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'Farang' robs Karon bank

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn & Natcha Yuttaworawit

KARON: Despite an intensive manhunt, police have yet to apprehend the Caucasian man who held up the Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) branch on Patak Rd in Karon on June 28, getting away with 420,000 baht in cash.

At the monthly Phuket Provincial Security Committee meeting held at the ST Hotel June 29, Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch said he believed the culprit was still in the Karon area.

Soon after the heist, at about 4:30 pm, Chalong Police began checking all guesthouses and motorcycle rental agencies in the area in the hope of tracking down the man, confirmed by Gen Decha as being a "farang".

"I think he has been in Thailand [awhile] because he could speak some Thai. I think he may have tried to copy the Dutchman who held up the office at Phuket Villa California recently [and was apprehended the following day].

"Witnesses said the man waited on his motorbike in front of the bank for about 30 minutes before entering," Gen Decha said.

The motorcycle used in the robbery had a license plate, but witnesses did not notice its number, he added.

In carrying out the heist, the thief wore a face mask, a white long-sleeved shirt and black trousers. He entered the bank quickly and promptly held a gun to the head of Branch Manager Thursak Chusap and demanded cash.

"Even though he was



Sultan afloat!

PATONG: Eleven days after the 38-foot sailboat *Sultan* beached at the south end of Patong during a storm, salvage efforts at high tide around noon June 30 finally saw her afloat and sailing for safer waters.

Sultan made landfall on Patong Beach about 1 am on June 19 after its anchor chain snapped during strong winds and large waves in Patong Bay.

Skipper Michael Wilson said, "I would like to thank everybody who has helped. I really do appreciate it."

He said he would now dock the boat to make necessary repairs before embarking on his next trip.

— Photo by Gerd Wissemann

masked, I believe he was a foreigner because he spoke both Thai and English. He kept shouting 'ray-o ray-o!' [faster, faster] and 'More, more!' He wasn't a big guy, though. Actually he was shorter than me at about 160 to 165 centimeters," K. Thursak told the *Gazette*.

"I was really frightened. Everything happened so fast, it was over in just two minutes and he made off on a Suzuki Step motorbike with the cash, about 420,000 baht. Fortunately, some

people outside got a look at his motorbike. That should provide the police with some valuable clues," he said.

The robbery was recorded on the bank's closed-circuit television cameras, but the images were not very clear, he said.

"Our bank is under 24-hour video surveillance and I am not sure if the robber knows that images of him robbing the bank were recorded," he said.

The robber waited until just

Continued on page 2

Phuket to have biggest aquarium in SE Asia

BANGKOK (Nation, Gazette): Ripley Entertainment, operator of Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum, plans to build and open a 2.1-billion-baht aquarium in Phuket within three years.

The firm will enter into a joint venture with Thailand-based conglomerate Minor International Plc, the franchisee of the Ripley museum in Pattaya.

The aquarium project will be Ripley's second property in Thailand and its first aquarium outside the US.

The aquarium is planned to cover 10,000 to 12,000 square meters and would be bigger than Underwater World in Singapore, which claims to be the biggest aquarium in Southeast Asia.

Ripley Entertainment President Robert Masterson said the group intended to hold a major stake in the new project.

Mr Masterson declined to reveal the location and amenities of the project, saying it was too early to go into details.

"The tourist market will be a major target," he said.

Sombat Phuwatchiranond, former chief of the Phuket Marine Biological Office (PMBO), told the *Gazette* that the Phuket aquarium draws an average of 30,000 visitors per month, but he said that it could be difficult for a private aquarium to draw as many guests since the entry fees for the government-run facility are cheap.

"Investing in an aquarium is also very expensive, as is the maintenance, so they have to set a high ticket fee," he said.

"They also may run into problems because when people come to Phuket they want to see the fish under the sea, not in an aquarium."

From page 1

Farang robber still 'in Phuket' – police



before the bank's 4:30 pm closing time to strike, he noted.

Despite the robbery, the bank was back to business as usual and ready to pay out end-of-the-month salaries due that day for many workers on the island, he said.

Chairing the meeting, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit was clearly exasperated by the second robbery-at-gunpoint by a farang in the same month.

Crime rates were already high enough among Thais and the numerous illegal laborers on the island without tourists getting in on the act, he said.

Gov Niran told the security committee he understood that government officers assigned to Phuket were tired, but nevertheless encouraged them to redouble their efforts to catch the thief in order to protect Phuket's image as a safe tourist destination.

As this edition went to press, Chalong Police investigator Pol Capt Thammasan Boonsong said police had already questioned many foreign tourists whose names were taken from lists supplied by motorcycle rental operators between June 26 and 28.

The suspect was a Caucasian foreigner, aged from 30 to 40, he added.

"None of the people questioned so far matched the bank robber's description," he said.

Capt Thammasan encouraged anyone with useful information or a possible suspect in mind to call him directly at 081-6413007.

OrBorJor closer to buying Phyathai hospital building

By Supanun Supawong

PHUKET CITY: After years of failed negotiations, the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) has obtained permission to buy the abandoned Phyathai Phuket Hospital building and re-open it as a hospital with public organization status.

OrBorJor President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr met Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit June 27 to discuss buying the building for 327 million baht, with 273 million baht from regular *OrBorJor* budgets for fiscal 2006 and 2007 and the remainder from an *OrBorJor* cooperative account.

The building, abandoned in 2000, is under the control of the Thai Asset Management Cooperation (TAMC), a government agency set up after the 1997 financial crisis to remedy non-performing loans.

After the meeting, K. Anchalee said that Gov Niran had "no reservations" about the new plan and that she expects him to grant

the required approval for the purchase from TAMC.

The plan will be put before the *OrBorJor* members for a vote July 3. K. Anchalee believes the project will find little opposition in the *OrBorJor*, which she has headed since May, 2004.

"This is a good project for the people and a public opinion survey we conducted of more than 1,000 people showed strong support for it... This project can help Vachira Phuket Hospital, which is now overloaded with patients due to all the foreign laborers who go there for treatment," she said.

Treatment costs at the new facilities would be lower than at private hospitals, she added.

"The first step is the purchase. After that we will discuss how to administer the hospital in a way that will increase high-quality, affordable treatment options for middle income earners. The hospital can

eventually hold 200 beds, but we expect to start with 50 to 75 beds in the first phase," K. Anchalee said.

Administrative experts will be brought in from Banphaeo Hospital in Samut Sakhon Province, which already enjoys public organization status. Medical staff will be recruited from hospitals outside the province, she explained.

The *OrBorJor* has a plan to contact Mahidol University in Bangkok about bringing in specialist on weekends, she added.

The *OrBorJor* plans to recoup its investment in the project within six years.

However, K. Anchalee did not elaborate on whether a management company would be brought in to operate the hospital on the *OrBorJor*'s behalf, as mentioned in earlier proposals.

However, Gov Niran urged the *OrBorJor* to proceed step by step, concentrating first on buying the building, which he said should be completed by August.

'Slim' survival odds for beached dolphins

By Semacote Suganya & Stephen Fein

PHUKET: Two gravely ill dolphins were taken to the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) after washing ashore in separate incidents, the first at Karon Beach on July 1 and the second in Phang Nga's Tai Muang District the next morning.

PMBC biologist Kongkiat Kittiwattawong told the *Gazette* that the first, a 40-kilogram female spinner dolphin (*S. longirostris*), washed ashore at Karon Beach about 7 am.

The spinner, 1.6 meters long and about five years old, was too weak to swim back out into the heavy surf and showed symptoms of a severe lung infection, but otherwise appeared healthy.

Officers at the Kata Fire Station tried unsuccessfully to push the animal back out to sea through the heavy surf at Karon Beach, then took the animal by



The spinner dolphin was rushed to a waiting pickup truck, which raced with sirens blaring to the Phuket Marine Biological Center.

– Photo by Lars Dikander

pickup truck to a section of Kata Beach with smaller waves, but the dolphin was too weak to swim away.

The second dolphin, in Phang Nga, was a 50-kilogram female striped dolphin (*S. coeruleoalba*). It also showed

signs of respiratory infection and was covered in lesions.

They were being treated in separate tanks at the PMBC.

K. Kongkiat rated the chances of recovery for both animals as very slim.

Blood samples were taken, but it was still too early to determine if the two animals were suffering from the same type of infection, said K. Kongkiat, though he added that was unlikely given that they were of different species.

Experts to head Phuket property forum

PHUKET CITY: The Phuket Real Estate Club (PREC) and Delice Thai Co Ltd will host a forum titled "Problems and Solutions in the Phuket Real Estate Market" on Saturday, July 14.

Speakers will include Thawan Thimasarn, director of the Subdivision of the Bureau of Standard Land Document Issuance; Lt Phummisak Hongsyok, president of PREC; Eric Tomlin, secretary to the Association of Phuket Property Agents; and John Magee, publisher of the *Phuket Gazette*.

Registration begins at 3 pm in the Hay Nakha Room on the second floor of the Royal Phuket City Hotel. Speakers will discuss the issues from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm with a question and answer session until 6 pm.

The forum will be held in both Thai and English, with assistance from a moderator.

For more information call the PREC at Tel: 081-6933000 or 081-3964222, or Delice Thai at Tel: 076-258417-9 or 086-682-3770. Email: info@phuket-realestateclub.com

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Firefighters were on the scene at the Phuket Art Gallery, in the heart of Phuket City, within 10 minutes, stopping the blaze from spreading to adjacent Sino-Portuguese shophouses.

Mixed messages from tsunami drills

By Natcha Yuttaworawit & Supanun Supawong

PHUKET CITY: Mock tsunami evacuations at Baan Laem Tukkae and Saphan Hin were staged on June 29 and 30, but with voice announcements that could not be understood and firetruck sirens instead of the tsunami warning towers alarms.

However, government officials have insisted that the "quiet" testing was intentional to avoid panic.

The tests, on June 29 in Baan Laem Tukkae and June 30 at Saphan Hin, were held in preparation for a July 25 test throughout the six Andaman provinces.

At Laem Tukkae, about 20 volunteers took part in the mock evacuation, including several who feigned injury to allow rescue crews from the Kusoldharm Foundation to practice helping citizens escape from tsunami strikes.

The tsunami warning towers sounded the alarm, although people taking part in the exercise could not understand the voice warnings.

Despite assurances from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM-Phuket) Chief Aroon Kerdson said that the sirens would be triggered from the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) in Bangkok to fully test the system, the sirens were set off from Phuket City Municipality offices.



Volunteers from the Kusoldharm Foundation attend to a volunteer feigning injury during the tsunami warning drill at Baan Laem Tukkae.

Somkid Petchkor, head of Phuket City's Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Division, said that some 57 officers had joined the exercise.

The following day at Saphan Hin, about 15 volunteers again practiced retrieving victims.

However, instead of the tsunami warning towers sounding the alarm, a firetruck with a wail-

ing siren cruised the streets.

Referring to reports that wiring had been stolen from tsunami warning towers at Saphan Hin, K. Somkid said that the missing wires had no effect on the sirens since the towers are solar- and battery-powered.

The July 25 tests will be triggered in Bangkok, K. Kerdson asserted, and will include about 100 towers in the six Andaman coast provinces.

Phuket art gallery gutted by fire

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET CITY: Firefighters were called to Phang Nga Rd June 28 after flames engulfed the 111 Phuket Art Gallery building, destroying up to 50 paintings on sale at prices ranging from 10,000 to 50,000 baht each.

A local resident alerted police and fire officers at around 11:30 am, after seeing smoke rising from the building, located behind the Sinthavee Hotel. Five fire trucks arrived within 10 minutes of the call and police closed the road to help the firefighters.

A man and a woman who live nearby braved the heat to rescue a number of paintings from the gallery.

"I helped a girl who lives opposite me to remove four or five large pictures from the shop, but we couldn't move any more

than that. The heat from the second floor eventually became too much," said the man, who declined to give his name.

Around 400 onlookers watched as the fire spread from the second floor of the building to the gallery on the ground floor, causing both the roof and the first floor to collapse.

The second floor of the building, made predominantly of wood, is usually used as living quarters for artists who work for the gallery.

Nobody was present at the time of the fire, said Aree Kongpol, 43, a partner of 111 Phuket Art Gallery business, which opened about one year ago.

Firefighters contained the blaze around midday.

The cost of the damage and the cause of the fire have yet to be determined.

Thai E-passport clinic to come to Phuket

PHUKET: The Thai Consul Department will hold a mobile service center at Central Festival Phuket for Thai nationals to apply for "e-passports" from July 27 to August 4.

The center will be open from 11 am to 7 pm. Valid for five years and at a cost of 1,035 baht, the passports must be applied for with an identification card, government officer card or state census card.

Minor applicants (aged under 20 years old) must be accompanied by a parent and must present an identification card or birth certificate, census registration and their parents' identification cards.

If the minor's parents have divorced, the par-

ent applying with the minor must provide documents proving the parent's right as guardian of the minor.

Applicants will also be required to provide documentation of any changes of name.

E-passports, which were introduced in Thailand in August 2005 to replace standard passports, are combined paper and electronic identity documents that use a computer chip to store information about the passport holder.

For more information contact Krissada Khosantiwichai of Marketing & Promotion at Central Festival Phuket. Tel: 076-291111 ext 1201. Fax: 076-249000. Email: marketingpf@central.co.th

Rotting corpse found in Thalang

THALANG: Police made a grim discovery on morning of June 25, when they found the badly decomposed body of an unidentified man lying in a ditch.

A local fisherman alerted police of a sickening odor at Tambon Srisoontorn Village 1, where the body was discovered by Pol Lt Col Kritthana Putluecha and his team around 8:30 am.

The victim, who suffered a fractured skull and multiple lacerations to the chest, had been

dead about two weeks, said Col Kritthana.

Police will interview local businesses to see if the man was employed locally.

Col Kritthana downplayed rumors that black magic may have been involved in the apparent slaying.

The Kusoldharm Foundation, which recovered the man's remains, will keep the body while relatives are sought, he added.

- Natcha Yuttaworawit

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ECO-SHOCK: Incinerator

At 8 am June 22, fish farmers south of Saphan Hin smelled a foul odor in the air. By that evening all of their fish – worth more than 6.6 million baht – were dead.

The source of the stench and death has been traced to the Phuket landfill and incinerator, where overflowing trash heaps and heavy rain caused a release of wastewater that, through the help of drainage pipes, flowed directly into the river.

Gazette reporters Pathomporn Kaengkra-chang and Sompratch Saowakhon investigate.

Along the banks of the canals located about 500 meters behind the incinerator at Saphan Hin grows what looks like a healthy mangrove forest. Birds fly through the trees, mudskippers spar on the banks and tiny fish swim in the river.

However, there are *only* tiny fish... none larger than a toothpick, in fact, since all of the fish, both native and farmed, were killed off by a pollution spill on June 22.

Klong Koh Phee flows behind the incinerator, which can burn off up to 250 tonnes of garbage a day. Phuket, however, produces up to 520 tonnes a day, according to Chief of Phuket Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment Aong-art Chanachanmongkol.

The remainder of the waste is piled behind the incinerator in landfills and, more recently, alongside the retention ponds that are used to treat wastewater from the incinerator.

However, on June 22, fol-

lowing heavy rains and a high tide, the black, bubbling wastewater from the garbage dump flowed directly into the mangrove forests and the klong – through the drainage pipes leading there.

The toxic plume traveled more than a kilometer downstream, killing marine life as it went.

"I noticed a bad smell in the air while I was on my fishing boat on the morning of June 22. At that time I didn't know where the smell was coming from, but it was not like anything I had smelled before," said Supat Luenpan, leader of a collective of fish farmers along Klong Koh Phee.

"By 9 pm all my fish were dead and floating in the water." The fishermen reported that their fish spasmed and splashed about before they died.

The fish farmers also raise green mussels and crabs. A week after the fish died, the mussels were still alive, but very weak, and the fishermen said they expected all their stock to die soon.

Twenty-five fish farms



Sin Aumjaiboon, one of the 25 fish farmers affected by the spill, shows the brown-spotted grouper killed by the toxic spill.

were affected, with 396 fish pens covering 3,564 square meters poisoned.

The precise number of fish killed is unknown since each fish farmer buried his stock by the riverbank. However, each pen contained between 100 and 400 fish, which leaves the toll anywhere between about 40,000 and 160,000 fish.

However, fishermen kept samples of their dead fish and the polluted water to give to the provincial authorities.

Scientists from the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) found that the water in Klong Koh Kui and Klong Koh Phee had low dissolved oxygen levels and high concentrations of ammonium and phosphate.

They speculated that the initial pollution did part of the damage, while the rotting fish killed by the runoff further contributed to the low quality of the water.

Among the species in the pens were brown-spotted grouper, sea bass, red snapper, sur-

geon fish, striped sea catfish, crabs and green mussels, along with other local species.

Praman Hormvong, leader of the Klong Koh Kui fishermen, told the *Gazette*, "I lost my food and my income all in one day. I have children who must go to school. What can I do now? I don't know what to do."

Phuket City Municipality and the Phuket Provincial Fisheries Department were quick to respond to the fisherman's problems. On June 25, Phuket City Municipality Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana met the fisherman and the Fisheries Department.

It was decided that each fisherman could submit a bill for compensation and any person claiming up to 400,000 baht would be able to receive the payment almost immediately from the city.

Any larger payments would first have to be approved by the Ministry of the Interior, which K.

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spill wipes out fish stocks



Nearly a week after the toxic spill on June 22, water from one of the landfill reservoirs still flowed into the klong.

This huge pile of garbage is kept to one side of the overburdened incinerator, where the trash stays until it is dry enough to burn – even in the rainy season. Not surprisingly, a combination of heavy rains and high tides resulted in the release of deadly toxins into the local klong.

Somjai said should not be a problem.

The total compensation is estimated to reach 6.6 million baht.

Of the 25 farmers affected, 21 are owed 400,000 baht or less, so only four will have to await Ministry approval. K. Praman lost the most, according to records, with 1.43 million baht in stock destroyed.

K. Somjai visited the spill site. She said that it was “an accident that nobody wanted to happen” and that she wanted the city to support the fishermen as much as possible.

The poisoning also warranted a visit from Kasem Sanitwong na Ayuthaya, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, who toured the area on June 30.

“I was told about the overflow of garbage, and I am concerned about it. Phuket has only

one incinerator to deal with all of its garbage, but it appears that the low capacity of the incinerator is what caused the poisoned water to flow into Klong Koh Kui.

“I have made recommendations to Phuket City Municipality about how to reduce garbage, such as by separating the trash into different types and upgrading the incinerator to be more efficient. To do this, Phuket needs a larger budget. We will help the city by lending budget from the environment funds of the Ministry,” he said.

However, as many islanders know, Phuket has requested the funds for a second incinerator for some time. Most recently, Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Rattasima, Pollution Control Department (PCD) Deputy Director General Wichian Jungreung and K. Aongart met May 29 to request 2.9 billion baht for waste management in Phuket, in-

cluding 1.3 billion baht to build a new incinerator.

In the meantime, the outflow from the retention pond nearest the klong now has a makeshift earthen berm, a barrier created after the spill to prevent more overflow from reaching the river. Overflow from the other retention ponds can still flow freely into the klong, however.

In addition to the Municipality’s payout, the Fisheries Department has also announced they will help the fish farmers

restock their pens. The fish will not be ready to sell for about one year, but the support from the Department was greatly appreciated by the farmers.

“The Fisheries Department and the city have taken very good care of us; we are happy with the results,” said K. Supat.

This isn’t the first time the fishermen on Klong Koh Phee have received government assistance. The tsunami of 2004 wiped out nearly all of their houses and fishing equipment, leading the

government and other organizations to assist them in the rebuilding.

Fishing boats donated by the Rotary International can be seen on the klong.

The provincial governor’s budget at the time was also used to pay each family 500,000 baht and wood was donated to help the fish farmers rebuild their farms.

K. Supat said, “My family, leading back through my grandfather and my father, has been rearing fish, crabs and green mussels here for more than 20 years. We live and work here, and we’re very happy with the natural environment.

“I lost a lot to the tsunami two years ago, and this feels like another tsunami just hit. This is almost worse than the tsunami because it was quiet and nobody thought it could happen.”

So as the farmers await their compensation and new stocks of fish, they dangle their fishing lines in the water hoping to catch some food for dinner.

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Queer News

TEMPLE TROTS

NAKHON RATCHASIMA: A man known locally to villagers in Kham Thalay So District as *Mor Thewada*, (which, roughly translated, means 'Angel of Mercy' doctor) is under investigation after a patient claimed that his medicine gave him a nasty case of diarrhea.

The story surfaced after a patient checked into Kham Thalay So Hospital suffering from a bad case of the runs.

After discussing it with the doctor, the most likely source of infection was traced back to a herbal treatment prescribed by one Budtha Namwongsa, 38, who was treating patients for various ailments at Nohn Tan Yai temple.

Budtha had been claiming his herbal potion could cure all diseases, the unnamed patient told doctors. Budtha did not charge for his services, but graciously accepted donations if offered, the patient added.

On hearing of the story, Kham Thalay So Hospital Director Dr Suphakij Iatragulphaibun, working with the District Public Health Office, ordered an investigation into Budtha's activities.

When Public Health officers paid a call on Budtha on June

22, they found him busy with no fewer than 10 patients in the temple's sala.

Most of the patients were suffering from cancer.

Budtha was ordered to put an immediate stop to his practice, Dr Suphakij said.

Samples of his "miracle" herb were taken for analysis to see if they were potentially harmful. If they were determined to be the source of the patient's bowel problems, Budtha would face charges, he said.

Budtha claimed that he had never claimed any special powers for his herbal medicine.

Its reputation as a cure-all followed its use in treating the temple abbot, who was treated for injuries suffered in a road accident about three months previously, he said.

He did not have a set fee for the treatment.

"I got the herb mixture from my mum, I don't know exactly what herbs are in it," Budtha admitted.

"Patients take one teaspoon of it a day and say that it makes them feel better – or completely cures them. That's why it has become so well known," he added. **Source: Kom Chad Luek**

Esoteric art of beetle-wing pictures showcased

On August 3 Thailand Post will launch a series of four new special-edition stamps, each featuring a colorful image of a bird created by a special technique that employs iridescent beetle wings.

The birds featured on the stamps are the mythical Hongsa, along with duck, pheasant and a bantam rooster, all made from the wings of beetles from the *buprestis* species.

A special lithographic technique enhances the colors of the beetle wings on the stamps.

The original works are on display at The Foundation for the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUPPORT) in Ayudhaya, under the patronage of HM Queen Sirikit. SUPPORT is a foundation to develop skills and employment in traditional arts and crafts.

The series will debut at the 20th Asian International Stamp Exhibition August 3 to 12 in the Royal Paragon Hall on the fifth floor at Siam Paragon in Bangkok.

The stamps each have a face value of five baht. One million first-day covers will be produced, selling for 30 baht a set.

STAMPS



The stamps will be available at the Exhibition and all Thailand Post offices, including the 10 branches in Phuket. For more information visit www.thailandpost.com

Meditation session date changed

PHUKET CITY: The second in a series of free meditation sessions with instruction by English monk Phra Nicholas Thanissaro will take place on July 22 at the Phuket Kalyanamitta Center, formerly known as the Wang Gung Restaurant, behind Suan Luang Park.

The session date was previously listed as the third Sunday of the month, which in July would have been July 15.

The session will include an introduction to meditation, relaxation exercises and mediation practice, as well as a question and answer period. All nationalities and religions are welcome to attend.

To get to the center from the Central Festival intersection, head south on the bypass road and take the first left at the sign to Wat Naka. Go past the temple about one kilometer and make a

U-turn when you see the park on your right.

Take the next left into a housing estate, and enter the third soi on the left. The meditation session will be held in the building just past a mansion.

For more information call 081-3704005, 089-6476424 or 087-2838185; Email: poolsuk@asianpremier.com or visit www.meditationthai.org

F&B Show dates set

PHUKET: The annual Phuket Food & Beverage Show this year will be at Central Festival Phuket from July 5 to 8.

The event, organized by the Food and Beverage Managers Club of Phuket for nearly the past 20 years, will include a number of competitions, including a cook-off.

There will also be competitions for vegetable and fruit carving, flower arrangement, table theme design contest on July 7

and an ice carving competition and the Phuket bartender contest on July 8.

Products and equipment for hotels, spas and restaurants will be exhibited at the event.

Activities on July 7 will be held from 1 pm to 5:30 pm and from 1 pm to an awards ceremony at 6:30 pm July 8.

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International school opens

A new international school has opened its doors on Samui and is preparing to relocate to a new location in September 2007. Bluewater International School hopes to take education to a higher level on an island that has been cursed with multiple closings and empty promises during years of rapid development.

A spokesperson from Bluewater said that new premises have been bought and that the school will be adhering to the National Curriculum for England & Wales while employing only experienced, fully qualified teachers.

School Director Jeremy Lees is keen to promote the learning institution and its teachers as an essential addition to the island for existing family residents as well the future of Samui.

"The island has been troubled by educational issues for many years, and this has been a potential deterrent to any investors or interested parties with children who may be looking to Samui as a possible home," said one island resident.

The island has had other international educational institutions, such as the UK-affiliated Dulwich International College, which began construction on Samui in 2005, and piloted a pre-nursery program.

The project ended without completion due to internal problems and the Dulwich College name was finally revoked.

With plans to accommodate students up to the age of 18, Bluewater school has the community hopeful that quality education will no longer be an issue.

The school will have a full extracurricular schedule, a range of sporting facilities, state-of-the-art design technology labs and a well-stocked library. Classes will be offered in English to students of all nationalities.

Applications are now being accepted for the September term.



FUTURE JOCKS? Children at Bluewater International School will start classes at the school's new premises in September. Hopes are high that Bluewater will add another string to Samui's bow in attracting families to be residents on the island.

Celebrity spots: There has been renewed optimism in Samui's real estate community and greater confidence among buyers with recent reports of the world's rich and famous investing in land and holiday homes on the island.

Rumors have circulated that sporting greats such as tennis number one Justine Hennin, retired England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, and David Beckham and his famous brood will be making Samui their island getaway.

It has been reported that Beckham likes the island so much that he is trying to persuade his football chums to join him. Whispers of Wayne Rooney resting his golden feet on the shores of the Gulf have also emerged.

"The island has real Thai

charm and beauty. It has Western amenities but has retained its authentic appeal of a beautiful island getaway," said Jim Harrow, a potential buyer of one of Samui's latest developments.

Political instability and continued controversy over illicit land deals have caused Samui's real estate boom to slow in recent months. Yet, interest seems to be picking up, possibly due to faith in the famous and their influence on the market.

Popular real estate broker Justin Freedom said, "It's not as bad as we expected it to be. People are buying and that is because well-priced properties sell and are selling."

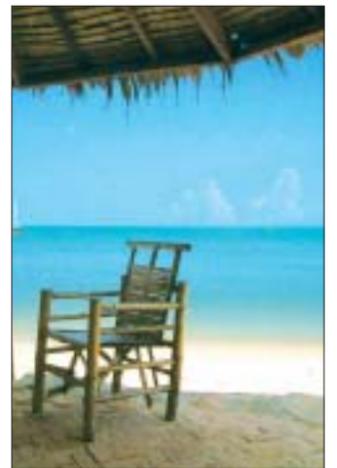
Things are not as they were but we expect them to get better. There is a lot of pent up demand

in these months before the elections."

The news has brought the island and its community a new sense of pride and it is hoped that the trend will in turn show the rest of the world that Thailand, and Koh Samui in particular, is still a property hotspot.

Asked what he thought of the new famous residents, Mr Harrow said, "I can't see that it will do any harm and maybe now the roads will get repaired."

Sick leave. A cruise ship that recently docked off Koh Samui



FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Max Rogers

was reportedly infected with a gastroenteritis virus. Eighty-eight passengers and four crew members, aged between three and 83 years old, came down with the highly infectious illness while aboard the *Superstar Gemini*.

The ship, which originated from Singapore with 1,106 passengers, was on a tour of Southeast Asia when people on board began falling ill.

The vessel's doctor reported that the illness had victims suffering from diarrhea, fever and vomiting, but no people were hospitalized.

Before arriving at its final destination in Hong Kong, the ship had visited Samui, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City and Danang in Vietnam.

The ship's medical team determined that all passengers were healthy upon arrival in Hong Kong. Exactly how they contracted the illness, which left many holidaymakers ill for the duration of the cruise, is still unknown.

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A two-term chairman of the Khao Khram Tambon Administration Organization (*Or-BorTor*) council in Krabi's Muang District was shot dead on the afternoon of June 29.

Police found the body of Haron Mukhura, 40, at Banghem restaurant lying next to a table where he had been sitting with friends.

One other man sitting at the table, Romahn Phaosophap, 55, was injured after being hit by a bullet in his right arm.

Police established that K. Haron had stopped at the restaurant in Tambon Khao Khram on the way back from a trip to Surat Thani. He was joined at the table by four friends, including the owner of the restaurant.

As the group was waiting for its food, two youths pulled up on a motorcycle and went to look at the curries on offer in the window, about three meters away from where K. Haron was sitting. One of the youths pulled out a pistol and shot K. Haron five times before the pair sped off on their motorcycle.

Col Somphop Kantasri, superintendent of Krabi Muang District Police, said he could not yet say what the motive of the killing was.

Police are now examining bullets removed from K. Haron's head to see if they can provide any clues as to who his killers were, Col Somphop added.

Lucky escape: A Korean tourist told police in Satun that on the night of June 28 a man armed with a knife had broken into her bungalow on Li Peh island and attempted to rape her before making his escape.

Police took a statement from Aum "Kate" Yian and sent her for tests at Satun Hospital.

The prime suspect in the case is a man who was recently released from prison for the rape and murder of a Krung Thai bank employee in 1986.



UP IN FLAMES: Korp Kul market, also known as Khlong Ngae market, burns in the early hours of June 26. More than 100 stalls at the more-than-40-year-old market were destroyed with damage estimated at more than 100 million baht. Police believe the fire may have been started deliberately and are searching for four youths seen driving motorbikes around the market shortly before the blaze started.

Councilman gunned down in Krabi

On being shown police file photos of the man, Aum Yian said she could not be sure he was her attacker as the photos were three years old and showed a clean-shaven man with short hair, while the man who attacked her had long hair and a beard.

Police said they would find further evidence before requesting an arrest warrant.

Deadly duel: A Nakhon Sri Thammarat policeman was shot dead while off-duty in a gun battle with unknown assailants on Nakhon Sri Thammarat-Pak Phanang Road on the morning of June 29.

Police led by Lt Col Kittichai Krainara, an investigating inspector from Bang Jahk Tambon Police Station, found the body of Sen Sgt Maj Surin Nutaphong in the driver's seat of his Mitsubishi G-Wagon.

A .357-caliber pistol was found next to the body with six 5.56-millimeter cartridge cases of the kind fired by M16 assault rifles. A short shotgun was also hidden in the car.

A passenger in the car at the time of the attack, Pathom Chaidech, 45, was also injured. He was taken to Maharaj Na-

khon Sri Thammarat Hospital by the *Kamnan* (sub-district chief) of Tambon Bang Jahk.

Police established from witnesses that as Sen Sgt Maj Surin was driving to Nakhon Sri Thammarat City, a white or metallic silver pickup truck pulled alongside his car and a man in the back of the truck opened fire with an assault rifle, believed to be an M16.

Sen Sgt Maj Surin returned fire with his own assault rifle but was shot and killed.

Col Kittichai said that from examining the pattern of bullet holes in Sen Sgt Maj Surin's car, police believe the gunman was a professional shooter. He added that as yet police have no solid leads as none of the four witnesses can remember the pickup's license plate number.

Col Kittichai said that the attack was likely connected to one of Sen Sgt Maj Surin's cases.

Sen Sgt Maj Surin had recently returned to the police force after being acquitted of murdering a member of Bang Sala *Or-BorTor* and his wife in June 2005.

Golden grab: Two armed men robbed a gold store in Haad Yai on June 28, making off with 100,000 baht in cash and about 50-bahtweight of gold jewelry valued at 600,000 baht.

Chachor Kuchakon, the owner of Tang Seng Heng gold shop in Haad Yai's Tambon Phatong, told police that she was alone in the shop when two men, one wearing a helmet and the other a cap, pulled up outside on a motorbike.

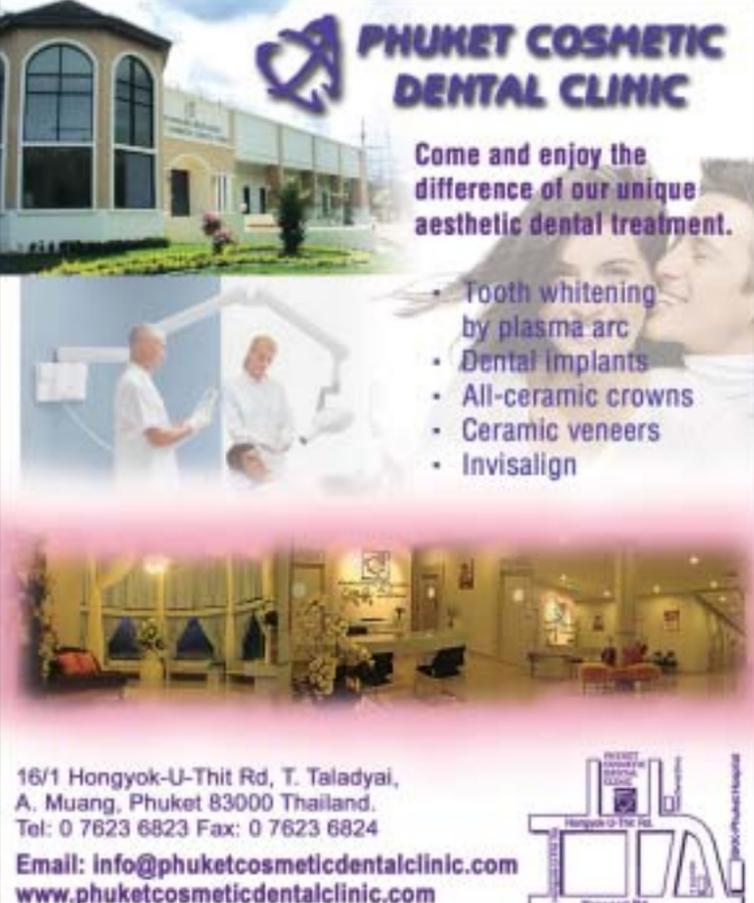
The men then walked into the shop and one of them pointed a shotgun at K. Chachor's chest.

The other man swiped gold from the shop's displays and then went behind the counter to get cash from the till while also acquiring the store owner's pistol.

The robbery lasted less than 10 minutes, she added.

Police deduced from closed-circuit television footage that the robbers drove a black Honda Nova Dash motorcycle, registration 5025 Songkhla.

Around the South news round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.



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Education spending 'being wasted'

The government's annual education budget of 300 billion baht and parents' total spending on tuition fees of about 900 billion baht each year are being wasted because they yield low-quality graduates, a top educator told a seminar on June 30.

Somkiat Pongpaiboon, chairman of the 40 Rajabhat Universities' Lecturers and Officials Council, cited results of Graduate Assessment Tests at the Prathom 6 and Mathayom 3 and 6 levels in which average scores were below 50% in all subjects tested.

At the university level, many schools were too focused on commercial gains and neglected to provide quality teaching. Likening such schools to "hungry tigers", K. Somkiat called for non-profit private organizations to be given state funding to compete with the state schools.

Dr Usanee Anuruthwong, president of Srinakharinwirot University's Center for the Gifted and Talented, said that understanding of brain development and learning process in children was not incorporated into the Thai education system, resulting in 99% of children being unhappy at school.

She called for more understanding of this aspect in drawing up a curriculum and an evaluation system based on children's potential and abilities, rather than on administrative considerations, as at present.

Manhunt for French gunman: A Thai woman and her Italian former husband were arrested on June 29 for planning the murder of a retired German policeman in Chon Buri's Bang Lamung District.

The woman, Rungnapa Sridet, 32, was also previously married to the victim, 63-year-old Heinrich Hermann Friedrich, who was gunned down in front of his house on June 25.

Rungnapa reportedly confessed to police shortly after the murder that she and her ex-husband Fernando Nardini, 49, allegedly had planned the murder for a French gunman and two Thai men to carry out.



UP IN SMOKE: Nearly three tonnes of narcotics worth more than 3.6 billion baht were burned by Thai authorities on June 26 to mark the UN's International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. Foreign diplomats were invited to witness the ceremony, Thailand's 35th, held at Ayudhya's Bang Pa-in industrial estate. The drugs included 833 kilograms of ya bah (methamphetamine), 59 kilograms of heroin, 20 kilograms of opium and 1.8 tonnes of marijuana.

The motive was reportedly Rungnapa's bid to take possession of a five-million-baht house that Friedrich had bought in her name. She had filed a lawsuit to take possession of the house following their separation two years ago.

Police are hunting for a Frenchman alleged to have acted as the gunman.

Nardini reportedly told police that he had planned the murder and offered a Frenchman identified only as Marc, a 53-year-old fugitive criminal, one million baht to carry it out.

Peewee ID: The Cabinet has asked the Interior Ministry to review its revised Identification Cards Act, which would require all Thai nationals over one year old to have an ID card.

The ministry was advised that any requirement for young children to obtain an ID card could conflict with other laws that require ID card-holders to carry the cards themselves. Young children would have to leave their cards with their parents, Cabinet members noted.

The revised Act stipulated

that Thais aged one-year and up should have ID cards, which would be valid until they were 10 years of age. It also proposed penalties for those revealing ID card information without the card holder's consent, of up to five years in jail and/or a 100,000-baht fine, except if it was needed by a court or deemed necessary by state agencies.

The Council of State, which scrutinized the legislation, agreed that the Act in its current form would be difficult to implement.

Save your breath: Motorists who refuse an alcohol breath test at road checks will be detained for "extensive questioning" and legally regarded as drunk once an amendment approved by Cabinet on June 26 takes effect.

Violators would have their licenses suspended for five years after court convictions, deputy government spokesperson Netpreeya Chumchaiyo said.

Under current regulations, motorists have to pay a fine of up to 1,000 baht if they refuse to undergo a breath test, a penalty considered light compared with those given for drunk-driv-

ing convictions if alcohol levels in their blood are over the legal limit.

The amendment has been proposed by the Justice Ministry to increase road safety, reduce human casualties and heavy medical costs caused by road accidents each year.

Protest warning over ironworks: Residents of Tambon Deelang in Lop Buri's Phattana Nikhom District have threatened to protest if a polluting ironworks factory is allowed to resume production.

The Namheng ironworks is seeking to restart work after a forced 60-day shutdown for maintenance of emission filters.

The Industrial Works Department ordered the factory

closed on June 14, following complaints from residents.

Sanom Potirat, a non-smoker, was diagnosed with emphysema. He blames iron dust emissions from the plant.

Although the factory covered his medical expenses, he said he would still join the other villagers in pushing the factory to prevent more emissions.

According to the Industrial Works Department's Lop Buri office, Namheng on June 29 gave notice of its intent to resume work.

However, Samphan Kositpol, that office's factory-division head, said the factory would not be allowed to resume work until proper dust-control measures were in place.

Flim-flam fuel: Consumers have been cautioned about filling up their tanks from vending machines after some customers were found to have received 10% less fuel than they paid for.

Songklod Ubolsing Deputy Director-General of the Commerce Ministry's Internal Trade Department, said the department's inspection team found many fuel-vending machines in Bangkok and nearby provinces to be substandard.

The random survey found that many of the machines dispensed less fuel than the customer had paid for.

About 5,000 vending machines have been installed at petrol stations nationwide.

The Internal Trade Department is drafting legislation to regulate the operation of fuel-vending machines.

The act will be ready next month.

Around the Nation news roundup is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Heavenly aspirations

By Janyaporn Morel

Work on the colossal Mingmongkol Buddha image, on a 400-meter hilltop in the Nakkerd range in Karon, is due to be completed by the end of 2008.

Already clearly visible across much of the southern end of the island, and even from the western shores of Koh Lone, the image will, upon completion, be the world's largest marble-covered Buddha image in the Pang Manvichai (meditating) posture, claim its creators.

Officially entitled "Phra Puttamingmongkol Akenakkiri", the image is being built with the cooperation of the Forestry Department, on whose land it sits, together with Wat Kitisangka-raam (Wat Kata) and the Mingmongkol Faith 45 Foundation, which has been soliciting contributions for its construction for years under the slogan, "Enhance your merit value in your mind".

People who have not visited the hilltop may not know that there are two images at the site. The first, also in the Pang Manvichai posture, was completed in early 2005 at a cost of 8.8 million baht. It is a 22-tonne bronze image of the Buddha covered in gold leaf, 5.5 meters wide at its base and reaching a height of 12.5m. HRH Princess Ubol Ratana Rajakanya attended a prayer and dedication ceremony for the image on February 11, 2005.

Despite its grandeur, that image will be dwarfed by the better-known, massive second Mingmongkol Buddha image, work on which is now focused on the head that reaches a height of 45m. Made of reinforced concrete and to be covered with white marble,



The Mingmongkol Buddha image is 45 meters high. Made of reinforced concrete which will be covered with white marble, the image is 24.5m across at the base, which features enormous lotus leaf motifs.

the image is 24.5m at its base, which is decorated with enormous concrete lotus leaves.

Suporn Vanitkul, who heads the project committee, said the

project is intended to conserve Buddhist art traditions and remind all those who see it to remember the teachings of the Buddha, helping them to be good people. Of paramount importance, he said, is that the image was built as a celebration of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 80th birthday, which will be December 5 this year.

K. Suporn said that all works of Buddhist art follow historical trends based on legends. The Pang Manvichai posture was chosen for the image because it was in this pose that the Buddha subdued Mara, the Buddhist

equivalent of Satan, the embodiment of Evil.

The Mingmongkol Buddha image will be covered with white marble because white represents purity, while the base is of lotus leaves which represent loving kindness.

"Through this Buddha image we want to convey the idea of purity and love to everyone in the world. The entire image is based on the *sattha* (faith) of the many people who contributed to the construction fund, including rich and poor, Thais and foreigners," K. Suporn said.

About 60 million baht in donations have been collected, but even this amount is not enough to complete the project, he said.

"We are fortunate to have received many donations of construction materials, including cement, iron and even 135 tonnes of white marble from Burma," he said.

Knowing that the Buddha image was built in honor of HM The King has made people happy to donate, he said.

"Buddhists believe that building Buddha images is a high form of attaining merit. The minds of those involved in its construction glow with happiness when they reflect upon this. As Buddhists believe in rebirth, we know that this will continue to benefit us not only in this carnation but in future lives," he added.

Finding someone capable of overseeing such an enormous construction is not easy, but in this sense the Faith 45 Foundation is fortunate to have the services of 60-year-old Prasit Lubliam of Nakhon Pathom, who has a lifetime of experience in Buddha image construction.

"K. Prasit is very good at scaling up from the models to the actual size. Although he is a highly experienced Buddha image builder, he still meditates daily in order to keep his mind free of distractions and focused on the construction," he added.

The image, which looks over Phuket City, will be surrounded by a "Buddha-Uththayan" garden covering 42 rai.

"It will be a serene place, appropriate for meditation. We have already planned many kinds of hardwood trees there and there will be public restroom facilities," K. Suporn said.

Devotees, tourists and other visitors will be able to enter what K. Suporn describes as a "museum" constructed inside the image itself, with a floor space of 436 square meters. This room will feature exhibits of the history behind the project with displays of the image under construction and some of the tools used in its construction.

"We will have some areas set aside for meditation in there, too," he added.

"I would like both Thai and foreign tourists to visit and experience our culture. From the park they will be able to pay respect to the Buddha image and enjoy impressive views of Phuket City.

"We hope that after visiting they will know that Thai people seek peace in the world. The image is a symbol of the peace and loving kindness which the Buddha used to overcome every form of vice and attain enlightenment," he concluded.

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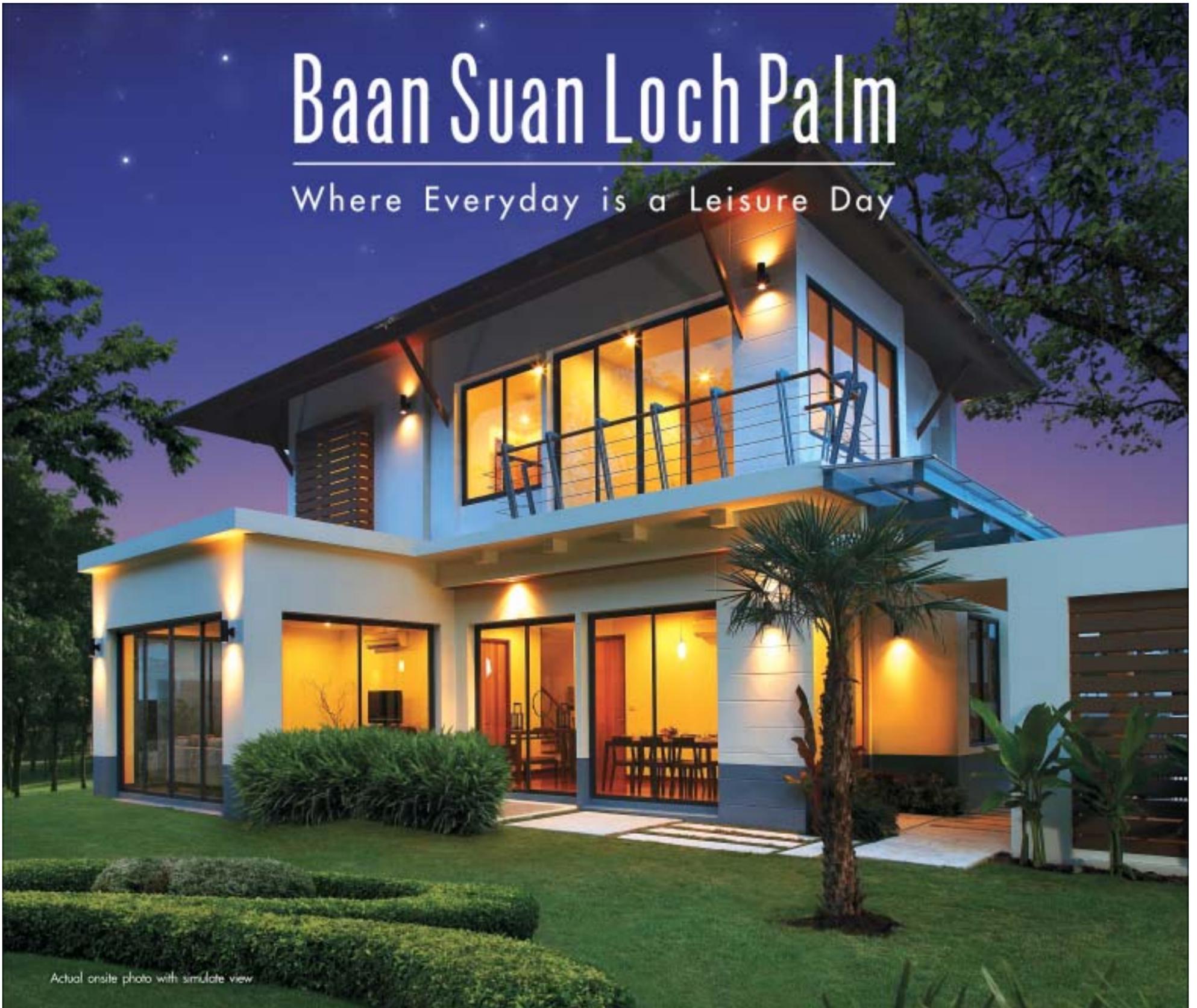
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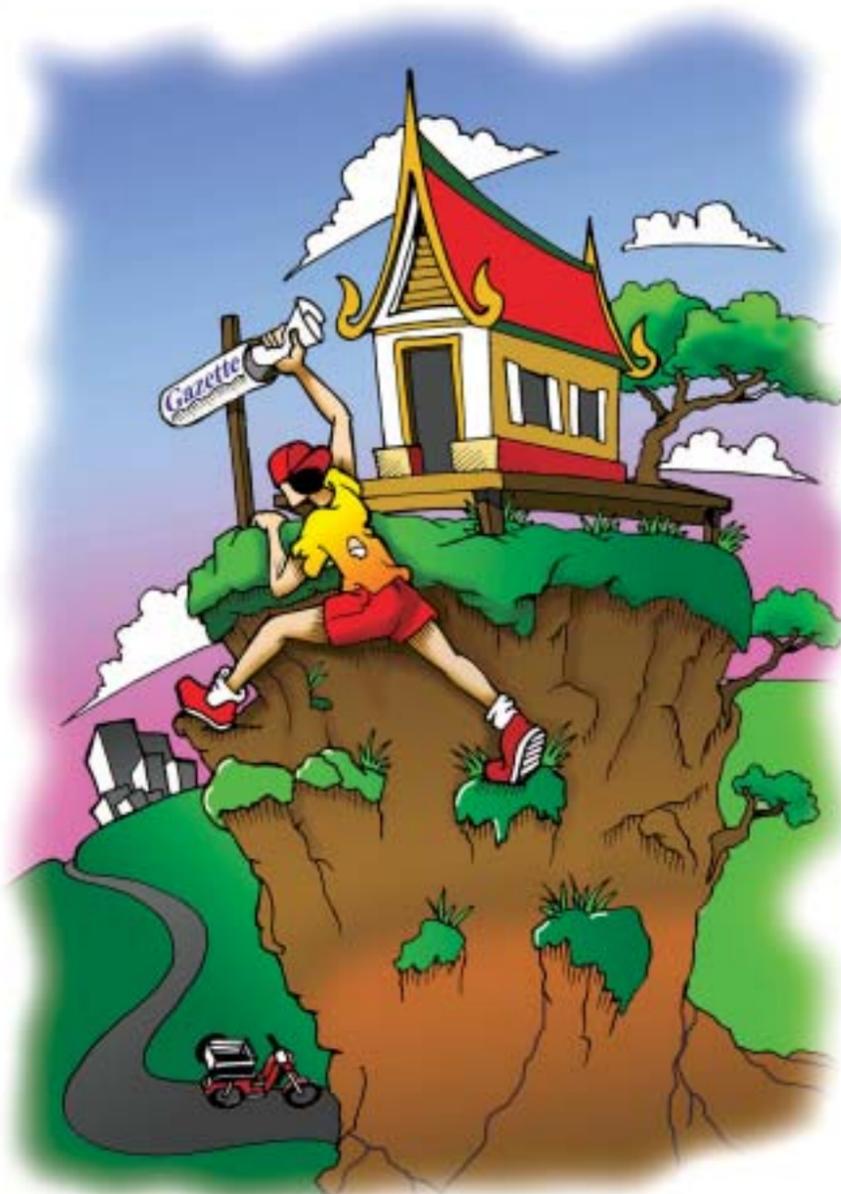


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High-end home cooking

I don't know how you feel, but I am tired of heading into a Thai restaurant with the thought of taking in a nice and spicy *pad prik gaeng*, a slightly creamy *tom kha* or a light and almost fluffy *pad Thai*, only to exit having faced bland, watery and greasy food.

So I was over the moon when a good friend mentioned Tawai Thai restaurant. It's in Cherng Talay, in the group of restaurants and shops that line the entrance to the Laguna complex. My friend had tried Tawai for lunch a few times and had good things to say about it, so I thought I'd join her one day and see for myself.

The restaurant itself is simple and plain, and dotted with various Thai artifacts from a wide range of times. Actually, it seemed like someone had spent the weekend at Chatuchak market and had randomly bought anything they set their eyes on, but it only added to the originality of the place. I was later to learn from K. Noi, the owner of Tawai, that it was a mixture of her family's belongings and items her husband had picked up over the years.

We sat at the table farthest from the serving area as they presented us with comfy double chairs, perfect for lounging and relaxing. A refreshing cool breeze was also on offer here as the shuttered windows were open on both sides of us, allowing natural air conditioning to keep us cool. By this time, the sound of the gentle wind rustling through the trees were all we could hear.

It all contributed to a feeling of stepping out of the hustle of Phuket, and even more so, a step back in time. It somehow reminded me of a trip to Laos many years ago when I got a hint of how Thailand once was, with its slow but careful approach to

life. I could feel myself relaxing and molding to the shape of the chair. But what of the food? Could it do the same and take me back to a time lost?

We started with cool iced tea, as it seemed to fit the occasion, and it was at this point that K. Noi arrived and introduced herself. Her timing was perfect as we were just about to order and needed to cut down our choices as there was too much I wanted to taste.

K. Noi is from the central Thailand and this explained some of the options on the menu as there were more than a few things I hadn't seen since my days in Bangkok, hence the difficult choice. One of those is a real favorite of mine, which I rarely have the chance to sample nowadays. It's *yam tua pu* (160 baht) or winged bean salad, and this was like no other I had tried before. K. Noi grinned with delight when I told her this almost as if she

knew this would be my reaction.

The reason, she explained, was that it was a special family recipe and that all the food in the restaurant was prepared by family members. By now, my grin matched hers as I almost burst in anticipation of what was to come.

She took time to explain how much attention she paid to the food and how important the preparation of each dish was central to her philosophy of food. All chili pastes were prepared by family members, and ingredients were sourced from all over Thailand, although fish and vegetables were supplied locally.

The *yam tua pu* was one of our main dishes, but in true Thai style there was little separation between courses. I've always likened eating Thai food to be like sampling from an artist's palette and the combination of tastes is definitely the best way to eat it.



Tawai is set in a garden in the Tinlay area of Cherng Talay

We had started with prawn cakes (*tod man kung* at 180 baht) and another preference of mine, *gai hor bai toey* (140 baht) or chicken wrapped in pandanus leaf. Both were excellent, with large chunks of prawn visible in the cakes, which were crispy to

bite, but soft as velvet to eat, and the juicy chicken gently flavored by the pandanus leaf.

A nice touch was the presentation of the rice. It was served in an interesting little rice pot the likes of which I had never seen before, and it served to keep the rice nice, warm and fresh throughout the meal.

As the pastes were made on the premises, we opted for a local curry with shrimp-panaeng kung. Although not a

dish from K. Noi's home region, the homemade touch gave it a familiar flavor, along with something a little special. The sauce was thick and creamy and had a touch of spice that grew the more you ate. Isn't it amazing how addictive a bit of chili can be?

K. Noi also insisted we have some fish and she suggested *pla pad cha* (190 baht) as it used Thai herbs that apparently assisted the digestive process. This was probably a good idea in light of all the food we were consuming.

The pleasing thing was that the staff at Tawai seemed as knowledgeable about the food as K. Noi, and she told us that she looked after her staff well, as they were good and she didn't want to lose them.

Unfortunately we didn't have a chance to sample some Thai desserts, again homemade, but K. Noi insisted I return as they were worth the effort.

Return? I said, I don't think I'm leaving. Return I will, though, as even without the ambiance, the food filled a void my stomach had been seeking to fill.

Tawai Thai Restaurant, beside BB's Pub (across from Toto's) at Tinlay Place, Cherng Talay. Open daily from 10 am to 11 am. Tel: 076-325381, 081-7875354. Email: toto@phuket.ksc.co.th

On the menu WITH Gareth Marshall

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LIVING IN QUIET

Phra Nicholas Thanissaro, 41, is not your typical monk. Born in London and a graduate of the University of Manchester, the highly articulate Englishman has devoted his life to teaching others the benefits of meditation. Fluent in Thai, he spent nine years in training before being ordained at Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Pathum Thani.

Although he currently spends about 70% of his time at the Dhammakaya Center for Buddhist meditation in Surrey, England, he was recently in Phuket to give meditation and ethics training to students at British International School.

While here, he also held a meditation session in English at the Wang Gung Phuket Kalyanamitta Center, behind Suan Luang Park. Among the handful of interested foreigners who attended was *Gazette* News Editor **Stephen Fein**.



Stephen Fein: What are your views on the Jatukham Ramathep amulets craze that is going on nowadays?

the ritual involved reminded me more of the Catholicism I grew up with.

Phra Nicholas: Well, it's an amulet which seems to be popular with a lot of people. But what is ironic is that it is not an amulet of a Buddha, but of some Hindu deity or god of some sort – I don't know which one – but it seems to have caught on with a lot of Buddhists who seem to prize them.

Phra Nicholas: Hopefully without sounding partisan, there seems to have been a downturn in peoples' true understanding of what it actually means to be Buddhist.

SF: But they are being made and distributed by Buddhist monks...

Many people have become so removed from what Buddhist practice actually means that there is nothing much left but a superstitious clinging to certain aspects of it. I think that this Jatukham Ramathep craze is just one symptom of that, but there are many other aspects too.

Phra Nicholas: Yes, that confuses me. Normally Buddhist monks wouldn't be involved in making things that obviously have nothing to do with Buddhism.

The weakness of Buddhism comes when people think they are Buddhist automatically, without practicing anymore. The main practices of Buddhism are generosity, keeping the five precepts and meditation. You become a proper Buddhist by practicing. But if you are a Buddhist in name only and your whole religious awareness is just superstitions, then you are really only a minimal Buddhist.

SF: Before I moved to Thailand I took a university course in Buddhism and I found it fascinating. When I moved to Thailand I thought I was coming to a place where people would be meditating a lot, but when I arrived all

But if you look in the right places, you can find a lot of Buddhist scholars in Thailand – a lot more than in many other countries. But often the face of Buddhism you tend to come across in Thailand – your default face of Buddhism in Thailand – is not a scholarly one. It's one of superstitions, for the most part.

You can see beyond that if you know what you are looking for, but many people don't know what they are looking for anymore.

SF: Is the Dhammakaya Foundation part of the mainstream Buddhist Church in Thailand?

Phra Nicholas: It's a movement within mainstream Buddhism to encourage people to get back to

basics – especially meditation and teaching young people the actual teachings of Buddhism. Within Theravada Buddhism in Thailand there are two schools, Mahanikaya and Dhammayuthika, and we are in the Mahanikaya school.

SF: How long did it take you to become ordained?

Phra Nicholas: I lived in the main Dhammakaya temple in Pathum Thani for nine years before I was allowed to become a monk. The policy of the temple is that they like to make sure that the people who they ordain are sure that this is the life for them, rather than making a mess of being a monk. So there is a "probation period", which in my case took nine years. I have been a monk now for 10 years.

SF: How many hours a day do you meditate?

Phra Nicholas: Normally two

hours per day, one hour in the morning and one in the evening.

SF: Usually when I interview people I ask whether the person has any hobbies. Do you have any hobbies, or things you do that aren't really connected with being a monk?

Phra Nicholas: Excuse me? (feigns slight surprise at the question) No, no that's my life, I'm afraid. But I do a lot of traveling. I've been to about 40 countries by now, various things connected with Buddhism... most recently India and Indonesia. There seems to be a demand for meditation teaching in English.

SF: Is it uncommon to be a farang monk in Thailand? Have you ever had any bad experiences or conflicts?

Phra Nicholas: As a Western monk, you are an oddity wherever you go. If you go to the West,

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CONTEMPLATION



ABOVE: The type of meditation taught by Phra Nicholas involves imagining one's body as a hollow vessel with a spherical object at its center. Introductory sessions last 20 minutes.

LEFT: A handful of foreigners were among those who made their way to the Wang Gung Phuket Kalyanamitta Center on June 17 to learn more about meditation.

you are an oddity because you are a monk. If you come to the East, you are an oddity, not because you are a monk, but because you are a Western monk. But, in general, I find that it attracts people to ask more about Buddhism, so I think it's a positive thing. I have never felt disadvantaged by being a Western monk.

SF: As someone in the media, I wonder what you think about media coverage of scandals involving monks? What do you think the media's role should be?

Phra Nicholas: Well, such stories may have some truth in them because there are a lot of monks and in any population, if you have enough people, you are always going to find some bad charac-

ters in there.

People tend to overreact when monks get bad press and I think the media needs to have a responsible outlook on the way they report – or maybe decide not to report – incidents concerning behavior of monks. Even if a small minority behaves badly, it tends to undermine the whole livelihood of 99.999% of monks who practice well, help the community and are altruistic... It's a double-edged sword because while the press should be helping to stamp out bad behavior, it makes life difficult for the rest who are behav-

ing well.

One likes to report reality, but there is another side that maybe you should know about. I think the gutter press in Thailand may be framing monks to get stories. It is very easy to get a picture of a monk which he maybe didn't intend and then run another headline under it.

Around 1996 and 1997 there seemed to be stories every day of this nature, as if there was a gang of people going around drugging monks, getting a scantily-clad woman to sit on the bed with them, taking a picture and

saying "This is reality".

SF: What did you do before you came to Thailand and began studying Buddhism?

Phra Nicholas: I was 23 and I graduated as a teacher, but I never worked as a teacher. I came out here. If I hadn't succeeded I would probably be an English teacher somewhere by now.

I came here as a result of having met a Thai monk studying in England. At that time I was secretary of the Buddhist society of my university and he suggested I spend some time in a temple in Thailand.

SF: You go by your monk name now. What was your given name, and does it matter anymore?

Phra Nicholas: I changed it to my monk's name in my passport.

SF: When you were growing up was your family religious?

Phra Nicholas: I was baptized as an Anglican, I think. I have a certificate somewhere [smiles]. My parents were not really enthusiastic churchgoers, but my grandparents were. Even they are happy that I am a monk now.

SF: How were they about it at first?

Phra Nicholas: They were disappointed that I didn't become a Christian monk. Later they found out that Buddhist monks are okay

after all – and that in fact they are very peace-loving, and so on.

My 85-year-old grandmother says it's good and she boasts about it to all her neighbors... My parents came out at one stage to make sure that I hadn't been brainwashed, and they went back satisfied.

They couldn't get their heads around the idea that I had become so interested in Buddhism all of a sudden. But for me it wasn't that sudden, as I had been studying it for 10 years.

Phra Nicholas' last meditation session in Phuket will be at Wang Gung Phuket Kalyanamitta Center, behind Suan Luang Park, on July 22 starting at 1:30 pm. However, the sessions will continue, on the third Sunday of each month, with instruction by English-speaking Thai monks.

To get to the center from the Central Festival intersection, head south on the bypass road and take the first left at the sign to Wat Naka. Go past the temple about one kilometer and make a U-turn when you see the park on your right.

Take the next left into a housing estate and enter the third soi on the left. The meditation session will be held in the building just past the mansion.

For more information about the sessions call 081-3704005; 089-6476424 or 087-2838185, or email: tatphuket@tat.or.th or poolsuk@asianpremier.com

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This week



THANK YOU: Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima (center) and Sriwalee Co Ltd Managing Director Paiboon Upatising (3rd from left) join Boon Rawd Trading Co Ltd Director Palit Bhirombhakdee (3rd from right) and actress Naowarat Yuktanant (2nd from right) at a thank you party for Leo Beer agencies in Phuket.



SING IT LOUD: Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort Hotel Manager Hratch Katchanian (back, in white shirt) celebrates the No Moon Party in the hotel's Le Patong pub and karaoke with management staff and trainees.



RESPECTFUL RASCALS: Kids at Kajonkietsuksa School line up to give garlands and flowers to their teachers during Wai Kru (Respect the Teacher) ceremonies.



HELPING OUT: Big smiles all around as Jumeirah Phuket Private Island Resort/TGR Group Managing Director for Asia Dilokpol Sundaravej (2nd from right) hands a check for 1 million baht to Phuket International Womens Club (PIWC) President Cindy Ratcliffe (5th from left) to help fund this year's Gala Ball on November 24. The ball raises funds for the PIWC scholarship fund that this year provided assistance to 250 students from elementary to university level.



WHAT GOES AROUND: Laguna Rotary Club members pose after completing the five-kilometer Charity Walk at the Laguna Phuket International Marathon.



DIGGING IN: Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima joins Campbell Kane Thailand Ltd Managing Director Ian Henry and volunteers in planting one of 200 mangrove trees during a Mangrove Planting Ceremony sponsored by The Yamu company.

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Volvo's latest S40 inherits a distinct family appearance from the top-of-the-range S80. "The new, lower and more horizontal appearance radiates power," said Steve Harper, the man responsible for the design of the new S40.

"This impression is reinforced when the car is viewed from the side. At the rear, it is the shape of the new tail lamps and a new bumper that further boost its dynamic appearance."

When the outgoing S40 and its sibling the V40 were introduced in 2003, Volvo had its sights firmly set on a younger generation of motorists who had sporting aspirations but who needed the space and refinement of a sedan.

Space is something the 2008 S40 has in abundance, thanks to zealous scrutiny of the interior design. "The criticism of the current model's limited storage space served as high-octane fuel when the time came to sketch the new interior of the S40," said Harper. "We weren't entirely satisfied until we felt we had exploited every single available cubic centimeter in an efficient way."

The team concentrated its efforts on two areas: the doors and the center stack. The entire lower part of the front door interior panels was redesigned and even the audio speakers were reshaped to free up space for a larger storage compartment with enough room for an A4 format

Reinventing space, seriously



By Jeff Heselwood

book, an upright soft drink can or a bottle of water on its side.

The center console is available in new décor versions, such as the Nordic light oak, real wood inlay, while the storage space between the seats has been refined and even the handbrake has been redesigned to free up more space. The sliding cover over the larger storage area also contains two cup holders.

"We've even utilized the small spaces that are usually covered over when they are not housing controls for options or accessories. Now instead, the space has been converted into a handy compartment, for instance for a mobile phone," explained Harper. "After all, you should not be using your phone while driving, anyway," he added.

Engine sizes vary from 1.6 to 2.4 liters for gasoline models, or there are three diesel motors



SPORTS, SPACE AND TASTE: The new range of S40s offer more space and improved performance, and more buyers in the US are choosing the new models to represent a sense of style.

to choose from. It is not yet clear which models Thailand will receive, but the Kingdom is unlikely to get the top-of-the-range turbocharged S40. And nor should we: Thailand's roads do not match the safety and regulation of European highways.

Power outputs vary between 100bhp (74kW) and 179 bhp for the normally-aspirated gas engines, and up to 180bhp for the diesels.

It would be futile to list performance aspects of the various models here. Suffice to say that acceleration is brisk and top speeds are more than adequate. Volvo conducted a market

survey in the US showing that the proportion of S40 buyers under the age of 35 has increased from 23% to 45%, indicating that it is attracting a younger generation of owners. In addition, the survey showed that the proportion of single owners has risen from 30% to 40%.

Volvo's president and CEO Fredrik Arp said, "The reasons for choosing the S40 are much more emotional than before. Today's buyers speak enthusiastically of its sporty design and driving pleasure. We are also increasingly winning the image and prestige match against our toughest competitors."

Volvo's global sales target for the S40 is 75,000 cars a year. "The S40 and new V50 not only account for one-third of our sales volume in 2007," said Arp, "but they also play an important role in reinforcing the Volvo brand."

The 2008 Volvo S40 is yet to find its way to Asia and consequently prices are yet to be revealed.

Keep an eye on the website www.volvocars.co.th (Thai language only) for news of its arrival. It promises to be a seriously good motor car.

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netvigat.com



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THE POSSESSION THAT WARDS OFF POSSESSION

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

The legend goes that a Japanese man was driving his car one day when he ran over and killed a pedestrian.

After this terrible accident he was haunted by the spirit of the man he had killed. Whenever he was out on the road the spirit would be there: sometimes running after the car, sometimes sunning himself on the bonnet, or, worst of all, sometimes sitting in the front passenger seat.

The man was so distraught that his friends started to worry that he had gone insane.

He became so fearful that he walked everywhere or used public transport, leaving his shiny Honda in a nearby parking lot. Where the car was, the spirit was.

A few weeks later, the man was approached by an old friend who had an idea that could get his exasperated buddy back behind the wheel.

The old friend gave the man a Hello Kitty doll and told him to hang it off the rear bumper of his car to ward off the spirit of the unfortunate pedestrian.

Reluctantly, the man placed the doll as instructed, got into his car, and slowly drove around the block a few times.

He couldn't believe it: the spirit was nowhere to be seen.

Word soon spread and other drivers, fearful of being chased by angry ghosts, followed the man's example until hundreds of these pendant dolls could be seen on the roads of Japan.

As with all Japanese fads,



This fierce dog guards his owner's car from any spirits chasing her down the road.



Not all dolls need to scare the ghosts away, this pretty pink doll does the trick just as well.



This monkey, dangling under the back bumper of a car in Phuket City, has been catching a ride for a few months now.

the idea has trickled down to Thailand.

Next time you're on the road, take a look at the car in

front of you. Fresh from Japan, pendant dolls are the latest craze to take Phuket by storm, but are the island's drivers really scared of car-chasing spirits, or is a pendant doll this season's must-have accessory?

The rules are simple: hang the doll off the back bumper of your car for 49 days to ward off unwelcome spirits. If the doll comes off, you must buy a new one and start the count again.

When *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift* opened last year, people noticed these pen-

dant dolls hanging from the rear bumpers of some of the souped-up vehicles on the screen. Once the movie hit Thailand's cinemas the craze caught on.

Naruemon Petsuwan, 23, a secretary for AIA insurance company, said, "I first saw pendant dolls on a TV program and I thought they looked funny."

"I learned that this trend came from Japan and I heard that some people really believe there are spirits that follow cars."

"I don't disrespect this belief, but I don't believe it myself. I

bought a pink Piglet doll because pink's my favorite color. I love the pig! I got it from Expo for 39 baht and I've had it for about a month."

Northern fans of the craze have been in disarray since authorities in Chiang Mai banned pendant dolls.

"I think it would be better if officers banned modified cars with their loud stereotypes on the road rather than pendant dolls."

"Sometimes people look at the back of my car and it makes them smile," K. Naruemon said.

Suppakorn Sae-Tung, 19, owner of a modified pickup truck, said, "I've hung a bee from my rear bumper for about four months."

"It's a bit of a paradox looking at the style of my car. I heard about people's beliefs in Japan, but my reason for having a doll is watching *Tokyo Drift* and seeing how popular it became. I want to be up with the latest trends."

Though they may look odd at first, a pendant doll is an interesting way to add a unique touch to your car. But spare a thought for the Japanese man who still has nightmares about the spirit who could only be deterred by the powers of Hello Kitty.

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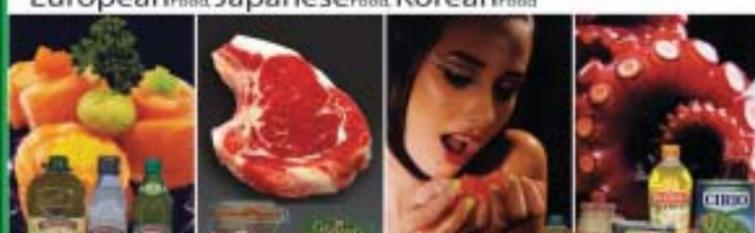


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By Matt Crook
(who has long, flowing locks)

SHINING EXAMPLES

Walking around Patong Beach during the day you should not forget your sunglasses. Sure, the bright sun and brighter smiles of the massage parlor girls are enough to warrant some UV protection, but the alarming number of bald men around, with their glinting, shiny pates, mandates that eye protection be worn at all times.

Some of these chrome domes even profess to have chosen this hairstyle without any helpful hints from Mother Nature, and they have grabbed the bull by the horns, the razor by the handle and sheared their fur right off. Others are still struggling to come to terms with the hand dealt to them by the hair gods.

Have you ever wondered what goes on inside the mind underneath that pate, or pondered how to take care of an exposed crown? What's the secret to a shiny scalp? We found some hairless wonders on the beachfront willing to confess all.

Sup, 36, is a watch seller at Patong Beach. Although he isn't completely bald, he has the remainder of his hair cropped as short as possible. His brown dome looks like melted chocolate and reflects the sun so much that it could be used as a beacon to send messages from the beach.

"I just wash my head with water and shampoo," said Sup. "I've had my hair like this for four or five months. I might grow it back some time but I'm happy this way. If it's hot - no problem!"

John Diamant, 58, is a sturdy Dutchman on the last legs of his holiday touring Thailand. "I'm leaving tomorrow," he said, with a tear in his eye. His large head is almost perfectly spherical. "I just put sunscreen on it every day.

"When I wash it I use soap and water and sometimes some cream. My hair was always short and I finished it off 20 years ago. It feels good and easy and I'm happy with my look," said the veteran baldy.

Daniel Imms, 28, from Australia, is a man who faced baldness from an early age. At 21 he started noticing his hair wasn't quite as thick as it should be, and so he chose a cleaner look. "It makes it hard to have a hairstyle, but to be honest, I'd rather look like this than Krusty the Clown. It's pretty low maintenance."

So there you have it. None of our specimens used special treatments on their receding hairlines, and each man said that a hair transplant was an unnecessary luxury. Whether or not the rest of Phuket agree with them remains to be seen, but for these fine gents bald is better.

So what tact should you take when creeping bald spots begin to appear? There are several roads toward baldness, some more effective than others:

The comb-over: There comes a time when most would face up to their inevitable baldness, but the

comb-overs still cling on to those few final strands of hope by covering a bald spot with extra long hair from another area.

The struggling baldy: Spare a thought for those who are caught somewhere between having a full head of hair and being bald. These fine specimens are not yet ready to reject their locks, but they aren't afraid to show off their increasing baldness either.

The people's baldy: Here are men who have done the sensible thing and embraced their balding by removing all signs of hair growth. Hair loss can be a traumatic experience, but the blow can be lessened by using it to your advantage. Just think how many pretty girls will ask, "Can I touch your head?"

The real life baldy: Let us not forget the men for whom hair has not presented itself in any shape or form. These egg heads will never know what it's like to have long, golden locks for they have been dealt a hairless existence by the man upstairs.

Some men struggle to face life without hair. The downward spiral of despair brought on by the thinning of the mane is not something to be scoffed at. But all is not lost for those not yet prepared to face life without locks, as Dr Piyapas Pichaichanarong at Bangkok Hospital Phuket explained.

"Many male patients at the moment are requesting hair



WASSUP? Patong watch seller Sup loves his hairstyle, but does the clean look suit everybody?

transplants," he said. "I'm seeing increasing demand for it in Phuket. While the process itself is not too laborious, it needs a highly skilled team to perform it because it's quite a complicated procedure.

"The cost in Thailand is much lower than in the US, and I would say that within 12 months we will be able to perform it here in Phuket."

A hair transplant is a painless procedure that can be com-

pleted in a handful of sessions, depending on how much hair a patient is missing. A patch of hair is required for the initial graft which means that if you're completely bald you're out of luck. Those interested in a hair transplant will need to undergo anything from 500 to more than 4,000 grafts over several sessions. The cost of treatments should be between 80 and 150 baht per graft, according to Dr Piyapas, compared with between US\$ 3 and

US\$ 7 (96 and 224 baht) in the US.

Boots pharmacy in Patong has a number of hair care products aimed at both men and women suffering from baldness. First up in the hair loss solutions range is a Vitamin Boost Masque at 199 baht. It comes in a small jar and looks like hair gel.

In the same range are Nourishing Scalp Serum and Nourishing Root Tonic (both 199 baht). If you fancy a bit of a splurge then maybe a set of 30 vitamin tablets that promises to "increase hair growth" is for you.

The effectiveness of any of these products could not be immediately verified by the pharmacist, but readers should be aware that there is no miracle cure for hair loss.

Is bald sexy? This is the question at the back of every baldy's mind. Will women still find me attractive if all my hair falls out? The good news is that some will, but as with most things in life, not all females are tempted by a bald cranium. We took to the streets of Patong to find out what girls think of guys with less on top.

Mol, 40, said, "I think that men with no hair look warm and friendly. It makes me think that they are not just interested in sex but would be good for talking to. I like to look at young men and touch their heads. If I get married to a guy with hair then I think I would make him shave it off."

Pow, 35, agreed. "I think it makes a man look smart and handsome, as well as clean and presentable, if he doesn't have hair. Old men with no hair look like leaders," she said.

But not all women can be expected to interpret the Morse code of reflections off the skull for a heart-warming love song. Neung, 24, said, "I like men who have hair. If a man has hair then he looks smarter than someone who is bald. I don't think I could ever go out with a young man who has no hair."

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I couldn't bear it any longer: the agony, the anguish, the torment. If you've ever suffered from migraines then you'll know how I felt. I was driving to a new spa at the Royal Phuket Marina on a mission to find relief and Melinda Briend-Marchal, The Pearl Beauty and Spa's managing partner, was to be my savior.

At my wit's end, I arrived at the spa and immediately sank into a white leather sofa while the spa's receptionist plied me with hot tea. Melinda joined me and told me a little about her background.

"I am a physiotherapist and chiropractor. I trained in France and I used to work in the Four Seasons Hotel Georges V in Paris as a therapist. I then moved to St. Barthelemy Island in the Caribbean and worked for two years in a spa. When I came to Thailand I joined my three French partners and we decided to open a spa here," said Melinda.

I was finding this fascinating and forced a smile, but the pounding in my head was relentless. Melinda told me that the spa, open since mid-February, is based on a concept of three ideas: the design, which is unique for Thailand, the training of the staff and the medical treatment offered.

She continued, "We want to do something different from other spas here: something trendier and yet more casual. We contacted a Thai interior design company and they did a very good job."

Melinda explained that though she trains all of the spa

Escaping from the misery of migraine

Melinda Briend-Marchal: Trained physiotherapist and chiropractor with magic hands.



staff in medical treatments to ensure that the spa offers the highest quality service, many customers request treatment directly from her. I started to feel faint. All this talk of medical treatment was like dangling a carrot in front of a donkey. I could almost grab it, but found some solace in another cup of hot tea.

My poor head! I thought it might explode. I was itching to get into one of the spa's four rooms. There's a room for Thai massage, two for scrubs, aroma-

therapy and facial treatments, and one with a whirlpool bath for a couple or people who want to have treatments together. I noticed there wasn't a headache

room, but I was still hopeful that one of the three therapists would be able to help me out.

I was given a copy of the spa menu and read about the four

different types of treatment: Cure, Pleasure, Beauty and Health, with prices from 650 baht for a head and shoulder massage to 2,800 baht for facial treatments. I noticed a beauty salon service where customers can get pedicure, manicure and waxing treatments. Though the prices were reasonable, starting at 100 baht for nail polish, this was no time to be thinking of self-indulgence.

My mood picked up a little when Melinda mentioned chocolate body treatment. Now that I could go for. Apparently it helps the skin detoxify and moisturize, but who cares what it does when you're covered in chocolate?

It got to the crunch: I called on the human fondue treatment and asked Melinda what she rec-

ommended to help with my migraine. She suggested aromatherapy with the warm scent of vanilla to help me relax before her own medical treatment method.

Great idea, I thought, and off I went with therapist Supaporn "Nang" Khanthong to a white room. I undressed and clambered onto the bed, sprawled out on my stomach, and peered through a hole at fish darting back and forth in a glass bowl under the bed.

K. Nang started to massage my back, dousing me in vanilla scented massage oil. She dug into my spine and shoulders, forcing the muscles to relax. Her hands worked on my arms and legs, and then, as the soothing music and sweet scent in the air made me feel like I was dreaming, I flipped over onto my back for her to massage my front.

An hour breezed by and the massage came to an end. The fate of my headache now hung in the balance as Melinda joined me to give the final part of my treatment. Her strong fingers softly massaged my forehead, temples and neck. I could feel the pain and tension flowing from my body. This lady really does have magic hands, I thought to myself.

As I slipped in and out of fluttering daydreams, Melinda told me, "You can't treat migraines too much. There are many sensitive parts of the head and you need to get the blood circulating again. I don't perform strong movements like a chiropractor does, but rather, I use a soft touch so I don't hurt people and they feel more relaxed."

And so my day at the spa came to an end and I gave myself a reassessment. Relaxed? Yes. Refreshed? Of course. Headache? All gone, thanks to the soft touch of Melinda. I

thanked Melinda for the wonderful treatments I had received and bounced out of the door, ready to take on the world again.

The Pearl Beauty and Spa at The Royal Phuket Marina. Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 8 pm. Tel: 076-360888. Email: info@thepearlbeautyspa.com Website: www.thepearlbeautyspa.com

Spa MAGIC



By Janyaporn Morel

Pearl Beauty & Spa

The Department of Lands in cooperation with the Phuket Real Estate Club, Association of Phuket Property Agents and Delice Thai have set up a forum "Problems and Solutions for Real Estate in Phuket" on July 14, 2007 in the Hay Nakha Room of the Royal Phuket City Hotel.

We have invited guest speakers in the real estate and related fields to discuss the current situation of real estate in Phuket.

Speakers:

Mr. Thawan Thimasarn
Director of Subdivision of the Bureau of Standard Land Document Issuance

First Lieutenant Phummasak Hongsyok
President of the Phuket Real Estate Club

Mr. Eric Tomlin
Secretary to the Association of Phuket Property Agents

Mr. John F. Magee
Publisher of the Phuket Gazette

FAQ:

What is the future of Phuket?
Can foreigners own land and property?
Freehold or Leasehold?

FREE! for members and all who are interested.
This forum will be held in both Thai and English (translated by a moderator).

Phuket Gazette

For more details, please contact:
info@phuket-realestateclub.com, www.phuket-realestateclub.com
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Chillin' with Zero Cool

How or why Zero Cool got his nickname is lost in the annals of history, but a somewhat fluid mystique is part and parcel of Malé, so who better to show you round the capital of a country that's 99.9% water?

So laid-back, it was a wonder he could stand upright. Zero Cool meandered over shortly after I had disembarked at Jetty One, mildly culture shocked at being teleported from the blissful sun, sand and solitude of the Anantara Resort to the biggest metropolis within 500 miles.

Instead of the scary, extrovert persona bubbling with facts and figures adopted by tour guides the world over, Zero Cool managed to convey, without saying it in quite so many words, that he happened to be wandering about and if I wanted to tag along too then he had no real objection.

Endlessly informative when asked a question, for the rest of the time he retired behind his reflector shades, comfortably ignoring the buzzing of his mobile phone, a Maldivian boulevardier to the manner born.

Malé is less than two kilometers square, two meters above sea level, home to 80,000 souls and refreshingly devoid of must-sees. Rather, the island must be viewed as a whole, floating like Lemuel Gulliver's Leputa in the Maldivian archipelago.

As we strolled its byways and *goalhi* (short, narrow lanes) nobody gawked, nobody hassled, nobody catcalled and city life simply unfurled much as it must have done when Marco Polo or Ibn Battutah passed by, give or take a few score motor scooters.

Zero Cool did manage to rouse himself enough to indicate the strict injunction against taking photographs of the National Security Services Head-

quarters, which we passed hurriedly on the way to the Grand Friday Mosque. We entered shoeless to gaze at its marbled halls.

Across the street, the Sultan's Park is one of the few green spaces in Malé, shrouded by centuries-old rain trees and containing the National Museum. Normally such institutions bristle with high-tech interpretation, audio-visual whatnots and diversionary souvenir shops, but here the expo was contained in three musty stories, the last remnant of the long-deposed sultan's palace.

Just as interesting as the one-time ruler's cooking utensils and the collection of pre-Islamic carvings dug up by Thor Heyerdahl were the curators, who fairly skittered with glee at the prospect of having their photo taken, and chattered merrily if not entirely accurately about the artifacts on display.

A piece of living history stood just a few hundred meters away in the form of the fish market. The boats, glorious Technicolor affairs with sweeping prows, docked across the road, and sailfish and tuna were humped by the hundreds onto the market floor. No ice, no refrigeration, simply a huddle of buyers who scooped up the catch and bore it off to be eaten that day.

Zero Cool receded into the background after lunch, so I was left to wander Malé without his wraith-like presence, marveling at its other-worldliness and the picaresque names people chose for their houses: Starling, Banana Cabin and Aston Villa.

Overcrowding is the greatest problem here and the government is busily constructing a new city on the nearby atoll called Hulhumalé. I'm sure it's going to be a miracle of modern town planning; but will it embrace the charm that Malé has in spades? Damn progress!

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters



A fisherman unloads his catch at Malé atoll, one of Maldives' many coral formations.



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Puzzles

The Cryptic Crossword

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?

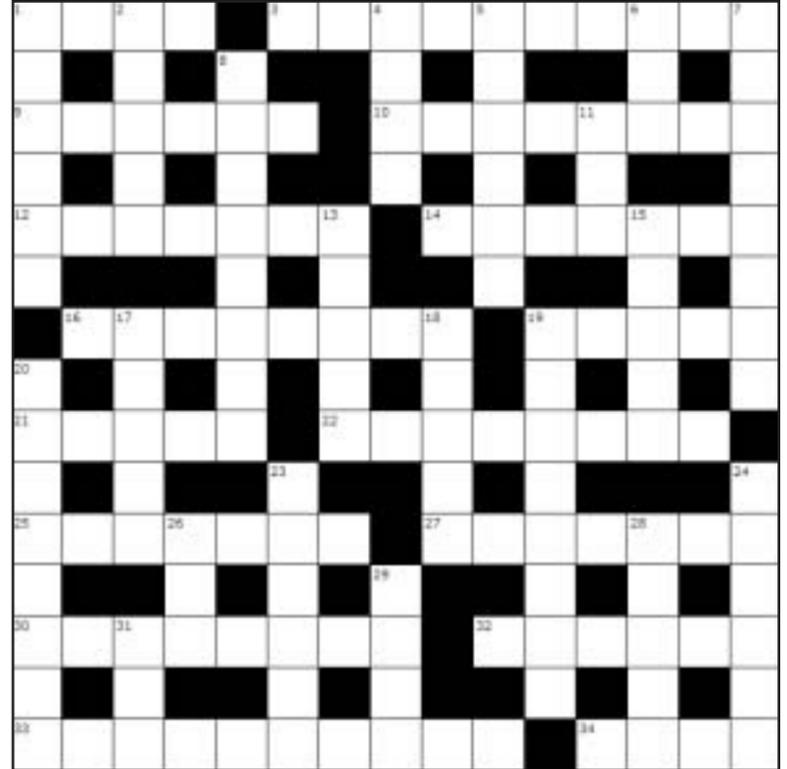


ACROSS

1. Dull bard returns. (4)
3. Belt has tip twisted for admiral' s pride. (10)
9. Zigzag slam takes 50 and nothing. (6)
10. Pay attention to coronary tube and oil back around. (6,2)
12. Sea and a chap. (7)
14. Twister ripped a party. (7)
16. I' m decent...not! (8)
19. Turkish officer has personal assistants? Ha! (5)
21. Sad about the French side-dish. (5)
22. Demanding former spouse onstage. (8)
25. Pardon Amy, about to set up home. (7)
27. Unpredictable Eric swallows rodent. (7)
30. Arab role, oddly, is up a tree. (8)
32. Plant bachelor and medic on rings. (6)
33. Point to conical frame for old museum initially. That' s thrifty! (33)
34. Old man bursts. (4)

DOWN

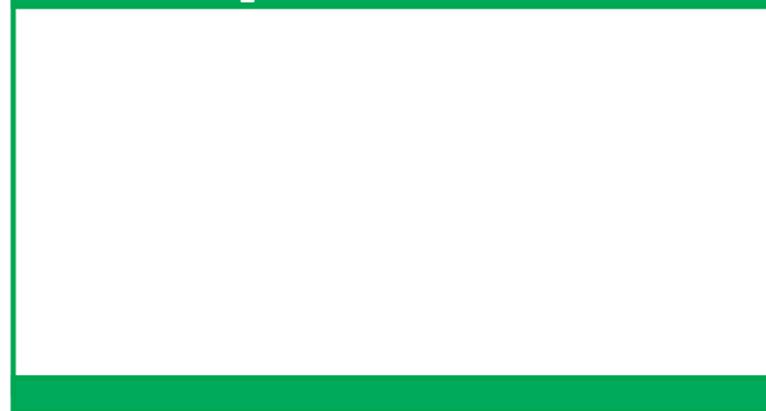
1. Dishearten and speak ill of month. (6)
2. Prize for an election district? (5)



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2007

4. Fee for bell-ringing, perhaps. (4)
5. Slender cruiser has ring meter. (6)
6. Hospital for a French-Asian tribesman. (3)
7. Hold up ring to Sal, offering marriage. (8)
8. Absinthe flavor for mescal addition to copse. (8)
11. Light loses initial over long time. (3)
13. Relative is mostly nice. (5)
15. Burning a right child. (5)
17. Me, left, on fruit. (5)
18. Track cart back to a point. (5)
19. Fatherly Patrick gets to learn poorly. (8)
20. Climb opera house in French summer. (8)
23. Brook could make a saint take a bundle. (6)
24. Comes back east with a hundred garden implements. (6)
26. I go after cardinal. (3)
28. Bat back rings? That' s forbidden. (5)
29. Group nearly bar the way. (4)
31. Loud noise finishes 32 across. (3)

Scribble Space



EZ Trivia Quiz

1. What is the capital of Lithuania?
2. Which country's flag has four white bars, five blue ones, and a white square on blue in one corner?
3. Where would you find your patella?
4. In which US city would you find the White House?
5. Roger Federer is the No 1 player of what?
6. Which country does he come from?
7. Who is Prime Minister of Malaysia?
8. Who achieved the first instance of human flight?
9. Which US president was assassinated in 1963?
10. Who wrote the play, *The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice*?

Answers on next page

Rhyme Time

The words or phrases described below all rhyme with "fire". What are they?

1. Get bogged down.
2. Happen.
3. Tightrope walker's gear.
4. Laundry equipment.
5. Gemstone.
6. Monk living off alms.
7. Sweat.
8. Ask about.
9. Monastery official.
10. Fibber.

Answers on next page

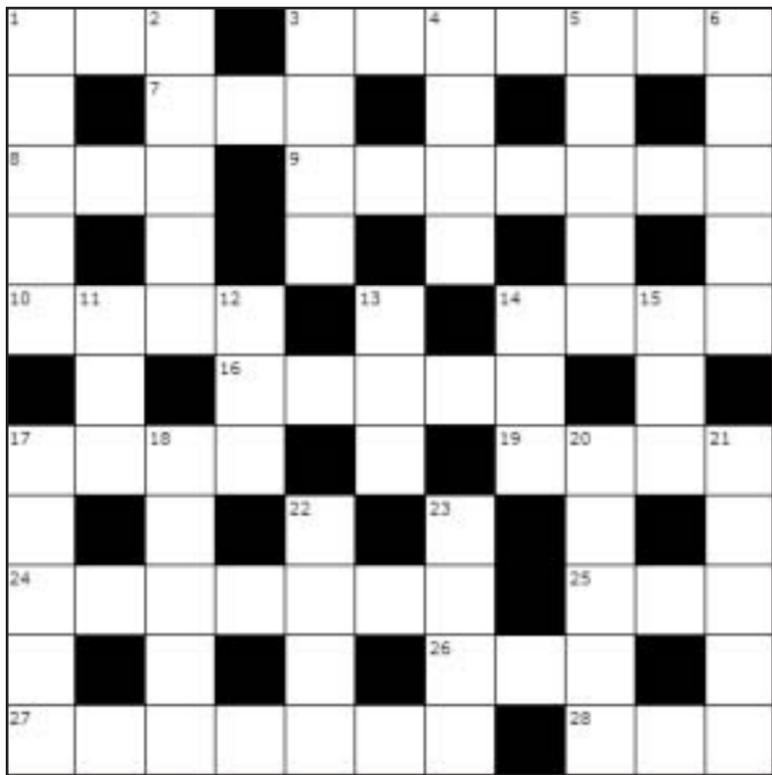
su | do | ku
© Puzzles by Pappocom

Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

			4	1	3	6		
3	5	4						
		1					5	9
		7	9					
8								2
			3	1				
6	9				7			
					9	3	5	
	4	8	3	7				

MEDIUM # 24

The principle of Sudoku is very simple: each row, each column and each " box" of nine squares within the puzzle must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9 with, naturally, no repetitions. Guess if you will, but each Sudoku puzzle can be solved using logic alone. Beware: this puzzle has only one solution, which is on the next page.

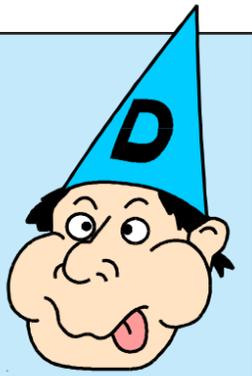


Quick Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1. Remains of a fire.
 - 3. Fool.
 - 7. Very chilly.
 - 8. Possess.
 - 9. Wine sampling.
 - 10. Great lake.
 - 14. Way to join ropes.
 - 16. Long-term rental agreement.
 - 17. Dutch cheese.
 - 19. Low-level light.
 - 24. Louder.
 - 25. Explosive.
- DOWN**
- 1. Make up for.
 - 2. Indian language.
 - 3. Computer file unit of size.
 - 4. Perch or garoupa, eg.
 - 5. Strong-tasting vegetable.
 - 6. Between days.
 - 11. Stop light color.
 - 12. Tree.
 - 13. Rodent.
 - 14. Small barrel.
 - 15. Yoko * * *
 - 17. * * * and Bert, Muppets.
 - 18. Mexican friend.
 - 20. Roman language.
 - 21. Essential fluid.
 - 22. South Pacific nation.
 - 23. Percussion instrument.

Solution below, right

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



Kids! Ask Mum and Dad to help you find the answers to these questions. They're not easy but, if you do some research, you should be able to find the answers to all of them.

1. In which year was the Great Lakes Storm, which killed 250 people?
2. Name the violent windstorm that swept across Europe from Ireland to Russia early this year.
3. Which Scottish bridge collapsed in 1879, taking a train with it?
4. Where did the last large-scale outbreak of smallpox occur? In which year?
5. Nearly 1,800 people died of Minamata disease between 1932 and 1968. What caused it?
6. Of the ten most deadly natural disasters ever, three took place in China, all from the same cause. What was it?
7. In 1970, between 500,000 and a million people in Bangladesh were killed by what?
8. Which earthquake is thought to have taken the most lives?
9. The two deadliest volcanic explosions ever both took place in which country?
10. The deadly cold Year Without A Summer in 1816 was probably caused by what?
11. Before the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, which was the deadliest tsunami in history?
12. What killed 35,000 people in Europe in 2003?
13. In 1888, 246 people in Moradabad, India, were killed by what?
14. The deadliest tornado in history struck which country in 1989?
15. In 1975, flooding killed 231,000 people in China. What caused it?
16. Roughly how many people are thought to have been killed by the Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa?
17. What disease killed as many as 100 million people worldwide in 1918 and 1919?
18. What caused 30 million deaths in China between 1958 and 1961.
19. What destroyed crops across much of northern Africa and parts of the Middle East in 2004?
20. The Tunguska event of 1908 devastated 80 million trees was probably caused by what?

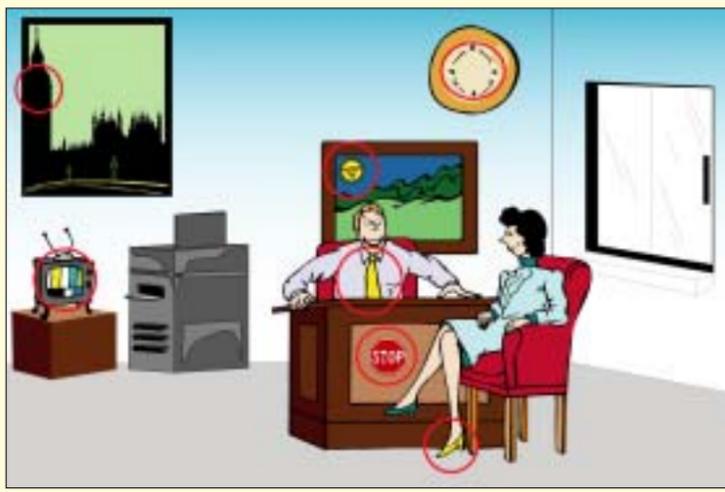
Answers below left

Puzzle Solutions

Monster Quiz Answers

1. 1913; 2. Kyrill; 3. The Tay Bridge; 4. Yugoslavia, 1972; 5. Mercury in industrial waste; 6. Flooding of the Yellow River; 7. The Bhola cyclone; 8. The Shaanxi, China, earthquake of 1556; 9. Indonesia (Tambora and Krakatau); 10. Volcanic dust in the atmosphere; 11. The tsunami following the 1755 Lisbon quake. It killed 100,000 in Portugal, Morocco and Cornwall; 12. A heatwave; 13. Hail; 14. Bangladesh; 15. Failure of the Banqiao Dam; 16. 300 million; 17. The Spanish Flu pandemic; 18. Famine; 19. Locusts; 20. Airburst explosion of a meteorite or piece of comet.

Solution to Cartoon Puzzle



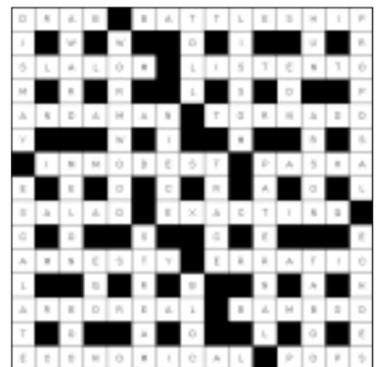
EZ Trivia Answers:

1. Vilnius; 2. Greece; 3. It's your knee cap; 4. Washington DC; 5. Tennis; 6. Switzerland; 7. Datuk Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi; 8. The Montgolfier Brothers; 9. John F. Kennedy; 10. William Shakespeare.

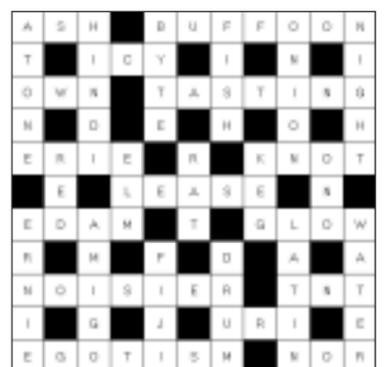
Rhyme Time Answers:

1. Mire; 2. Transpire; 3. High wire; 4. Spin dryer; 5. Sapphire; 6. Friar; 7. Perspire; 8. Inquire; 9. Prior; 10. Liar.

Cryptic Crossword Solution



Quick Crossword Solution



Sudoku solution

2	8	9	5	4	1	3	6	7
3	5	4	9	6	7	8	2	1
7	6	1	8	2	3	4	5	9
4	1	7	2	9	5	6	8	3
8	3	6	7	1	4	5	9	2
9	2	5	6	3	8	1	7	4
6	9	3	1	5	2	7	4	8
1	7	2	4	8	6	9	3	5
5	4	8	3	7	9	2	1	6

Drinking outside of the box

Patong – love it or hate it, you can't ignore its diversity. Tourists of all ages and nationalities flock to the big PT every year to spend hard-earned cash on a multitude of items and activities.

When the *Gazette* editor asked me to trawl through PT's gutters and check out what's happening on the down-low, I replied, "I've been there for two years already and haven't found my way up to the sidewalk yet."

In hindsight, that's probably the reason I'm the perfect candidate for the gig.

This column will not be a sleaze-fest all of

the time – quite the opposite, as I will be dealing with the issues affecting the thousands of Thais and foreigners who fill the streets of Patong: the big talking points, movers and shakers, gossip and an expert insight into the cheapest and classiest bars and restaurants in town.

So, to all you bar owners and

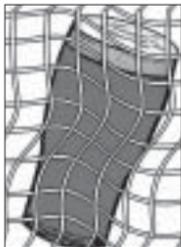
restaurateurs in Patong: look out, I'm trawlin'.

Street drinking: I know I speak for the vast majority of bar owners when I comment on the rise in alcohol sales prominent on Soi Bangla. These makeshift outlets normally operate from behind a cooler box and most likely do not have relevant licenses (whiskey and municipal) to conduct such a business.

When you take into consideration the time and money legal bar owners have to spend on keeping in line with regulations, it hardly seems fair that you can go to 7-Eleven, buy a few beers and re-sell them on Bangla for nearly twice the price.

At the same time it's creating masses of late-night drinking on the soi at 3 am and later, with local law-abiding and tax-paying businesses not benefiting.

Roll back: Have you ever visited a bar on Bangla with great



TRAWLIN'

By Alas Swan



CLOSER: Legitimate bar owners have been sounding off about street drinking. Although law-abiding bar owners are forced to close at 2 am, street vendors are able to sell alcohol openly well in to the dark hours of the morning.

views of the street, in a prime people-watching position, only to be struck down with heartburn when you realize the four beers you've already dispatched cost near on 500 baht?

If so, those days are over with the aptly named 50 Baht Bar

located in the entrance of the Patong Beauty Salon, next to The Pizza Company on Soi Bangla. As the name suggests, 50 baht is the sole price of any beer you wish to buy, and you can enjoy the sweet nectar while taking in the scenery from a great viewpoint.

And everyone knows that a 50 baht beer always tastes sweeter than a 120-baht beer; nearly two and a half times sweeter in fact.

Talking of taste, if you like your meat pies English/Aussie-style, then look no further than a little street vendor positioned outside The Market Bar on Nanai Rd, opposite the back entrance to Jungceylon.

Steak pies, chicken, mushroom and sausage rolls are on offer at affordable prices, made and sold by a Thai lady named K. Lai. Trust me, I hold a degree in pastry consumption and these savory delights are top-drawer.

Roman roads: I will be wandering aimlessly through the streets in search of something interesting to comment on.

So if you see a jaded looking, 6'1" dashing Englishman with a confused look on his face (I'll be standing next to him), point him in the right direction.

Alas Swan can be contacted by email at wasnotwass@hotmail.com

PHUKET DIARY

Upcoming events on the island

Until July 3. Southern Book Fair 2007.

This year the Southern Book Fair will be held at Lan Nawamin Park, near the clock tower roundabout on Phuket Rd in Phuket City. The fair will be open daily from 8 am to 8 pm.

Activities will include new book recommendations, readings and book signings by authors, an art exhibition, a stamp exhibition and a booth for donating books or money to needy children.

More than 60 bookstores will take part, offering more than 1 million English- and Thai-language books at prices discounted between 20% and 90% off the retail value.

Until July 8. Food & Beverage Show 2007.

This year the annual F&B Show will be at Central Festival Phuket. Great shows and competitions will be on stage from leading hotels in Phuket and Southern Thailand from 11 am to 6:30 pm. Products and equipment for hotels, spas and restaurants will be on display. Call Saksorn Sangsuk at 081-7885194 or email: moos4fb@hotmail.com or visit: www.phuketfbclub.com

Every Sunday. Brunch at the Mangosteen Resort and Spa.

Specialty brunches every Sunday, from 11 am to 3 pm, with an Italian brunch on July 8. Only 499 baht net, with the first 20 bookings each week paying just 399 baht net. With a half-bottle of wine, the charge is 950 baht net.

For more information call

Christophe Lopez at 076-289399 or email: info@mangosteen-phuket.com

July 7. Wine Tasting @ Wine Connection Bangtao

Come and taste six different wines and our tapas buffet, and enjoy our live band. Only 350 baht. Reservations recommended. Phone 076-326137 or 076-326138.

July 11 & 12. Free Professional Life Saving Training.

The Rotary Club of Laguna Phuket and Australia's Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club are offering free full-day courses (one for beginners and one for advanced) of life saving training at the Dusit Laguna Resort on July 11 and 12.

This training is suitable for individuals, government agencies, private companies, hotels and more. The aim is to raise awareness and educate local Thai people about surf and water safety. Participants will receive certificates from the Australian Life Guard Association. The course will be held in English.

For details contact K. Gem

at 076-362999 or to apply, email your name, occupation, organization and contact details to dlp prmgr@dusit.com

July 14. French National Day Buffet and Wine at the Royal Phawadee Village.

The evening starts at 6:30 pm with wine and appetizers in the lobby, followed at 8 pm with a "Mistral Gagnant" buffet next to the pool.

Prices are 690 baht per person (only on reservation) with a 5% discount for the second and third person in a party and a 10% discount for the fourth and fifth person.

For more information & reservations contact Claude at 081-

8936677, email: claudedecrissey@crisseyco.com or claudedecrissey@hotmail.com; or contact Bao at 084-8492122, email: bao@crisseyco.com or Website: www.royal-phawadee-village.com/14juillet.html

July 14. Phuket Property Seminar.

Phuket Real Estate Club and Delice Thai Co Ltd will host a forum "Problems and Solutions of Real Estate in Phuket" at the Royal Phuket City Hotel.

Speakers will include K. Thawan Thimasarn, director of subdivision of the Bureau of Standard Land Document Issuance; Lt Phummisak Hongsyok, president of Phuket Real Estate Club;

Mr Eric Tomlin, secretary to the Association of Phuket Property Agents and Mr John F. Magee, publisher of the *Phuket Gazette*.

Registration begins at 3:00 pm on the second floor of the Royal Phuket City Hotel on the day of the event. Speakers will discuss issues from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm with a question and answer session until 6 pm.

The forum will be held in both Thai and English with the assistance of a moderator.

For more information call Tel: 081-6933000 or 081-3964222 or Delice Thai Co Ltd at Tel. 076-258417-9, 086-6823770, email: info@phuket-realestateclub.com or visit www.phuket-realestateclub.com

Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

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Believe it or not

It strikes the *Gazette* as sadly ironic that less than two weeks after the deadly poisoning of fish farms off Saphan Hin that US-based conglomerate Ripley Entertainment announced its ambitious plan to build Southeast Asia's largest aquarium somewhere on the island – though they aren't saying exactly where.

If the 2.1-billion-baht "mega-aquarium" becomes a reality within three years, as Ripley's hopes it will [see News pages], it will likely become one of Phuket's top tourism draws – a must-see attraction ranking alongside the Laem Phromthep, Phuket FantaSea and the Mingmongkol Buddha image now under construction in Karon and expected to open by the end of 2008 [see p10, Around the Island].

Unfortunately, Phuket needs ever more attractions just to keep up with the ongoing expansion in its number of hotel rooms, the official number of which is already around 35,000 – not including all the villas, condos, time-share developments and small, unregistered accommodation establishments that push the actual number of accommodation establishments much higher.

While the aquarium at the Phuket Marine Biological Center is interesting, informative and well-maintained, it is too small to keep a family entertained for more than an hour or two. Other family-oriented attractions that have been long discussed but never built include a world-class water park or other types of amusement parks.

Increasing the number of such attractions is a key development issue for Phuket, which has developed too much of a reputation for more "adult-oriented" activities from golf to bar hopping.

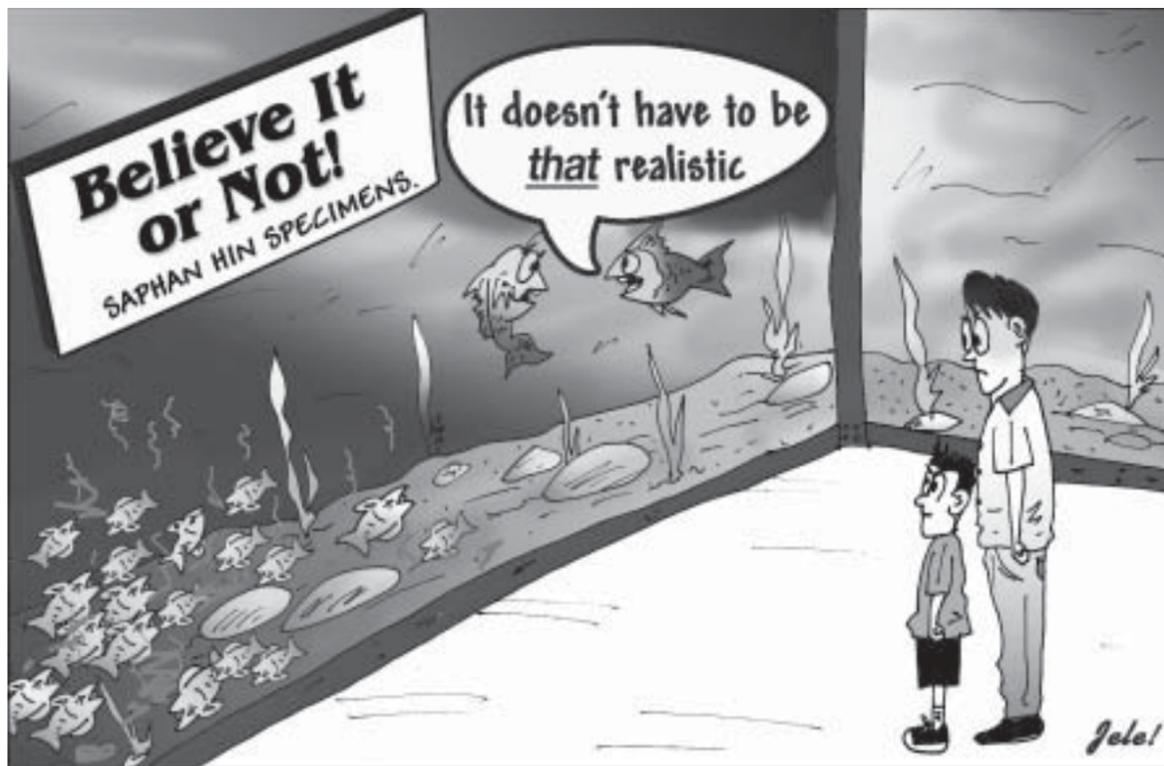
Fortunately, the opening of large, new retail centers such as Central Festival and Jungceylon have improved Phuket's appeal, though the number of baby strollers being pushed up and down Soi Bangla by night continues to speak for itself.

At the same time, Phuket's greatest natural tourism asset, its beaches, continue to suffer through a combination of poor regulation, environmental degradation and outright greed. At Patong, the days when kids could safely swim in the sea, build sandcastles on the sands at dusk or swim safely have been long since passed, having been ended by the activities of jet-ski and parasail operators.

Then again, fewer people are choosing to swim in Patong Bay due to the failure of the municipality to treat its wastewater, resulting in much of it being discharged into the south end of the bay, once home to impressive coral beds and the marine life they sustained.

In this regard, Ripley's might be the perfect match for Phuket. As the fish farm fiasco indicates, the current rate of decline of our island's coastal resources might make Ripley's aquarium the last healthy environment left for fish left in Phuket.

– The Editor



Letters

The *Gazette* is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax to 076-213971 or send an email to editor@phuketgazette.net with your views for publication in our next issue. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Pseudonyms are acceptable only if your full name and address are supplied.

Stiff measures may be our saving grace

The two recent armed robberies committed by Westerners in the past few weeks are a sign that Thailand really is becoming the new Costa Del Crime.

The last thing this country needs is an influx of criminally minded immigrants from the West. The military-installed government should take advantage of its monopoly on power to bring in measures to make the country less attractive to undesirables.

For a start it could crack down on the vice that is so openly and offensively paraded on streets in all the country's major tourist destinations and is a big draw for criminal types.

Another easy measure would be stiffening requirements for visas. Last year's welcome step of limiting people staying on visa-on-arrivals to 90 days in any six months should be toughened to allow only one or two 30-day stays a year without a visa applied for from a Thai embassy. This would be more than enough for the average tourist.

Anyone applying to stay in Thailand longer would have to be put through a thorough grilling about their background and why they want to live in the Kingdom, much as Thais wanting to go to the US or UK would have to endure.

Jeremy Stigwell
Rawai

Where da beatz?

I'm new to Phuket, but after a two-year stint in Bangkok, I've got to ask: where are all the parties?

Maybe I've been looking in the wrong places, but for an island with half a million inhabitants,

I expected more from the nightlife. Please, somebody, steer me in the direction of some drum 'n' bass, nu skool breaks, electro-clash – heck, I'd even settle for an NME-invented genre like new rave.

You islanders don't really settle for pop hits, mainstream hip hop, eurodance and commercial house do you? Maybe it's up to me to make my own scene. I promoted events in Bangkok (at Club Astra, Club Culture, Café De Moc, Jazzit, and so on) and I'm starting to think that the only way for me to hear the music I want would be to try to do the same thing here.

But is it an impossible task? Am I alone in my appreciation of electronic music? I enjoy hip hop and watching good scratch DJs, I can get down with indie, and I have no problem with trip hop, but what I'm after are some intelligent, crisp beats – not the mindless 200bpm sort you hear in some Thai clubs.

Help a kid out here. Where are all the 20-something clubbers hanging out?

Out of the curious
Phuket City

I love ya, Phuket

I agree with John from Rawai, who wrote in wondering why there is so much complaining going on in the *Gazette* Letters to the Editors section.

Phuket is a great place to live and I hope it never becomes like "back home" anywhere.

I love seeing motorbikes with four people on them and my personal record is counting eight people in a *samlor*.

I also love puppies in motorbike baskets and the ice cream guy in my neighborhood, the one who wears a big lion's head mask

when he is on his route.

Every day I see something that brings a big smile to my face – let's keep it that way. Go Phuket! I love ya!

Fredo MacAnniny
Nai Yang

Landing the hard way

After being beached on Patong for nearly two weeks, Sultan skipper Michael Wilson finally learns how far spouting off gets you in Thailand – stuck.

Although exhausted from his solo journey storm-chasing all the way from Sri Lanka, you'd would have thought that he'd notice how many other boats were moored in the bay.

How spooky does it have to be to pull into Patong Bay, offshore from so much development, only to notice that you're alone in dropping anchor?

Anyway, I'm glad to hear he finally learned how nice Thai people can be and I only hope that he was sincere in expressing his gratitude.

Mr Wilson: welcome to Thailand.

Baywatch Beauty
Patong

You light me up

Praise should go to the *OrBor-Whatever* that painted reflective stripes on the road between Baan Manik and Cherng Talay.

This has to be one of the darkest stretches of road on the island and as an older guy my night vision just isn't what it used to be.

Since the lights are never turned on, the new reflectors help a lot in knowing where the edge of the road is. I really appreciate the help.

Cautious driver
Cherng Talay

Phuket Gazette

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Boosting the police presence in Phuket

I have already sent a request to the Royal Thai Police headquarters asking for Tah Chat Chai Police Station to be upgraded to have a superintendent as its chief commanding officer.

This is important because until that police station has a superintendent, officers at that police station do not have the authority to carry out an investigation.

All investigations from Tah Chat Chai police station are currently assigned to officers in Thalang Police Station, who work with the Tah Chat Chai officers in carrying out investigations.

I believe the time has come for Tah Chat Chai to be upgraded because the population in the Mai Khao area is increasing and officers stationed there will need to have investigative powers in case something happens at Phuket International Airport.

This would be much better than wasting time waiting for officers at Thalang Police Station to be brought up to speed on cases that Tah Chat Chai officers would



FIRST PERSON

As of July 2, a total of 1,064 police officers were stationed on the island to cater to the more than 600,000 residents – not including the 6 million or so tourists who visit Phuket each year.

Here Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Decha Budnam-etch explains his plans for boosting police presence on Phuket.

be much better at investigating.

I have also requested that a new subdistrict police station be

set up in Wichit and that it be under the administration of Phuket City Police Station. This new po-

lice station will at first have a chief, but later will have a superintendent of its own and officers stationed there, just as at Tah Chat Chai, they will have the authority to conduct investigations.

Similarly, I have requested that Karon Police Station no longer be operated as part of Chalong Police Station. It too should have its own chief and later its own superintendent.

Chalong Police Station has a huge area to respond to, including Chalong, Rawai, Kata and Karon tambons. It would be much better to let officers at Karon Police Station be responsible for the Kata-Karon area.

However, we will not know the exact area that each of the police stations will be responsible for until we receive confirmation from headquarters that the changes have been approved.

Police in Phuket have very heavy work loads. For example, elsewhere in the country each police officer responds to an average of 70 cases per year, but in Phuket each officer on average

responds to more than 200 cases per year.

This is one of the main reasons why we have so many unsolved cases. Because of their workload, officers often find it difficult to make progress in an investigation within the three-month deadline laid down by Royal Thai Police regulations.

If no progress has been made in an investigation after three months, the officer has no choice and must mark the case unsolved and move on to the next case. Of course, if new evidence is found, the officer can re-open the case, but by then he has even more cases to work on.

Just the sheer amount of work slows down progress in each investigation.

We are trying to improve the police service in Phuket and this is another step forward.

We are making progress. We were recently approved to have four Provincial Police Deputy Commanders. In the past, we were allowed to have only two.

Have the Immigration rules changed?

Have there been important changes to the supporting documents required to extend a permit to stay on a non-immigrant B visa?

I have heard that with effect from May 4 Thai Immigration requires:

- A photocopy of the employing company's Affidavit and Shareholders' List certified as a true copy of the original by the Ministry of Commerce.

- A photocopy of the employing company's most recent Annual Financial Statements certified as a true copy of the original by the auditor who audited it.

- A photocopy of the employing company's most recent Personal Income Tax Return (PND1) with the Revenue Department's receipt plus a photocopy of the applicant's most recent Annual Personal Income Tax Return (PND91) – if the person has one – certified as a true copy of the original by the Revenue Department.

- A photocopy of the employing company's most recent Social Security Fund monthly return certified as a true copy of the original by the Social Security Fund Office.

With effect from May 16, Thai Immigration requires the first application to extend a non-

immigrant B visa to be supported by photographs of every employee in the employing company and each photograph is to be taken showing the employee at their place of work, for example sitting at a desk or at a machine or behind the steering wheel of the company vehicle and so on.

I have been told that if a company has many Thai employees then the application should be supported by photographs of several of the employees as long as the number exceeds the minimum requirement of four Thai employees to match each foreign employee.

However, the reason the photographs are required is to enable an Immigration inspection team to match the photographs against actual employees at the workplace if they pay a surprise visit.

The Immigration Bureau has warned that it is now a policy of theirs to conduct surprise visits to newly registered companies that employ expatriates who require work permits.

The aim of the inspections by the Thai Immigration Department would appear to be to determine whether the information supplied by companies employing expatriates is correct insofar as:

- Capitalization;

Issues & ANSWERS

The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or www.phuketgazette.net

b. Business activity and nature;

c. Location of business;

d. Number of Thais employed as a ratio to expatriates; and,

e. Existence of Thai employees.

I have been informed that all new companies registered that employ expatriates may be subject to a visit by the Immigration Department.

To avoid breaching the legislation with respect to work permits and visas, companies are advised to adhere as a minimum to the following:

a. Fully paid up registered share capital of 2 million baht per work permit for non-BOI companies;

b. Employ four Thais to every expatriate and those Thais must be current employees of the company, be paid a salary and have written contracts to support

their employment for non-BOI companies;

c. Business operated by the company should comply to the objects in the Articles of Association; and,

d. The place of business should have the appearance of a proper place of business even if it is operated from an expatriate's place of residence.

The Immigration Bureau has also issued a warning that if it is found that the information provided in supporting documentary evidence is not correct then the applicant's visa will be canceled and the applicant will have to leave Thailand.

In addition, the principals of the employing company and the agency handling the application (if one is used) will be reported to the police for further action.

Martin Kyle
Bangkok

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO), replies:

We here at the PPIO have not been informed of any changes to the requirements for an extension to a permit to stay for people who entered Thailand on a non-immigrant B visa. I know nothing about these regulations coming into effect on May 4. As

far as I know, these regulations have applied for quite some time.

The Immigration officer processing the application for an extension to stay may ask for *any* or *all* of this information to support the application. The officer always has the right to ask for more documents.

At the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office we require only the same documents as before, which are the same financial documents and other requirements you have mentioned, but not the photographic evidence.

For a full list of the documents required for extensions to stay for *all* classes of visa, please download the file at: www.immigration.go.th/nov2004/2notice/rtp606EN.pdf

If we believe an applicant has intentionally filed incorrect information in the application – either not disclosed important information or lied to a government officer – then we will report the foreigner to the court, which will decide whether the foreigner should be deported and added to the Immigration blacklist.

Similarly, if we believe a company has intentionally filed incorrect information or not disclosed important information, we will report the company to the police to investigate.

Rabies: Should you worry or not?

There are few, if any, diseases that conjure up more fear than rabies.

Visions of people being driven insane by pain followed by certain, inescapable death spring to mind. The word itself comes from the Latin for madness. Thailand is classified as a country where rabies is endemic, but is it something we should be concerned about?

Rabies is a viral disease that causes acute inflammation of the brain in mammals. In non-vaccinated humans, rabies is invariably fatal after symptoms have developed, but prompt treatment will generally prevent the virus from progressing. There are only six recorded cases of a person surviving rabies without treatment.

Most deaths these days are generally in children who fail to report that they have been bitten. The old treatment consisted of extremely painful injections through the stomach wall, but this has long been superseded by a course of normal injections which I can vouch are no more painful than any other type of vaccination.

Most animals can be infected by the virus and transmit the disease to humans. In Thailand



MAKING TRACKS

By Top Dog

the most likely carriers are dogs, cats and bats.

Although the Soi Dog Foundation always recommends volunteers who are working with stray animals to be vaccinated against rabies, I have never in my time here seen a dog or cat suffering from the disease. The last recorded case of rabies in a human in Phuket was more than 20 years ago, and in an animal seven years ago.

Indeed, Phuket Provincial Livestock Chief Dr Sunart Wongchavalit last year went so far as to announce Phuket a rabies-free zone.

In Thailand only 14 rabies deaths were recorded last year, and all of these were in rural areas. Compare this to the risk of Aids: Despite Thailand having one of the best education and prevention programs in Asia, more than one in 100 adults is infected with HIV, and Aids has become a leading cause of death. The reality is



RABID DOG? Foaming at the mouth does not mean a dog is suffering from rabies, and can also result from severe injury. This dog, however, is infected with rabies.

that you are about 60,000 times more likely to contract HIV than you are rabies.

The stereotypical set of symptoms associated with rabies can be misleading. Actual symptoms can vary wildly from case to case and mimic symptoms of other conditions, often resulting in misdiagnosis. Frothing at the

mouth is the most widely recognized symptom, but I have seen many dogs frothing and foaming at the mouth; in each case it has been the result of poisoning, never rabies.

Other symptoms can be running around wildly, sometimes snapping at things in the air, being weak and meek, partial pa-

ralysis of the head, enlargement of neck or leg muscles, or difficulties in swallowing.

Some of these symptoms are similar to canine distemper or canine parvo virus, both of which are very common on the island, but cannot be transmitted to humans.

In humans, the period between infection and the first flu-like symptoms is normally two to twelve weeks, but can be as long as two years. Soon after, the symptoms progress to such things as slight or partial paralysis, anxiety, insomnia, confusion, agitation, abnormal behavior, paranoia, hallucinations, and progressing to delirium.

The production of large quantities of saliva and tears coupled with an inability to speak or swallow are typical during the latter stages of the disease. Death almost invariably results two to ten days after the first symptoms.

A friend of mine was recently walking down a street and presumably went too close to a neighbor's house, because the dog ran out and nipped him on the leg, breaking the skin (stray dogs are far more likely to run away when you approach).

He was returning home to Europe that day and phoned me in somewhat of a panic asking what he should do. After putting his mind at rest that the chances of the dog being rabid were practically zero, I did advise him to do the following, which is what I would advise anybody to do if they are bitten by any animal in Thailand:

First, wash the bite area thoroughly with soap and water, which is very effective itself in reducing the number of viral particles. Then go immediately to a local hospital and report that you have been bitten and would like a course of rabies injections. Five are generally given over a 28-day period. Although the chances of infection here are tiny, it is better to be safe than sorry.

All pet owners should of course ensure their pets are vaccinated against rabies. The vaccination is cheap and the Livestock Department often has clinics where the vaccinations are carried out for free. The local animal welfare charities routinely vaccinate the stray dogs brought in for sterilization and treatment.

Finally therefore, you cannot totally rule out being infected with rabies in Thailand, or for that matter Phuket.

Even the UK, considered rabies-free for more than a century, had a well publicized death a few years ago when a man was bitten by an infected bat, believed to have flown over the Channel from France.

But the chances of being bitten by a rabid dog here on Phuket are statistically so remote that it is not worth losing sleep over. Now HIV is another matter!

How to win an argument

Mr A and Mr B, both residents in Thailand from the same home country, got into a quarrel.

Mr B admitted in court to having called Mr A to talk about how Mr A had treated Mr B's dogs, which led to the pair arguing on the phone.

In the court's decision it ruled that it strongly believed that the argument on the phone had made Mr B so angry that he went to Mr A's house that night.

Although the court believed that Mr B went to Mr A's house

with the sole intention of settling the dispute, it ruled that Mr B ripping the front gate off its hinges was evidence that he was furious and that he fully intended to enter the property.

If Mr B had honestly intended to settle the dispute in a friendly manner, he would have apologized for this and would have at least attempted to place the gate back on its hinges.

LAYING DOWN THE LAW



With Friedrich 'Sam' Fauma

The court also ruled that if Mr A had wanted Mr B to enter his property, Mr A would not have repeatedly hit Mr B.

The court found Mr B guilty of trespassing on Mr A's property and that Mr B was in a state of rage when he did so, which were mitigating factors in Mr A's assault against Mr B.

In his defense, Mr A pointed

out that he had only one leg, needed to use a walking stick and that, at 182 centimeters tall, Mr B was taller than Mr A.

These two factors would give Mr B a considerable advantage over Mr A should they become involved in a fistfight, Mr A claimed.

Mr A added that he could not have delivered the repeated, rapid, forceful blows and raps to the ear that Mr B said he had.

Mr A claimed that Mr B had broken the law by trespassing and that Mr B had struck the first blow, which gave Mr A justified reason to strike back.

The court ruled that as Mr A had retaliated by using only his hand to slap Mr B's face and by hitting Mr B with only his walking stick, and did not use any weapon, that Mr A's actions were considered rational self-defense.

Mr A was therefore absolved of the charges of grievous bodily harm brought against him.

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In The Stars

by **Isla Star**

WHAT DO THE HEAVENS HOLD IN STORE FOR YOU THIS WEEK?

CANCER (June 22 – July 23): Early next week you get a bee in your sunhat that's very hard to shake out. Those of you who can't let go of a particular issue are advised to face it head on. Libra would like to know you better and should make their presence felt this weekend. Money matters are well-starred, with chance of a windfall forecast before the middle of July. Wear the color sage green to encourage wisdom.

you should be glad for the guidance. A mid-year slump means that your motivation is low, but this should be a beneficial time for introspection. Eat plenty of orange-colored tropical fruit to encourage extra energy to flow. The number 5 can bring some luck next Wednesday.

LEO (July 24 – August 22): Your luck in love is especially high during the coming week. Those of you who have been waiting for someone special to make a commitment won't be disappointed. If you're already in a relationship, your partner has some good news to share. Business affairs need the soft touch on Monday when someone's unrealistic expectations need to be dampened. The number 3 can bring luck on Thursday.

SCORPIO (October 24 – November 22): Going round and round in never-ending circles is one thing that's certain to irritate Scorpios. However, there is little you can do to hurry business matters along; Aries is the only person who could have some influence, but you probably don't see eye to eye with this person. The wind of change is about to blow over the personal relationship area of your life – love in a foreign climate is highlighted.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 23): Guard against being idle for too long. Wet weather blues are forecast, but you can avoid them by taking up a new interest. Ask a Sagittarian friend for advice this weekend. A storm is brewing at work and a colleague wants you to take sides. Remember that there are always two sides to a story before becoming involved. Wear sapphire blue to encourage tranquility.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 – December 21): You feel well disposed towards others this week, which is a good thing because a Piscean friend could use some words of comfort and understanding. This mellow mood helps to dissolve an awkward atmosphere at work on Tuesday, but the cause of this will re-surface later in the month. A romantic weekend helps a blossoming relationship reach the next level.

LIBRA (September 24 – October 23): A dream this weekend sheds light on a problem related to your social life. If you have been confused about what is for the best,

Wear copper and bronze to enhance your earthiness.

relationship will get the green light. Money owed to you should be paid by the middle of July.

CAPRICORN (December 22 – January 20): Your skills in handling finances should stand you in good stead this week. You will find easy ways to improve your personal budget, but avoid socializing too much with a spendthrift Scorpio. You could find yourself between a rock and a hard place when asked for a loan midweek. Don't part with more than you can afford to lose.

ARIES (March 21 – April 20): Your aims are likely to change when news from overseas arrives this week. Many of you will realize what's really important and relocation before the end of the year is strongly indicated. If you're looking for love, Leo is ready to help you find it. Those already in a relationship will need their partner to answer a burning question this weekend. Wear a piece of amethyst to enhance your ability to work out problems.

AQUARIUS (January 21 – February 19): Indulge in relaxation this weekend as the pace of life picks up quickly after Monday. You could be called upon to fill in for a work colleague at the last moment on Tuesday or Wednesday. Rising to this challenge can help you on the way to promotion. Where love is concerned, you who haven't been sure which way the wind is blowing will have to wait until next weekend to find out.

TAURUS (April 21 – May 21): A more philosophical approach to life is recommended for those of you who have the tendency to get hot under the collar for no real reason. When the timing is right, changes in your circumstances will happen. Communication from an old Libran friend is highlighted towards the end of the week and an imminent reunion is indicated. Wear emerald green to help dissolve insecurity.

PISCES (February 20 – March 20): A roller coaster ride is highlighted for those born this week. A romantic move you made last month has repercussions that you never dreamed of. If you need a shoulder to cry on, try a Sagittarian friend. By Friday all should be clear and it's likely that this new

GEMINI (May 22 – June 21): Most of you are forecast to coast easily towards success in business by the middle of the month. The only possible drawback could be your easy come, easy go attitude towards money, which will be stronger than usual this week. Aquarius is ready to take advantage of this, but Capricorn can be trusted to do the decent thing. Monday is the best day to make your romantic interest known. Wear silver to be taken seriously.



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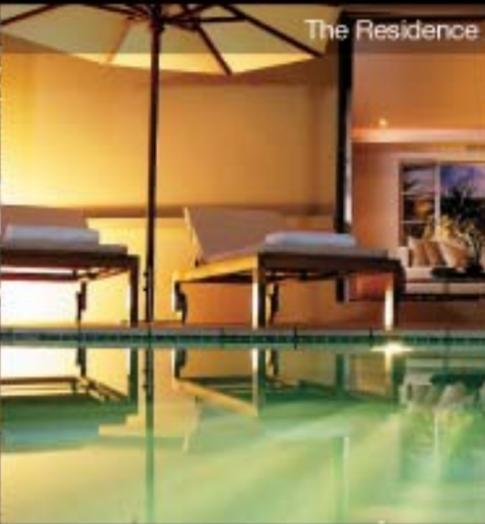
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Technical divers reach new depths in Krabi

Phuket and its neighboring provinces are home to some of the most popular diving spots in the world. However, it's not just tourists and recreational divers who are flocking to the region. Technical divers have also been coming here to push the boundaries of the sport to its limits.

Technical diving involves going beyond recreational limits. These vary depending on the dive organization, but are typically between 30-40 meters.

Phuket resident Ben Reymenants, a "mixed gas instructor trainer evaluator" and certified hyperbaric technologist working for the SSS Recompression Chamber Network in Thailand, provides a more in-depth – one could say – definition.

"Technical diving is a form of Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (Scuba) diving where a diver does not have immediate access to the surface, such as when penetrating a wreck or cave, or if there is a (virtual) ceiling above the divers in the form of an obligatory extended decompression [underwater] stop," explained the diver, technically.

"The difference is also in the education and the equipment. A technical diver needs to take two of everything in case of failure: two tanks, two buoyancy devices, two masks, two computers."

Last year, a pool of water in a pristine jungle in Sra Keow, Krabi, frequently used as an elephant watering hole, became a point of interest for two cave divers, Cedric Verdier and Mike Gadd, who did an exploratory dive to 200 meters, yet failed to reach the bottom.

With a passion for exploring uncharted territory, Ben,



What looks like little more than a muddy puddle in Krabi is actually an entrance to an extensive subterranean karst cave system reaching a depth of more than 200 meters – enough to set a record in Thailand.

Cedric and Mike formulated a plan for another exploratory dive that would hopefully take them to the bottom of the cave.

On February 18, Ben and Cedric returned to the Sra Keow cave. With a team of experienced support divers and medical staff on hand, they descended independently of one another. Unlike recreational diving, technical diving is often done solo, as each diver is equipped to be self-sufficient in case of an emergency.

Ben, who at one time held the record for the deepest open ocean dive using Scuba at 202 meters, reached the bottom at 239 meters and set a record for the deepest cave dive in Thailand.

Ben described the dive, saying, "At 12 meters the cave started and because of the fine sediment, the visibility was reduced to one meter. I dropped fast and after just four minutes I passed the 60 meter mark. The visibility got better, the angle steeper, the

stalactites disappeared and I could see where the running water had created a genuine piece of art in the limestone.

"Below 150 meters, the cave turned into a giant cathedral, the walls disappeared and my only visual reference was my slowly spinning reel in front of my eyes. One of my dive computers had gone to sleep and I asked myself 'what the hell am I doing here?'"

"At 190 meters, high-pressure nervous syndrome kicked in. My hands were shaking and I could feel tremors on my spine. Suddenly I got hit by something: one of the walls sneaked up on me and I bounced off. I looked up and saw a large cloud of dust following me."

Finally Ben reached the bottom. "The feeling of falling into a giant duvet blanket shot through my head. The bottom was composed of fine yellow silt, settled over thousands of years. Very gently I sunk into it up to my knees, coming to a full stop." His

gauge read 239 meters and it was time to start ascending.

The ascent, which needed support divers to come and unload the 25 used tanks, took a total of nine hours. At one point Ben was carrying 11 tanks while at a depth of 55 meters. The last three hours of the dive were spent in a small, homemade underwater habitat.

Constructed by Ben, Mike and Cedric, the habitat is a large water tank inverted and lowered to nine meters. This allowed the divers to eat, unload their diving equipment and read while breathing 80% oxygen from a supply hose. When Ben reached the habitat, Cedric, who had descended first, was already waiting for him.

Ben's motivation for the dive? "Finding places nowadays where no other human has set foot is very difficult.

"This, combined with the mystery of that cave in the middle of the Thai jungle, made it intriguing to have a look and see how deep it went."

Support, planning, experience and sponsors all helped make the dive a success.

"For an extreme cave dive, a large team is needed to help with the logistics and secure the safety of the divers," says Ben.

"Maurizio Carmini and Laurent Bihler were the safety divers, and on the surface were dive medics Eefje Pattyn from Phuket and Marina Frei from Ao Nang. Dr Luba Matic confirmed the health of all divers before, during and after the dive. Local dive shops Seafun Divers, One Stop Dive Shop, Deep Blue Divers, Ocean Zone and Protec provided tanks and gas. O'Three Drysuits supplied the drysuits and Liquivision supplied a custom-made depth gauge."

As for his future plans for more exploratory dives, there seems to be no

stopping Ben. "Well, the cave system still has a lot of unexplored side passages and one major passage at 80 meters leading to another lake."

For more information you can find Ben at the SSS Recompression Chamber in Patong or send him an email ben@deepcult.com


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Thailand's Pongsaklek Wonjongkam has held the WBC flyweight belt for more than six years, defending his title a record 17 times while going undefeated for 11 years.

With his career winding down, Pongsaklek and his camp now seem intent on making two superfights in the next year; one with Japanese superstar Koki Kameda and the other with Vic "The Raging Bull" Darchinyan.

Here Pongsaklek speaks with Scott Mallon.

A chat with the champ



Pongsaklek: Training is going well.

Scott Mallon: You're fighting Daisuke Naito on July 18 in Japan. How's your training going and how is your weight?

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam: My training is going well. My weight is really never a problem though and I'm always close to the flyweight limit, even when I'm not training for a fight.

SM: You've beaten him twice already. There are rumors he's getting another shot at your title because he's told his manager if he can't beat you this time, he's retiring. Why are you fighting him again?

PW: I believe he said if he loses he'll retire. All I know is he wants to fight again. He is a difficult opponent, but I will be well prepared for him.

SM: So you like fighting in Japan. What about Koki Kameda? He a huge star in Japan and you're a star in Thailand. A fight between you two would be a massive event in Japan. What is the chance of a fight between you two?

PW: Yes, I like Japan and would be happy to fight him, but this is up to my boss, promoter Virat Vajiratonawongse. Kameda came to Thailand about three years ago and trained in the gym here. He's a determined fighter who is an active boxer with good movement. His manners are one thing that's not good though, but everything else is good.

SM: Let's move on to Vic Darchinyan. He has publicly stated he doubts your willingness to fight him. His promoter, Gary Shaw, has also stated that a \$ 250,000 purse is not a problem and if you're truly sincere about willing to fight his man, your pro-

moter knows his phone number and can easily get in touch with him. Do you think a fight with Vic Darchinyan will ever happen?

PW: I would like to fight him, but this is for my manager and promoter to decide. Boxing is a business and it's much easier for me to fight in Japan than America. Television rights, options, travel, money - I'm a fighter and my job is to train, to fight and to win. My promoter's job is to take care of the business side of boxing.

SM: Can't you tell your promoter you want to make the fight though?

PW: Like I said, this is my promoter's job, not mine. I would like to prove myself to the fans in America and I'm sure a fight between Darchinyan and me would be exciting. The promoter is my boss though and like I said, he handles the business of my career. I'll fight anyone he tells me to.

(It should be noted here that in Thai boxing culture, the fighter has little to no say in deciding who he fights. In most cases there are no written contracts between the fighter and his promoter and fighters rarely challenge their promoters' and managers' business practices. A fighter calling his own shots is a foreign concept to Thai fighters. Instead, they view themselves as an employee and the promoter as their boss.)

SM: What do you think about Darchinyan as a fighter?

PW: His style is alot like Manny Pacquiao's. He is strong and courageous. Maybe after I finish with my obligations this year we can fight in the United



BIS tennis coach Lorenzo Marcuzzi huddled with some of the primary students before they began their first-ever tournament June 24. Lorenzo hopes to create a monthly tournament for tennis players of all ages beginning in September.

BIS tennis tournament draws 27 competitors

KOH KAEW: Twenty-seven competitors took part in the first tennis tournament staged at the British International School (BIS) Sunday, June 24, to raise funds for the Tennis for Africa program.

BIS tennis coach Lorenzo Marcuzzi organized the tournament, which he said he hopes will be the first in a series of tournaments and league play on the island.

The tournament comprised three divisions: primary students (with 11 players), secondary students (10 players) and parents (six players).

The primary students played a variety of games to collect individual points, including singles, doubles and challenges such as hitting cones and markers on the ground.

Secondary students played

a Davis Cup format match with both singles and doubles, while the parents played mixed doubles.

All of the competitors won prizes including Tennis for Africa shirts and medals.

Marcuzzi said that he hopes to plan a monthly tennis tournament beginning in September. His goal is to create a league, rankings and bigger tournaments for Phuket. All players are welcome.

The Tennis for Africa program, based in Rome, supplies tennis equipment to Sierra Leone to encourage the sport.

For more information about tournaments or summer tennis camps, you can contact Lorenzo 081-0802453, lorenzotennis@libero.it or his website at www.tennis-plus.com

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

Valhalla score at last

PATONG: In the battle to avoid relegation to the pool league, Valhalla got their first victory of the season by swiping all three precious points at home against newcomers Simply Red.

In a Nanai Rd derby, Beach House staged an upset by taking all three points against Offshore in decisive fashion, 7-2. With first-place Dog's Bollocks and second place Shakers both on bye weeks, Queen Mary moved into a tie for second place with Shakers by taking all three points at Piccadilly.

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staff to: darts@phuketgazette.net for inclusion in this article.

June 26 results: Piccadilly 4 Queen Mary* 5; Offshore 2 Beach House* 7; Simply Red 3 Valhalla* 6 (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Dog's Bollocks (22 pts.); 2.= Shakers, Queen Mary (18); 4. Offshore (17); 5. Beach House (16); 6. Piccadilly (11); 7. Valhalla (5); 8. Simply Red (4).

July 10 matchups: Shakers v Piccadilly; Offshore v Dogs Bollocks; Valhalla v Beach House; Simply Red, Queen Mary = byes (home team first).

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ON THE MOVE

Henry Gray, from Scotland, has been appointed Area General Manager of Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa, which includes oversight of the Evason Hideaway on Koh Yao Noi, opening in September. Mr Gray graduated from the Henley College for Hotel Training in Coventry, England, where he studied Hotel and Catering Management. His experience includes working in India, Indonesia, Mexico, Canada and the British Virgin Islands, including 12 years with Amanresorts.



Phuket native **Janejira "Gift" Saywipas**, 22, has been promoted to the position of Classifieds Administrator at the *Phuket Gazette*. She is a graduate of the Communication Arts program at the Phranakhon Rajabhat University in Bangkok.



Songphol Pongrapeeporn, from Bangkok, has been appointed General Manager of Marketing at Central Festival Phuket. He has a BA and MBA from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, California. K. Songphol's experience in retail marketing and cosmetics includes working with Shiseido, L'Oreal and Esté eLauder. Most recently he was the marketing and communications manager for Gaysorn Shopping Center in Bangkok.



Krabi Airlines to launch on November 1

BANGKOK (The Nation): Soon to be Thailand's newest carrier, Krabi Airlines is now being set up and plans to begin flight service to international destinations starting on November 1, just in time for the start of the 2007-2008 high season.

Civil Aviation Department Director General Chaisak Angkasuwan said the airline, with four investors, including former Thai Airways International employee Kosol Vongsrisart, plans to fly to Norway, Germany and Australia by the end of the year.

The carrier intends to add flights to cities in the US and Japan within five years, he added.

K. Chaisak said the establishment of the airline, which takes advantage of Krabi Airport's upgraded international status, would be completed very soon.

It will be the first fully scheduled airline using it as a base of operations, he said.

At first, the airline will ser-

vice two international routes: to Oslo and Munich.

In the second phase, between this year and 2009, the airline plans to fly to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in Australia, plus one city in New Zealand.

K. Chaisak said the airline would use two Boeing 777-200ER aircraft in its first year, increasing the number of aircraft to five within five years and up to 10 by 2013.

The airline, targeting tourists from Europe as its main market, expects to run an average cabin factor of at least 70%, he said.

Over the longer term, starting in 2011 the airline plans to expand its routes to Vancouver, Canada; Los Angeles and San Francisco, California; Tokyo and Osaka in Japan; and Seoul.

Meanwhile, Thailand's open-skies policy is key to encouraging investors to start an aviation business.

K. Chaisak added that more than 10 airlines were in the process of being established. Each is required to have a minimum 200 million baht in registered capital.

Most are intending to serve Asian markets, he said.



Patong's Grand Tropicana Hotel is to become the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Patong Beach

Five major hotels to be re-branded

PHUKET: Three Phuket hotels will be renamed under the Central Group's re-branding of its hotel and resort business, while another two will be taken over by the Marriott chain of hotels.

Central Karon Village, Cen-

tral Karon Beach Resort and Central Kata Resort will be renamed Centara Villas, Centara Karon Resort and Centara Kata Resort, respectively.

Centara, Central Group's new hotel brand, comes from the words "Central", the 60-year-old brand name in Thailand, and "tara", Thai for water or river.

Suthikiat Chirathivat, chairman of the executive board of Central Plaza Hotel Plc, said he believes the name "Centara", which marks a separation of the group's hotel and resort business from its retail and food business unit, was more relevant to Thailand than "Central".

Three different sub-brands have been created to re-brand the 11 hotels under Centara: five-star properties will include the word "Grand" in their titles, village properties will be renamed Centara Villas and spas will be renamed Spa Cenvaree.

The move comes as the Central Group prepares to expand both locally and internationally, starting with a new 505-room hotel, the Centara World Hotel, slated to open March 2008 in Bangkok.

The Marriott hotel chain will take over the 399-room Grand Tropicana Hotel Phuket, in Patong, and rename it the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Patong Beach. The company will also pick up the 256-room Surin Beach Resort, which will be re-branded as the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Surin Beach.

The Marriott management comes through a deal struck between Marriott, which also owns the JW Marriott on Phuket's northern end, and Destination Properties.

Both hotels will undergo significant renovations during the process. They are both expected to be finished by early 2008.

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Life after the death of the company pension plan

Saving money from comes naturally to some people but not to others. Perhaps for most people it is like dieting, postponed until next month, next year or even later.

Traditionally, employees of companies were automatically part of a firm's pension scheme. The employee would contribute about 7.5% of his salary to the pension fund and the company, in most cases, would match this sum.

After decades of service the employee would be able to retire with a pension of around two-thirds his final salary.

This cozy situation has changed for several reasons. Employers have realized that this does not suit their operations for many reasons.

Often a company's largest asset will be its pension fund, but this is not an asset of any real financial value to the company and produces little benefit.

Companies have also found that their financial commitments to the pension fund are, in reality, a blank check for a great sum of money and with pensioners living longer than in the past the pension fund can become a huge liability.

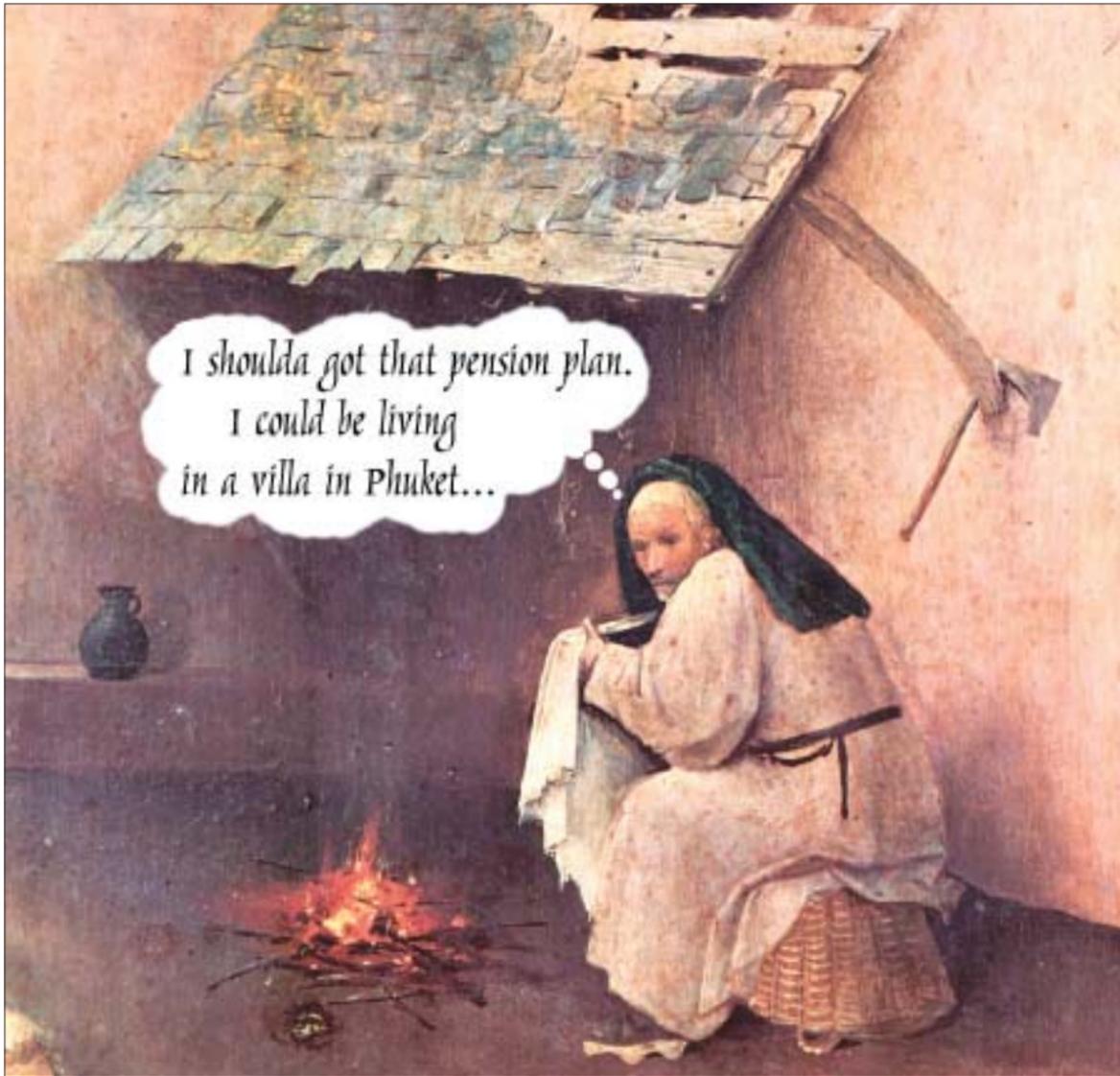
It is not simply a matter of companies being greedy, it's more a matter of survival of the company itself.

Pensions give even the wealthiest governments major problems. After World War II, the British government introduced an old-age pension that, for males, paid benefits from the age of 65. At that time, life expectancy for males was 63 years, now life expectancy is over 70.

Many developed countries are also finding that birth rates are dropping and consequently the governments' ability to pay pensions is being challenged. Society has changed dramatically over the past 50 years, as have attitudes toward family responsibilities. In the past, the family was a close-knit unit and one of the benefits was care of the elderly.

The change, especially in wealthier countries, towards smaller nuclear families has seen a change in attitudes towards the financial care of the elderly. People are now expected to take care of their own finances and with governments increasingly unable to take the burden this is what the future holds.

Governments these days are often telling their citizens that



With apologies to Hieronymus Bosch.

they must make provisions for their own retirements. Most governments still pay pensions, but the amounts paid are more aimed at staving off starvation than providing a comfortable retirement.

Expatriates now are in a different position; often employers do not even offer pension plans. Many expats are working in various parts of the world on contracts and change employers every few years. Others are running their own businesses, but in many cases the eventual sale proceeds of the business may well result in inadequate funds for retirement years.

In reality, many businesses fail and if the business operator was relying on the business being the future "nest egg", he is sorely disappointed. Expats are a diverse group, and are more likely to be more diverse than almost any other group of people. In Phuket, we can see the difference ranging from the extremely wealthy to those who are close to despair.

There are various choices to cover pensions. Offshore insurance companies offer pension plans, and while the lump-sum in-

vestment plans, such as mutual funds, stocks and bonds, in this sector are extremely competitive, the pension and savings plans are just the opposite.

Pension plans suffer from high fees and if they have to be cashed in early they are subject to crippling early withdrawal charges. The situation is so bad that since 1990 I have refused to sell pension products because I believe the average person would be better off leaving the money in the bank and investing it only when a reasonable lump sum has been saved.

However, there are usually exceptions to a rule. The pension

plan offered by Close Private Bank is such an exception. The charges are moderate, the plan is flexible and it offers a fair deal to customers.

Close Private Bank was formed in the UK in 1873 and has a top investment grade credit rating. The bank is listed on the London Stock Exchange and its shares are part of the Financial Times Stock Exchange - FTSE 250 Index.

The pension scheme is designed for expats through the bank's Guernsey, Channel Islands, operation; though it also has an office in Singapore.

The pension has several

options and benefits. First, it is portable - a contributor can take the pension to whichever country he moves to.

Also, the pension is held in a trust, so that in the event of the death of the holder, there are no delays in obtaining probate. Having a pension in trust means that in the event of insolvency or divorce, creditors may not seize the assets.

The pension plan can be denominated in UK pounds, euros or US dollars. Contributions can be increased, decreased or, if necessary, stopped without any penalty. At the outset of the plan a retirement age is selected, but can be changed at any time.

The assets of the pension can be borrowed, up to 40%, in a pre-agreed credit facility and the bank supplies a gold Visa card to investors. Pension plan members receive a valuation twice yearly and the value of the pension can be checked at any time online.

Close Private Bank is the largest independent merchant bank in the UK and by using its Guernsey Pension Plan, investors have tax-free returns.

Investment choices, which can be changed, range from "Cautious to Neutral" to "Balanced" to "Growth" and there is another option which simply tracks the Libor - London Interbank Offer Rate in sterling, euros or US dollars.

This is by far the best pension plan I have seen offered to expatriates.

Richard G Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service. He can be reached at Tel: 076-381997, Fax: 076-383185, Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th



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By Richard G Watson

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PC group therapy: THE DOCTOR IS IN

Our first PC Group Therapy session in Patong drew a dozen people. Attendance at the second one grew by almost 50%. At this rate, by the end of the year, we'll need a room the size of Samui to hold everybody.

The folks in attendance ranged from absolute first-time beginners to grizzled Microsoft Certified System Engineers. And one card-carrying dummy.

I'd like to go over some of the things we talked about at the first two sessions. I can only scratch the surface: we covered a lot of territory. As befits the wide-open nature of the Group Therapy sessions, lots of people helped other people, shared their experiences and their expertise, and we solved a lot of problems.

Recent shenanigans by local Internet Service Providers provoked several questions about Domain Name Servers: the ISPs here in Phuket had people change their Domain Name Servers, and several people in, uh, "therapy" wanted to know why. The short answer: the ISPs don't know what they're doing. The longer answer requires a bit of explanation.

You and I work with the Internet by typing in names like phuketgazette.net or smtp.mail.com. Computers on the Internet don't understand names - they need so-called "IP addresses", which are numbers that look like 203.146.21.166 (the IP address for phuketgazette.net).

Whenever you type a Web address into a browser or an email program, your computer has to reach out to a giant telephone book, to translate phuketgazette.net into 203.146.21.166. That telephone book is called a Domain Name Server. Its sole purpose is to translate domain names into IP addresses.

When you pay for an Internet account, the company that provides the Internet service is supposed to give you automatic

access to a telephone book - a Domain Name Server. Your programs are rigged to consult the ISP's telephone book whenever they need to look up a telephone number.

Sadly, some ISPs still haven't figure out how to automatically offer a telephone book for your programs to use - in computer lingo, they don't have a functional default DNS server. Instead of fixing their problem, they force you, the customer, to reach into the bowels of your computer and manually specify the location of a telephone book.

If you've ever received a notice from your Internet Service Provider - or if you've ever watched over the shoulder of one of the guys who installs your ADSL line - and you've been instructed to go into the Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) Properties dialog and type in a Preferred DNS server number, you should know that the only reason for doing so is to cover up for the mistakes of the Internet Service Provider.

You should also know that if you move your computer somewhere else, or switch to a different Internet Service Provider, having a DNS server number



And you think you have a messed up ADSL line? Fred Nesvold tells me this is his line, coming straight out of his apartment.

hard-coded in your computer can cause all sorts of grief.

What can you do? Vote with your feet. If a technician monkeys around with your computer and gives you a manual DNS server number, or if you get instructions from your ISP showing you in great detail how to manually change your DNS, get a different ISP. Life's too short to deal with bozos.

Flushed: In a related DNS question, one of the people at the PC Group Therapy session asked about "flushing the DNS cache". That sounds both mystical and scatological, but in fact it isn't as

your DNS cache becomes corrupted), you throw away all of the already-looked-up-entries ("flush the cache") and start all over again.

Some people think their computers go faster after they've flushed the cache. In fact, the computer runs just a little bit slower, until it's filled up the cache again. The difference is hardly perceptible.

Well served: Shortly after the second meeting, Paul Spring (Email: admin@thaiservers.com) let me in on a surprise announce-

ment that should be of interest to any companies or individuals who want their own Web server.

Paul runs Thaiservers.com. He hosts both of my websites, and he's done a great job of it for years. For example, one morning I sent Paul an emergency email at 3:04 am about a domain transfer. He got the new server up and running, and sent me back a confirming message at 3:35 am that same day.

Thaiservers works with a very capable "server farm" in the US. That's why my sites stay up so well: Paul provides help here in Phuket, but the servers are in the US.

Paul's worked out a deal with his server farm to provide an exceptional package for folks who want to have their own Internet servers. Mind-boggling, actually.

One of the packages includes a Pentium D930 3.0 GHz with 2 x 2MB cache and 1GB of RAM, 250GB SATA II hard disk, 100mbps direct connection to the Internet, 2,000GB per month bandwidth, Linux, Cpanel and WHM.

Total price: a little over 10,000 baht a month, including round-the-clock support in Phuket via email, mobile phone and SMS.

Paul runs, maintains and updates your server to make sure it's always in tip-top condition, hardens the server and plugs bugs in the operating system and control panel. You own the server. You can change anything that you like.

If you have a computer question, I would like to invite you to join me on Sunday between 10 am and noon at my Sandwich Shoppe in Patong. Have something to sell - a computer, an Internet service, a hardware repair center? Looking for a job, or freelance work?

Come by on Sunday, and every Sunday for the foreseeable future. No rules. No holds barred. No commitments. No guarantees. Let's just get together and see if we can solve each other's problems.

If you can't make it this week, not to worry. I'll be there next week, too. And the next...

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When he isn't writing computer books and magazine and newsletter articles, knocking Microsoft around on his website, or swinging a butcher knife, Woody Leonhard (woody@khunwoody.com, www.askwoody.com) runs Khun Woody's Bakery and the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong.

Decor

by Natcha Yuttaworawit



PERFECT FOR BEER CHANG: Stainless steel elephant beer steins add a touch of Thai flavor.

Steel products shine in Phuket's kitchens

Homeowners and housekeepers frustrated with inferior kitchen products can find a solution to their woes in locally produced stainless steel items.

The Handmade Shop, owned and managed by Yanisa Somthai, has been importing stainless steel to Phuket from Ayudhaya and Kanchanaburi for two years, and selling products from Thai producers injects income into local communities, she said. It also provides an opportunity for Thai craftsman to exhibit their skills.

Stainless steel, which has become increasingly popular in kitchens due to its high resistance to stains, rust and corrosion, is easier to clean and has a longer lifespan than ordinary steel, although it costs more.

The iron-carbon alloy is made from chromium and nickel and is protected by an invisible layer of chromium (III) oxide.

Kitchenware sold at The Handmade Shop, which can be custom-designed, is made from 18/8 stainless steel (18% chromium, 8% stainless steel).

All items are dishwasher-safe and can be cleaned using dish washing liquid, although they should not be scrubbed with dust or sand, said K. Yanisa.

K. Yanisa's store doesn't end with stainless steel, however, and includes a range of tin sculp-



These chopsticks aren't especially easy to use, but their modern Korean style more than makes up for the difficulty.

tures made by artisans in Chiang Mai. As with the stainless steel articles, the tin sculptures can be custom-made to fit any design.

K. Yanisa didn't want any prices to be listed in the newspaper, but she assures readers that she is fair to Westerners and maintains a single pricing scheme.

For more details visit the shop in Cherng Talay, opposite Bang Tao Beach Riding Club, open 9 am to 9 pm, or call K. Yanisa at 076-270847.

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Gardening

by Bloomin' Bert

Predictably unpredictable

Predictability: there's a lot to be said for it. We may as well start close to home; the half-dozen or so regular readers of this column should be prepared for an aimless rant that precedes more ramblings about something green and growing. No surprises there.

There is predictability elsewhere, however. It's quite reassuring to know exactly what will happen in a Thai soap opera even before the opening credits have finished. Some young bloke is going to fall desperately in love with a stunning girl, then get sick and eventually die in a hospital bed.

There will, without doubt, be an older woman knocking around somewhere, with big hair held upright by a gallon of hairspray. She will shout a lot at the pretty girl, and the girl will pout excessively in return.

The older lady will be married to a downtrodden chap who wouldn't say boo to a goose. Have I missed anything?

This predictability thing is everywhere. How many times have you met someone who said that he's got an idea that will make him extremely rich, but he just needs a backer for a little "initial capital outlay"?

You know he's a buffoon,

but he swears you'll both be millionaires in months.

Of course, you do the sensible thing and distance yourself from the madness as swiftly as possible. Your "friend", however, piles every penny he has into this scheme of his. His downward financial spiral is inevitable; as predictable as a Thai policeman's shirt shrinking in the wash.

Us islanders inevitably receive house guests, perhaps staying only a few nights each visit. Your mate's in town, but how does he manage to pick one of the few days of the year when the bars are closed for the night? Totally predictable.

Thai food is predictably spicy. Thais can eat quantities of chili that would make most people cry. So, if a Thai person assures you that what's on your plate is mai phet (not spicy), don't take any chances, just run for cover. If it looks deadly, it probably is.

Most people who know me would probably describe me as a little predictable. I'm the sort that tends to eat at the same restau-



The golden dewdrop's flowers may be pretty, but the berries pack a poisonous punch.

rants on a regular basis, and even orders the same food on arrival. Come to think of it, some of the waitresses don't even bother giving me a menu now.

The plant world enjoys predictability, too. But there's a catch; not all plants are as predictable as others. Plants are

known for the particular flowers or fruit that they produce, or the distinctive leaves that set them apart from everything else floral.

The golden dewdrop, or tien thong as it's known in Thai, is one of the most unpredictable plants around in terms of appearance. It doesn't seem to have decided what it should be famed for, so it has a go at everything – growth speed, flowers, berries... the whole lot. It goes by many other names including sky flower, duranta and pigeon berry. It's a fairly fast-growing plant that can reach heights of up to a couple of meters.

A dewdrop, as most of us know, is regarded as a petite, delicate thing. The dewdrops that appear on this specimen, however, aren't the most attractive things of the plant world. Perhaps the golden dewdrop isn't the ideal name for the plant whose fruit bears much more resemblance to bright orange garden peas.

The flowers, however, are quite cute. The tiny, vivid lilac flowers form in spectacular clusters. They are swiftly followed by loose clusters of bright orange berries that look good enough to eat. That's probably not the most sensible thing to do though, as

they're poisonous (containing hydrocyanic acid). So it's probably a good idea to keep this one away from children's play areas.

Plants in Europe reflect their seasons, with blossoms appearing on fruit-bearing plants in spring. These drop off en masse to be replaced by the fruit when it gets a bit warmer.

Not so in Phuket. Plants here are a little confused, as the seasons here don't tell them what to do in the same way. The golden dewdrop is no exception. The berries and flowers appear in a never-ending cycle. The berries are produced immediately after the flowers and arrive in such quantities that they actually cause the branches to arch down, as if they can't bear the weight.

The dewdrop grows at an enthusiastic pace, and soon becomes a straggly bush if not regularly attacked with a good pair of secateurs. It makes a superb hedge or effective windbreak for the garden, and becomes denser with regular pruning. Trained well with a few bits of wire bent into shape, this plant can grow to any shape you want. It does as it's told. Topiary starts here.

Like so much of the vegetation that thrives in Thailand, it will put up with virtually any kind of treatment. It's happy in full sun or partial shade, although it will produce more flowers and fruit in full sun. It needs fairly moist, well-drained soil, but doesn't demand too much water.

Likely because of its virile nature, in other parts of the world the golden dewdrop has been declared a menace. In the US, it's officially labeled as one of Hawaii's most invasive plants. You don't get a reputation like that by sitting around doing nothing.

Life would probably be fairly dull if everything was totally predictable. Flowers and poisonous berries? Why not? Time for a beer, anyway – my mate's in town. It's not election day, is it?

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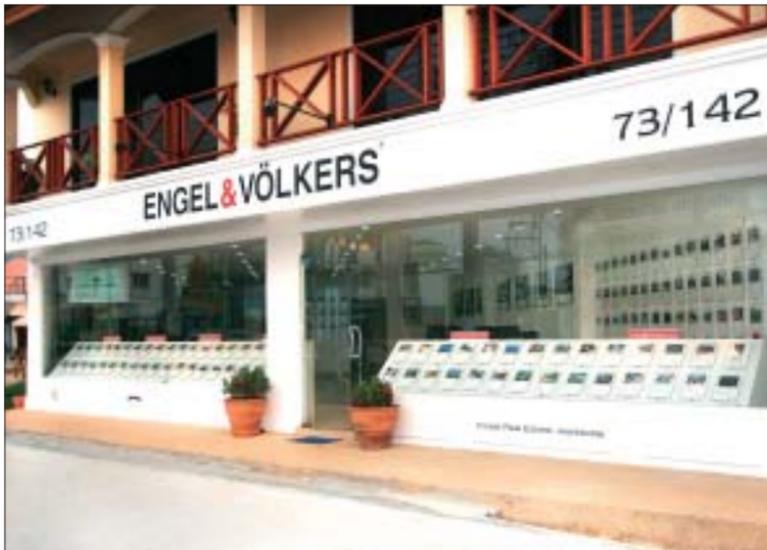
Clear thinking about protection

Once upon a time, we had a functional ozone layer. It shielded us from the sun's harmful rays. It controlled the earth's temperature, and it worked quite marvelously... until we somehow managed to mess it up.

Many years and many inventions later, we've discovered the best protection under the sun is still the one nature invented: the ozone layer. Following a long tradition of man-made inventions mimicking one of Earth's finest creations, KristalBond glass coating copies the UV protection of the ozone layer.

Those copied developments, such as Gecko tape, Sharkskin swimsuits or Lotus-effect nano-coatings for glass, are all described as bionic solutions. KristalBond follows the theme of bionic products and on a pane of glass it can block as much as 99% of UV rays and reduce heat by 90%. The same effect could be achieved by painting the windows over with black paint, but KristalBond does it with a barely-noticeable shade.

KristalBond is the only UV protective coating that uses Sol-



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: The right main window of the Engel & Völkers office in Kamala has been coated with KristalBond, which blocks 99% of UV rays. The main window on the left has not.

Gel technology. It comes in liquid form but within a few hours of application, it forms a micro-thin solid layer on the glass surface.

With the help of nanotechnology, this coating is evenly dispersed and includes agents such as infrared absorbers and optional color pigments. This method also allows KristalBond to form a long-lasting, seamless bond with glass surfaces of any shape and size.

If you've invested a small fortune on a property with a beautiful view – be it a magnificent vista of the sea or a room overlooking lush landscaped gardens – surely you want as little as possible to come between yourself and your picturesque surroundings.

KristalBond, however, can also protect your family, your beautiful curtains, wooden floor-

ings, carpets, upholstery and pictures that are otherwise at risk from the sun's UV rays.

In addition to keeping your Monet from fading, it may also help the environment. Since the gel prevents infrared rays from penetrating the home, it reduces heat inside the home, which reduces the need for using air conditioners.

Factory-installed sun protection remains the most convenient way to get UV protection in window glass, but this is only possible on double-layer glass. That means that it is much more expensive than regular glass and twice the weight.

Post-factory sun protection is otherwise limited to tinted films, which are big sheets of plastic that adhere to the glass. These have a limited lifetime and can peel or bubble, but KristalBond has a 10-year warranty and promises to hold up in even the toughest weather.

KristalBond can also be applied to car windows. If you suffer from failed cosmetic surgery or you are an awkward driver, you may like to hide your face behind a dark tinted window, but

as soon as the sun is going down driving could become twice as difficult. With tinted windows you are unable to recognize objects quickly enough to react. With KristalBond, however, you get a full UV protection on all windows with clear vision.

Surfaces treated with the technology don't need any special maintenance and can be cleaned as usual. If you would like to see a sample, stop at the Engel & Völkers office in Kamala. Try to determine which window is treated and which is not.

For a demonstration, visit the TCM Asia booth number 102 at the Architect & Engineering Exhibition from July 12-15 at the Royal Phuket City Hotel. The exhibition will be open from 11 am to 8 pm.

Andreas Ruthe is Managing Director of Technical Construction Material Asia Co Ltd (TCM Asia). He has lived in Phuket for five years and is the sole agent for KristalBond and other nano-technology products in Phuket. Contact him by email at: ruthe@tcm-asia.com

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

Pornsawan rises in Phun Phol

Piling work is slated to begin mid-August for the Pornsawan Grand Tower & Pornsawan Plaza, the 800-million-baht project on eight rai on Phun Pol Rd, opposite the Bank of Ayudhya's Phun Pol branch. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.

Pornsawan comprises a 10-story condominium block and a four-story plaza building that will feature a large water park on the top deck.

The condominium building, called Pornsawan Grand Tower, will house 72 apartments on the fifth to the 10th floor, with the lobby area, management offices, laundry, spa and a convenience store on the ground floor.

The second, third and fourth floors will provide parking space for about 120 cars.

Pornsawan Kongkawai, project developer and managing director of P.N. Land Co Ltd, told the Gazette that about 40% of the apartments have been sold since going on the market on June 1.

Three types of apartments are available: penthouse suite A, which has 100 square meters of usable space; standard suite B, which has 67sqm; and standard suite C, which has 60sqm.

The penthouse will be a two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment with a living area and a three-square-meter balcony. Type B and C units will have one bedroom, one bathroom, living area and also a 3sqm balcony.

There will be 24 units of each condominium type, with prices ranging from 2.9 million baht to 5.2 million baht and all units will include full furniture and decor package.

"In addition to the parking area on the fourth floor, we will have a swimming pool and fitness center for residents. We will also have CCTV security cameras on each floor and the system will be connected to the local police station," K. Pornsawan said.

"The apartments will be on the fifth floor and higher because we have four-story buildings surrounding our location. From the



The Pornsawan Grand Tower & Pornsawan Plaza development will feature 72 apartments, retail outlets, convenience stores and a water park; all of which will completely overshadow its surrounding developments.

fifth floor and up, you will be able to see the sea from the balconies. Our residents will have views of Ao Phuket and Saphan Hin," he said.

In addition to the condominium building, there will be a four-story plaza building with a water

park on the top deck – claimed to be the first of its type in Southern Thailand.

"We decided to build a water park so we would attract children. We believe that any business that can bring in children will be successful because it means that we will be able to attract the entire family," said K. Pornsawan.

The plaza building will be 56 meters wide and 56 meters long, giving a usage area of 3,000 square meters to each floor for retail outlets.

The ground floor will feature an information technology center, while the second floor will have a shopping plaza, banks and event halls. The third floor will have a food center, playground and gaming station.

Parking for 400 cars will be provided on three floors and the area surrounding the building. An 8-meter by 36-meter pond will be

installed at the front of the building.

The plaza building will sit on three rai while the condominium building will have a two-rai footprint. Three rai adjacent to the buildings will be used for landscaped grounds and additional parking.

K. Pornsawan said that the condominium market in Phuket City still has potential to grow as he could see from the number of units sold for this project and also from his previous development.

"Our last project was Pornsawan Condotel, located on Chao Fa East Rd, which is nearing completion. It features 72 condominiums including units that are either 36sqm or 72sqm. We have seen how the market has grown quite well for this area, as we sold all of the units in only two weeks.

"We have both Thai and foreign customers purchasing the units. Thai customers have mostly bought the one-bedroom design as an investment property while our foreign customers have tended to buy the two-bedroom design for living purposes.

"The most attractive feature for the Pornsawan Grand Tower & Pornsawan Plaza is that we are the first condominium site in Phuket City that will showcase sea views and we are certainly the only development that will have a water park to attract people as well," he added.

For more information, contact Pornsawan Grand Tower & Pornsawan Plaza sales office at 5/125 Moo 2, Chao Fa Rd, Wichit, Muang, Phuket. Tel: 076-244262, 076-245345, 089-4461222. Website: www.pornsawangroup.com




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Home of the Week

Cherng Talay

Riverside respite

This week's Home of the Week, located within the Baan Rim Tarn development in Cherng Talay, is perfectly suited to be either a permanent residence or a holiday home.

With a peaceful riverside to the front and hills with rubber plantation behind, Baan Rim Tarn is a community of 21 villas. As with the other units in the development, this two-bedroom, split-level house with 241 square meters of living space is designed to optimize enjoyment of life in the tropics.

There are two ways to enter the property: through the covered parking space, large enough for two cars; or through the large hardwood front door. Both lead to the house via stepping stones next to a pond and decorated water feature.

Through the front door, you enter the living, dining and kitchen area with full Western-standard kitchen appliances and travertine limestone flooring. The modern-design space totals an area of 42sqm. The villa has been designed to allow breezes to enter through the large doorways, cooling the living area.

At one end of the kitchen is a large maid's room and laundry facilities.

The living-dining area opens out through glass sliding doors, lined with aluminum frames in hardwood, onto a balcony overlooking the swimming pool.

The 24sqm pool and surrounding garden are the main focus of the home and can be viewed from all rooms. Surrounding the pool is a sandwash and earthen-tile terrace. On the far



side of the swimming pool is a large sala, providing a shady area for cool relaxation.

Down a few stairs from the living area is the 25-sqm first bedroom, with red hardwood parquet flooring. The bedroom includes a large walk-in closet and an ensuite shower room of two meters by three meters with mosaic tiles.

Again, the views are out on to the garden area and swimming pool, and to the river beyond. Out from the sliding glass doors is a four-meter-long terrace, with easy access to the swimming pool.

The second bedroom, at 16sqm, includes an en-suite bathroom measuring two meters by three meters. This bedroom adjoins the living-dining area, opening to the sala by the pool.

The current owners, who have decorated the house to a high standard, are selling the home partially furnished with the option to negotiate on all furniture.

The house is available freehold or leasehold. The asking price is 10.8 million baht.

To arrange a viewing or for more information contact Morna Macdonald at CBRE (Tel: 085-7829544; Email: morna.macdonald@cbre.co.th)



Main picture: White fantastic in the living/dining area. Inset, the house at night.

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Property Gazette

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HOUSE FOR SALE
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INEXPENSIVE LAND
1.5 rai to 2 rai near Mission Hills golf course. For pricing, contact Tel: 086-9421930.

LAND FOR SALE KOH SAMUI



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2-BEDROOM HOUSE
Kamala area. Quiet location, nice garden, aircon, close to the beach. Great place at a great price. 1.45 million baht. Please email for photos and details. Tel: 087-2756736. Email: thai_hs@yahoo.com

PANORAMIC SEAVIEW LAND

1 rai (1,600sqm) land plot in Rawai with main road access, available for quick sale. Project plans also available. Price: 10 million baht. Tel: 081-7888280, 084-0639223.

HOUSE FOR SALE



3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 54sq wah. Price: 3.8 million baht. Contact at Tel: 081-6760125. Send email: jaidee_kind@yahoo.com

LAGUNA VILLA AND LANDPLOTS. Luxury villa with pool in Laguna area for sale. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, big garden, freehold or leasehold. Landplots: 836sqm and 640sqm. Both plots for sale. Call for details. Tel: 087-8934636. Email: annericphuket@hotmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

Chalong, 696sqm, flat land with hill view, water, electric, Chanote, 3 million baht. Tel: 081-6480736 (Thai). Email: thaipaul@gmx.de

RAWAI BEACH

condo. Sea view, foreign freehold. 550,000 baht. Tel: 086-9408914. For more info email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

RAWAI POOL VILLA

New resort of 6 houses for sale. 4.5 million baht each. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

HOUSE URGENTLY

for sale. A beautiful 1-story house in Chalong with 3 bedrooms, indoor Jacuzzi, outdoor pool, fully equipped kitchen with island. Located on over 0.5 rai land. Urgent to sell. Priced at only 4 million baht. Tel: 075-637588, 081-6765525. Fax: 075-637588. Email: frank@krabibiz.com For additional information, visit our website: www.sothebysrealty.com

LAND ON BYPASS ROAD

Eleven rai. Last plot near Leelawadee resort. Chanote title. Price: 6 million baht per rai. For details, send email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

KARON LAND FOR SALE



15 million baht per rai, Chanote, hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet area. Please contact for additional information. Tel: 081-5597456. Email: se_rim@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

Kathu area. 3 bedrooms, aircon, large garden, big balcony, big kitchen. Total area: 180sqm. Tel: 084-7597880.

3 RAI IN THALANG

50% discount for 3 rai 5 wah. Water, electric, road access, Chanote. Tel: 089-2911112, 087-3898139.

NEW HOME 3.99 MILLION BAHT

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1-bedroom modern apartment. Tel: 084-8473304. For further details, please visit our website at http://www.selectphuket.com

CHALONG SHOPHOUSE

for sale or rent. New, 3 stories, Wiset Rd, close to CP Mart. Please contact K. Jenwit at Tel: 086-6933340.

LUXURIOUS VILLAS

In Bang Tao, Natai beach and Yacht Heaven area. Please see our website: http://www.janepropertyphuket.com

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AO POR LAND URGENT SALE



150rai, Chanote, panoramic sea view. From 2.3 million baht per rai. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-5597456. Email: se_rim@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

Saiyuan. Soi Tohinkhow, 80sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, swimming pool. Tel: 085-6166676.

KHAO LAK HOUSE

95sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 1 kitchen. 1.99 million baht (last price). Will rent for 12,000 baht per month. Call Tel: 081-892-0213. Email: relaxphuket@thailand.com

RAWAI 2-STORY HOUSE

140sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, close to the beach. Price: 1.5 million baht. Call Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

PHANG NGA LAND FOR SALE

Chanote title and deed. Total area: more than 5 rai. Priced at only 4.5 million baht. Tel: 076-221595, 076-221598, 081-8918755.

KARON CONDO

Waterfront location, central Karon Beach. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 167sqm corner unit with sea view on the 9th floor, unit#9D. 12.6 million baht. Tel: 081-4084991.

2-STORY HOUSE PHUKET TOWN

5m x 20m, Soi Romanee. Price: 3.8 million baht. Call Tel: 084-0577505.

LAYAN VILLAGE



20 rai: Few minutes from the beach, Chanote. For sale or looking for serious partner to develop. All infrastructure is in place, 2 public roads, electric, phone, Internet, office. Lake is part of the land. 2 rai: Chanote, lake view. 7 rai: Chanote, hillside with nice sea view, road access. For plot prices, send email: danwea@loxinfo.co.th

Land for Sale Land for sale at Kathu

5 rai 50sq wah with Chanote title, good area, canal at the back. 5 minutes to Big C/Central. Perfect for private complex. 7 million baht per rai.

House for Sale House at Phuket Country

Club golf course, near club house, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, aircon, kitchen units with hob, hood, oven and dishwasher. Land area 175sq wah with Chanote title 7.3 x 12m pool & Jacuzzi. Nice & quiet. Beautiful Golf views. 17 million baht. Available for long term rent.

New Double shop for rent New double shop unit

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Please contact:

Mr. Geoff Curry
Mobile: 081-8540061.
Tel office contact
K.Ning: 081-0803414.
Tel: 076-323214
Fax: 076-323215

HOUSE FOR SALE
Soi Namtok in Kathu, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, aircon, kitchen. Price: 880,000 baht. Tel: 089-8728188.

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3-story modern home & office. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms located in Karon. Very close to the main road. Price: 4.75 million baht. Tel: 076-280801. Fax: 076-281067. Email: legalinsidesiamproperty@gmail.com

KAMALA NEW VILLA



For sale/rent. 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2-car garage, studio apartment: 370sqm. Land: 750sqm. Price: 16.5 million baht. Call Boomer. Tel: 086-2878966.

LAND FOR SALE



Flat land, 119sq wah in Maneekram, located between Chalong and Central Festival. Full public utilities, quiet area. Please contact Tel: 084-8516115. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE



Single house in Soi Bangrae, Chalong. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living area, kitchen and many more facilities. Great buy. 125 talang wah & 500sqm. 6.5 million baht. Contact Tel: 081-5395317, 086-6890769.

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LAND IN NAI YANG

for sale. Chanote. Near beach. 2 rai: 7 million baht. 1 rai: 3.5 million baht. 6,440sqm plots: 1.5 million baht per plot. Call Tel: 089-7241140. Email: nong.phuket@yahoo.de

APARTMENTS IN KARON

One unit with 3 fully furnished apartments for sale. Must see. Please contact John Johannesen for pricing and further details. Tel: 081-8957957. Email: gymworld@loxinfo.co.th

NICE HOUSE

2-story detached house with Western-style kitchen, dining room, living room, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 aircon, carport, garden, fully furnished. Price: 3.2 million baht obo. Contact Tel: +31-64-6098573. Email: shd1@planet.nl Visit our website: <http://home.planet.nl/~duang000/house.htm>

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1.6 million baht per rai. Will sell from 5 to 22 rai. Contact for additional details. Email: admin@thaisunshine.developments.com

HOUSE IN PATONG

23sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, bathroom with hot/cold water, living room, kitchen, 2 cable TVs, 2 fridges, washing machine, fully furnished. Only 1km from Patong Beach. Price: 4.7 million baht. Contact Tel: 076-341724, 081-5690664. Email: sunsetap@ji-net.com

CONDO FOR SALE

Patong studio rooms, fully furnished, aircon, hot water, kitchen corner, pool, parking area, 400 meters to beach. Contact Tel: 081-4596090, 081-8411916.

RAWAI BEACH LAND

500 meters to Rawai Beach, 100 meters to hotel and spa, 34.5m x 41m plot. Price: 6.2 million baht. Please contact Tel: 081-0910964.

LAND ON KOH MAPHRAO

East side, street access, electricity, water. Approx. 1 rai, ready to be built on. Price: 3.9 million baht. 7 rai next to Swiss resort. Price: 2.9 million baht per rai. Call Tel: 081-8918930.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Beautiful Sino-Portugese house in center of Phuket City. Already restored, ideal for restaurant, guesthouse or business. Tel: 081-9700121. Email: tikky2@mac.com

SEAVIEW LAND FOR SALE



1 rai + 160 sqm. Call for info at Tel: 085-7932718.

LAND FOR SALE

9 rai for sale at Pasak Soi 8, Cherng Talay. 2.7 million baht per rai. Please contact for more information and details. Tel: 076-282808, 086-9519198. Fax: 076-282346. Email: heypiassy@hotmail.com

RAWAI POOL VILLA

Two 2-bedroom pool villas for sale at 6.5 million baht each. Contact for additional details. Tel: 081-8953979. Email: bdandy@tttmaxnet.com Please visit our website at: <http://poolvilla.wetpaint.com/>

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

400sqm land, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool. 6.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

3.5 RAI FLAT LAND

Chanote title, 1 rai, square plot, 500m from Thepkrasattri Rd, Thalang area. Price: 2 million baht. For more information, contact Tel: 084-0577505.

BEAUTIFUL 3-STORY building.

5 aircons, 3 rooms on second floor, third-floor apartment with kitchen and bathroom. Price: 6.2 million baht. 600 meters from Chalong circle on Chao Fa East Rd. Tel: 081-4763242. Email: davidbul@loxinfo.co.th

CHALONG AREA

3.5 rai. 40 meters to connect of mainroad near communication office. Price: 28 million baht. Tel: 084-0577505.

BEACHFRONT POOL house.

3-4 bedrooms from only 8 million baht. For more details, email: admin@thai.sunshinedevelopments.com

NEW PATONG VILLA WITH POOL

Very exclusive, completely-furnished villa with swimming pool in best residential area of Patong. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms with aircons, 3 bathrooms, Jacuzzi, Western kitchen, dining area. Living area: 200sqm. Freehold land: 150sqm. Price: 8.5 million baht. Contact Tel: 081-8928526. For additional information, please visit our website at www.phuket.besthomes.com

CONDOS FOR SALE

Fantastic sea views and hill views in Patong Tower. Only a few minutes to Patong Beach. Must see! Contact for pricing. Tel: 076-341871, 081-5697616. Email: sales@phuketislandrealestate.com

LAND IN KAMALA

All with Chanote. 55 rai in the most exclusive area near Kamala center on flat land at 8.5 million baht per rai. Also, 6 rai with good sea view at 6 million baht per rai. 20rai with best sea view in Kamala at 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308. Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

HOUSE FOR SALE/RENT

1km from Heroines Monument, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, swimming pool. Sale price: 2.6 million baht. Rent price: 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 083-1036578.

NEW SHOPHOUSES

near Bangla Rd. 12 new shophouses for sale in the heart of Patong. Can buy whole plot or separate. Very close to Jungceylon and Bangla. Walk to the beach in 10 minutes from the site. Must see! Tel: 076-239839, 081-8779292. Fax: 081-8779292. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Unfinished duplex with land for sale. Directly on 16th fairway. Contact Tel: 087-5074395. Email: radrussell@gmail.com Website: www.fairway16.com

URGENT SALE

Khao Lak. Bang Niang bungalow-apartment resort. 8 bungalows with 2 rooms and 2 bungalows with 3 rooms. 6 x 12-meter swimming pool. Sauna and Jacuzzi, restaurant. All rooms with aircon, color TV, DVD player and ADSL. Parking available. Price: 9 million baht. Contact Tel: 076-346065, 081-8914844. Email: joerg@phuket.ksc.co.th

KAMALA LAND PLOTS

For sale. Chanote titles. Great plots. 1 rai: 3.3 million baht. 1,000sqm: 2.3 million baht. 400sqm: 1.3 million baht. Contact Tel: 076-292596, 086-2678477. Email: tourniechristian@hotmail.com

BLUE CANYON CONDOMINIUM

One of the best condominiums at Blue Canyon Country Club now for sale. Freehold. 265sqm. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, large terrace. Includes active golf membership. 16.5 million baht. No agents. Tel: 081-9708304. Email: amy@my-rooms.com

SHOPHOUSE

4 stories, great location near Phuket City bus terminal. 4m x 12m. Price: 3.8 million baht. Tel: 084-6518028. Email: herbert.eisenberg@gmail.com For details, visit our website: <http://eisrawai.wetpaint.com/page/Phuket+Townhouse>

SEAVIEW COTTAGE

Cape Yamu. Fantastic views over many islands. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Private swimming pool, set in 700m of tropical gardens. Exclusive private development. Chanote title. Price: 12 million baht. Tel: 086-2796283.

NEW HOUSE KATHU

Great views, quiet, secure, furnished, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 aircons, Western-style kitchen, 2 carparks, 460sqm land. 6.5 million baht. Tel: 087-9391035 (Eng), 086-0050318 (Thai).



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Property Gazette

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BEACHFRONT ON BANG TAO
Beachfront apartment. Rare duplex, 2 bedrooms, 2 balconies, sea view, pool, parking, fully furnished, separate storeroom. Rent: 50,000 baht per month. Tel: 852-9033379. Fax: 852-28653966. Email: cmcgee@netvigator.com

VILLAS FOR RENT

Quiet residence in Rawai on Soi Suksan 2. Great location. Electricity not included, 220sqm, 3 bedrooms, TV, DVD, aircon, hot water, ADSL, Wi-Fi, swimming pool, French management. Price: 40,000 baht per month. Please contact for more information and details. Tel: 086-2773817. Email: myprojob@hotmail.fr Please visit our website: www.christianesblue.com

MISSION HEIGHTS
Large luxury house, fully furnished, 4 double bedrooms, all with en-suite bathrooms, maid/guest bungalow in large 120sqm gardens. Pool and Jacuzzi, 10 mins to airport, 10 mins to golf courses. Call for details and pricing. Tel: 076-528016, 089-2262612. Email: jim@jimmarsh.net

4-STORY BUILDING
for rent. 6 bedrooms, opposite Tesco Lotus. Contact for more information at Tel: 089-4743575, 085-9095191, 089-4744839.

B.L. APARTMENT
New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. Price: 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6923163.

3-STORY HOME/OFFICE FOR RENT
Chao Fa Rd and Naka Rd. 2 mins to Central, Big C and Lotus. 2 bedrooms, 2 hot/cold water bathrooms, 2 aircons. 25,000 baht per month obo. 24-hr security, garbage collection, common area garden. Tel: 089-4742815. Email: noppakul@hotmail.com

CHALONG HOUSE FOR RENT
2 bedrooms, kitchen, living room, dining room, laundry room, fully furnished, aircon in every room, carpark, communal swimming pool, tropical garden. ADSL and UBC satellite TV included. Price: 25,000 baht per month. Minimum 6-month lease. Tel: 087-1057320. Email: stefan@phuketit.co.th

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PALM GARDEN
New 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom in Thalang gated community. 24-hr security, swimming pool, furnished. 15,000 per month. Please contact Tel: 081-8928208.

PALAI, GREENHOUSE BIG GARDEN
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KATHU TOWNHOUSE
2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, hot shower, 3 aircons. Fully furnished. Price: 17,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-5371515, 089-9222800 (Eng).

HOUSE FOR RENT/SALE
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for rent in Karon and Patong. Please contact for additional details and pricing information. Tel: 089-4912496. Email: jjc@gmail.com

CHALONG HOUSE
Nearly-new house for rent. 2 bedrooms, 2 aircons, fully furnished. Quiet street, close to everything, great location. Call for information. Tel: 084-8485517.

PATONG CONDO
1-bedroom condo for rent in Patong. Fully furnished. 10-minute walk to beach and Bangla Rd. Great location. Long-term rent: 13,000 baht per month. Please contact Tel: 089-8726895.

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Near Patong temple. Soi Khuan Yang. European-style kitchen with fridge. Fully furnished, aircon, fan, cable TV, hot/cold water bathroom, high-speed wireless Internet. A must see! Great price at only 9,500 baht per month. Please contact for more information at Tel: 084-8450541, 081-8914561.

PANWA BEACH HOUSE
View, deck, sunsets, close to beach, 1.5 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, kitchen, hot/cold water. Long-term rent: 8,500 baht. Tel: 084-0571420.

RAWAI SEAVIEW APARTMENT
New deluxe studio. Full kitchen, cable, DVD, great view, furnished. Long-term rent: 6,000 baht per month. Contact for more information. Tel: 084-0571420.

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KATA LUXURY APARTMENT
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RAWAI VILLA
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3-4 bedrooms, sat TV, Internet, big pool, 2 levels, nicely furnished. Contact Tel: 084-8516121.

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in Patong Tower. Newly renovated in a beautiful modern style. Best location in Patong area. Long-term rent: 18,000 baht per month. Contact at Tel: 087-1238320. Email: deherder@hotmail.com

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RAWAI LUXURY VILLA
4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, European-style kitchen, large swimming pool, garden, ADSL, UBC. Price: 70,000 baht per month. Call for more details at Tel: 081-7196998.

LARGE HOUSE FOR RENT
3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house for long-term rent. Telephone, UBC, garden, etc. Close to golf course & BIS school. Located on quiet private road. Price: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-8439579, 086-9402227.

2-BEDROOM FLAT
Beautiful space, fully furnished, fully equipped, Western-style kitchen. Aircon throughout. Private access to swimming pool. Elevated view of Patong. Quiet and secure. Rental price includes water and UBC TV. Contact for information. Email: simon@coppingerproperties.com

SURIN BEACH APARTMENT
Modern, luxurious ground-floor Lersuang apartment. 2 bedrooms, fully furnished, pool and parking. European kitchen with bar! 35,000 baht per month. Minimum rental of 6 months. 400m to the beach and restaurants. Tel: 089-1925186. Email: slees@slees.com

HOUSE FOR RENT
at Land & Houses in Chalong. New house by the lake. 3 bedrooms, fully furnished, aircon, UBC, ADSL. Call for information at Tel: 081-8953649.

LAGUNA TOWNHOME
3 bedrooms, 400sqm, garden & lap pool, golf course views. Price: 85,000 baht per month. Contact K. Amber. Tel: 089-2001681. Email: aabsxx88@truemail.co.th

HOME NEAR AIRPORT
8km to Phuket airport, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms at Garden Place, 115sqm. Price: 13,500 baht per month. Call for more details. Tel: 086-3823237, 081-2976162.

3-BEDROOM HOUSE
for rent in Chaofa Thani. Price: 9,500 baht per month. Nice garden. Contact at Tel: 076-280440, 086-6831964. Fax: 076-280440. Email: franklee200@hotmail.com

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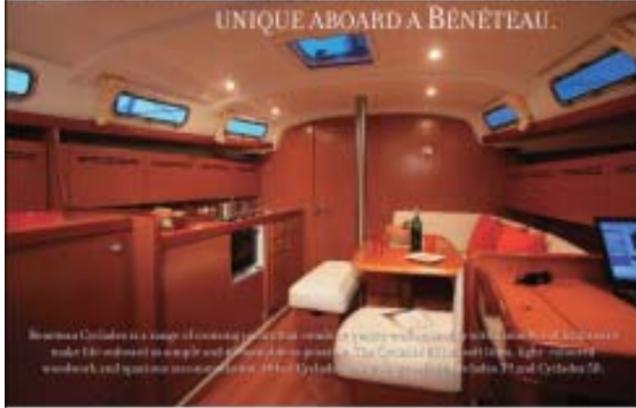
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Dive and fishing. Steppa 37 with flybridge, inboard toilet, storage room, sun deck, shower. Thai registration for commercial business up to 22 pax. Completely renewed hull. 2x200hp Yamahas. Email: iscoth@hotmail.com

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Lots of fun! 5 meters, 120hp engine, seats 5. Includes bimini, trailer, cassette radio, life jackets, etc. Price: 325,000 baht. Tel: 087-263- 4560. Email: mwd@nmwtl.com

SAILBOAT 1968 ISLANDER
for sale. 44ft world cruiser, lying in Haven Marina, US \$50,000. Contact. Email: temptation44@hotmail.com

17.5-METER DIVING BOAT



For sale or charter, width 4.5m. Diesel engine, 320hp generator at 20kW. 30 person capacity. Great buy. Price: 950,000 baht. Call Tel: 081-9680571.

SHIP FOR SALE
200 passengers. Length: 29.9m, beam: 5.0m, draft: 1.2m. Two 500hp engines. Diesel, air-conditioning. Hull made from steel. 40kVA generator. Contact at Tel: 076-212172, 081-894- 8635. Fax: 076-212252. Email: hade@seacano.net

JABSCO HEAD
for sale. Recent model. All seals are brand new and in perfect condition. Can be seen in working situation. Currently at Yacht Haven Marina and moving to Boat Lagoon in two weeks. Please contact for pricing. Tel: 084-8446246. Email: rogerg@seamarine services.com

INDONESIAN WOOD BOAT
Thai-registered wooden boat for sale. 65ft long, 18ft wide, 30 tons. Send email: shaanxi.xian@vipmail.hu or p.atiss@freemail.hu

63-FT LUXURY POWER CRUISER
Fully equipped, water maker, aircon, GPS, radar, life jackets, tender, full galley, bedding, towels, plus much more. All for a very low price. Must be seen. Contact for inspection at Tel: + 66-081-9390176. Email: beaver@tstf.net

20-METER POWER catamaran with 4 double cabins (king size), 2 double cabins for crew and 2 saloons. 90% finished. Price: 49,000 euro. Please call for information. Tel: 087-8919620.

FAST, FUN SAILING dinghies. Australian-built 59ers: 300,000 baht. 45% off new price. 29ers: 220,000 baht. 35% off new price. Like new condition. Please contact for more info. Tel: 081-3970905. Email: phil@circumnave.net



Find more classified ads

"Boats & Marine"

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Island Job Mart

KATATHANI
PHUKET BEACH RESORT

1 Asst. FB Manager

Qualifications:

- Foreigner or Thai nation, male minimum age of 28
- Fluent in written and spoken English, other languages will be an advantage
- Minimum 5 years experience in a senior Food and Beverage position in a 4 - 5 star hotel with several outlets
- A natural, highly motivated leader with great communication skills and good personal relationship

2 Chief Guest Service Agent

Qualifications:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Good command of spoken German and other language would be preferred.
- General computer skills

Experience:

- Experience in guest relations work and knowledge of Front Office work would be an advantage.

www.katathani.com
Please contact Personnel Department
14 Katanoi Road, Karon, Muang, Phuket 83100
Tel: 076-330124-6, EMail: personnel@katathani.com

SILK
restaurant bar

SILK RESTAURANT & BAR A Lan Kwai Fong Group Company. One of the island's most popular restaurants is currently recruiting highly motivated, service-minded and qualified candidates to join our team.

- Restaurant Manager
- Guest Relation Officer
- Cashier
- Waiter & Waitress

Attractive salary with benefits and career opportunities are offered to successful candidates. Please submit your full resume, expected salary and enclose a recent photo to: nattakarn@silkphuket.com

SILK RESTAURANT & BAR
5/50 Moo 3, Cherngthalay Sub-District, Thalang District, Phuket 83110
Telephone: 076-270302 Fax: 076-271704
www.silkphuket.com

SEA
PROPERTY INTERNATIONAL

SEA Property International, one of Phuket's leading Real Estate Agents with an expanding international network of franchised offices, invites applicants for the following position:

FRONT OFFICE RECEPTION STAFF

Looking for an exciting challenge with excellent opportunities for career progression?

Work with the SEA Property International Team:

Your main responsibilities will include:

- Meeting and greeting customers and dealing with day to day enquiries and administrative duties in English and Thai.
- Working on the reception desk of our main Rawai office and being the first point of contact for visitors to the office
- Telephone operator (fielding incoming calls to the office)
- Providing administrative support for the sales and marketing staff

Applicants will have a strong command of both spoken and written English, a positive outgoing personality and the ability to work well under pressure and meet deadlines.

Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and Adobe Photoshop is an advantage but not essential as training will be provided.

Interested candidates are invited to send their applications, full resume and a recent photograph to:

SEA Property International
5/3 Moo 5, Viset Road, A Muang, Phuket, 83130
Tel: 076-381489, 076-381490 Fax: 076-280539
Email: HR@sea-property-international.com
www.sea-property-international.com

British International School, Phuket.
invites applications for the Position of
Manager of Marketing

Reporting directly to the Headmaster, the Manager of Marketing will be responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Department of Marketing and lead a team of six to eight persons. Among the primary responsibilities are the following: coordinating all aspects of marketing the school on the local, national and international levels; developing and administering public relations programs; organizing media events; overseeing student admissions and registration procedures; alumni relations; publications such as brochures, newsletters, prospectus, handbooks and other promotional materials, as well as website management, special events planning and budgeting.

The successful candidate will have strong interpersonal skills, be computer literate, with experience in the field of marketing (preferably in an education environment, but not essential) and be a team player. A minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing will be required.

Remuneration: commensurate with qualifications and experience
Closing date: August 6, 2007

Candidates should e-mail a letter of application, CV, recent photograph and coordinates, along with telephone contacts of three referees to headmaster@bcis.ac.th

 **British International School, Phuket (BIS, Phuket)**
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83000 Thailand
Tel: 076 238 711-20 Fax: 076 238 750 Bangkok Tel: 02 636 8991-2 Fax: 02 636 8992

LOOKING FOR GM
3-star Resort in Phuket, with 45 rooms, is looking for a highly motivated and ambitious GM with strong management and organizational skills. Able to make decisions, negotiate, convince, sell and influence professionals and hotel guests. Outgoing personality, fluent in English, computer skills are a must. Experience and/or interest in real-estate is an asset. Age not over than 35 years old, Thai/Foreign nationality. We offer an exciting and interesting job full of action and potential in a young and friendly environment. Interested persons are invited to send detailed resume and qualification with salary expectation to Khun Tara Ariyawongsophol, Director of Human Resources, at
Email: taraariyawongsophol@hotmail.com

SALES OFFICER
Layan Beach Resort & Spa Village is looking for a Sales Officer. Must be fluent in both Thai and English, possess good communication and presentation skills, be customer-focused with good leadership skills, the ability to motivate others and able to work under pressure. Car and driver's license required. Interested applicants are invited to apply in person or send a resum to: info@layanphuket.com Call K. Orasiri. Tel: 076-313412-4.

TIGER MUAY THAI
This is for Thai nationals only please. Busy and fun sports-oriented business in Chalong is looking for a receptionist/office staff and a cook/waitress for our Thai + foreign restaurant. We also need a nanny for a 1-year-old boy. Receptionist: English and computer skills, working with foreigners, 8 am - 5 pm. Cook: Thai + foreign food, 2 pm-9 pm. Contact K. Smai to schedule interview. Tel: 076-367071. Email: info@tigermuaythai.com

ADMIN/SECRETARY
Experienced admin/sec required for small but busy real estate agency based in Surin. Applicants should be computer literate, able to speak English and able to interact with foreign customers and developers. Please send your CV to email: orawan@phuketpropertyhunter.com

PART-TIME
teachers. The British International School in Phuket requires dedicated and innovative, temporary part-time teachers to work at our summer camp. July 8 - August 4. Bachelor's degree and ESL certificate required. Please contact Tel: 087-2753614. Email: preez@bcis.ac.th

TRAINEE SALES ASST.
for real estate & property development company. You must be able to communicate well in English & be computer literate. Your own car & a phone are necessities. This is a permanent position and offers a salary and a bonus. Thai national only. Please contact for additional information.
Tel: 089-6498703.

RECEPTIONIST
27-room hotel in Patong requires female staff. Good English skills are a must. Call Tel: 081-8921621.

DRIVER WANTED
Local Thai driver with valid driving license for expat family living in Thalang. Please contact at Tel: 076-260468. Fax: 076-260440. Email: admin@theestategroup.com

KARON OFFICE
staff required for boat charter/cultural tour company. Thai with good English skills, sales and marketing experience, must have own transport. Call Tel: 081-0817163. Email: gsmith100@gmail.com

HOTEL JOBS
We currently require 1 cook, 1 English-speaking receptionist and 2 waitresses. Contact via email: info@club-coconut-resort.info

ADMIN WANTED IN KAMALA
Salary 10,000-12,000 baht per month. Must be able to drive and use computer. Uniform provided. Contact Khun Kha for interview. Tel: 081-3963549.

TIMESHARE REPS
& OPCs. Sales reps and OPCs needed. Minimum of 2 years experience. Foreigners okay. Contact for more details. Tel: 081-1371001. Email: solitude001@aol.com

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Executive secretary will be providing secretarial service to the MD as well as handling administrative and HR functions for the office. Male/female, Thai nationality, with experience in the position required. High proficiency English communication skills and computer literate. The candidate must be able to work at Phuket International Airport with own transportation. Interested persons, send CV to hrda@destinationair.com

HEAD ACCOUNTANT
in Krabi. We seek a person who is able to implement and standardize the whole process of accounting. Experience of a minimum of 3 years in the same position, and/or with an accounting company, is required. Must also speak and write English; be loyal and fair; and be willing to take ownership of tasks and work well under pressure. Internet & computer skills are required, as is knowledge of QuickBooks. A driver's license is also required. Contact via email: kristen@krabisunset.com

Looking for a job?
Still haven't found the perfect candidate?
Find more Recruitment Classifieds at www.phuketgazette.net!

Island Job Mart



THE PARADISE KOH YAO
Boutique Beach Resort & Spa

The Paradise Koh Yao, a contemporary 70 room Boutique Resort is located on Koh Yao Noi island, a 60 minute boat trip from Phuket. Catering to the experienced traveler looking for unspoiled nature in uncompromised luxury - away from the crowded tourist spots of Phuket and Krabi.

We are seeking an outstanding personality to be a key member of our motivated team that is committed to personalized, superior customer service.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT MANAGER (ROOM DIVISION)
In charge of Room Division (Front Office, Housekeeping, Engineering, Recreation / Transfers, Spa) directly reporting to the General Manager

- At least 3 - 5 years experience in 5 or 4 star Hotel / Resort operation in similar assignment
- Fluent in English (written / spoken)
- Exposure and personal strength in Front Office, Housekeeping
- Energetic person, pleasant personality and excellent Guest Relations skills
- Strong presence in day to day operations
- Thai National 30 - 40 years of age

Attractive remuneration package will be offered to the right candidate.
Send your latest resume with recent photo and references to: gm@theparadise.biz

The Paradise Koh Yao - Boutique Beach Resort & Spa (Phuket Office)
12/39 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Kohkaew, Muang, Phuket 83000. Tel: 076 238 081
www.theparadise.biz

ONLINE JOB APPLICATION
HOTEL - ACCTING - SALES - IT - WEB DESIGN - F&B
www.KARON-PHUKET-HOTELS.com /JOB.htm

Designer Way Vacation Club, the market leaders in travel agent based holiday clubs in Asia. Due to our rapid expansion we are currently seeking the following candidates for our Phuket exhibition centre:

Marketing Manager

- Thai national
- Able to develop & execute marketing strategies
- Computer literate (Microsoft Word/Excel, Outlook Express)
- Organized and able to work independently
- Experience in hotel/tour operations is an advantage Own car.

Sales Representatives

- Position open to Thai & Foreigners
- Experience preferred but not essential
- Full onsite training provided
- Top commissions paid and daily splits

Work permits will be provided to successful sales candidates. Interested applicants are invited to fax or e mail your resume, details, qualifications and experience with recent photo.
Tel: 076 293061, +66 857851248, Fax: 076 293060.
Email: sales@freedomleisuregroup.com



RESORT MANAGER

An experienced manager is required for a new serviced apartment resort opening in December 2007. The property consists of 96 serviced beachfront apartments with clubhouse facilities in Phuket.

The ideal candidate will need to meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 5 years experience of managing all aspects of international hotels/resorts
- Strong Marketing and Business Development Experience
- Bi-lingual English/Thai
- Be self motivated and hands on

Salary & Benefits will be commensurate with experience

Interested candidates should in the first instance send their CV by Fax or email to:

Alfa Resorts and Management (Thailand) Co., Ltd.
434, 436, 438 Srisoonthorn Rd., T.Cherngtalay
A.Thalang, Phuket 83000 Thailand.
Fax: 076 270 138
email: dan@alfa-resorts.com

OPERATION OFFICER

French speaking. Job duty: will be responsible for operations between Phuket receiving agent and suppliers both in Phuket & overseas. Require young, dynamic person with pleasant personality, energetic and hard-working with service-oriented skill and ability to work with internationally based clients. Must demonstrate proficiency in English & French communication skills and be computer literate. Ideal candidate would be a male or female Thai national and your own transportation would be preferable. Experience with hotel and tourism industries would be an advantage. Interested people, please send CV to info@phuket-receptif.com or walk-in interview at Phuket Receptif Co Ltd 100/23 Moo 5, Chalermprakiat Rama 9 Rd, T. Rasada, Muang, Phuket 83000 Thailand Contact Tel: + 66-076-261195-6. Fax: + 66-076-261197 For additional details, please visit our website:
www.phuket-receptif.com

SMART THAI PERSON wanted. Confident and responsible Thai national required to help small but busy and growing Patong-based company maximize its market potential. Responsibilities include traveling throughout Phuket and meeting both new and existing clients ranging from retail outlets to 5-star hotels. You must have a smart appearance and be able to work under your own initiative. Basic salary after training period is in excess of 20,000 baht per month (+ benefits) with high season target earnings of over 40,000 baht attainable for the successful applicant. Must have excellent command of both spoken and written English. Email: phuket.job@hotmail.com

CASHIER/ORDER taker. Two years' experience in restaurant. English speaker. Tel: 076-345024.

20 Hours Thai Language and Culture Course

Opportunity for Foreign teachers without a degree in education and who wish to teach in Thailand. This programme is offered by the Education Faculty of Rangsit University

23rd and 24th of August 2007
9.00-21.00
British International School, Phuket
12,000 Baht
(Including lunches and dinners)

All Applicants must have at least bachelor's degree.

For more information please contact
076 238711-20 ext. 1122 or 6103 or e-mail: saowarotm@bcis.ac.th

British International School, Phuket (BIS, Phuket)
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83000 Thailand
Tel: 076 238 711-20 Fax: 076 238 750 info@bcis.ac.th www.bcis.ac.th



HEVTA is looking for an active sales/dealer to sell uPVC window & door in Phuket & Samui.

- Age 25 to 35 years old
- Good command of English
- Computer literate
- Able to work on own initiative
- Able to drive & must have a car

Tel: 08-1846-1396, 034-824-729-30
Email: info@hevta.com



The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

Advertising Sales

- Thai national with an outgoing personality
- Good command of written and spoken English
- At least 26 years of age
- Driver's license and own car

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to ann@phuketgazette.net

Reporter

The successful candidate will be a Thai national, with initiative, an outgoing personality, and plenty of experience about the world and how it works. Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car.

Good salary for the right candidate.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV and resumé to: editor@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai,
A. Muang, Phuket 83000

DESTINATION AIR sales representatives will be responsible for Destination Air Shuttle outside sales, marketing and public relations. Require young dynamic people with pleasant personalities, energetic and hard working with sales-oriented skills and ability to work with international client base. Must demonstrate proficiency in English communication skills and be computer literate. Ideal candidate would be a male or female Thai national and be able to work in or from Phuket International Airport with your own transportation. Experience with aviation, hotel and tourism industries would be an advantage. Interested people, please send CV to email: hrda@destinationair.com

BROKER/AGENT wanted for health insurance company. We will be visiting the Phuket area on a monthly basis. Interested parties should contact Tom Thomson at Tel: 089-6674777 or Chalach Mahachalalai at Tel: 081-9259126 to arrange for an appointment.

SALES & MARKETING Manager. Shopping Plaza to open in Khao Lak in 2008. Looking for a responsible, experienced person to handle the marketing and leasing. Please send CV by email or contact for more information. Tel: 658-2888593. Email: davish@espnstar.com

Employment Wanted

HOUSE CLEANER
Farang lady available in Rawai area for hour or day. Please contact for complete details and prices.
Tel: 087-8859247.
Email: johannesberger@web.nl

Online Classifieds 10,000 readers every day!

FREELANCER WANTED
Good research and writing skills needed. Native English speaker. Contact for additional information. Email: gavin.wills@angloinfo.com

SECRETARY NEEDED
Experience preferred. Good English and computer skills required. Please contact at Tel: 087-0778454. Email: solitude001@aol.com

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles For Sale

SECOND HAND POOL TABLES



Coin-operated pool tables. Size: 3.5' x 7'. Price: 40,000 baht. Tel: 076-263687, 081-7555057.

42" PLASMA TV

Phillips, perfect condition, looks great. Price: 40,000 baht. Call Khun Leons at Tel: 086-2839806.

LOVE ZEN SHOP

Hi everyone! If you like online shopping, check out my website inspired by all things Asian. There are designs on over 70 products, including T-shirts, hoodies, ringers, bags, mugs, mouse pads, cards, journals, keepsake boxes, clocks, buttons and magnets. You can also see a lot of my photography from around Asia, including Thailand. Thanks everyone for checking my site! Contact via email: ginaellen@hotmail.com For further details, visit my website: www.lovezenshop.com

LOW INPUT, HIGH OUTPUT

Automatic carwash machines for sale. Starting from 3.9 million baht. For additional details, please email: carwash_phuket@hotmail.com

FULL SOUND SYSTEM

4 speakers, 1 Denon mixer, 1 EQ, 1 JBL subwoofer, 2 amplifiers, 1 crossover, 2 CD players, 100-model Pioneer. Only 2 months old. Price: 120,000 baht. Please call Tel: 081-7977045.

ROAD MOUNTAIN BIKE

Batavus Challenge road bike (mountain bike set-up). Cost 40,000 baht, but now selling for only 8,000. Tel: 086-948-8139. Email: jefdejong@hotmail.com

3 LEATHER SOFAS

7,000 baht each. Contact Andy at Tel: 087-8905633.

MOVING OFFICE

Must sell aircons, pumps, tank, refrigerator, partitions, etc. All at attractive prices. Tel: 084-6255179. Email: supotpac@phuket.ksc.co.th

2 CAKE DISPLAY UNITS

Like new condition. 30,000 baht each. Call Andy at Tel: 087-8905633.

Bulletins

PHUKET HOME MAINTENANCE

Closed for staff holiday in July. Return to work as normal in August. Please inquire via email: phukethome_maintenance@yahoo.com

PIWC GALA BALL

The Phuket International Women's Club announces the most prestigious event this year - the annual Gala Ball on Saturday, November 24th at the Indigo Pearl in Nai Yang Beach. Watch for more details. Tickets will be in great demand. Contact Carol at Tel: 087-4178860, email: carol@aplusplussoftware.com or Sue at Tel: 087-2776948, email: arnulphy@loxinfo.co.th

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Mission Hospital
Phuket City
Wed and Sun 7 pm

Bangkok Phuket Hospital
Phuket City
Fri 7 pm

Patong Hospital Patong
Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun
at 7 pm and Fri at 8 pm

Chalong Health
Clinic-near Chalong Circle
Tues 1 pm
For Phuket info (English)
call 081-9564031,
081-8912895

Scandinavian speaking Group
Wat Karon School-Karon
Tue 7 pm
Tel 081-2732053 (Nor)
087-2795636 (Nor)
086-7458910 (Swe)

For info on other Thailand
AA meetings inquire
at Tel: 02-2318300
(for Thai language press 3)
www.aathailand.org or
email info@aathailand.org

Business Opportunities

BEER BAR

Pool table, darts. Contract paid until Oct. 2008. Price: 1.6 million baht. Tel: 087-3876401. Email: stellan_larsson@hotmail.com

CHARTER CRUISE BUSINESS

includes 50ft yacht. Priced at only 7.5 million baht. Email: admin@ideacon.biz For further details, please see our website at: www.ideacon.biz/charter_cruise_biz.htm

TRAVEL BUSINESS

for sale. Fully furnished office in a good location on Nanai Road. Great rent price. 18 motorbikes, 5 Internet-ready computers and 2 printers. Cheap living accommodation behind the shop. High season profit: 1 million baht, easily. Reason for selling: moving to another country. Asking 1.5 million baht. Contact Tel: 081-2729714. Email: meniOn@hotmail.com, cheeranant@hotmail.com

GUESTHOUSE SALE

or rent. 4-year lease, located near Patong beach, 9 rooms, low rent. Asking: 900,000 baht. Contact Tel: 076-342-280, 081-9781956. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

DANISH GRILL/BAR

Selling franchise. Price: 800,000 baht. Email: admin@ideacon.biz For more details, please visit our website: www.ideacon.biz/dansk_grill_bar.htm

ESTATE & BUSINESS

broker. Price: 300,000 baht. Email: admin@ideacon.biz For additional details, please visit our website: www.no1phukethomes.com

KATA BEER BAR

For sale or lease. Furnished, full counter, office equipment. Great layout. Price: 550,000 baht. Contact Khun Nida at Tel: 081-6590439.

EARN BIG MONEY

in real estate. Invest 2 million baht and get a 100% return. Email: admin@ideacon.biz

BARGAIN BUY

Bar for sale on Nanai Rd. Includes pool table, darts, 42" plasma TV, fully stocked. Bargain price: 475,000 baht. Rent: 10,000 baht per month. Call Tel: 084-8520862.

BAR/RESTAURANT

Koh Phi Phi:
1. Successful bar/restaurant business + airconditioned apartment. Well-established, great location for passing trade.
2. New bar/restaurant and apartment, 15-year lease, under construction, completion in September '07.

Price to include both premises and business name. Please call Tel: 089-4746007. Email: sgiandubh69@hotmail.com

PATONG GUESTHOUSE

Recommended by Lonely Planet. Includes travel shop. Fully furnished, low rent for the area, only 10 minutes to beach, 2+ 3-year lease. Quick sale at 1.7 million baht ono. Tel: 087-3196458.

RESTAURANT

Well-established, prime location in Nai Harn. Fully equipped and ready to go. Contact for more information at Tel: 081-9580542.

TRAVEL AGENCY

An established TAT-licensed travel agency is for sale in Patong. This 7-year-old business comes with an excellent website, corporate clients, and a superb reputation with its clients, who include tourists, expats and Thai locals. Price: 1 million baht. Tel: +66-848528142. Email: trevor@bensojack.com.au

BAR FOR SALE

Rawai, prime location on the beach road. Very nicely decorated. Price: 1.7 million baht ono. Tel: 087-2706297.

KATA RESTAURANT

Small restaurant at the main road. Sell: 1 million baht. Rent: 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-9807570. Email: kata.restaurant@gmail.com

LIVE AND WORK

in paradise! We get you started from scratch! From idea and dream to reality! We are the only idea consultation in Thailand! Email: admin@ideacon.biz For further details, please see our website at: www.ideacon.biz

PATONG BEAUTY

salon. Take over lease that runs until 2010. Please contact at Tel: 084-4414689.

INTERNET CAFE

Profitable Internet business for sale in Chalong. Contact Tel: 087-0930221. Email: simplewebs.lee@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at http://www.simplewebs.org/details.html

SOLID INVESTMENT

Multiple businesses. Car care, 100sqm cafe and restaurant, 50sqm aircon office, separate toilet house, big parking area, billboard rental, 6 staff rooms. 3 minutes to Tesco Lotus. 1 location, 3-year lease. Call PVB, Bertrand. Tel: 081-2715292.

CHALONG CAFE/BAR

Wholesale & retail pies, fish & chips, etc. Cheap rent includes accommodation and 2+ 2-year lease. Loyal staff, all training and recipes are included. Price: 995,000 baht. Call Tel: 087-0245036.

50% PARTNERSHIP

for busiest restaurant and bar on Nanai Rd. 3.5 million baht revenue. Long lease, low rent, comes with accommodation. Will sell to best offer. Australian or British preferred. Call Mark for more details. Tel: 081-7411963.

MESSAGE SPA

for sale. Also have ADSL Internet cafe-style setup inside for customers to use. Indoor waterfall. Everything new including beds, chairs, computers, massage stock and equipment. Unique style. 2 floors. Call for more info. Tel: 084-3259808.

BUSINESS FOR SALE

Cafe, 32 seats, very busy, 2 apartments located above, newly refurbished, low rent, 5+ 5-year lease, great investment. Price: 1.6 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 084-8521977.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Earn over six figures with our unique strategy from the US. Tel: 087-8971070. Watch video at our website: www.bluepointinvestments.com

PHOTO LAB

High-end shop. Best photo prints for gallery. Up to 30 inches wide, unlimited length. Selling the business. Call for pricing. Tel: 081-6490415.

PARTNER REQUIRED

for bar business in the busy Bangla Rd area. Please call after 6 pm. Tel: 084-8436792.

PHI PHI DIVE SHOP

Dive shop in good location near main road. 16m x 44m. Boat, 2 Bauer compressors, 20 sets of equipment. Contact Tel: 089-2902155.

RESORT WISHES TO SELL

2-year-old pizza oven in excellent condition. Price: 99,000 baht. Contact K. Pom at Tel: 075-607100.

BOOKSHOP SALE

Patong OTOP bookshop for sale. Price: 690,000 baht. Call Tel: 084-1705552.

USED BOOK BUSINESS

4,000 used books and 20 wooden bookshelves for sale. Only 258,000 baht. Good chance to open your own book shop. Tel: 089-7242136

CHEAP RESTAURANT

includes Internet cafe at Chalong circle. Fully equipped, worth 1.6 million baht, must sell to the best offer. Contact Tim for genuine enquires at Tel: 084-8445301. Email: tcgardener@hotmail.com

SHOPHOUSES

Phuket City center near the Metropole hotel. Prices from 8,000 to 12,000 baht per month. 3-year leases or for sale. Tel: 089-6186894.

SWISS INVESTOR

Private reasons for offering my 50% partnership for only 60,000 Swiss francs. Working and living in Thailand or Europe is no problem. The business is working! Email: lifestylexl2001@yahoo.de

HOTEL FOR LEASE

Long-term contract. 22 rooms fully refurbished, swimming pool, 60 covers restaurant, pizzeria. Running perfectly. Rental fee: 2.5 million baht per year. No key money. Contact Tel: 086-0043008.

GENUINE

one-of-a-kind biz! We have ideas for many types of businesses that have never been seen in Thailand before! Stand out from the crowd! Email: admin@ideacon.biz Website: www.ideacon.biz

BOUTIQUE HOTEL

For sale in Patong. Good location, Thai limited company, 6 rooms, nicely furnished, includes busy bar and restaurant. Good profits. Only 2.8 million baht ono. Contact Andrew. Tel: 087-2825086.

TSBA
Selling Going Concerns

EXCELLENT LOCATION
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Great revenues+profits
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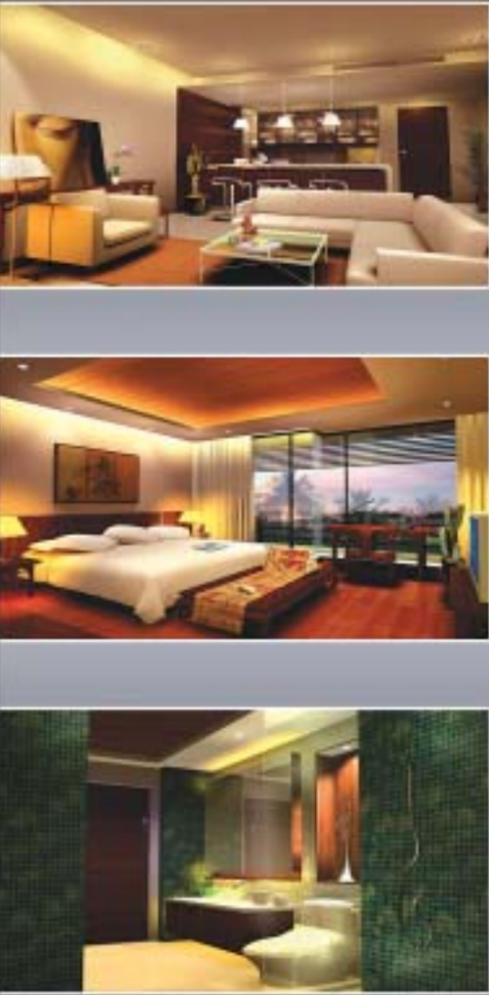


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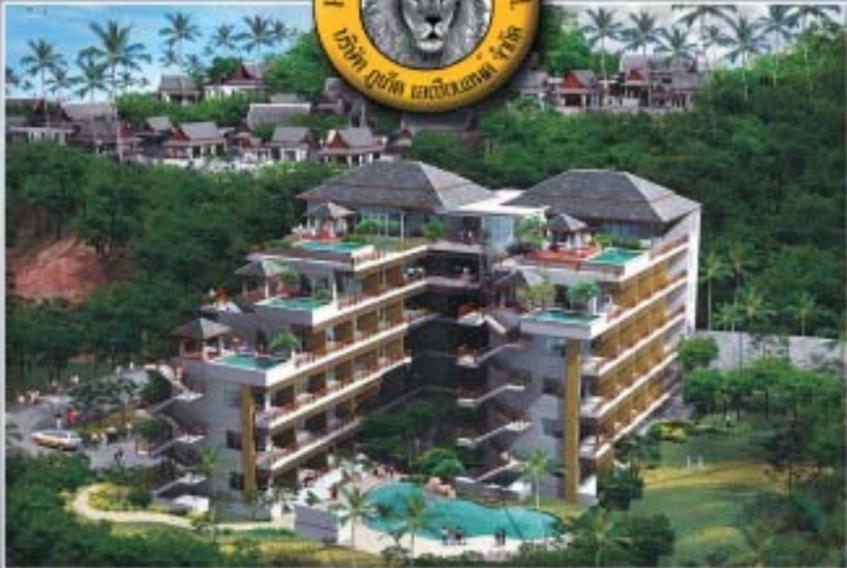
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