thai national, female and have some experience in admin and accounts. Must also live locally. Good salary and immediate start. Please contact for further details. Tel: 076-271315, 081-895 6267 (English). Email: info@phuketlandandhomes.com

CUSTOMER SUPPORT WANTED
We are the leading travel agency in Phuket. We currently want to fill 2 positions for customer support. Starting salary ranging from 12,000-15,000 baht. Please contact for more additional details. Tel: 076-367120, 086-950 6945. Or send email: korphong@hotmail.com

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- **Engineer**
Salary 9,000 to 10,000 baht per month plus service charge. Working hours from 8am to 8pm - Work 5 days with 2 days off - Must be skilled in electrical, plumbing systems & wood work - Position available now. Must be a Thai national, fluent in English.
- **Bartender/Receptionist**
Salary 8,000 to 9,000 baht per month plus service charge & commission. Must have front desk experience - Shifts alter from morning, afternoon and evening. Must have knowledge in making drinks & bar beverages, and be friendly and outgoing with guests. Must speak and understand English. Position available. Tel: 076-333222. Or send email: sales@ccblosshotel.com

SALE EXECUTIVE NEEDED
Sale Executive needed urgently in Phuket Town. Qualifications: Aged between 25-45 years, male or female. Good command of English in writing and speaking skills. Minimum 2 years of experience as sales officer, any construction experience will be considered favorably. Salary: 8,500-12,000 baht not including commission. Email: phuketimperial@yahoo.com www.phuket-stainless-service.com

OFFICE SECRETARY
We are seeking an energetic and proactive full-time office secretary/administrative assistant. Candidates must have good English and computer skills. Tel: 086-004 3008. Email: angius@villasuksan.com

BOAT REFIT PROJECT MANAGER
Hands-on, good organizational skills, team player. Duration 2 to 3 months. Tel: 081-270 9006 (English). Email: ulrichkuhl@gmail.com

PHP PROGRAMMER
Wanted for full-time position in Chalong. Good salary. Tel: 084-628 2629. Send resume to gianni@ictned.eu

ADMIN CHERNG TALAY
Young Thai female, good English. Must be able to do with-hold fax forms & use Microsoft Office. 3-month trial period. Salary 12,500 baht per month. Send CV & pic by email. Email: patsypalm@hotmail.com

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHER
Female Caucasian to teach class of 10-12 children, 3-7 years old. Located in Chalong. Work hours: Mon-Fri (8am-4pm). Start immediately. Tel: 080-624 7060. Email: phuketpreschool@yahoo.com

ADMIN + LITTLE ACCOUNTS
Young Thai female, good at English. Must be able to with-hold fax forms and use micro-soft office. Three months trial period. Salary 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-271315, 081-895 6267. Fax: 076-271316. Send a CV and picture to Email: joinourcompany@gmail.com

RECEPTIONIST/ FRONT DESK
Salary 9,000 baht per month. Thai female, English speaking, hotel experience. Tel: 076-344701, 085-523 1772 (English). Fax: 076-344488. Email: info@patongsubinn.com

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED
Female, native English teacher for 4 kids, 3-5 years old, on a 4-month contract. Salary 40,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-343 0777.

TELEPHONE SERVICE
We are seeking to hire a Thai woman for our phone customer service. High salary. Send resume to vorike3@gmail.com

SALES & MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Requirements: Experience as sales & marketing executive of luxury high-end products of over 4 years (ideally in Phuket), fluent in English, and any other languages, excellent computer, communication and social skills, PR & marketing knowledge and skills, knowledge of luxury yachts and islands around Phuket, boating industry and lifestyle would be helpful. Tel: 081-979 9911. Email: vrit@boatlagoon-yachting.co.th For further details, please see our website at www.boatlagoon-yachting.co.th

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Mobile spa in good condition, used only for 1 year. Price: 70,000 baht. Tel: 081-667 1637 (English & Thai).

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Wed and Sun 7 PM

Bangkok Hospital - Phuket City
Fri 7 PM

Patong Hospital - Patong
Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 17 PM

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Tue 1 PM

Stereo Lab Restaurant - Surin Beachfront
Mon and Thur 9:30 AM

Scandinavian Meeting - Karon
Tue and Sat 7 PM (Nov-April)
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For info on other Thailand AA meetings inquire @ 02-23118300 (for Thai language press 3) www.aathailand.org or email: info@aathailand.org

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FC Phuket slide to seventh after draw

FC PHUKET pulled back from 2-0 down to salvage a draw on the road at Samut Prakan in the Thai League's Division 1 last Sunday.

Goals by Nitirote Sukuma and Nene Bi secured the Southern Sea Kirin a point, but wins for Bangkok United and Songkhla pushed Phuket down to 7th place in the league.

The Kirin went into the match on the back of a 6-1 trouncing of Thai Honda. Samut Prakarn Customs United who were beaten 1-0 away at Suphan Buri and, at 14th in the table, had yet to win a game.

Both sides were frustrated for much of the first half, and were struggling to break free from the danger areas. Two headers from Kone Adama were the best chances FC Phuket had, but both went astray.

Customs had the best of the latter minutes, with the division's only English player Lee Tuck creating chances, but the half finished 0-0.



Nene Bi. Photo: Apinun Saithong

The Southern Sea Kirin appeared to be on yet another hard-luck road trip when Tuck scored early in the second half. Minutes later he set up Weerasak Kiatsoong-nern, who put Customs up 2-0 at 59 minutes.

But FC Phuket fought back with a beautiful free kick into the top-right corner by Nitirote Sukuma at 67 minutes. The equalizer came at 72 minutes, when Customs United defender Surapon Phrom-

riboon pulled down FC Phuket's Kone Adama in the penalty area and a sure-footed Nene Bi converted the spot-kick.

FC Phuket coach Surachai Jirasirichote said: "We knew that our opponents had lost four games in a row. Because of that, they had to fight hard, and they showed it isn't easy to beat them at this stadium."

FC Phuket now sits in 7th place, with 18 points after 10 games.

Following a recent ruling by the Thai FA, the final seven minutes of Phuket's away fixture at Bangkok United, abandoned due to a freak storm, will be replayed. The score of 5-2 in the Bangkok side's favor will be retained. The date and location of play is undecided.

FC Phuket fans will have the chance to see Saraburi in action this weekend, when the Southern Sea Kirin play them again at home on Sunday at 6pm.

- Phuket Gazette

Thieves pinch shirts from FC Phuket shop

THIEVES broke into the FC Phuket merchandise shop at the entrance to Surakul Stadium, stealing more than 4,000 baht's worth of replica shirts recently.

Thaweesak Jampada, a store employee, said that when he arrived to open the store the next morning he noticed a hole had been smashed into the wooden wall at the back.

Checking the stock, he noticed items had been stolen.

"My first suspicions were that they had squeezed in through the narrow hole between the store and the wall of the house next door," he said. "You could sneak through to the back of the shop that way," he said.

Mr Thaweesak said the wall was made of thin wood that could easily be smashed.

It was the second time the store had been robbed, he added. Last time, the warehouse next to the store was targeted.



Fans wearing the official shirts.

Naruebeth "Sia Lek" Ayupong, the club's director, said the robbery appeared to be the work of kids, because the size of the hole meant whoever went in must have been small.

"There wasn't much damage, so we probably won't make a report," he said.

- Phuket Gazette

Karate youths set for international tourney

THE island's top youth karate *sempai* were due to compete in a week-long multi-national karate tournament this week in Bangkok as this newspaper went to print.

The Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) Phuket chapter selected 24 of its best iron-fisted youths, aged 6 to 15 years of age, to compete for medals.

In addition to Thai athletes, karate students representing 14 nations were set to go head-to-head.

Hosted at Chulalongkorn University Sports Complex from May 11 to 17, the 5th Asian Pacific Goju-kai Karate-do championships is organized in conjunction with the International Karate-do Goju-kai Association (IKGA), Thailand's association

(TKGA) and Karate Federation (TKF), as well as the SAT.

SAT Phuket Office Director Wirat Patee brought the youths to meet Governor Tri Aukaradecha earlier this week for some final words of encouragement.

"I expect our athletes to bring back no less than eight gold medals," declared a confident Wirat.

"In any case, the tournament will be a major training for the athletes in preparation for next year," he added, referring to the 28th Thailand Youth Games which Phuket will host in March next year.

For results of how the Phuket karate young guns got on, see next week's issue of the *Phuket Gazette* out May 21.

- Steven Layne

Tasar win for Slipstream

THE Bel Air Panwa Tasar Series recently finished on Phuket with some close racing from this growing one-design fleet.

Phuket is famed for its big boat regattas, but a recent resurgence in dinghy and junior sailing now offers greater choice for sailors.

The Bel Air Panwa Tasar Series consisted of three events over two months. A nine-race series saw the title fight go to the wire at the last event of the series.

Winner of the series was Slipstream, skippered by Andrew de Bruin. A number of firsts and consistent high placings saw him win the series by three points.

Seakitt Casschris, skippered by Muzza Nordstrand, placed second and in third place overall was Drag-onfly, skippered by Liam Kealy.

Hot favorites G-String skippered by Leslie Hand, finished fourth in the final leaving her fourth overall.

Preparations are underway for the next Tasar series and there are still opportunities for more teams to enter. If interested, contact class captain Andrew de Bruin at E:andrew@leemarine.net.

The Phuket Yacht Club will host a weekend Thailand Nationals for the Tasar class in the near future.

- Phuket Gazette

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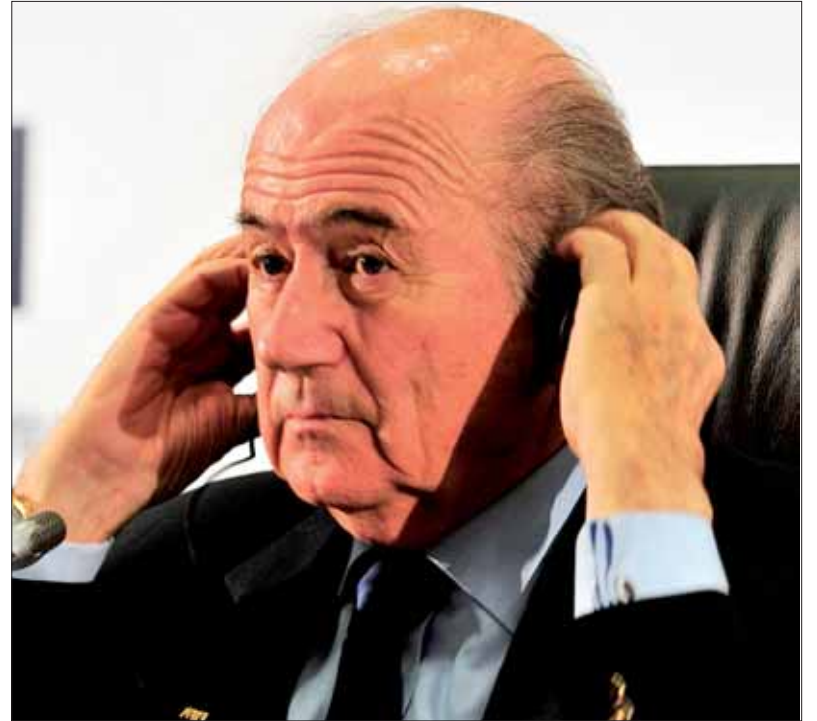


Football still in the dark ages

In the ever-developing tech world we live in, the question remains: Why doesn't football make proper use of it?



THE GOAL THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN: Frank Lampard's shot crossing the line during the England versus Germany match in the South Africa World Cup 2010. Photo: AFP



HEAR NO EVIL: Sepp Blatter, president of FIFA, deaf to football's modern requirements? Photo: Agencia Brasil

By Neil Quail

I USED to love football. A game for thugs played by gentleman as the saying partly goes. My father played for Glentoran in Northern Ireland and in later years he became a respected referee. My younger brother followed this officious capacity in sports and became an international hockey umpire.

As one can imagine, our household was never short on sports arguments and especially debate regarding contentious decisions in football such as off-sides, red cards and goals, made by the men in black, as once they wore.

Irrespective of the different teams we supported, or our personal interpretation of incidents on any given Saturday or Sunday, to this day we agree on one aspect of sport. We continually ask the same question: Why the hell hasn't football introduced goal-line video technology?

The argument against the use of technology usually involves the nonsensical and archaic fear that the "human aspect" would be removed. Supporters of the obtuse Sepp Blatter, president of FIFA, use this argument in association with the costs of introducing the technology, which for anyone genuinely interested in the development of the game, can only lead to questions of a sinister or conspiratorial nature.

In the first instance, using video replay as a tool to help reduce unnecessary controversy in sport has no down side.

Remember, this is "goal-line" technology

can be used to answer questions such as: did the ball cross the line?, was it a hand ball?, was it a penalty? These decisions can directly affect a goal being awarded.

Off-sides, fouls outside the penalty area and carding players would remain under the direct responsibility of the referee and his assistants.

Many a referee has made incorrect decisions which adversely affect the outcome of an important game, costing a team valuable points or continuation in a competition.

The litany of errors is too great to offer in any great detail, but recent incidents of note include Thierry Henry's handball against the Republic of Ireland which secured France's inclusion to last year's World Cup and prevented a worthy Irish team from competing in South Africa.

During that very World Cup Frank Lampard scored for England against Germany in the last 16 stage at a crucial point in the match, but the goal was not acknowledged by the Uruguayan referee Jorge Larrión.

Mr Lampard's fortunes were recently reversed when he was awarded a goal playing for his club Chelsea in a Premiership game against Tottenham.

Spurs goalkeeper, Huerleho Gomes stopped the ball from completely crossing the line, but his remonstrations to the offi-

cial were denied, where television replays showed him to be correct.

Copious amounts of money infest football and yet the powers that be have the audacity to suggest this technology is too costly to implement.

This seems a ludicrous statement when we consider the employment of a fourth official at matches whose ineffectual purpose is to prevent managers from stepping outside their designated zones and to hold aloft a digital board indicating substitutions and added time.

His redundant presence would be better served sitting with a television crew, prepared for when referees require verification on a pending goal issue, replaying and offering advice once checked.

Other sports not as affluent as football have employed a range of technologies to help with officiating. Tennis first introduced line technology in 1974.

Cricket has used a sensitive microphone system called the "snick-o-meter" to pick up the sound of ball on bat since 1999 and shortly after that in 2001, brought "Hawkeye" to the game, which shows the path of a ball. In 2006 the sport introduced another development called "Hot Spot" which uses infra-red cameras to determine the strike point of a ball.

'If football does not catch up with the momentum of technology in sport, gentlemanly conduct and fair play will be lost.'

Youth Games facilities inspected

SPORTS Authority Thailand (SAT) Phuket Office Director, Wirat Patee announced that the SAT and Phuket Sports Association are conducting inspections of the various sporting facilities being prepared for the upcoming Thailand Youth Games.

Last week inspections were conducted at the 123 Gymnasium and at the Sports Center around Saphan Hin which comprises the gyms and facilities that will be used to hold volleyball, badminton,

tennis, and Pe-tong competitions.

The officers will continue to inspect, improve, and prepare all the event hosting facilities to ensure maximum preparedness and the highest standards for the games.

Director Wirat expressed his approval of the efforts being made for next year's games.

"I very much appreciate the work that has been done in the past four years. The growth and development of sports and facilities in Phuket is clearly noticeable and it's not just the result of efforts from

one office. The collaboration of the private sector with Phuket's government authorities must be commended," he said

Further initiatives are being introduced to develop outstanding sports talents in Phuket, he added.

"The White Elephant" (*Chang Phuak*) project will identify individual talents from sports... Funds from the project will provide a monthly allowance and a scholarship to a Bangkok University," Director Wirat said.

— Neil Quail

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Legends to match up at Thanyapura

Ex-professionals to clash at new sports center on the island

By Neil Quail

THE host venue for the Liverpool Legends versus Legends of Thailand Phuket leg has officially been announced to the *Gazette* as Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Center (TSLC) by owners and promoters North Scoreboard Co Ltd.

"Thanyapura was selected for the quality of the pitch and facilities to support our international teams and visitors as well as the enthusiasm of the team to be involved in the Football Legends concept.

"We are excited to hold this important match at the world class facilities of Thanyapura which we believe the fans will enjoy immensely," said Cris Rosenbergs, Director of North Scoreboard Group, the owner and creator of the Football Legends concept.

Spread across 22.5 hectares, Thanyapura is a state-of-the-art campus with world-class sporting facilities. The Legends match will be played on their synthetic rugby surface endorsed by the In-

ternational Rugby Board.

"The opportunity to showcase our facilities at this stage of our development with such an internationally famous group of players being present is one we proudly have taken. Thanyapura represents a major step forward in sports and leisure facilities on Phuket and we feel this match and activities will highlight to the people of Phuket, Thailand, and indeed around the world who will see the match on TV, what Phuket has to offer for world class sporting events," said Dave Roberts, Vice President for Operations of TSLC.

"The Legends of Liverpool have brought a great deal of success to the team in the past, and have many fans around the world. Liverpool is one of the leading teams that Thai people support.

"Bringing together such a team of famous past players is not a simple task and TrueVisions is excited and proud to welcome the team to Thailand and to provide media partnership to the organiz-

ers through its own channels.

"TrueVisions is more than delighted to update all the activities that will be part of the tour, apart from the live broadcast of the match in Bangkok and Phuket, TrueVisions will provide special benefits to its subscribers to further promote the tour and support other activities of the official partners," said Ong-art Prapakamol, Chief Commercial Officer of TrueVisions PLC.

As part of the Legends tour the team will participate in a range of activities, making an eventful TV series which will be broadcast worldwide highlighting the destinations they visit.

The match of Legends will be held at Thanyapura at 6pm on June 18. Gates open from 4pm. Tickets are available from HomePro outlets on Phuket or can be purchased at Thanyapura.

Visit W:footballlegendstour.com and W:thanyapura.co.th for more information.



STAR SHOW: Legends of Liverpool tour manager Alan Kennedy (left) and Phil Neal (right) appear on True Visions recently in Bangkok.

BSS Champions League a hit with competing kids

BRAZILIAN Soccer Schools (BSS) Phuket held its third successful 3v3 Junior Futebol de Salao (FDS) soccer tournament at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club (TSLC), in Thalang last Saturday.

A total of 105 Thai and Expat children from the Phuket community ranging from seven to 13 years old thrilled spectators with their pace and skills on the pitch.

"We are delighted with how this tournament ran. It was our most successful 3v3 tournament yet. All the players were awarded medals and all their parents got to see the benefits of our unique training system," said Martin Hill, Head Coach of BSS.

First was the Under 8 division, played in a nine team format. The teams were given Champions League team names as tribute to the upcoming final to be held at Wembley on May 28.

Inter Milan took bronze, the silver medal went to Manchester United and tournament champions were Chelsea.

Late afternoon saw the Under 10 division get underway with over 30 players participating. Schalke and Spurs made it through Group A into the semi-finals where they faced the winners of Group B; Inter Milan and Arsenal. Both games were tight affairs, but Inter Milan and Arsenal proved too strong and again met in the final. Schalke and

Spurs battled for the bronze medal with Schalke winning a close match 2-1. Arsenal took the Silver medal as they lost out to Inter Milan 2-1 in the final.

A frantic start to the Under 12 division yielded 29 goals in the first 4 games. The first semi-final matched AC Milan and Spurs. AC Milan won 5-3 to book their place in the final. The second semi-final offered the upset of the tournament, as league winners Real Madrid were beaten by Manchester United 4-1. Real Madrid overcame their disappointment later by defeating Spurs to finish in third place. A reversal of fortune was witnessed in the final when a 7-1 loss in the opening game of the tournament was avenged by Manchester United to topple AC Milan 6-1 in the final.

On Sunday the Under 14s took center stage at TSLC. Four teams each played three group games as well as two play-off matches. Real Madrid beat Manchester United in the first semi and Schalke scored two late goals against Barcelona to see them into the final. The final could not be decided in normal time with Real Madrid scoring a last gasp equalizer sending the teams into a penalty shoot-out. Real Madrid won the shoot-out 2-1 to claim gold.

The next FDS 3v3 tournament is due for September.

- Neil Quail

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From the desk of a well travelled sceptic...

I usually don't gush about my travels, as an avid traveller I can almost safely say that I've done it all and seen it all. But when I flew to Singapore from Phuket with Air Asia, I was deeply impressed and moved that I felt that I have to share it everyone.

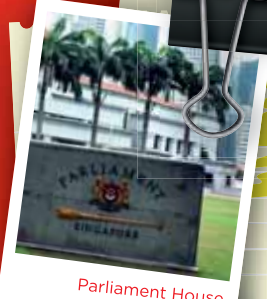
Though my partner and I only spent the weekend in Singapore, we felt that we saw the best it had to offer in that short time. We reached Changi Terminal 1 Airport early in the morning for our first day and headed straight to the city and started off our own city tour. First we started at the beautifully preserved Colonial district where the **Parliament House**, **City Hall**, **Padang Cricket House** and the **Supreme Court** call home. As noon passed we headed to Chinatown to visit the historical **Thian Hock Keng Temple**, to Marina Bay to catch the original national symbol the **Merlion** (half-lion half-fish) with its little cub, and coincidentally since the **Esplanade - Theatres** on the Bay nearby, we managed to catch a show at the theatre as well. As night descended, we rode the cable car up to **Mount Faber** and then later on to the **Singapore Flyer** for a birds-eye view as dusk settled and the city lights turned on.

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With a magical end to our night and a sleepover in **Sentosa**, we were all set to conquer the many sights & experiences of Sentosa the next day. We ventured all around **Siloso**, entered the old fort and were mystified with the beauty of **Underwater World** and the **Dolphin Lagoon**. From there we wandered to the **beaches of Sentosa** and then up to **Imbiah Lookout** and had a magnificent view of the whole of Sentosa and the mainland.

For our last day we headed to the city centre and the ever popular **Orchard Road**. It was an absolute joy to shop as there were your popular brands from all over the globe to your local designers. Even the food here had the same array of choices as we went through the numerous malls up and down Orchard Road. After all that we headed to **Bugis Street** for more street shopping and we were pleasantly amused by it all. We managed to visit **Universal Studio** before we headed back to Changi Airport for our flight back to Phuket.


With loads of love and fond memories,
Marie



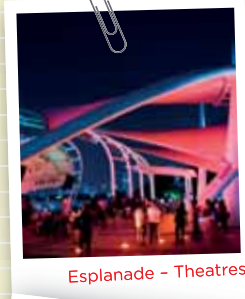
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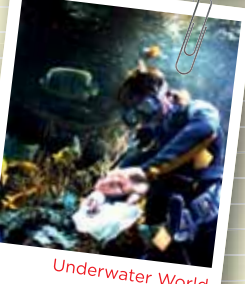
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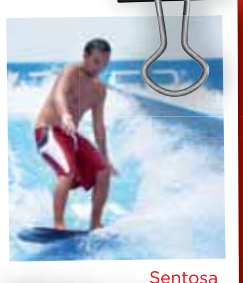
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