

Phuket Gazette

February 27 - March 4, 2016

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'THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT MILO. THERE ARE MORE TO SAVE'

Orangutan saved, new laws needed

■ Rescue of Milo in Phuket backs national push against illegal exotic animal traders

By Kongleaphy Keam

LAST week's rescue of the Phuket Zoo orangutan, Milo, led to a firestorm of social and political activity bolstering efforts to close legal loopholes abused by exotic animal traders in Thailand.

An amendment to the Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act BE 2535 (1992) that will require those who possess animals named on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) list to have proof of the origin of the animal, as well as a permit for them, will be put in front of the National Council for Peace and Order next week.

"This isn't just about Milo in Phuket. We believe there are many more illegally owned orangutan in Thailand. However, at this point we have no idea how many," said Metee Meechai, director of the Wildlife Conservation Office, Protected Area Regional Office 5 of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP). "If you are in possession of one of these great apes, or know someone who is, please bring them to us. At this point, we can ensure that you will not face the full force of the law."

Thailand joined CITES in 1983, but failed to have...

Story continued on Pages 4-5



Milo, a 13-year-old orangutan, disappeared from Phuket Zoo and was found caged in a jungle area on the island. Photo: Boonyawat Saelim

CIB raid rounds up illegal jet-ski operators

A TOTAL of 28 jet-ski operators were arrested during a Central Investigation Bureau raid on February 18.

Despite numerous accidents and complaints jet-ski operators have continued to work under an umbrella of lax enforcement of rules and regulations.

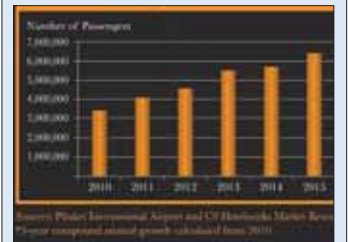
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LOCAL NEWS

Briefly

Missing British tourist 'found' alive and well

POLICE in Krabi tracked down a 21-year-old British woman who disappeared for six days while travelling in Thailand, prompting a social media frenzy to help find her.

Krabi Tourist Police confirmed that they found Grace Taylor at Krabi International Airport on February 23. Tourist police stayed with her to ensure her safety, while awaiting the arrival of a family member from Bangkok to take care of her.

The family of Grace Taylor reported that she hadn't made contact for nearly a week, except for a frantic phone call she made to them on February 22, in which she alleged that people were 'trying to hurt her and were following her'.

Police are currently unable to confirm if any crime was committed.

– Chutharat Plerin

Patong Hill bus crash kills one, injures tourists

A BUS driver was killed and 17 tourists injured when a bus crashed into an electricity pole while descending Patong Hill on February 22.

Bus driver Jeerasak Kimbuathong, 40, was pinned in the driver's seat by the pole, which fell on the vehicle. He was later pronounced dead.

The tourists were taken to Patong Hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

Police have yet to press charges while they inspect the bus for further evidence.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Ex-mayor's brother-in-law arrested after CIB standoff



Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) officers swarmed the home of former Rassada mayor Suratin Lian-udom on February 20 during a standoff with suspected drug dealers, including the ex-mayor's brother-in-law, Jompol Siriwan, who had previously been jailed for ten years on attempted murder charges. For the full story, visit PhuketGazette.net. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

Rescue workers unable to revive swimmer at Bang Tao Beach

A CHINESE national died on February 20 after swimming with his family at Bang Tao Beach.

Miu Zhioin, 63, was pulled unconscious from the water after losing his footing and going under the waves.

He was pronounced dead on arrival at Thalang Hospital.

Police will continue their investigation while awaiting an official cause of death.

– Winai Sarot

Three dead after canoe capsizes

RESCUE workers recovered the bodies of two men on Feb-

ruary 23 who had been missing since their canoe capsized near Koh Sireh two days earlier.

The bodies of Mat Panthip, 51, and Laong Theppitak, 54, were found floating near a waterfront restaurant in Rassada.

The capsized boat had already claimed the life of Visut Prasert, 58, whose body was found shortly after the accident. However, the 9-year-old boy in the canoe was safely rescued after the boat flipped.

– Sukawin Tanthavanich

Officials hunt boat anchored at coral boomie

OFFICIALS are hunting down the company that owns a boat that was caught on video anchoring in fragile corals off Koh Racha Yai.

Video shows the anchor biting into a coral bommie with the metal chain laying across a few species of corals. The anchor is connected to a rope tied to the boat, which the cameraman clearly documents as he ascends with the line, capturing the name of the boat.

Officials will call in the owner of the boat and question them before taking any legal action.

– Kongleaphy Keam

Gypsies decline offer to buy up disputed land

THE Rawai sea gypsies have turned down the provincial government's suggestion to buy 19 rai of disputed land, insisting that the land deeds must be revoked entirely, as they were unlawfully acquired.

The area that Phuket Province suggested purchasing for the seafaring nomads was a 19-rai plot, which had already been inspected by the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and proven to have been the gypsies' home for more than 100 years.

– The Nation

Rescue worker killed in crash

A KUSOLDHAM Foundation worker was killed on February 19 after he crashed his bike and was dragged underneath a bus in Phuket Town.

According to the bus driver, Nukul Kaewthwee, 37, he had slowed down to avoid a parked vehicle, after which he heard people shouting at him to pull over, as someone was being dragged underneath his bus.

Fellow Kusoldham Foundation rescue workers performed cardiopulmonary

resuscitation (CPR) on Sakpayom Tarapong, 36, and transferred him to Vachira Phuket Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Bangkok flight delayed due to bomb scare

PANIC ensued on a Bangkok Airways flight bound for Phuket when cabin crew feared a bomb threat after overhearing a conversation between a group of passengers on February 21.

Staff reported that prior to take-off, four passengers on the flight were overheard talking about an item that might 'ra-berd', a Thai word meaning to explode or burst.

Officials later found out the item in question was a conch that the passengers were worried about getting damaged during the flight.

Police have yet to decide if they will press charges.

– Komchadluek

Krabi headman gunned down in front of home

KRABI Police are hunting for a gang of men who gunned down an influential village headman (*Phu Yai Baan*) in Krabi on February 16.

Chanwit Jantharak, 50, was shot 10 times while leaving his home in Mueang Krabi.

Mr Chanwit's wife told police that at least three men in a tan Toyota Vigo pick-up truck shot at her husband at the gate of their house, and then immediately sped away.

Police believe that the motive may have been either political or business related.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Aussie man falls from balcony

A CONCIIOUS Australian tourist was rushed to hospital after falling from a third-floor balcony in Patong on February 23.

Jonann Petschauer, 65, fell off the balcony attached to his room and through a glass ceiling at the Charm Resort Phuket.

Mr Petschauer was taken to Patong Hospital and then transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital. Hospital employees were unable to provide details regarding his condition.

– Winai Sarot

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Raids nab illegal jet-ski operators

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

A TOTAL of 28 jet-ski operators were arrested during a Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) raid on Phuket on February 18.

Despite numerous accidents and a legacy of scamming tourists, jet-ski operators have continued to work under an umbrella of lax enforcement of jet-ski rules and regulations.

“We arrested the jet-ski operators for renting their vehicles to tourists without provincial permission,” said Adis Ngamchitsuksri, deputy commissioner of the Royal Thai Police CIB.

About 300 officers took part in the raid that busted the jet-ski operators, along with alleged drug dealers, illegal firearm owners, copyright infringement vendors and those participating in a number of other illegal activities.

“With the ‘Prai Fah Na Sai’ [Peace for the People] raid we are targeting major tourist destinations for all types of criminal activity,” said Maj Gen Adis. “Phuket plays an important role in the Thai economy, generating a great deal of revenue. It is essential



The raid yielded illegal jet-ski operators and guides, as well as people in possession of drugs, fake cosmetics, illegal medicines and illegal firearms. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

that we protect it.

“We are concerned that the wealth and opportunity in Phuket will draw both domestic and international criminals to the island,” he said.

A total of 58 people were arrested during the raid, including 14 for whom arrest warrants had already been issued.

In addition to those busted for allegedly working as illegal guides, being in possession of drugs, fake cosmetics or illegal medicines, seven were arrested for the illegal possession of firearms.

One of the seven was Srisoonthorn Mayor Worawut Songyos, confirmed Gen Adis.

“Though we seized firearms, we are still looking into whether or not they are illegally owned. At this point, we have only pressed preliminary charges. However, among the hunting rifles seized, we found a pump-action shotgun and semiautomatic handguns,” said Gen Adis.

Turkish Amb blasts Phuket Int’l Airport



Amb Tulun meets with V/Gov Prajiad. Photo: Phuket PR

THE Turkish ambassador to Thailand blasted Phuket’s airport during a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on February 16.

“Phuket is a beautiful place and many Turkish people want to travel to the island. However, they always complain about three aspects of their trip: the narrow airport terminal, communication issues with airport employees, and immigration,” Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Thailand Osman Bulent Tulun said in a meeting with Phuket Vice Governor Prajiad Aksornthammakul.

Phuket hosts about 20,000 Turkish visitors a year, noted Ambassador Tulun.

– Sukawin Tanthavanich



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Officers bust Bang Tao vendor, illegal beach furniture seized

A PHUKET vendor caught encroaching on public land at Bang Tao Beach was arrested on February 20.

“Jakkrit Dechana, 28, was arrested with three wooden tables and 10 chairs,” said Col Bancha Panpradap, an officer with the Region 5 Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Suppression Division (NED).

Mr Jakkrit told police he was only taking care of the furniture and was not the owner. Nonetheless, he was taken to Cherng Talay Police Station for further processing.

The bust was a joint effort by the NED, Cherng Talay Police, Cherng Talay Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) and the Royal Thai Navy.

“We seized an additional 58 chairs, 31 umbrellas and three tables. However, no one came



Chairs and tables were taken off Bang Tao sands. Photo: Winai Sarot

to claim them,” Col Bancha said. “Our aim is to enforce the beach management policy of the province. Unscheduled

checks on beaches and making arrests like this one are steps in the right direction.”

– Winai Sarot

Milo saved:

From page 1

...any laws that empowered officers to enforce regulations in line with CITES until 1992. Nonetheless, the Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act, BE 2535 (1992) came with a grandfather clause that allowed those already in possession of orangutans to do so legally. Additionally, the breeding of orangutans in Thailand is legal, as long as both great apes are legal, explained Mr Metee.

“Both of these have caused massive legal loopholes that are being taken advantage of by criminals,” said Mr Metee.

However, the founder and director of Wildlife Friends of Thailand (WFFT), Edwin Wiek, who was instrumental in securing Milo’s freedom, confirmed that a number of orangutan owners were already feeling the pressure of the proposed new law.

“There are still many other illegal orangutan being raised in Thailand. Some of those raising them are now afraid of the law; they are contacting us, asking us to take the orangutan from them,” Mr Wiek said.

Following the news of the disappearance of Milo from the Phuket Zoo ahead of a police raid last week, a three-year-old orangutan was abandoned in front of the WFFT office on Monday, Mr Wiek noted.

According to the Thailand CITES office, there are only three orangutans that have been legally imported into the Kingdom since 1983. They were imported from Taiwan by The Zoological Park Organization under the patronage of the King of Thailand.

All other orangutans in the Kingdom have been either illegally smuggled into Thailand or are the offspring of orangutans that were in the country before the law came into effect.

“We have no records of these animals or their offspring, making it nearly impossible to enforce the laws we currently have,” said Mr Metee. “We need more funding so that we are able to conduct genetic testing on all orangutans in Thailand.”

Mr Wiek concurred with Mr Metee with regards to the need for improvements in the way orangutans are accounted for and documented in the Kingdom.

“They need to construct a genetic database. However, such a task is expensive, labor intensive and time consuming – it’s hard

for the DNP to justify using their limited resources this way,” said Mr Wiek. “Therefore, the long-term solution is pushing through the new Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act, which clearly states that those in possession of CITES listed animals must prove that they have come by them legally.”

SMUGGLING

The demand for orangutans in Thailand is fueled by domestic and international tourists’ desires to see the exotic great ape, explained Mr Metee.

“Most orangutans here were smuggled in from Malaysia or Indonesia aboard fishing boats or small cargo boats,” said Mr Wiek. “Hat Yai district in Songkhla is a well-known point of entry for illegal orangutans.”

The 12 illegally imported orangutans found in Phuket in 2008 were imported through Hat Yai district, confirmed Mr Wiek, who had received an anonymous tip that the apes were being held at the now defunct Phuket Crocodile Farm and Tiger Zoo.

Before the facility was raided, however, the animals were found in cages along a roadside.

In response, DNP officers and CITES officials have since set up a number of checkpoints along the Thailand-Malaysia border, as well as at airports and piers.

“However, criminals always find a way. Thailand is especially vulnerable to smuggling because of the numerous small islands along our coast,” Mr Metee said.

DISAPPEARING, REAPPEARING MILO THE ORANGUTAN

The issue of orangutan smuggling took the spotlight in Thailand after 13-year-old orangutan Milo, who conservationists were fighting to free from the Phuket Zoo, went missing ahead of a raid on the facility on February 19.

Pressure on the zoo began to mount after local animal-rights activist Vicki Kiely, garnered more than 8,000 signatures on the online petition ‘Save Milo’ on Change.org.

“Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Division (NRECD) of the Royal Thai Police and Department of National Parks (DNP) agreed to investigate the case of Milo,” Mr Wiek explained on February 19. “The DNP regional wildlife office

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more orangutans to be rescued

found that Milo was probably illegally being kept at the Phuket Zoo, as there was no orangutan legally registered at the location.”

However, police officers arrived at the zoo only to find that Milo was gone.

“All her photos with tourists were also removed from the zoo; they were even deleted from the Phuket Zoo’s website,” Mr Wiek said.

“The owner of the zoo told the group of police and witnesses that he had released Milo into the Khao Phra Thaeo Non-hunting Zone, a small patch of rain forest on Phuket. He further claimed that this was where he found her two years ago.”

The next evening, Khao Phra Thaeo Non-hunting Zone officers discovered Milo locked in a tiny cage deep in the jungle.

“I went to her first thing Sunday morning and she was still stuck in the cage. The door was padlocked, no keys were found in the area. They eventually had to hammer open the lock at the Phang Nga Wildlife Nursery Station, which



Milo is believed to be one of the many illegally owned orangutans in Thailand. Photo: Boonyawat Saelim

took a good 20 minutes,” said Ms Kiely.

Milo was taken to the station before she is to be moved to the Khao Prathap Chang Wildlife Sanctuary in Ratcha Buri, which already houses a number of orangutans.

“When she finally got out of the cage, we walked with her about 20 meters before she fell flat on her tummy,” she said. “She is still overweight and will need to go through

some rehabilitation.”

ZONING IN ON ZOO

The conspicuous resurfacing of the great ape was one of many issues Mr Wiek tabled during a meeting with DNP Deputy Director Adisorn Nuchdamrong on Tuesday.

“Not only were they keeping an endangered animal without a licence, they released an invasive species into

a protected jungle without permission,” Mr Wiek alleged. “Additionally, I was told that officers will be looking into if the zoo was responsible for abandoning the orangutan in the cage, and whether or not this would be classified as animal torture.”

Piyawat Sukhon, head of Khao Phra Thaeo Non Hunting Zone, confirmed to the *Gazette* that the DNP

has ordered a full investigation into the zoo.

“The first question we need to answer is how they obtained Milo, then we need to look at how she escaped notice when officers inspected the zoo every three months,” said Mr Piyawat. “Additionally, we will see whether or not Milo was raised and cared for properly. If not, charges of animal torture could be added to charges of the illegal possession of an orangutan.”

The penalty for the illegal possession of a CITES listed animal is a fine of up to 40,000 baht, four years in prison or both.

Animal-rights activist are calling for the closure of the Phuket Zoo after the story of Milo blew up online, reported *The Nation*.

When contacted by the *Gazette*, Phuket Zoo employees declined to comment.

“Thailand has promised other countries that they will adhere to the rules of CITES. I don’t want Thailand to fail to follow through on our promises,” said Mr Metee.

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TALE
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By Ed Peters

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Foreign guides plan comes under attack

By Anongnat Sarpisut
PHUKET: Panomphol Thammachatriyom, President of the Phuket Professional Guide Association (PPGA), has blasted a proposal to legalize foreign tour guides.



He added angrily, "Minister says that we don't have enough guides, but we have conducted a nationwide survey there are more than enough guides in Phuket already..."

Sondhi 'lights a flame' in Phuket

PHUKET: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawangkura on February 15 ordered the Phuket Provincial Highways Office to conduct a study into the impact of a road between the port and...

Guest of Thammachatriyom wants police to crack down hard on illegal guides.

People must have the right to get the news

Gov orders study on new Port of Phuket airport

PHUKET: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawangkura on February 15 ordered the Phuket Provincial Highways Office to conduct a study into the impact of a road between the port and...

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Thank you, Tourist Police, and goodbye

...t lines pose sex threat to teenagers
Wooden performance: Three performers control a giant wooden puppet at a press conference for the 8th Wood Carving Road Fair held recently in Bangkok's Bang Sue District. The event includes stalls selling quality wood products, vocational workshops and a folk-song contest.
Riding a motorcycle? Please...
That law requires that motorcycle drivers and passengers wear safety helmets with the chin strap fastened at all times.
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JET-SKIS FOR RENT HERE!
These jet-ski races shouldn't allow these jet-ski races. All this zooming around at high speed could give us a bad reputation.

Baleful baying brings bureaucratic bungle

THERE is a reason that old-dog expats are jaded and sound like MP3 players with less than half a dozen songs playing on shuffle. That's because, like it or not, they've seen the mangling and crushing of that beautiful idea us newbies to the island think will be the catalyst for 'real' change.

When it comes to what have become entrenched, decade-long fights, the February 25-March 3 issue of the Gazette was running hot with both jet-skis and illegal tour guides.

Page one was dominated by attacks on a plan put forward by then-Governor Udomsak Usawangkura to legalize foreign guides (guiding is one of many professions reserved for Thais). The president of the Phuket Professional Guide Association blasted the proposal.

Phuket already has problems with foreigners working as tour guides, especially Koreans and Russians. Thais who have already been

trained are being used only as 'sitting guides', the president said.

"We have conducted a nationwide survey and there are more than enough guides covering all [the major tourist] languages.

Replace the word Korean with Chinese and the Gazette could easily have run the comment in the news this week, following several tour guides being scooped up by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) last Sunday.

Also hauled in as part of the central government's 'Peace for the People' raid were 28 illegal jet-ski operators, representing perhaps one of the largest legal actions taken against the well-protected industry. They are so well entrenched in the sands of Phuket, in fact, that they are still here.

As noted in the Gazette editorial 10 years ago, the governor had pledged to phase out all jet-skis by March 1, 2011. He was clearly a fan

The gift of hindsight

Phuket with no jet-skis? It has the same statistical likelihood of a potted plant and whale suddenly appearing in space and falling to Earth.

And though in this particular editorial, as opposed to countless others that stretched out nearly ten years ahead and behind this particular piece, this one was pro-jet-skis. Let us clarify: it was in favor of professional jet-ski events on the island, not jet-ski cowboys renting out dangerous machines to untrained, unlicensed and unconcerned tourists.

Since hosting the first round of the 2006 Jet Ski Thailand Championship, the island has played host to a number of other professional jet-ski events, including the Gazette sponsored Southeast Asia Games.

of the sound dead-lines make as they fly by, as well as the wacky, offbeat, satirical humor of Douglas Adams. Can you imagine

As the island continues to promote sport tourism, there is little doubt that the fitness and health industry is also growing at exponential speeds.

The opening of two major fitness centers - a total investment of about 86 million baht - was marked in the Gazette as the island 'experiencing a boom' in the fitness industry. Now, a quick drive through Nai Harn or a walk down Soi Ta-ied makes it clear that a couple of new gyms are hardly a drop in the bucket. That, of course, is neglecting to point out the voluminous training facilities at Thanyapura Phuket, which in 2015 was looking to top up an already staggering investment with an additional 300 million baht to further strengthen its status as the 'Sports Hub of Asia'.

Thankfully, no jet-ski operators have razed the government about not allowing them access to those popular swimming lanes. Unfortunately, that is not the case for many of Phuket's beautiful beaches.

- Isaac Stone Simonelli

Revision of foreign media visa rules for clarification

THE revision of guidelines for issuing visas to correspondents and media personnel applying to work in Thailand was done to introduce clear categories of who is eligible for a media visa in the wake of an increase in new and online media applying to work here, the Foreign Ministry has said.

The former guidelines lacked a clear scope and definition for foreign journalists, which reportedly led to misuse, with holders of media visas working on unrelated fields, spokesman Sek Wannamethee said.

BKK denies 'IS threat' but supports boost in security

SECURITY at mass-transit systems and key attractions has been stepped up following a US embassy warning that Thailand is among the countries the Islamic State (IS) is targeting. The attractions include department stores and entertainment venues.

Thailand has been on alert for terrorist attacks since the



deadly Ratchaprasong bomb attacks last year, though it was not linked to IS, said Panitan Wattanayagorn, adviser to Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan.

Thailand seeks closer defence ties with Russia

IN A bid to tilt Thailand's foreign relations and military cooperation towards Moscow af-



ter cooling relations with the United States and the West, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan visited Russia to seek deals on military equipment, as well as trade and investment.

Elephant kills Laotian man

A LAOTIAN man was stomped to death by a wild elephant in a cassava plantation in Chanthaburi on February 19.

The body of 36-year-old Khemphetch Chaiyasan was found near his gun and a flashlight in the extensively-damaged plantation.

The victim's wife, Buakham Chaiyasan, 51, told police that Mr Khemphetch went to trap

rabbits in a mountain area behind the plantation despite her request for him not to go because of the wild elephants.

Thai prostitutes arrested in South Korea

SOUTH Korean police alerted Thai police of a crackdown on prostitution rings on February 18 that resulted in the arrest of 48 Thai women and five prostitution brokers.

Of the 48 Thais arrested, 12 had already been deported, Deputy Police Spokesman Krissana Pattanacharoen said on February 19.

Trouble dealing with serious diseases among migrant workers

HIV and drug-resistant tuberculosis are the most prevalent health hazards detected among migrant workers

The Department of Disease Control revealed that in 2014, more than 400,000 cases of HIV among foreign workers were reported, while incomplete treatment of tuberculosis had caused the disease to become drug resistant. In addition, previously eliminated diseases had reappeared in Thailand as a result of labor migration.



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Orangutan freedom

THE tale of the disappearance of orangutan Milo from a local zoo and her subsequent rediscovery a few days later deserves a slot in the annals of the 'Amazing Thailand Always Amazes' series.

Now that the issue has drawn the interest of the national and international media, the *Gazette* hopes that sustained interest will pressure the Department of National Parks (DNP) and other regulatory agencies to do a better job in honoring Thailand's commitments under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Such an effort could start with a thorough investigation into how Milo came into the zoo's possession in the first place; how the DNP could have failed to notice her presence there during numerous inspections over several years; and the zoo's incredible explanation of her 'release back into the jungle', albeit still padlocked inside a cramped cage.

In almost all cases, demand for the creatures is fuelled by the tourism industry. While it might be impossible for the DNP to monitor all zoo exhibits, violations involving high-profile endangered species like the orangutan should at least raise the suspicion that collusion and kickbacks may be involved.

Milo's case certainly highlights the increasingly important role of social media in raising public awareness of the plight of sentient creatures like the orangutan that are forced to waste away through years of physical and mental deprivation, if not outright torture, at the hands of greedy entrepreneurs whose illegal operations are conveniently ignored by officials.

Back in 2008, when the Phuket Crocodile Farm and Tiger Zoo was still in operation near the Nimit (Sea horse) Circle in Phuket Town, a similar tale unfolded in which 12 unregistered orangutans were discovered following an anonymous tip to the Wildlife Friends of Thailand, the same NGO that has been active in Milo's case.

These orangutans were later recovered after being dumped along a roadside after the zoo operators apparently learned that an inspection was imminent. The zoo owners were never charged for illegal trade or possession of the primates.

It will be interesting to see if public pressure, especially via social media, has reached the point that Thai officialdom will be forced to actually investigate Milo's case and put those responsible before the courts. Such a move would overturn the existing sad state of affairs in a way that would be truly 'Amazing'.



Acceptance is the first and easiest step

Re: On Deck: The case for in-water zones, February 19

Before you change things, you have to accept that others can do better.

Already this first step is too big for many, but even if you have done this step, the next challenge is not any easier – namely the wish to learn.

However, the last step is the hardest by far, it's called enforcement.

*Georg The Viking
Gazette forum*

Narrow-mindedness may be the issue

Re: Turkish Ambassador blasts Phuket airport, February 19

I cannot ever remember going into the Phuket airport and being uncomfortable with the 'narrowness' of the airport.

Would Turks be happier if it was 1, 2 or 3 meters wider?

My guess is, if Thais went on holiday to Turkey, the Thais wouldn't be able to understand the Turks at their airports either.

However, as far as immigration goes, I can understand his point of view.

*Mark
Gazette forum*

Apparently details make the difference

Re: CIB nabs illegal jet-ski operators in Phuket, February 19

I am so sorry for the jet-ski operators.

They were arrested only for

Letters to the Editor

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

not having provincial permission. How can such a detail make a difference?

I am sure the marine department will immediately step in and help them to get this permission. After all, they have to feed their families and as we all know, everybody really loves jet-skis.

All the other ones with a valid license will be even happier.

*George
Gazette forum*

Do as the elephants do while in Thailand

Re: Phuket orangutan 'disappears' ahead of police raid, February 19

I thought it was an interesting read recently in the international press about Thai elephants.

The article claimed that when an elephant is in musth and kills someone, the animal is renamed and moved to a different location because it is too expensive to do anything else.

This option may have also been used here, but more likely released into the wild.

*Anon
Gazette forum*

Parked cars cause of deadly problems

Re: Kusoldharm Foundation worker killed in three-vehicle crash, February 20

Surely it was an 'illegally' parked vehicle that caused the accident. It is common to see vehicles parked halfway on the road as the driver visits a store, friend or whatever.

Many times cars and motorbikes are trapped or caught unaware by this type of parking, yet the police do nothing.

Another dangerous traffic problem that could be fixed by just following the laws, police enforcement, and common sense.

*capealava
Gazette forum*

Using PADI as an example of safety

Re: Opinion: Floating ideas, February 21

PADI ensures its instructors are safe to teach through extensive systems of instruction, examination and regular assessment.

Conversely, the Thai Labor Dept allegedly gives a work permit to anyone who pays enough.

How is a snorkelling trip supposed to work if all the customers are bobbing around in the water floating face up? The Thai authorities should take a leaf out of PADI's book and self-regulate, not just blame others.

*CaptainJack
Gazette forum*

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Promoting gastronomy

FIRST PERSON

PHUKET was awarded the title 'City of Gastronomy' by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on December 11, 2015 in recognition of the island's rich culinary history and unique cuisine.

The question is, are we ready for this?

I think Phuket should do something to promote its wonderful variety of local dishes and make it easier for tourists to try the island's famous food, which is, after all, a major attraction and part of the Phuket experience.

There are so many good local restaurants here in Phuket, but a lot of them are not in the kind of condition that tourists would find attractive, so we have to come up with ways of improving them and getting more tourists to eat there.

Tourists are not like locals. They don't know about restaurants that are not publicly promoted.

The restaurant's location, size, signs and menus do not really give tourists any clues as to the quality and style of the food they serve. Even those restaurants that are well-known among locals for serving great food do not get visited by tourists if those places aren't promoted.

Firstly, restaurants need to have menus in English. Secondly, they need to be suitably sized to accommodate groups of tourists. Thirdly, they must be clean and hygienic, and lastly, they need to be easily accessible to tourists.

Take menus, for example. If we go abroad and find that all the menus are written in the local language, we just won't



Rangsiman Kingkaew is a Phuket native and the Secretary-General of the Phuket Tourist Association (PTA). He holds a master's and bachelor's degree in economics from Thammasat University.

Here he talks about his ideas on improving the

standards of local eateries to live up to the province's new title as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy.

know what the dishes are or how to order. The same principle applies here.

Some restaurants in Phuket do, of course, have English-language menus and that is really appreciated. However, we want to see more of the same at the smaller local eateries.

Dishes labelled in English, along with short descriptions and a nice photo of each dish, is a very good way of attracting more foreign customers. Menus illustrated in this way are also very useful for people with food allergies.

Locals might not worry too much about the hygiene and appearance of places where they know they can get good food, but foreign visitors might not feel as comfortable about it, so we need to improve on these aspects to make foreigners feel safer about eating at small, local restaurants.

That doesn't mean restaurant owners have to redesign their whole venue. They just have to make it clean and comfortable enough to attract more wary tourists.

Additionally, there are many restaurants in Phuket Town serving authentic dishes unique to Phuket, but we don't see so

many of these in popular tourist spots such as Patong and other beach areas.

Some tourists will never venture very far beyond the beach where they are staying but they should have the chance to taste local delicacies. So, I want restaurants in such spots to think about how they can offer and promote more local dishes to the tourists.

After receiving recognition from UNESCO last year, we did conduct a workshop for locals, but there was concern among some of them that changes would mean losing the traditional aspects of eating out in Phuket.

However, I don't think these kinds of improvements will have a negative impact. Far from it, in fact. Improving hygiene and having menus in English will neither change the taste and identity of the food, nor the Phuket way of life.

Restaurants do not necessarily have to become modern looking. Just clean, clear about the food they serve and easily accessible.

Now that Phuket has been awarded UNESCO City of Gastronomy status it is very important that we live up to that title.



A sheet of batik was stretched down a side soi. Photo: Isaac Simonelli

Old Town done right

Island View

By Alex Stone

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

WHEN a dance choreographer based in Manhattan, New York finds the splendor of the Old Town Festival magical, engaging and fulfilling, then you know Phuket is doing something right to promote cultural tourism on the island.

She was here for the sun, sand and sea – like the vast majority of Phuket tourists – so I hadn't planned on taking her to the Old Town Festival at all. It's not that we were actively avoiding it, but it was barely a bleep on the radar of activities. However, on a last minute whim we decided to check it out; it would at least be a good chance to introduce her to some Phuket food.

And without a doubt it was the food that pushed the entire festival to a whole new level. Being dubbed a UNESCO City of Gastronomy brought a new air of prestige and world focus to the unique food developed by the Peranakan culture of Phuket.

The stage performances at 'Dragon Park' were captivating. Numerous performers from Thailand's Got Talent took the stage: a juggler, an illusionist, actors, singers and clowns. Even the over the top ladyboy clowns that carried on in Thai brought tears of laughter to our eyes as we enjoyed the show along with Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada, who was sitting just a few rows

in front of us. In fact, the shows were so good, that every time we tried to leave, we ended up right back in our seats. By the time we did pull ourselves away, the rest of the festival had shut down for the night.

It turns out that the only thing better than one night at the Old Town Festival is two nights at the Old Town Festival. Yes, we went back.

A large sheet of batik stretched down a side soi and had already been covered with wax, so anyone passing could grab a bucket of dye and a brush and leave their mark.

The mix between an understanding of how to engage a modern audience of all ages with the unique culture of Phuket and the province's strong ties to China created a mesmerizing and delightful experience. So much so, that by the end of the second night, my Manhattan friend declared that even if we didn't make it out to Phang Nga Bay or to Nai Harn Beach, the experiences from the Old Town Festival were more than enough to justify the trip to Thailand.

Words from the Wise

"Real courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what."

– Harper Lee

"Every man of genius sees the world at a different angle from his fellows, and there is his tragedy."

– Havelock Ellis

Issues & Answers

How many cars can u-turn at the same time?

LAST weekend, I saw four vans in a row waiting for the u-turn at the Koh Kaew junction. They nearly took up the entire u-turn lane, making it difficult for people trying to make a u-turn from the other direction.

Is it legal, or is only one vehicle allowed to make a u-turn at a time?

Lt Col Rungrit Rattanapagdee of the Phuket City Traffic Police replies:

It is definitely illegal, and each vehicle – other than the one closest to the median – should be fined the maximum

penalty of 500 baht for blocking traffic.

However, we must look at the situation as well.

For example, if there is a traffic jam, and the lane for the u-turn is backed up, it may be appropriate for multiple cars to take the u-turn at once if it does not cause additional traffic jams for oncoming vehicles.

Sometimes, it really just ends up being a judgment call for us.

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

Submit your issue at:

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Understanding stop loss orders



WITH global stock markets off to a rough start this year, its time to take a closer look at stop loss orders and how they can help as well as hinder you from achieving your investment goals.

So what exactly are stop loss orders?

A stop loss, or simply a stop order, is an automatic trade placed in advance specifying that you want to place a trade for a particular investment when a certain price level is reached.

There is also a stop loss variation called a 'trailing stop' where the sell order is set at a percentage level below the current market price (and not the price you bought it at), while a 'chandelier stop' is a trailing stop specifying a dollar amount instead of a percentage.

When executing a stop loss order, a brokerage will normally look at the prevailing market bid price (the highest price investors are willing to buy an investment at a given point in time and its a price that a seller can get in the market) to determine when the sell trade will be executed.

So, how should stop loss orders be used?

Let's say you had bought 100 shares of stock X for US\$10 a share with shares having risen to US\$25 a share and you want to protect most



A broker looks at prevailing market price to decide when to execute the sell trade. Photo: www.hushtrade.com

of your capital gains from a sudden downward share price movement. You could tell your broker to put a stop loss order in at US\$20 a share so that you only lose US\$5 should shares fall back to that share price level or below.

Likewise, let's say you have just bought stock X for US\$10 a share. You could put a stop loss order at US\$8 a share to limit any immediate buyer's remorse.

Stop loss orders are particularly advantageous if you

are unable to monitor your portfolio for a period of time, for instance, you are on a long vacation and don't want to be logging into your account or calling your broker should the market start falling.

On the other hand, there are some disadvantages with stop loss orders or rather they are not a perfect form of insurance protection for your portfolio. For starters, a stop loss order is not guaranteed to be filled at the preferred stop price, as once it's been triggered, the trade

becomes a market order which is filled at the best possible share price. This price may be lower than the price specified by the stop order – especially if shares are falling fast and there are few buyers.

You must also be careful about how you use stop loss orders, as it may be unfavorable to activate a sale on a short-term market fluctuation if you have a long-term time horizon for a given investment. For example, if stock X is volatile and has a tendency

to fluctuate widely on a weekly or monthly basis, a stop loss order set at too low of a share price may result in the order being triggered prematurely or not at the optimum time to maximize your return.

Finally, there are no clear rules for what price level you should place a stop loss order at. If you are an active trader, it might make sense to place a stop loss order at 5 per cent below the current share price. However, and if you are a buy-and-hold investor with a long-term time horizon, 15 per cent or more would probably make more sense.

Just remember that there will likely be a broker commission on any sell trade and you may want to factor in that commission when you determine your optimum stop loss order price. In addition, you may not be able to place a stop loss order on every investment, such as certain OTC Bulletin Board stocks or penny stocks.

Can stop loss orders help or hinder your long-term financial goals?

Don Freeman, BSME is president of Freeman Capital Management, a registered investment advisor with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), based in Phuket. He has over 15 years experience working with expatriates, specializing in portfolio management, US tax preparation, financial planning and UK pension transfers. Don can be reached at 089-970 5795 or via email at freemancapital@gmail.com.

Impact of insurance cut Household debt expected to stay high

THE lowering of the deposit guarantee to 1 million baht from 25mn baht per bank presents a golden opportunity for a small player like Land and Houses Bank to expand deposits by 10-15 per cent annually for several years.

Sasitorn Phongsathorn, president of LH Bank, said that the

policy is expected to ignite deposit reallocation of 1.13 trillion baht in the banking system, as depositors who will not be covered by the Deposit Protection Act will seek to spread their savings among banks. The bank might launch packages to woo customers, but pricing will not be the key strategy. – *The Nation*

THE level of household debt this year is expected to continue to exceed 80 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) even though some people who borrowed to take advantage of the previous elected government's first-car scheme will pay off that debt in the fourth quarter.

Thanyalak Vacharachai-surapol, head of money and banking at Kasikorn Research, said household debt this year would touch 83 per cent of GDP, against 81 per cent at present, because consumer borrowing has continued to rise.

Each year, there is new borrowing of auto and housing loans, so the fact that some of the first-car borrowers will pay off their loans this year does not mean overall household



KResearch suggests debt will reach 83 per cent. Image: Chris Potter

debt will decline quickly. However, it may help improve the purchasing-power situation by the end of this year.

According to KResearch, 1.26 million vehicles were purchased under the previous

government's first-car tax-break program.

Ms Thanyalak said the annual Motor Expo at the end of the year could encourage some first-car buyers to purchase new models. – *The Nation*

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How to master email marketing



Business Buzz

Simon Wetherell

OTHER than branding, one of the primary functions of social media marketing is to create a database of potential customers. But building the database is only the first step, so what do we do with it once we have it?

I have previously discussed the importance and value of your database; now I am going to show you how to leverage it. It is critical to develop the relationship with your clients further, and email marketing is a perfect way to do this.

People interested in a product or service are much more likely to purchase from a provider with whom they have an established rapport, or trust. So one of the important goals is to create and build that trust and rapport. Email marketing is an efficient way to do that.

Email marketing has many benefits. The most relevant being its very low cost. It is also informative, instantaneous and continues to reinforce your branding over time.

Remember that the easier you make it for your audience, the more interesting and compelling your message is and the higher the response rate you will have.



Check your spam score to ensure that your email is not redirected to spam. Photo: startupstockphotos.com

SUBJECT HEADING

The subject heading is critical. This is the first thing your audience sees. Its purpose is to get the recipient to open the email. It needs to grab their attention. Common tactics include using shocking facts, scary statistics, promoting benefits and even humor. Create a sense of urgency; work on people's fear of loss and scarcity.

You should also personalize the email where possible, as people love to see their own

name, and it makes it feel less like spam.

If you have a gimmick or offer, make sure the body of your email continues your offer.

Remember that people will see from their inbox who the sender of the email is, so this should be consistent with your company and branding.

BODY

Once the recipient has opened the email, the content should make them undertake a specific

call to action, which was the purpose of sending them the email in the first place. This may be to go to a website, place an order or answer a survey – but the purpose must be very clear to the reader.

Let them know what you want them to do and make it as easy as possible for them to execute it. So, if you want them to visit your website, have a live link that they can click. Spell it out for them and offer them an easy way to do it without them having to think or use any effort. If it is time

sensitive, then make that clear.

SPAM SCORE

Finally, you should check your overall spam score to make sure that the recipients' filters are not likely to send it to the spam folder. Often your mailing software will have this built in. If not, there are a number of products that can do this. Also make sure you have your address at the bottom of the email, as well as a way that they can opt out from receiving any further emails.

Remember to be consistent with your branding and your goals. The information must be relevant, honest and factual. Know your target market well – the more the message speaks to your recipient on a personal level the more engaged they will be.

It is also very important to track and monitor all your email marketing, so you can see what is working and what is not. The analytics can have a huge impact on determining whether your email marketing will be a success or not.

Simon Wetherell is a social media expert and lawyer. He trains businesses and individuals on how to profit from the social media industry. For more information, visit PhuketOnlineMarketingSchool.com or call 095-085 3355.

Caltex plans retail expansion

CHEVRON (Thailand) Ltd, marketer of the Caltex brand, plans to sustainably grow its retail business.

The company aims to expand its Caltex-brand service stations with a focus on quality locations, such as strategic highways and key provinces, nationwide.

The company will also continue to cooperate with retail partners to enhance offerings and services for motorists. At the same time, it will work to reinforce brand awareness and broaden its reach with the younger customer base.

Salman Saadat, country chairman and general manager for products, said that the company is committed to enhancing its presence in Thailand by working with current retailers and new investors to add new Caltex branded service stations in Bangkok and other provinces in order to cater to demand and growth of the market.



Chevron plans to sustainably grow its Thailand retail business this year. Photo: Byron Villegas

In 2015, Chevron opened 23 new fuel service stations. This year, the company said it would continue its effort to expand Caltex service stations from nearly 370 existing sites.

The company is also working on enhancing its service-station experience to make it more enjoyable. So far, nearly 200 Caltex fuel service station networks have been reimaged. "The focus for 2016 is to provide motorists with a one-stop exceptional experience each time they visit our stations," said Mr Saadat. – *The Nation*

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Ministers stop by at Thanyapura

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister, along with national and provincial Ministers of Tourism and Sports, stopped off at Phuket's 23-hectare international sports, health and educational complex in Thalang on February 5 as part of their recent visit to Phuket to promote the island as an international sports and leisure industry hub.

(From L-R) Ministry of Tourism and Sports Permanent Secretary Pongpanu Svetarundra; Thanyapura Executive Chairman Chris McCormack; Minister of Tourism and Sports Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul; Deputy Prime Minister Gen Tanasak Patimapragorn; Thanyapura President & CEO Philipp Graf von Hardenberg; Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada; Phuket International Academy Chief Executive Julian Whiteley; and Thanyapura Director of Communications Nathaphat Asavathanachart.

Muscle mania coming in March

Body builders from around the world will be greasing up and taking to the stage at The Port Zone at Jungceylon shopping center in Patong for the International Muscle & Physique Warriors 2016 contest on March 5. The event is jointly organized by the National Amateur Body Builders Association (NABBA) and the World Fitness Federation (WFF).



PUMPED: (From L-R) Managing Director of Nanox Nutraceuticals Thailand Jurgen Vanderlooy; NABBA/WFF (Thailand) Event Organizer Wilaiporn Wannaklang; Jungceylon Phuket General Manager Paul Rochel; and Adchara Rattanaviroj, Chief Executive Officer of Method Reform Co Ltd.

Hospital hosts research seminar

Doctors from Oregon Health & Science University shared their knowledge on the latest advances in colonic and rectal surgery with local doctors and medical students on February 5 for the latest in a series of international symposiums in colorectal disease organized by Bangkok Hospital Phuket's Colorectal Surgery Center.



Bangkok Hospital Phuket Managing Director and CEO of Group 6 BDMS in Southern Region Kongkiat Kespechara (2nd from right), with speakers at the medical seminar from the Oregon Health & Science University.

Hugs, roses and bears help local children's charity

Guests and associates at Angsana Laguna Phuket Resort raised 16,000 baht for charity on February 12, buying hugs, roses and teddy bears. Proceeds from the event were donated to the Phuket Panya Nukul School in Paklok for children with intellectual and hearing disabilities.



HELPING HANDS: Guests and associates at Angsana Laguna Phuket.

Pulling on heart strings

Paradise Beach Phuket threw a 'Heartbeat in Paradise' half moon party at the Patong Beach venue on Valentine's Day.



ON THE PULL: Partygoers play at the latest half-moon party by Paradise Beach.

Events in Paradise

HeadStart Int'l School launches new facilities

HeadStart International School, Phuket held an Opening Celebration on February 12 to officially open the school's new facilities in central Phuket. Facilities include two libraries, a new football pitch and a covered sports ground.



(From L-R) Headstart's Admin Manager Collette Edouard; Founder and CEO Jazon Edouard; School Licensee Parimon Phaisamran; and After School and Events Manager Anisa van der Laan.



Students perform a traditional southern-style dance on stage.



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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

March 4-5. Lighthouse Weekend Market

Eat chill and shop along the dockside at Phuket Boat Lagoon's Lighthouse Market. Two evenings of live music, food and fun for all the family at one of Phuket's signature outdoor events.

Find out more on Facebook: [lighthousemarketphuket](https://www.facebook.com/lighthousemarketphuket), or call 081-8103 328.

This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

March 26. Thailand Beach Volley Fest

The International Amateur Beach Volley Tournament at Karon Beach will feature teams from Asia, Australia, Europe, and the Americas. Classes are: Men's 2 x 2, Women's 2 x 2 and Mixed 4 x 4. Players of all levels are welcome to compete. The entry fee is 2,000 baht. There is no admission charge for spectators.

This event is proudly sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

April 6. Chakri Memorial Day

Chakri Day commemorates the origins of the Chakri dynasty founded by Rama I who established Bangkok as the nation's capital. HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty.

Swedish athlete to attempt swimming circumnavigation

SWEDISH Ultraman World Champion Jonas Colting will undertake a 'Swim Around Phuket' challenge. If successful, he will be the first swimmer to circumnavigate the island.

Another aim of the mission is to raise funds for the Yaowawit School, a government-approved boarding school for children from underprivileged families, initially founded to help children who were victims of the 2004 tsunami.

"If we all swam more in the oceans, we would receive a greater awareness of the importance of good water quality," Mr Colting said. "Now I'm ready for the adventure Swim Around Phuket, which highlights the importance of clean water with the goal to inspire more people to swim in open water and make the journey into an adventure."

Mr Colting is no stranger to long-distance swimming. Aside from the 10-kilometer swims that are part of the Ultraman format of long-distance triathlon racing, he took part in the charity swim SverigeSimmet in 2014, a 640-kilometer swim from Stockholm to Gothenburg.

Mr Colting has partnered



Ultraman Jonas Colting plans to swim 120 kilometers around Phuket in seven days. Photo: Thanypura

with Thanypura Phuket and Apollo Travel Group to make Swim Around Phuket a reality and plans to swim the island's 120-kilometer coast in seven days. Each day he will cover between 10 to 17 kilometers and has extended an open invitation to anyone who would like to join him on one or more stages.

Thanypura has thrown its

full organizational support behind the swim trek, hosting Mr Colting and his team from Apollo Travel Group as they prepare for the swim and work together toward a safe and successful attempt at the feat. The provincial government has also backed the swim.

"The plan to swim around the island of Phuket has been some-

thing we thought was a remarkable feat and something that only the world's best endurance athletes could consider doing," said Thanypura Executive Chairman Chris McCormack.

To join Mr Colting on one or more stages of his trek, contact events@thanyapura.com or visit www.thanyapura.com/events.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Phuket looks to add Moroccan metropolis to list of sister cities

A TWIN-CITIES partnership between Phuket and Tangier is in the works following a meeting between the Phuket governor and the Moroccan ambassador to Thailand.

"About 10,000 Moroccans visit Phuket each year," said His Excellency Ambassador Abdelilah El Housni. "Although this number may not seem large, most of these are luxury travellers who own private jets and stay for an average of a month at a time."

Tangier is a rapidly developing Mediterranean coastal city in the Kingdom of Morocco with a rich history and culture.

The ambassador said that he believed a twin cities partnership would bolster a good relationship and provide convenience for travelers from both countries.



His Excellency Ambassador Abdelilah El Housni (left) speaks with Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada. Photo: Phuket PR

"Phuket considers this to be an important partnership as well; we will take a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to Morocco in the near future in order to formalize this agreement," said Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada. "We would also

like to thank His Excellency for his kindness."

Phuket also signed a twin city MoU with Xiamen, China in December last year and one with Penang, Malaysia the previous year.

– *Sukawin Tanthavanich*



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When two kings sat on the throne

By Anand Singh

IN MY last column, I spoke about Prince Mongkut's journey before taking the throne.

When Prince Mongkut was 47, he left the monkhood to reign as king. There was a problem, however, as Prince Chutamani had an equally legitimate claim to succeed to the throne. At the time of King Rama III's death, some nobles claimed that Prince Chutamani was, in fact, the heir presumptive. However, because Prince Mongkut was the older brother, his claim was stronger.

Prince Mongkut was crowned King of Siam on April 2, 1851. He took the title of Phrabat Somdet Phra Chomklao Chaoyuhua, Rama IV. In order to avoid conflict with his younger brother, Prince Chutamani, King Rama IV did something quite unprecedented in Siamese history. He allowed the prince to ascend to the throne as the 'second king'



King Pinklao's residence came to be known as the 'front palace'. Photo: Heinrich Damm

of Siam. He was asked to assume the title of Phrabat Somdet Phra Pinklao Chaoyuhua, which was equivalent to that of the king himself.

In the past, the position of vice-king, or *Uparaj* of Siam, was usually bestowed to the king's brother. In the line of succession, the *Uparaj* was

therefore also the heir presumptive. But it was always recognized that the *Uparaj* was second to the king.

Prince Chutamani, however, was not bestowed the title of *Uparaj*. He was asked by his brother to take on a title equivalent to Rama IV's, a crowned king of Siam. For the first time

in Siamese history, there were two crowned kings of Siam.

Some historians speculate that King Mongkut was a firm believer in astrology. According to astrological predictions, Prince Chutamani's astrological signs showed that he would be crowned king as well. It was therefore this belief that led to

Chutamani's coronation and elevation to become Siam's second king during the reign of King Rama IV. Others speculate that this was a clever move to appease Prince Chutamani and discourage him from challenging his brother's position.

There is no doubt however that the coronation of King Pinklao strengthened the relationship between the two brothers, a relationship that would remain peaceful throughout King Mongkut's reign. In practice, King Mongkut was the chief ruler of the kingdom, but King Pinklao was influential in foreign affairs due to his close ties with western diplomats.

King Pinklao maintained his own private army, as well as a navy of several modern ships. His palace became known as the 'front palace' and its authorities greatly expanded. King Pinklao died on January 7, 1866, predeceasing his elder brother by two years.

Loving it in Lamphun



Wat Phra That Hariphunchai, Lamphun. Photo: Photo Dharma

LAMPHUN, the oldest province in northern Thailand, has long been ignored by visitors who treat it as a passageway between Lampang and Chiang Mai.

Today, it is becoming a destination in its own right, due to the efforts of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), which is promoting the province as one of the must-see destinations in its 2016 domestic tourism campaigns '12 Hidden Gems Plus' and 'Khao Lao Wa'.

The campaign follows on from the success of the 'Hidden Gems' initiative introduced last year, which did much to generate income for people from smaller and less frequently visited provinces. The 'Khao Lao Wa' campaign, which falls under the TAT's 'Dream Destinations' project, is now in its third year and has similar aims.

"In 2015, we welcomed 500,000 visitors, which was more than double the figure for

2014. Of those, 80 per cent were Thai. The remainder came from South Korea, China, Taiwan and Vietnam, eager to play on our golf courses," says Ampai Chaipijitr, from Lamphun's Tourism Council. "We have much more to offer than golf though, including great food, a relaxed way of life and plenty of home-stay accommodation."

Located less than 30 kilometers from Chiang Mai, Lamphun is home to Wat Phra That Hariphunchai, one of Thailand's most important temples. The temple dates back to the ninth century and has a golden *chedi* that stands 46 meters tall.

Both Lamphun has been proposed to UNESCO for World Heritage Site status, and even though no definitive answer has been received, the small province is busy developing its oldest sites.

— The Nation

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Dealing with the blazing heat

Blazing Saddles
By Baz Daniel

WHETHER we Phuket-based cyclists like it or not, the 2016 season is going to be one of the hottest on record with the El Nino effect continuing to bring the Andaman region all sorts of problems.

To keep on enjoying your riding throughout 2016, there are a number of simple responses that local cyclists should make to the extreme temperatures we will be facing.

Firstly, ride as early in the day as you can, and ride in the shade and where there are cooling breezes, such as the Nai Harn Lake, Bang Wad Dam and Mai Khao loops.

With the glorious sunrises and clean, empty beaches at ride's end for a refreshing swim, early morning riding is certainly the best response to the heat, but sadly is not an option available to everyone.

If you have to ride when the ambient temperature is higher, either in the early evening, or worst of all, during the main part of the day, there are a number of precautions you should take.

First and foremost is good hydration.

Before you set off to ride in the heat, drink a lot of water,



Bicycles, as well as their riders, can be adversely affected by the summer heat. Photo: Garrett Coakley

up to two liters, as you'll sweat it all out as you ride.

While you're riding, and long after you finish your trip, keep on drinking.

Also, use room-temperature water, as cold water and ice shock your system and are harder for your body to absorb.

Another use for water is

pouring it over your hot body. Or you can get a similar effect more efficiently by soaking a bandana with cold water and tying it around your head under your helmet. Cooling down your head will help cool your entire body.

Avoid salty and spicy foods before and after hot rides and

eschew all dehydrators, such as alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks. Load up on healthy protein and carbohydrates before and after riding. Sports drinks are useful for replacing the sodium chloride and potassium that you lose through sweating.

Another essential in hot

weather cycling, especially if you are riding solo, is the ability to recognize and understand what is happening if you become heat-stressed.

Make sure you have a mobile phone with you at all times, and if you start to feel groggy or unwell, get in the shade and call for help immediately.

Proper clothing is essential. Cover your skin as much as possible with lightweight fabric to protect you from the sun. Lightweight natural fibers are the most comfortable and avoid dark colors which absorb more heat.

Wear a cap with a peak under your helmet if the sun troubles your eyes. Good quality sunglasses are also essential.

Finally, make sure your bike is well tuned up so you aren't working any harder than you have to.

Top off your tire pressure every few days and make sure your chain is greased and gears well-adjusted so that you can use the full range on all of them.

Hot weather biking isn't for everyone, but if you put some thought into how you dress, take it slowly and always have water and snacks on hand, you'll be able to enjoy cycling right through Phuket's coming season of hot wheels!

BROADCASTING PHUKET TO THE WORLD

Phuket Today takes the Pearl of the Andaman to an international audience. PGTV's one-hour show features the personalities, lifestyle, sports and leisure activities that make Phuket famous.

Produced by PGTV, the show is designed to promote Phuket to tourists and the international community in Thailand.

LOCAL COVERAGE	NATIONAL COVERAGE	INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE
<p>Phuket Cable Coverage: All of Phuket Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10.30am, 6pm, 9pm Saturday-Sunday: 10.30am, 9pm</p> <p>Rawai Cable Coverage: Rawai, Kata, Karon Channel: 1 Monday-Friday: 10am, 1pm, 7pm, 10pm</p> <p>KDTV Coverage: Phuket's West Coast from Patong to Chermg Talay Channel: 10 Daily: 8.30am, 2.30pm</p>	<p>MCOT World Tuesday: 6.10am, 12pm, 7.10pm Wednesday: 6.10pm Thursday: 1.10am Friday: 1.10am Saturday: 1.10am Sunday: 6.10am</p> <p>Truevisions Channel: 79 PSI Channel: 223, 320 Dynasat Channel: 106 Thaisat Channel: 185 Infosat Channel: 185 Sunbox Channel: 81 GMMZ Channel: 103</p>	<p><i>Broadcast to China, the Philippines, Southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Turkey, UAE, and many other countries around Asia and beyond.</i></p> <p>Thaicom 5 Sat 3520H Tuesday: 6.10am, 12pm, 7.10pm Wednesday: 6.10pm Thursday: 1.10am Friday: 1.10am Saturday: 1.10am Sunday: 6.10am</p>

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Proper diet to battle cancer



Excuse Buster
By Craig Burton

IN 2014 the *British Journal of Cancer* released a study that tested the relationship between a commonly used blood test for diabetics and pre-diabetics (HbA1c), and the development of several cancers. As has been widely published, diabetes increases the risks of developing several cancers, so testing diabetes and prediabetes markers makes sense.

The results concluded that high HbA1c did in fact correlate with an increased cancer risk for a number of cancers (prostate was not one of them).

What that basically means is that the role of diet is again seen to be critical in the prevention of cancer. Let me break this all down further...

WHAT IS HBA1C?

HbA1c, also known as glycated hemoglobin, is a marker or signpost for chronic hyperglycemia (high blood sugar). Hb stands for Hemoglobin, which is a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body.

A1c is the part that measures the amount of glycation that the protein hemoglobin has undergone. Glycation sim-



Your HbA1c level is something to keep an eye on, so get your blood tested. Photo: Leslie Porterfield

ply means that sugar has stuck (bonded) to a protein or fat, but in this specific case to hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells. Because red blood cells typically live for three to four months, this gives an idea of longer term blood sugar regulation.

WHY IS GLYCATION BAD?

Glycation leads to the increase in free radicals, which damage cells and also increases inflammation – processes that are considered to

be at the root of disease.

Neurologist David Perlmutter in his fantastic book *'Grain Brain'*, also notes that HbA1c is directly related to the rate at which the brain shrinks on an annual basis.

So this blood test not only looks at the risk of diabetes, but also looks as if it will be helpful in the detection, and hopefully prevention, of cancer and dementia.

with your doctor as part of an annual physical, which I believe everyone over 40 should have, although there's nothing stopping younger people from having one too. You can also walk into most hospitals and blood clinics (which are numerous in Phuket) and have the test done yourself for a cost of generally less than 500 baht – not a bad investment.

IDEAL REFERENCE RANGE

Most labs place the upper normal limit of HbA1c at about

WHERE TO GET TESTED?

I recommend discussing this test

5.7, but as Perlmutter explains these levels are already associated with a high risk for brain shrinkage. So his recommendation is aimed at keeping HbA1c at 5.2 or lower.

GET A HEALTHY RANGE

Nutritionally, it is achieved by reducing sugar, alcohol and high glycemic carbohydrates, such as refined grains. So watch out for breads, cakes, pastries and try to swap portions of white rice for smaller portions of brown rice with lots of vegetables (a good chunk raw), plus a small portion of protein (seafood being my favorite, as it is high in omega 3). Include good fats like olives, olive oil, avocados, coconut oil, or some nuts and seeds, at every meal to slow the rate at which your carbohydrate intake breaks down to sugar.

Achieving optimal health is naturally multifaceted. So along with a clean, low glycemic diet, regular exercise and quality sleep are essential to blood sugar regulation.

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

Looking for lumps

COMMON in women over 30 years of age, breast cysts are fluid-filled sacs within the breast. A woman may have a single cyst or many cysts and these are often described as round with distinct edges.

A large cyst can be felt in the breast and usually feels like a soft grape or a water-filled balloon. The cysts usually disappear after menopause, except in cases where the women are taking hormone therapy.

One important thing to know is that a simple cyst does not increase the risk of developing breast cancer. However, if you detect the presence of any new breast lumps, or if an already identified breast lump seems to have grown, please seek medical attention.

The cause of breast cysts remains unknown, but it is believed that they may be the result of excess oestrogen in the body. Screening and diagnosis



Breast cysts do not increase the likelihood of developing cancer. Photo: The Nation

of a breast cyst usually begins after a breast lump is identified by you or a doctor.

No treatment is necessary for simple breast cysts. However, the doctor may recommend closely monitoring a breast cyst to see if its size changes.

A breast self-examination should be done at least once each month. In case of finding any abnormality, seek immediate medical attention.

– Dr Duangmani Thanappapasr / *The Nation*

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Logos for BVT, PTT, Phuket Gazette, IG TV, Nature Valley, Pop Secret, Coca-Cola, and Winamax Point are also visible.

What is property valuation?



By The Book

Kevin Hodges

VALUATION is a process of estimation of the most probable price which would be paid for a property under typical market conditions applicable at the date of valuation.

The value of a property is the present value of all future benefits expected to be obtained from possession of the property.

The ability to provide a professional and accurate valuation relies on a combination of the professionalism of the valuation consultants and the quality of available market information.

SRE (Siam Real Estate) service uses the market approach, which examines the title, state, age and condition of the property, as well as major selling features. We then compare these with similar properties in the area, taking into account current market factors and the immediate local environment to arrive at a fair market price in the present market.

The valuation process does not review due diligence; either right of property, or access rights or title ownership. Public utilities and services are also not considered.

Due diligence should be carried out by a lawyer.

SRE specializes in appraisal and valuation reports covering: residential properties, houses/villas, town-houses, shop houses, condominium housing development projects, and apartments – also making direct comparisons with similar land plots.

The purposes of the valuation cover the following:

- Current market value
- Asset financing
- Rental assessment
- Mortgage finance
- Security value
- Divorce proceedings
- Dispute resolutions
- Risk analysis
- Insurance cover
- Fire sale estimate

Homes are valued based on what an average person would be willing to pay for a similar property. This data is derived by looking at current sales in Phuket.

Every attempt is made to use sales that have the same characteristics as the property being valued (subject property). These include, but are not limited to, area, number of bedrooms and baths, whether it has a garage and other similar factors.

If a subject property doesn't have enough match-



Homes are valued based on what an average person would be willing to pay for a similar property in the same area. Photo: Chris-Håvard Berge

ing sales, comparisons are made with properties most closely resembling that one, while making suitable adjustments to create an equitable value.

An example of this would be if the sale property had a swimming pool and the subject didn't, the sale price would be adjusted to reflect not having a pool.

A sale at fair market value is defined as the amount of

money a well-informed buyer would pay, and a well-informed seller would accept, for property that has been on the open market for a reasonable amount of time, assuming neither buyer nor seller is acting under pressure.

When a sale is deemed valid, it can be used to help determine fair market value for other similar properties.

The goal is to value all properties fairly and equally,

while being as close to fair market value as possible.

For more information, contact Kevin Hodges, the North Branch and Investments Manager for Siam Real Estate (SRE) in Phuket and author of SRE's Phuket Residential Market Research Report. He has more than six years' experience in Phuket's real estate market.

Tel: 076-324042. Email: kevin@siamrealestate.com; www.siamrealestate.com

Weak baht encourages demand for condos in central business districts

DEMAND from foreign investors to buy middle- to upper-market condominiums in central business districts (CBDs) is strong this year with the baht's weakening from 33 per US dollar to between 35.50 and 36 – a depreciation of up to nine per cent so far this year, which is boosting foreign demand for condominiums in Bangkok and Phuket's CBDs.

The AEC also presents a positive challenge for Thailand's property developers to road-show their residential projects overseas, especially in China, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Middle East.

Frank Leung, managing director of Hong Kong-based Fulcrum Capital, which invested 2.3 billion baht to buy 306 units of the Park 24 condominium from Proud Residences last year,



Zcape III Condo is one of several new residences rising in Phuket's Central Business District (CBD). Image: Tri Property

said Thailand was the first Asean country in which the company was expanding its investment. The company sees business opportunity in residential projects.

The current weakness of the baht also benefits its investment in Thailand's property market, Mr Leung said.

"Most foreign buyers looking to buy properties in the region have a fixed budget to spend. With the baht declining, they can

buy more expensive properties. In Phuket, we have recently been able to sell more expensive units in projects we represent," said Aliwasa Pattanthabutr, managing director of property agency CB Richard Ellis (Thailand).

Foreign buyers of luxury residences costing more than 20mn baht now get much better value for money than they did last year.

– The Nation

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Quality tourism trending

By Nick Davies

LAST year was a favourable one for tourism in Phuket, boosting confidence throughout the hospitality and property sectors with a rise in 'quality' tourists and investors – a trend that appears set to continue in 2016.

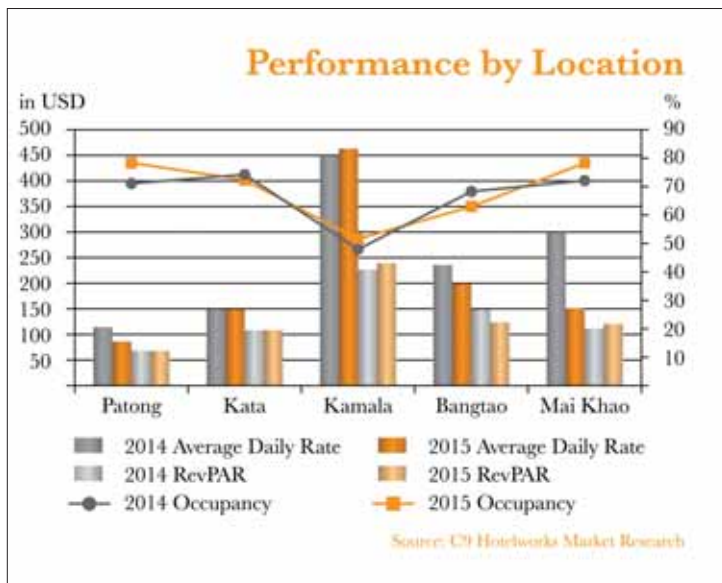
Arrivals at Phuket International Airport soared to 6.4 million – a record number of passengers passing through the province, according to the latest market research by Bill Barnett, the managing director of C9 Hotelworks hospitality and consulting firm.

“Despite both domestic and international volatility, there has been a compound annual growth of 14 per cent over the past five years,” said Mr Barnett.

International arrivals were up by nine per cent, and there was a 19 per cent increase in domestic arrivals in 2015.

A 34 per cent drop in arrivals from Russia was offset by a 35 per cent rise in visitors from China.

Part of the island's success was due to luxury-tier hotels



The past five years has seen a steady growth in quality tourists, boosting confidence in the tourism and property sectors. Infographic: C9Hotelworks

outperforming all other segments with an average daily rate (ADR) and occupancy rising by 17 per cent and three per cent respectively. Additionally, revenue per available room (RevPAR) increased by 24 per cent.

The steady growth of Phuket's evolving tourist market over the past five years has spurred new growth in hospi-

tality properties. Phuket currently has a total of 766 licensed lodging establishments with 49,645 keys.

A dozen new hotels are set to open this year, adding 1,567 rooms to the market. About half of the new rooms will appear in Patong.

“Hotel supply is expected to continue growing over the next four years with 30 new projects

set to come on line by 2019. That's more than 5,000 keys coming on stream,” said Mr Barnett.

The majority of the new projects are in Patong, followed by Chalong Bay, Phuket City, Kamala and Bang Tao.

At the boutique end of the spectrum are some small properties, including X2 Kamala Residences, with just nine rooms, opening this year.

Larger hotels coming online over the next few years include the Ramada ChaoFa Phuket with 270 rooms, opening in 2018; the Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Chalong Bay with 277 rooms, opening in 2017; the Premier Inn Phuket Nanai in Patong with 350 rooms, opening in 2018; and a new Best Western Premier Himalai Resort in Kamala with 402 rooms, opening in 2019.

There is also a demand for back-to-nature experiences among travellers, creating a niche hospitality market.

Innovative product designs and programming into niches such as wellness, tree houses and active sports are expected to boost future growth.

CP Land set to go global

MEGA developer CP LAND is looking to expand throughout Asean, Europe and Australia with a focus on office buildings and hospitality.

CP Land president and CEO Sunthorn Arunanonchai said Myanmar and Vietnam were potential expansion options over the next three years.

Investments will range from 1 to 3 billion baht, buying land and acquiring existing hospitality and office building assets.

In Thailand this year, CP Land set aside an investment budget of 12.1 billion baht. Up to 2 billion baht will be spent on the CP Industrial Estate in Rayong province, which has a total investment value of 7 billion baht.

3.6bn baht will be spent on developing 16 condominium projects in eight provinces. 4bn baht will be invested in 10 new hotels. Another 1 billion baht has been earmarked to develop a convention and exhibition centre in Khon Kaen, with 1.5bn baht to be spent on developing five new office buildings in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Surat Thani, Bangkok, Hat Yai and Udon Thani. – *The Nation*

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Available in the Ocean Plaza Patong for massage, beauty, coffee, souvenir shops, etc. Low-rent contracts for up to 12 years. Tel: 086-281 8883, 089-504 8882. Email: g.cummings@hotmail.com

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Alcoholics Anonymous

If you want to drink that is your business

If you want to stop that is ours

Daily Meetings

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Urgently required Indian Chef for new restaurant in Boat Lagoon. Contact Jimmy: 099-505 8134. Noi: 081-535 0778.

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Full time for immediate start. Thai national, good standard of English. 1.5 days off per week. Salary + bonus. OTE 30,000 baht. Ao Nang, Krabi. Tel: 075-637437, 081-077 5698 (English). Fax: 075-637669. Email: month info@baansanthiya.com

KRABI BOAT LAGOON URGENT

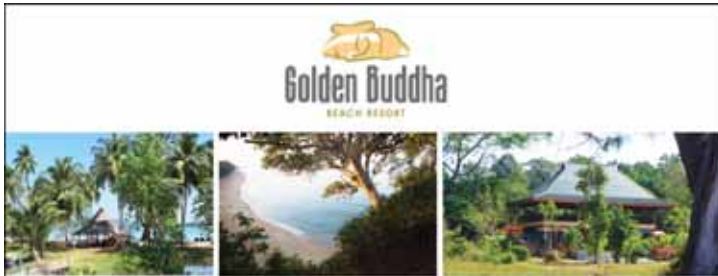
1 Marina Manager. 2 GSAs. All positions require good English command and service minded. Tel: 075-818 765. Email: sorn kom.k@holidayinkrabi.com

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P/T Kindergarten, Monday-Friday 8-11am. Rassada area in Phuket Town: TEFL. F/T EP school teacher, Phuket Town, Deg+TEFL. Salary: 36,000 baht +/month+W.P. ECC, Phuket. For more information, please call 089-139 8453 (English & Thai), 091-647 5465 (English). Email: Giles@ecc.ac.th

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Position: Front of House Manager

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

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

Requirements:

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

Interested candidates should apply in writing, including a resume and photograph, and stating expected salary. Email to Khun Pissa at pena@goldenbuddhaharesort.com Tel: 081-892 2208 or 081-895 2242. Please refer to our website prior to applying www.goldenbuddhaharesort.com

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To assist our Media Manager in translating our media releases. Must be able to communicate well and be social media savvy. Can work from home, native speakers in the following languages required. Japanese, Korean, Chinese, French, Italian, German and Spanish. Must be also able to read and speak English. Kathu. Tel: 095-036 0336 (English). Please email to bodymaxi miser@gmail.com with your details ASAP, http://maximizer.zone



Architectural Design, Consultancy Company located at Kamala Beach, Phuket is looking for qualified and energetic persons to fill in the position.

Architect / Interior designer

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- Bachelor in Architecture or Interior Design
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- Able to handle all facets of architectural work including general administration, client interfacing, general design, contract documentation and site supervision
- Able to use 3D SketchUp would be advantage
- Good English communication and interpersonal skills

Interested candidates, please send full resume, expected salary & enclose a recent photo by e-mail to Paradise Designs Co., Ltd.

The Plaza Surin 5/50 Moo 3, Cherngthalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 076-271241. Email: hr@paradisepuket.com



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Must have English skills. Thai national. Tel: 081-787 7702 (English). Email: workforsimba@gmail.com

THAI SALES REP

Looking for Thai sales rep to visit hotels, guesthouses, sports activities, or day-trips companies in Phuket. Salary + commissions. Send CV, photo & a motivational letter. Tel: 087-466 8640. Email: christophe.fischer71@wanadoo.fr

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

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- ▶ A Bachelor's Degree from a recognized university
- ▶ A good sense of organization and respect for details
- ▶ Knowledge of basic office software, InDesign and PageMaker would be a plus.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Diao@PhuketGazette.Net

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From penniless to priceless

Popular Thailand's Got Talent finalist talks about his life and career

By Kongleaphy Keam

SURIYAN 'Romadon' Kos-anea, 41, originally from Phang Nga, is currently an art teacher at Phuket Vocational College. He also owns a tea shop and art gallery in Rawai. The special thing about him is the way he uses his body for painting. In 2012, he was chosen as one of the last six contestants in the show 'Thailand's Got Talent' for his body painting performance.

At the age of 24, Mr Suriyan graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Arts from Silpakorn University, and started travelling all over Thailand. He first lived in Koh Chang and Pai before finally settling in Phuket.

"Art is life, but I just never realized it. I would wake up and

brush my teeth. Then I noticed how the toothbrush was designed. It's art, it surrounds us. I believe art is unlimited it has no frame, Mr Suriyan said.

"Art can be one way to help us to think outside the box. It can open up opportunities and new ways of thinking. We can present our life through art," he added.

Art gives us life. We can use art to make a better life for ourselves. I started from scratch, but now I have a family I can support. It always comes down to how you can apply art in your real life.

"Art gives us life. We can use art to make a better life for ourselves. I started from scratch, but now I have a family I can support. I used art to open up my tea shop and to impress the judges on

Thailand's Got Talent. It always comes down to how you apply art in your real life," Mr Suriyan said.

"My house is not big, but I can make use of every part of

it. It serves as a place to live, a tea shop and an art gallery," he added.

Mr Suriyan does not sell his art everywhere at present, as his main income is from teaching and the tea shop. However, when he does sell paintings he charges anywhere between 2,000 to 80,000 baht. Most of his customers are foreigners.

His life changed from a homeless artist who used to draw pictures on the walking street, to a respected teacher at the Phuket Vocational College, and then a contestant on a popular television show.

"Why did I move to Phuket? I had to find a place where people found my art interesting. There are many foreigners here in Phuket who understand and value my art.

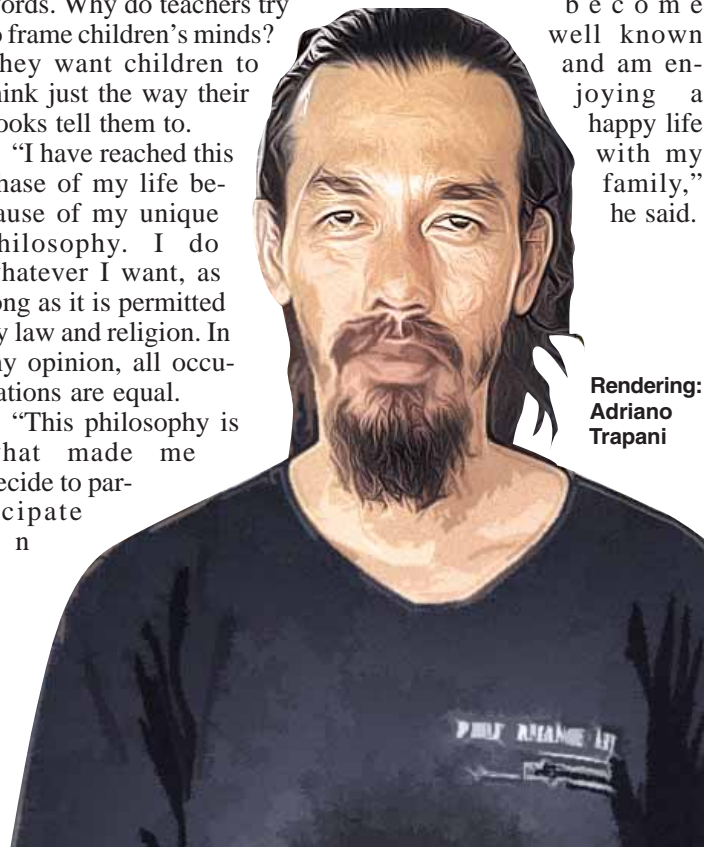
"I have liked art since I was a child. I loved painting the school logo, climbing up trees and always doing something different. At university, my teachers never liked my art. They always asked me to fol-

low a set procedure, but I did not care about other people's words. Why do teachers try to frame children's minds? They want children to think just the way their books tell them to.

"I have reached this phase of my life because of my unique philosophy. I do whatever I want, as long as it is permitted by law and religion. In my opinion, all occupations are equal.

"This philosophy is what made me decide to participate in

Thailand's Got Talent. My life has gotten better; I have become well known and an enjoying a happy life with my family," he said.



Rendering: Adriano Trapani



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