

Phuket Gazette

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MADE IN PHUKET: BOMB DETECTION KIT WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Terrorism Solution



Dr Worawit Wongniramaikul demonstrates the bomb-testing capabilities of Thailand's answer to terrorism. Photo: Kongleaphy Keam

Phuket-based researchers receive international award for bomb testing kit

By Kongleaphy Keam

A SIX member research team from Phuket and Hat Yai was awarded silver

medals for creating low-cost explosive testing kits at the 44th International Exhibition of Inventions Geneva 2016.

The invention comes in the wake of several recent bombings in Thailand. The competition included more than 800 inventions submitted by participants from more than 40 nations around the world.

The invention also won a special prize from the Association of Polish Inventors and Rationalizers.

Three of the research team members are professors from Prince of Songkla (PSU)

University Phuket Campus, namely Assistant Prof Dr Aree Choodum, Dr Wadcharawadee Limsakul, and Asst Prof Dr Worawit Wongniramaikul. The other three are from PSU Hat Yai campus, namely Associate Prof Dr Proespichaya Kanatharana, Jutaporn Keson and Prof Dr Niamh Nic Daied.

"Last week, we gave a presentation to the Ministry of Defence, and received a very good response. They are very interested in our research and are planning to bring the...

Continued on Page 5

Patong hosts UNESCO conference

THE world's foremost thinkers in education, public policy, information technology and labor, presented strategies to improve the educational opportunities for over one million out-of-school Thais.

Full story Page 3

BUSINESS



The owner of Zurich Bread, talks about the art and science of bread making.

PROPERTY



Two months of testing required ahead of official opening of new airport.

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LOCAL NEWS

Briefly

Gen supports beach cleanup

REGION 4 Army Commander Wiwat Pathompak visited Phuket on May 8 to assess the local government's push to return beaches to their natural state, following the demolition of illegal buildings at Patong, Kamala, Surin and Lay Pang beaches.

A group of about 50 disenfranchised vendors who had been evicted from Surin and Karon beaches met the general at Surin Beach, where they protested the reclamation of public land and their subsequent loss of incomes.

Gen Wiwat accepted letters from two of the protest leaders.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Man's body found near Kathu school

POLICE are trying to identify the decomposing body of a man found floating in a pond near Kathu Wittaya School on May 9.

Police said the man was naked and had no form of identification on him. The man was described as dark skinned, aged between 30 and 35 years old and about 1.7 meters tall.

"We believe the man died at least three days before his body

Drunk driving Russian in crash at twice legal limit



A Russian man who reportedly tested positive for more than double the legal limit of alcohol crashed his car on the morning of May 11. The driver, named by Chalong Police as Yuri Razuvayev, 25, crashed the vehicle into a water pump and damaged a beauty salon sign in Rawai at 6am. Mr Razuvayev has been charged for drinking and driving, as well as property damage. Police alleged the Russian had also overstayed his visa, and that they would be working in tandem with Immigration Police to bring additional charges against him. No one was seriously injured in the incident, officials confirmed. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

was discovered," police said.

The body was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for further examination to determine the cause of death.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Rawai sea wall repaired after mayor visits

TRUCKLOADS of rocks were dumped along a 30-meter

stretch of Rawai beachfront on May 8 to temporarily shore up a sea wall, which gave way last week after it was damaged by strong waves.

Rawai Mayor Aroon Solos ordered the quick fix after inspecting the site.

"The wall and sidewalk were damaged after being battered for three days straight. The waves eroded the sand at the base of the wall, weakening the foundations," said Mayor Aroon.

The concrete wall and footpath were first built after the 2004 tsunami.

Mayor Aroon could not confirm when a permanent fix for the wall would be installed.

— *Chutharat Plerin*

Police seize Bt5mn of meth over weekend

PHUKET Provincial Police announced the seizure of street drugs valued at more than five million baht following the arrests of five drug pushers on May 4-5.

Police seized more than 2.5 kilograms of methamphetamine (ya ice) and 6,400 methamphetamine pills (ya bah).

Police said cascading arrests led them to the main supplier

of lower level drug dealers. All five suspects have been charged with intent to sell category 1 drugs. Additional charges were filed against one suspect for possession of a homemade firearm.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Koh Yao Noi fishermen protest stricter regulations

MORE than 300 anchovy fishermen gathered in protest at Laem Mai pier at Koh Yao Noi on May 5.

The fishermen demanded changes to regulations that prevent vessels weighing 10 tons or more from fishing within three miles of shore.

Koh Yao District Chief Buri Thammarak met with the protestors and accepted a letter outlining their demands to be passed on to the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Mr Buri said he sympathized with the fishermen's plight and promised that their issues would be addressed by Deputy Minister, Narong Pipatchai, who was scheduled to visit the island on May 11.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Petitions pour in over dog mutilation case

PHUKET-based animal welfare charity Soi Dog Foundation called for the maximum penalty for animal abuse to be handed down to a Bangkok man accused of hacking off the front legs of a puppy with a sword.

An online petition set up by the Soi Dog Foundation has already garnered over 66,000 signatures demanding the accused is given the maximum two years imprisonment, and fined 40,000 baht.

The man allegedly attacked the dog because it had chewed one of his shoes.

The petition will be delivered to a judicial court on May 17.

— *Nick Davies*

Historic storm strikes Krabi, Phang Nga

HIGH winds, rain and hail caused extensive damage to property in Krabi and Phang Nga on May 5.

The cost of the storm damage was estimated to be several hundred thousand baht. Authorities are compensating residents whose houses were damaged and is providing temporary housing.

In Phang Nga, 10 buildings were damaged during the two-hour onslaught of hail and rain at the Phang Nga Agriculture and Technology College in Takuatung.

"This is the most extreme storm we have had in 38 years, but luckily, no one was injured. Some areas even experienced hail for the first time ever," deputy director of the college, Chaipan Kachakanpayan said.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Bypass road crash kills man

A 35-year-old passenger in the bed of a pick-up truck was pronounced dead on arrival at Vachira Phuket Hospital, after a three-vehicle crash on the bypass road near the Samkong intersection on May 8.

The pick-up truck was reportedly traveling at high speed and trying to overtake on the inside lane, before it lost control and hit the other two cars.

— *Winai Sarot*

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Patong hosts UNESCO education conference of international experts

THE world's foremost thinkers in education, public policy, information technology and labor, presented strategies to improve the educational opportunities for over one million out-of-school Thais at a three-day conference in Patong, May 9-11.

Officials from Cambodia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Australia, The United States, South Korea, Pakistan and Germany, among others, converged on Phuket for the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Education Conference at the Phuket Graceland Resort.

Representatives from distinguished international organizations presented education-related research and advice on assisting public development and equality in Thailand.

Officials and experts focused on internet access as a key tool in increasing the educational attainment and opportunities for Thai people.

"We have brought internet systems to help promote lifelong learning to 7,424 community learning centers set up in several districts across Thailand," said Permanent Secretary of Education Kamjorn Tatiyakavee. "Now there are 268 digital commu-



Experts and officials from around the world attended the UNESCO meeting in Patong. Photo: Phuket City Municipality

nity centers, and we hope to bring that number up to 1,680 in the near future."

"In order to provide digital learning to 1.2 million of out-of-school students in Thailand, we plan to ask vocational students to help take care of IT-related community issues, Mr Kamjorn said.

The Fourth UN Sustainable

Development Goal (SDG 4) is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all communities by 2030.

The conference was titled 'A New Paradigm of Community Learning Through Online Lifelong Education.'

- Sukawin Tanthavanich

Thai actor's family wins land dispute



Thai actor Puri Hiranpruk. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE standing committee presiding over a land ownership dispute of 24 rai on Naka Noi Island, just off Phuket's eastern coast, has voted to revoke the ownership of Six Mountains Co Ltd, Phuket Land Office Chief Watcharin Jetanavanich confirmed May 11.

"The Land Department Director-General has the final decision," Mr Watcharin said.

The land ownership dispute was brought into the public eye in December of last year, when the Department of Special Investigations handled a complaint by Thai actor Puri Hiranpruk. Mr Puri alleged that land documents had transferred ownership of land from Naka Noi Island to Naka Yai Island.

Mr Puri's family owns 60 rai of Naka Noi. He has claimed that a number of suspicious activities surrounded the transfer of land documents and title agreements.

- Kritsada Mueanghawong



Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupana Photo: Phuket City Municipality



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Families turn to pawn shops

Thousands sell valuables to afford back to school costs

PHUKET's pawn brokers said transactions on May 10 totalled nearly 12 million baht, as families pawned valuables to afford their children's school costs.

Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop representative Apirat Chaiyakul said transactions between May and June are expected to increase by as much as 30 per cent.

Mr Apirat said his store will do around B180mn baht in total transactions this year, mostly with items such as gold jewelry, watches, TVs, and cameras.

"In order to help parents who need money for their child's education, we are thinking of implementing a discounted interest rate policy for this demographic," Mr Apirat said. "The customers would bring the school fee re-



Pawn brokers see a hike of 20 to 30 per cent in transactions during the back-to-school rush. Photo: Kongleaphy Keam

ceipt and would only get a one per cent interest rate, down from our current 1.25 per cent rate."

Nida Sengsuda, together with her six-year-old grand-

daughter, Kuntida Maimung, was one of those customers at the Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop.

"She is studying at Kan- chanawat Witthaya and the total

expense per term is about 13,000 baht," Ms Nida said. "We have to pay twice a year and her mother doesn't have enough money, so I have brought my gold here."

"We do this twice a year, every year, as we cannot earn enough money by the time we have to pay for the school terms and other expenses. Normally, we try our best to get enough money to buy our gold back within a few months," she added.

Another woman, who wished to remain nameless, echoed Ms Nida's comments.

"I have three children, 6, 10, and 15 years old," she said. "In the past few years, I've earned enough to support them at school, around 40,000 baht, but now that they're older I need more money. I am working a

freelance job, so I cannot guarantee my income," she added. "When I had money, I bought gold items so I could pawn them if I ever needed it quickly. I've always gotten the gold back on time because I also need to show off to my family when I go back to my home town."

Every year, the Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop seizes approximately two million baht worth of items from those who cannot afford to buy their items back.

It's not much out of the 12 million baht in trading that we do, Mr Apirat said. "Most [of the seized items] come from teenagers who pawn for smaller amounts. The pawned items are then put on sale every second Saturday of the month.

- Kongleaphy Keam

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Two hospitalized in parasailing accident



A crowd circles injured parasailers on Kata Beach. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

A Chinese girl and a Thai man were injured in a parasailing accident at Kata Beach on May 5, when the pair were caught up in a tree and then fell to the ground.

The nine-year-old girl was flying tandem with Prasert Boonkert, 30, an employee of Sea Sport Speed Boat, at about 1pm when the pair became entangled in the tree toward the end of the flight, as they descended toward the beach.

"Both then fell to the ground. The girl landed on top of Mr Prasert, sustaining minor injuries to her neck, chest and lower body. She was rushed to Patong Hospital but later released," Lt Weerayut Thansirisukhaworakul

of the Karon Police told the *Gazette*.

Mr Prasert sustained a serious chest injury and was also taken to Patong Hospital to undergo emergency surgery.

Police questioned the boat driver, Wanchai Chalernsab, but have so far not pressed any charges against him or Mr Prasert.

"Mr Prasert's medical expenses are covered by his employer's insurance. Meanwhile, we are mediating with the injured girl's family, who are here on holiday, to establish whether they will require any compensation," said Lt Weerayuth.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

Poland recognizes Thai invention

From Page 1

...prime minister up to speed on its usage,” said Dr Aree. “In addition to local interest, our team has also been contacted by companies in Poland for commercial use of our testing kit in their country.”

The team also had a chance to conduct a test at the remains of the Bangkok blast site. Even though the tests were performed a week after the bombings, they still found evidence of Trinitrotoluene (TNT) usage and submitted it to the police, Dr Aree told the *Phuket Gazette*.

Overall, Thailand won seven honor gold medals, eight gold medals, 17 silver medals, 18 bronze medals and 28 special prizes at the exhibition.

“Our main objective is to solve the recent problems faced by our society, such as bombings, terrorist attacks and other unstable situations that have been taking place not only in Thailand and Phuket, but all over the world. We felt that there was a need to equip ourselves with simplified gear to deal with these new problems,” said Dr Aree.

“The unique and extraordinary quality of this new invention is that it is cheap, portable, easy to use and quick to provide results – it can be used both before and after a bombing,” she added.

“The test kits comprise a polymer in a small tube. We can take it to the scene, conduct the test, and know the results immediately,” Dr Aree said.

“The testing kit only costs about 30 to 80 satang per tube, as opposed to other tests which cost up to 78 baht per test. It can also be reused up to nine times, which effectively brings the cost down to 10 satang per test,” said Dr Aree.

Additionally, the results can be obtained immediately, whereas previously, officers had to collect evidence from the scene of the incident and then wait for lab technicians to perform tests and deliver the results.

“Everyone can do it. However, the tests are more suitable for professionals, such as Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel, police, military and others in the field of national security,” she added.

“The kit also allows the user to determine the type of the explosive and its origin right away. The procedure itself is

deceptively simple; cotton buds are used to collect samples and water is then added to it. The change in color of the kits helps to identify what kind of explosives have been used,” Dr Aree explained.

The sample can be obtained from virtually any surface in the vicinity of the blast – dirt, grass, clothes, body parts and so on.

“This means that the test can be performed before an explosion even occurs; we can use it to test suspects, suspicious items, or areas at risk, so that officers can take immediate action,” explained Dr Aree.

The test kits can identify up to six types of explosive substances, namely, TNT, Nitrate, Nitrate esters, Nitrite, Nitramines, and Nitroaromatic.

There are eight types of kits available to test these explosive substances:

1. Thin film test kits to test Trinitrotoluene (TNT)
2. Nitrate Explosives test kits to test Nitrate
3. Test kits for Nitrate ester explosives
4. Nitrite test kits for Nitrite explosives
5. Test kits for Nitramines Explosives
6. Hydrogel test kits for Nitroaromatic explosives
7. Biodegradable film for Nitroaromatic explosives
8. Cryogel test kits for Nitroaromatic explosives

“There are currently eight types of chemical substances that people use to make bombs. At the moment, we have created kits for six of the most popular ones. We are researching the other two, which are now gaining popularity – Peroxide and Acid,” said Dr Aree. “TNT is the most widely used explosive material in the world, while in the deep south of Thailand, Nitrate is the most popular one,” she added.

“This breakthrough is beneficial in many different sectors – economics, science, and security, to name a few. Even though these kits can be used both before and after an incident occurs, we prefer to use them before. It is our hope that our work can help Thailand, as well as other countries across the globe,” Dr Aree said.

“We are conducting research to help people in light of recent occurrences and hope to do our best our best to find feasible solutions.

“We are glad to share our knowledge with everyone who wishes to use it,” Dr Aree said.



The test kits can identify up to six types of explosive substances. Photo: Kongleaphy Keam

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Queer News
Sneaky thief shows a clean pair of heels

Phuket Gazette

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World music festival for Patong
Chao Fa West roadworks Time to reclaim Phuket's
causing traffic delays roads – with forethought

We invite you to...
THAI to increase ticket prices on Bangkok route
Around the world in eight days with the Gumball 3000 Rally
PHUKET DIARY of coming events

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PEOPLE: The new boss of Laguna. Pages 12 & 13
LIFESTYLE: Digital photo frames; Cocktails. Pages 14 & 15.
NATURE NOTES: Schiny

Candidates prepare for polls – again



Thai Rak Thai candidate Wisut Santikul will contest Phuket District 2 in the coming election.

PHUKET: As Phuket prepares to go to the polls once more, following the Constitutional Court's May 8 ruling of the controversial April 2 snap election as invalid, mystery surrounds just who will represent the locally powerful Democrat Party on the island.

Anchalee Vanich-Thep-abutr, speaking on behalf of the Democrat Party in Phuket, told the *Gazette*, "It is clear that we will have a new election for MPs throughout the country, and Democrat Party leader Abhisit said that the man in the..."

Gas prices halt Highway Police

By PHUKET...
The Of...
Dr Sriyada Palimaphan said she was ready to go to the polls again. "We have to wait for the final decision from the courts. All we... will be..."

RAINY SEASON BLOWS IN

"I'm always... sent the people," she said... Dr Sriyada, who won the Phuket District 1 seat... engaged in these illega... he added.



Mission to raise human torpedoes from WWII

Phuket City. Provincial Administration Orga-... run."

Patong Hospital To Be Upgraded

Gumball 'joyriders' not above the law

POLITICS were again on the front page of the *Gazette* in May 2006, following the Constitutional Court's May 8 ruling against the snap elections for Parliament on April 2. With the island burning a bright yellow, the big question was which member of the Democratic Party would be put forward to represent the island after clearing Thai Rak Thai in the polls.

Ten years later, the talk of general elections in Thailand continues to sizzle outside of the country. However, those of us on the inside are simply sizzling from the heat. Despite Songkran coming and going, the clouds carrying the rains usually ushered in with the celebrations have evaporated before hitting land. Islanders caught in traffic continue to blast their air conditioning as they attempt to beat the heat, especially those locked up in the Chalong Underpass construction.

"Motorists using Chao Fa West Road are feeling the pinch as work continues on the Phuket Provincial

Highways Office project to resurface the main artery to the island's southern beaches and widening it to four lanes," reported the *Gazette* in the May 13-19, 2006 issue.

Now, just ten years later, motorists are feeling the same pinch as a small section of Chao Fa West Road is reduced to two lanes to allow for underpass construction. Business owners and residents south of the circle continue to fear the impact the underpass project will have on their lives once it is in full swing. With no viable alternative routes in place and officials dragging their heels in providing real solutions, many will just have to bite the bullet and weather the storm. Hopefully, the Chalong Underpass will follow in the footsteps of the Koh Kaew Underpass – which is well ahead of schedule – and not the Samkong Underpass, which has suffered from more than a year of delays.

The gift of hindsight

It has always been well known that a speedy connection between the north and south will allow Thais and expats to better support community programs and events put on by establishments such as Boat Lagoon and Laguna.

And when it comes to Laguna, if you don't know the legacy of James Batt, 'Mayor of Laguna', then you're without a doubt a 'new era expat'. Of course, those of us who don't know Mr Batt, are much more familiar with Michael Ayling: after more than a decade of running Laguna, Mr Batt made room for Mr Ayling in 2006.

You might think that stepping into the shoes of Mr Batt would be intimidating, but Mr Ayling was up for the challenge.

"I want to keep the status quo and keep everything moving in the right direction. I'm taking over from James at a very good time, because the rebound [from the tsunami] is definitely under-

way and it's a great time to be in the property market," Mr Ayling said ten years ago, and for the next eight years that is exactly what he did. It wasn't until 2014 that Mr Ayling decided to switch gears and leave his position as Managing Director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels.

Though Mr Batt and Mr Ayling have both moved on, Laguna continues to expand and develop its properties – forever probing the future of Phuket for opportunities. It does not take much talent in the art of divination to predict that strong establishments that are part of the foundation of our island community will continue to thrive.

Just as we can now jump into the *Gazette's* 'Time Machine', to discover that Patong Hospital received a 70-million-baht budget to upgrade its facilities to international standards in May, 1996, editors of the *Gazette* ten years from now will be able to tie the events of 2006 to the reflections in a 'A Decade Ago'.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli

Drought-fueled fires scorch countryside

A FIRE in Chiang Mai's Khun Chang Khian highlands that started on May 8 was brought under control three days later. It reportedly blackened 300 rai of the forest, which is part of Doi Suthep-Pui National Park.

A separate fire continued to burn in Narathiwat's Sungai Padi District. That fire spread from farmlands to parts of the Bang Nara River Basin Forest Reserve, before consuming 200 rai of the Toh Daeng peat swamp forest.

A separate forest fire in Chumphon's Sawi District also started on May 8, prompting the district chief to order residents in five at-risk villages to prepare for evacuation. That fire has damaged 500 rai of land.

Panama Papers implicate Thais

NAMES of 1,413 persons with Thai addresses have been identified with links to offshore companies in the world's largest data leak, dubbed the 'Panama Papers.'

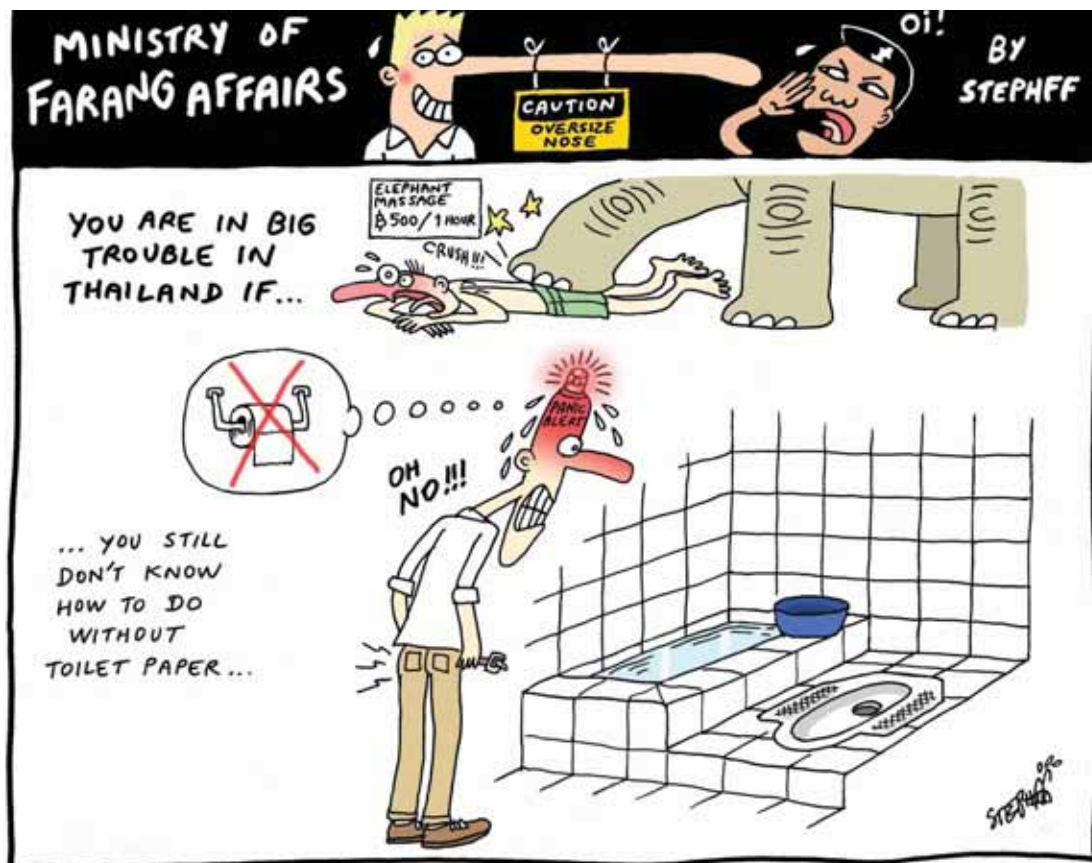
The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists made public a searchable online database of entities implicated in the leak on May 9.

Among those named in the latest release of documents on the website are: Singha Corporation Executive Vice President Chutinant Bhrombhakdi, Central Group CEO Tos Chirathivat, Samakhom Chomdao host Kathaleeya McIntosh and her husband Songkran Grachangnetara, divorced wife of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, and Kiatnakin Bank CEO Banyong Pongpanich.

Bt10mn nabbed in bank heist

THIEVES managed to steal an estimated 10 million baht from a Bangkok Bank branch in Phetchaburi province overnight on May 8.

A bank officer told police in Cha-am that he had gone to work as usual and noticed that the vault door was open and that the computer controlling the security camera and alarm system were destroyed.



Cha-am police reported that they had received an alarm call from the bank at 2.30am and rushed to the branch, but found nothing amiss.

The sub-branch provides foreign exchange services, and its money is transferred to the main branch daily, but the theft occurred over the long weekend holiday.

The number of people involved in the break-in was not known.

Shrapnel bomb injures four in Yala province

A HOME-MADE bomb exploded outside a house on May 8 in Yala Province's Yaha District, injuring four men.

A team of explosive ordnance disposal officers found metal pieces used to make the half-kilogram bomb, which was detonated by a timer.

The bomb was placed in a coffee bag and left at the scene.

The four men sustained slight wounds and were discharged from hospital after being treated.

Witnesses said they saw two people on a motorcycle drop off the coffee bag at the scene.

After dropping off the bag, they lit a firecracker and threw it on the ground, witnesses said.

When a village headman and other villagers went to inspect the scene, the bomb went off and wounded them.

Officials believe the attack was the work of insurgents.

NATIONAL NEWS Briefly

Court releases Facebook eight on bail

EIGHT activists detained for posting Facebook comments critical of the ruling junta and a military-backed draft constitution, were released on bail May 10.

The draft constitution drawn up under military supervision has drawn disapproval

from both sides of the political divide, and the junta has responded by banning criticism of the charter in the run-up to an August referendum.

The activists, detained in April, were charged with sedition and violating Thailand's computer crimes law over their posts on Facebook criticizing the draft constitution and Prime Minister Gen Prayuth Chan-ocha.

"The court has agreed to release them on a 200,000-baht bail each," a lawyer for the group said.

The mother of a vocal, anti-junta activist was released on May 8, after being charged with defaming the monarchy two days earlier.

Ministry closes Thailand's sole gold mine

THAILAND'S Industry Ministry has ordered the closure of its only active gold mine by the end of the year, in the wake of concerns it was responsible for contamination suffered by villagers.

In January last year, a government investigation team said that more than 300 people tested positive for arsenic and manganese at Akara Resources' Chatree mine.

The Chatree mine has been at the center of protests by farmers and villagers, who claim that the mine has poisoned residents, crops and livestock.

The Industry Ministry said the Australian subsidiary can continue its operation until the end of the year. The firm's mining lease was valid until 2028.

Central bank expected to keep rates low

THAILAND'S central bank is expected to leave its already-low policy rate where it has been for more than a year, letting government spending and tourism take the lead in reviving the weak domestic economy.

The current lending rate sits at 1.50 per cent. Thailand's last rate change, a 25 basis-point cut, was in April 2015.

Minor changes in inflation have reduced the need for further cuts, analysts said.

Package Lady Check

Cervical cancer is the most common cancer of women in Thailand. The cause of cervical cancer is caused by an infection with HPV types that cause cancer. Cervical cancer can be prevented by avoiding risk factors and regular screening, at least every one year.

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Phuket Gazette

Inventive Thailand

IN A world where the only constant is change, it is interesting to note that Thailand is now gaining a reputation for innovation.

The *Gazette's* cover story this week highlights just one of the many Thai innovations that won prizes at the 44th International Exhibition of Inventions, held in Geneva last month.

Among the other big Thai winners in Geneva were an industrial tube heat exchanger, a cosmetic phyto-gel hydration mask and a portable aflatoxin sensor for agricultural products and animal feed.

We're not quite sure what any of those things do, but they are obviously exceptional enough for the Geneva judges to pick them above the hundreds of other inventions submitted by innovators from the more than 40 countries represented at the exhibition.

This week, Prime Minister Gen Prayuth Chan-o-cha urged Thais to embrace innovation as the way forward in both trade and product development, saying that he believed there were many good innovators in Thailand and the country would develop further if they worked together.

Some of our more trollish readers (you know who you are) may be urged to comment that Thailand's international reputation is not so much framed around innovation, as entrenched in reproduction and repackaging of others' ideas and intellectual property.

Considering how often this newspaper reports police raids on vendors selling knock-off Gucci handbags and Ray-Ban sunglasses, you could be forgiven for thinking that is the norm. That industry is, however, fueled by consumer demand, the same consumer demand that has driven the opening of thousands of 'Thai' restaurants throughout the western world, regardless of whether there is a Thai chef in the kitchen.

Copying success is, unfortunately, good business. More importantly, it is easy business, wherever you happen to be in the world. Innovation, on the other hand, requires a more stern measure of commitment on the part of business leaders to promote their products and create consumer demand for them.

While the *Gazette* applauds PM Prayuth's call for Thais to innovate, we hope he will be equally insistent in encouraging the business community to sell unique Thai innovations, rather than emulating the obvious and importing the unoriginal.



Rubbish problem in Rawai getting worse

Re: Dumped in Phuket

Rubbish dumping is rapidly becoming a huge problem, especially in Rawai and its environs.

I live in Saiyuan Soi 13 where there is an unsightly, corrugated iron shack piled with scrap at the street corner. Worse, the excess rubbish – everything from old bedsteads to rusting appliances – is piled outside and against the building opposite. Further down the road, as though encouraged by the shambolic mess, garbage is accumulating – mostly smelly plastic bags and builders' spoil – at an alarming rate.

The whole area, designated as a residential area and with a number of high-end villas, is being degraded. It still has only one concrete road and the dirt tracks are not even regularly graded. Huge ruts make some of the so-called 'roads' impassable for the average car. The shambles encourages 'fly-tipping' everywhere in the vicinity.

Sadly, the *OrBorTor* shows absolutely no interest in rectifying the situation. Many people have complained. Nothing has been done.

*Rattled in Rawai
Letter to the editor*

Most road accidents could be avoided

Re: Wet road surface blamed for three vehicle pile-up, May 6

Can we please stop using the word 'accident'?

All the recent incidents would have been preventable if

Letters to the Editor

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

drivers had used due care and attention.

Drivers are putting themselves and others at risk with their poor skills and failure to adapt to road conditions.

An 'accident' is an unfortunate incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury.

*Mister Ree
Gazette forum*

Let's hope entire island is wire free

Re: Yaowarat Road to close for three days, May 6

Shame they can't make the whole island 'spaghetti free' from ugly wires, which is the way forward. Phuket without wires would be a dream.

*The Guest
Gazette forum*

Rock climbing providing jobs for many

Re: Climbing bans blamed for killing tourism at Thailand climbing meccas, May 7

I'm really sorry this kind of thing is happening. Rock climbing provides jobs for Thais (who have been climbing for centuries) as guides and supporting the tourist industry.

I must add, that while there has not been any major injury or death in Thailand, Climbing has brought injury and death in other areas. And so has swimming in the ocean, motorcycling, biking, crossing the street, skydiving, scuba diving, mountain climbing, and simply taking a deep breath.

Do not promise the authorities absolute safety, but the sportsman/woman themselves need to know the risks and then make the decision.

*William Moynihan
Facebook*

Provide business licence, not warning

Re: Austrian paraglider warned over Nai Harn flights, May 5

Instead of a warning they should have sent him the paperwork to legitimize his business. It clearly is a pollution free sport that could be a tourist magnet.

*Wolf Flow
Facebook*

Glad to see people coming together

Re: Canadian crash victim to receive emergency supply of blood platelets, May 11

It is heartwarming to see people rallying together for someone in need, age, race and nationality forgotten. The only thing that matters is helping someone.

*Alan Greenwood
Phuket Forum*

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The impact of tourism

FIRST PERSON

PHUKET'S growing tourism industry is a leading cause of changes in my community's way of life. In the past, we only fished to feed our families and traded the extra fish we caught for uncooked rice. That's the way it's been done since I was a boy. My family has been fishing for generations, but times have changed and now I fear the worst.

The changes started when people in neighboring areas began to visit Rawai for fresh fish. When a seafood restaurant, named 'Mook Dee,' opened up, it increased the number of visitors to the area, and encouraged more businesses to set up. This changed the nature of the community, from a small, local area to a much-frequented tourist district.

Another factor impacting our business is the drastic change in zoning laws and fishing regulations, which limited the number of fish we could catch.

In order to attract tourists, additional fish markets in Rawai have opened, putting a burden on fishermen such as myself.

The markets are flooded with new fish vendors, who wish to capitalize on the demand. Sometimes the fish they are selling isn't even local, but imported from elsewhere and sold in local markets. Due to the increased competition and zoning laws, we cannot use traditional methods of fishing

In order to fulfill legal obligations and heavy fines, some have simply chosen to leave this profession behind.

— Nirund Yangpan, Rawai sea gypsy fisherman and community member



Nirund Yangpan, fisherman by profession and father of four sons, was born and raised in Rawai's sea gypsy community. His family has been fishing for generations, but times have changed and now he fears the worst.

Here, he talks about how tourism and new fishing regulations have impacted their traditional way of life, making it harder to earn a livelihood.



Fishermen in the community have had to adjust their way of life to match the changes around them. Photo: Jim Welch

with spears and bamboo handles in shallow waters. We have been forced into deeper waters, and have had to buy boats and better equipment.

After marine national parks were introduced, fishermen in my community were arrested for fishing illegally. A number of them had to sell their boats in order to fulfill the legal obligations and fines that followed. Others simply left the

profession behind.

I would like to see Phuket's tourism grow side-by-side with the traditions of my people. Tourists would also like to see the way of life that sea gypsies have had for generations, and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) should make an effort to preserve and celebrate our culture.

We have to adjust our way of life to match the changes around us, but I don't want to see our traditions – which we have carried on for hundreds of years – disappear completely, simply because tourism is bringing more income to the island.



Despite its proximity to the leading coffee bean producers of the world, the Thai market is dominated by instant coffee. Photo: pixabay.com

And not a drop to drink

Island View

By John Washington

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

sounds like a very First World problem. But before you wipe away a mocking tear for this author, know that this problem, in fact, is precisely one facet of this 'globalized economy' we keep hearing so much about.

The highly decentralized, cottage industry production of coffee beans in Vietnam and Indonesia, the second and fourth largest producers of coffee beans in the world respectively, export primarily Robusta varieties of beans to international buyers. Those companies – you can guess who – then process and sell back those beans as instant coffee, while selling whole bean coffee blends of the highest quality to Western markets for a substantial markup.

Here then, we have not only a market that actively dissuades the consumption of whole-bean coffee within growing regions, it effectively embargoes it by reinforcing price barriers.

The irony of being within a few hundred miles from some of world's greatest coffee and not being able to drink it, is indicative of the primacy of the West, even in the East's backyard.

A GREAT part of my excitement upon learning I'd be moving to Phuket was due to the island's proximity to Sumatra and Java, arguably the world's most renowned coffee-growing regions. Imagine my dread at realizing that here, like much of the world, the market is dominated by instant coffee. Thailand's consumption of instant coffee is so ubiquitous that the International Trade Centre estimates 95 per cent of coffee consumed within the country to be of the instant variety.

This paradox – the closer you get to the source of excellent quality coffee, the less available it becomes – is not unique to Thailand. International demand has incentivized the export of coffee in much of Africa, Central and South America to such an extent that the very product these regions are renown for is virtually unavailable for retail purchase.

To be sure, fine coffee is available in Phuket's myriad of cafes, but the price and lack of prevalence of its bagged cousin is somewhat of a raincloud over my otherwise sunny experience here. I had dreams of bougainvillea and a French press in the mornings, instead I'm saddled with a cup of Dow Chemical grog and a waft of sooty exhaust.

All of this, of course,

Words from the Wise

“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.”

—Edward Everett Hale

“What lies behind us, and what lies before us are but tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Issues & Answers

Is there a 24-hour bike repair shop in Phuket?

A WEEK ago, I was on my way home late at night when I got a flat tire on my bike.

I noticed that no bike repair shops are open at that time.

That's quite a terrible situation to be stuck in, especially at that hour, when most of the normal repair shops are closed.

I was wondering if there are any bike repair shops open 24 hours a day in or around Phuket Town?

*Sven Larrson
Phuket Town*

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

Submit your issue at:

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Thank you for your query. There is a 24-hour bike repair shop in Phuket Town, close

to the Phang Nga Road intersection.

If you are riding from Royal Phuket City Hotel towards the Phuket Trick Eye Museum, you will see a big green sign right before the traffic light, about 20 meters on the right hand side.

The name of the shop is Bai Fern bike shop, and it provides tire repair (recap) as well as motorbike rentals, car rentals and taxi service.

For more information, contact 088-819 8456.

Drought calls for change of trade in Krabi



Ms Boonlap Maepeng urges villagers to trade in dried bamboo leaves to maintain incomes.
Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

THIS year's drought is forcing local farmers to diversify their crops in Krabi.

Boonlap Maepeng, 61, was having trouble producing rubber due to a lack of water when she was approached by a Bangkok businessman looking for dried bamboo leaves, which are used as wrappings for Bak Jang (rice dumplings).

Ms Boonlap now collects bamboo leaves from her entire village in order to meet the increasing demand. She said villagers can earn a lot from the bamboo leaf trade, and said it's good way to supplement their income during the dry season, when rubber collections are not enough.

"They are sun-dried or oven dried during the rainy season," Ms Boonlap said. "I buy fresh leaves at 15 baht/kg and sell at 40 baht/kg. I sell 800-1000 kg/month, which earns us approximately 30,000 baht."

"Those who have lost their incomes should sell bamboo leaves; it's easy to collect from your own farm and sell."

– **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

Opinions with a grain of salt

Finance

By David Mayes

IT'S very easy to get confused in the era of 24-hour media with regards to what's going on in the world economy. To make matters worse financial opinions are often reported as facts. Many times there are hidden agendas behind these, so it's important to take any opinions with a grain of salt.

The idea for this article came to me as I was sitting with a client, and we were discussing probable scenarios for China. If you have followed the narratives out of research departments of the major financial institutions and talking heads on financial news channels, you know that not so long ago the Chinese government was considered to be this cash-rich-behemoth with a mountain of cash that could destroy the US dollar if they ever decided to dump their cash holdings.

Now, this narrative suited them greatly while they were all recommending emerging market funds – the public was piling in. Yet, suddenly, the narrative changed and China was leveraged to the hilt.

The public pulled out of Chinese stocks and other emerging markets as well. I am not saying it is a conspiracy, but there have been studies on this strange phenomenon.

If you look back at the covers of financial magazines during the peaks and troughs of major market cycles, a pattern emerges, and it is not the one logic would have you expect. Just before every



The commentary around economic numbers may lead you to jump to a false conclusion. Image: Joseph Keppler

crash, there are rosy predictions of the futures of the day's high flying companies and usually the economy as a whole.

Similarly the bottoms are formed very often while pundits write about how this time is different and the sky is imminently falling. Of course, there are these kinds of opinions often during the middle of cycles, but they tend to be very extreme around tops and bottoms.

Now the main reason you need to be aware of this is because every so often Wall Street comes out about a specific company and starts making a very compelling argument about why it is a great addition to your portfolio. They are often trying to unload shares from their own positions. Of course, there is meant to be no communication between trading and research departments, but let's not kid ourselves here. It is highly likely any opin-

ion you receive from Wall Street has an ulterior motive behind it.

Knowing this is half the battle. It allows you to filter out all of the opinions being presented as facts and look for empirical data yourself. Economic numbers have an importance if you learn to understand them. However, the commentary around their release may lead you to make a false conclusion.

Similar to this is earnings data and moves in share prices. If you learn to understand the data itself, you can ignore the pundits and analyze the numbers within a framework that you understand. This could be the fundamental analysis for investing, technical analysis for trading, or maybe some econometric model to adjust weightings for portfolio management, if you are a little more advanced.

Whatever you do, knee jerk reactions are generally a bad thing when it comes to your financial affairs. Have a plan and stick to it regardless of what some super guru on CNBC says. He is likely 'talking his position' – an industry term which means trying to generate market-moving-pressure that benefits something he already holds himself.

Never accept an opinion as fact and remember no one has a crystal ball that predicts the future.

David Mayes, MBA, resides in Phuket and provides wealth management services to expatriates around the globe, focusing on UK pension transfers. He can be reached at david.m@faramond.com or 085-335 8573. Faramond UK is regulated by the FCA and provides advice on pensions and taxation.

Trader mentoring program to be held in Phuket

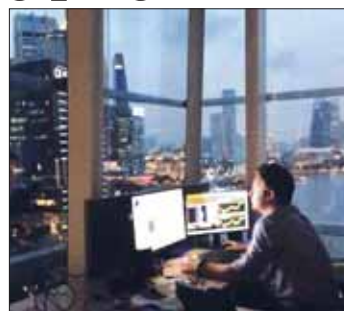
THE Institute of Trading and Portfolio Management is holding its latest three month trader mentoring program in Thailand.

The mentoring program is open to all retail traders, and begins with an initial 10-day personal coaching period that will be conducted in Phuket.

The mentoring is provided by the institute on a weekly basis by senior trading mentors Tristan Edwards and Jason McDonald.

Managing Partner Anton Kreil will be present for the ten day coaching period, and will oversee the entire 12-week program.

The students are expected to complete a hands-on program and after 10 days in



The program is being held in Phuket. Photo: Company Facebook

Phuket, they will return to their home countries to complete the three month program by trading with real money, with live trading accounts all the while touching base with Mr Edwards and Mr McDonald through screen-sharing and Skype sessions.

Participants of the program

trade with their own money and are backed by institute capital, trading as a team with the rest of the individuals on the program.

This achieves the two main objectives of retail traders, which is to learn, implement and emulate successful professional trading strategies using real capital and also build a portfolio good enough to be considered by professional trading companies for hire.

The Institute's Three Month Global Trader Mentoring Program begins in Phuket, on July 21, 2016. Programs are now exclusively reserved for eight participants every three months.

– **Phuket Gazette**



Engineering the perfect loaf

By Nick Davies

AN ENGINEER by trade, Singhathep Thepkanjana only spent six months working full-time in the field he studied for seven years, leaving university with a bachelor's from Chulalongkorn University and a master's degree in engineering management in Washington DC.

Since then, this Bangkokian has pursued the perfect loaf – an endeavor that has taken him across continents. “I can count on one hand the times in my life I have had good bread in Thailand. It's so difficult to find good bread here,” said Mr Singhathep.

He eventually discovered the Holy Grail of the Bread Makers in Zurich, Switzerland – a place he has been to many times since discovering the ‘best bread in the world’.

“When expats eat at Zurich Bread, our goal is for them to experience the familiar tastes and aromas of home. Just as Thais eat rice every day, and then miss it terribly when staying away for a while, Europeans have the same urges for bread,” he explains.

On his first visit to Phuket about eight years ago, he established a reputable food and beverage outlet at Phuket International Airport, selling quality



Mr Singhathep Thepkanjana says that bread making is a science and an art. Photo: Nick Davies

coffee and sandwiches. As a consultant to the Ministry of Transport, and AOT, Mr Singhathep was involved in the early planning stages of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport. He oversaw planning for all commercial aspects of the airport's operations, such as retail concessions, catering and ground services. Phuket is a premium destination so there is an expectation for premium products, yet the choice of breads available is still limited, even in five or six-star hotels.

The yellow wooden facade of the Bread Factory & Cafe with the Zurich Bread insignia of a boy holding loaves of bread is a distinct eatery on

Vichit Songkram Road leading up Patong Hill from Kathu.

Pull in to the car park at the rear of the building and the irresistible aroma of fresh bakes in the making draws you to the front door. Covering about 500 sqm, the building was designed by Design 103 Limited, the same firm responsible for the wave-like contours of the new international terminal at Phuket Airport. Inside, on the ground floor, customers exchange pleasantries over bakes from all over the world. You can also watch the team of bread makers at work in the spacious factory.

“Transparency is reassuring when you see how the product you consume is made,” said Mr

Singhathep. The factory, though, is where he has invested most heavily, making Zurich Bread one of the largest artisan bread and bakery factories in the South of Thailand. The entire set up cost about 20 million baht and the baking is overseen by technical chefs from Switzerland and France, working with a team of about 40 staff.

“I wanted my customers to enjoy good, wholesome food, so Zurich Bread became the very first bread factory in the country to make most of its bread from unbleached flour,” explained Mr Singhathep.

Obtaining the flour and making loaves from it requires special ingredients and baking

techniques. Mr Singhathep uses a local source for the flour, which is specially ordered and blended with a starter liquid and a secret technique known only to the supplier.

In Zurich, bread served is a good balance of quality. It is a premium product, made by special preparation methods to ensure pockets of air in the loaf. Cut through the crispy crust of a Zurich Bread baguette and you will find those pockets of air, a signature trait of the best breads in the world.

Zurich Bread is expanding operations to deliver its premium breads to high-end hotels and other outlets with its proprietary frozen dough. Distributing frozen dough is the only way they can expand, while maintaining the high standards for which Zurich Bread has become renowned.

The next Zurich Bread outlet in the pipeline is in Luang Prabang, Laos, which is set to open by the end of the year. Committed to being the best bread maker in Thailand, Mr Singhathep said the most challenging part was finding people with a passion for bread making.

“You can buy equipment but you can't buy talent. Bread making is a science and an art, and it takes a special kind of talent to bring those two elements together.”

Tips for establishing a start-up

Biz Chat

by Zohaib Sikander

THE island is filled with business people who invest millions on large business prospects, but no one ever talks about the little guy. What if you have 100,000 baht and want to play around with it? Here's a guide to investing in a small business, just to see if it works. Let's take it step by step – the basics first.

Plan: At times, a business idea seems untouchable when you first come up with it. However, when it's put on paper, it can morph into the worst idea in the world. If the planning is taken seriously, it involves financial figures and asset requirements that are just, well, realistic. The trick is to be honest with yourself and back off when the facts are



Be honest with yourself and back off when the facts are staring you right in the face, without blinking. Photo: Ken Teegardin

staring you right in the face, without blinking.

Get help: Seek professional assistance no matter how much you think you know about running a business. If you can't find an official organization that helps build businesses from scratch for a small fee, it's

a good idea to simply contact people who are running successful businesses in a field similar to yours. People love talking about their successes and how far they've come, so make sure you keep essential questions ready. Remember, no one will be willing to hand over

their financial statements to a potential future competitor, so be wary of the direction your questions can steer the conversation in. Keep it light and simple, and refrain from pressing them too hard.

Locate: If it's a brick and mortar setup, location is essential to how you want to conduct business in the future. For example, it would be better to open up a cafe on a busy street if walk-in traffic is what you need, and are willing to pay the extra price for it. However, if you want to manage clients online and have no need for walk-ins, it would be better to pick a location away from the hustle and bustle of a market, which may be cheaper and definitely quieter. Understand each and every requirement of your business and of yourself, and make your decision.



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Seedlings Phuket interns graduate class of 2016

Laguna Phuket hosted a graduation ceremony on April 28 for the first group of Seedlings Phuket interns, following their successful completion of the 18-month food and beverage training program.

Managed by Laguna Resorts & Hotels PLC, the Seedlings program provides professional job skills training and a career mentorship program for marginalized local young adults. The training was run by Banyan Tree and Angsana management using a curriculum endorsed by the Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus.

The Seedlings Phuket initiative comprises a two-phase paid internship program focusing on career and personal development. Other training courses provided include English language tuition and computer skills training.

The first nine months cover F&B skills training at Banyan Tree and Angsana followed by another nine months' work experience in the restaurant at Seedlings.

Seedlings Phuket's first graduating class with (back row from left) Paul Wilson, Director of Laguna Golf Phuket; Sriram Kailasam, Area General Manager of Banyan Tree Phuket; Ilias Vamvakas, General Manager of Cassia Phuket; Ravi Chandran, Managing Director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels; Dr Tatiyaporn Jarumaneerat, Associate Dean for Administration and Research, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism, Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus; Brian Connelly, General Manager of Angsana Laguna Phuket; and David Seet, Laguna Resorts & Hotels' SAVP-Resort Operations.

Phuket Community Foundation holds 'Soap for Hope' recycling event

Staff and guests of the Novotel Phuket Vintage Park in Patong joined a bubbly event organized by the Phuket Community Foundation on April 21.

The Planet 21 'Soap for Hope' charity event invited guests to recycle old soap with a mix of local organic products to create new bars of soap with unique ingredients.

The housewives group from Credit Union were also in attendance at the event, which took place at Vintage Park's The Square restaurant.

With an eye on renewable products, guests learned how to create brand new bathroom toiletries from the remains of old soaps integrated with new scents and even flavors, as some of the guests had fun adding coffee to their bathroom bubbles.



Cynthia Ratcliffe (4th from left) of the Phuket Community Foundation with (from left) Palita Sriwang, Sukrit Muangsathit, Mary Sebastian, Chairat Meesee, Pichsinee Pomnoi, Nicolas Girard, Tannin Somporn, Udomporn Nara-Art, Wittaya Duangsuwan and Sakkarin Yangdee of Novotel Phuket Vintage Park.

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15 years of Anda Focus

Anda Focus Billboard Advertising celebrated their 15th anniversary on April 30 at The Bliss Bar & Restaurant.



(From L-R) Chiraphat Sookphuet, Chairman of Anda Focus Billboard Advertising; Associate Professor Chirasak Chiyachantana, Chairman/CEO/Owner of World Credit Foncier PCL; Natchanok Sucharitkul, MD of Anda Focus Billboard Advertising; and Professor Chirasak's mother.

Bangkok Hospital Phuket doctor shares knowledge with kindergarten parents

Dr Nisarath Wadchareudomkarn of Bangkok Hospital Phuket's Child and Adolescent Psychiatry unit was the guest speaker at Phuket Municipal Kindergarten's parents orientation meeting on May 1. The topic of Dr Nisarath's talk was how to build discipline for kids.



Dr Nisarath Wadchareudomkarn (right) receives a gift of thanks from the parents' representative following her talk at Phuket Municipal Kindergarten.

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From peasant boy to boxing legend

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

DURING the late Ayutthaya period, around the year 1750, there lived a boy named Joi in the district of Pichai. His father was a farmer and often tasked him with taking care of the family's buffalo. Joi was intelligent and fearless. Although slightly small in stature, he was not easily intimidated and often got into fights with bigger kids. He loved boxing and martial arts.

When Joi was eight years old, his father sent him away to Mahathat Temple in Pichai for his education. At the temple, he was taught to read and write by the abbot. Every day after his classes, Joi would practice Thai boxing by using a banana tree's trunk as his assault target and by kicking tiny lemons suspended from a branch. His passion for Thai boxing was unparalleled.

One day, the governor of Pichai visited Mahathat Temple with his son. The governor wanted the abbot to educate his son along with the other boys, to which the abbot agreed.

Joi and the governor's son



Statue of Thongdee in Uttaradit Province . Photo: Jatupol Thawonsoot

did not get along however. One day a fist fight broke out between the two boys. Joi ended up beating the governor's son to the ground. Afraid that he would get into a lot of trouble, Joi ran away from the temple.

He wanted to go to Thasao, where there was a famous Thai boxing camp, to learn Thai boxing from the masters there. On the way, however, he met a Thai boxing master named Thiang, who agreed to train him as long as he was willing to help him with various chores. Seeing that this was a new life for him, Joi changed

his name to Thongdee.

By the time he was 18, Thongdee was an expert boxer. He began to teach students and take part in competitions. One day, a Chinese traveller on his way to Tak province stopped by Thongdee's camp. When he observed Thongdee's skills, he was very impressed. He told Thongdee that Phraya Tak Sin, the governor of Tak, was also passionate about Thai boxing. He invited Thongdee to visit Tak and promised to introduce him to the governor, to which Thongdee agreed.

When they reached Tak, the

governor organized a boxing tournament. Thongdee was pitched against some of the best Thai boxing masters of Tak. To everyone's amazement, the young Thongdee was able to knock out some of the best boxers in Tak.

Phraya Tak was very impressed by the young boy's talent. He promised to take Thongdee into his service.

Thongdee was grateful for the opportunity to serve under the governor. A young, hardworking man with integrity, he soon became one of Tak Sin's favorite officers. When Thongdee was 21 years old, Phraya Tak bestowed upon him the title of Luang Pichai Asa. Thongdee was now responsible for training Phraya Tak's soldiers.

In the year 1766, Phraya Tak received a royal degree from King Ekkathat, which elevated him to Lord of Kamphaengphet. However before he could be properly vested in this new position, the Burmese invaded Siam.

Siam under King Ekkathat was in turmoil. It had lost control of most of its vassal cities. The king seemed more interested in his luxurious lifestyle than political affairs. A Dutch

source even said that the Siamese court was on the verge of bankruptcy. When the Burmese invaded in 1766, they easily subjugated city after city in Siam until they finally reached Ayutthaya and laid siege to it.

Outnumbered and unprepared, Ayutthaya was in grave danger. King Ekkathat desperately tried to counter the Burmese army, but the Siamese were easily crushed.

Finally, King Ekkathat called upon Phraya Tak to come to Ayutthaya's rescue. He wanted Phraya Tak to lead his troops and attack the Burmese army laying siege to the capital.

Phraya Tak, however, knew that this would be nothing short of a suicide mission and that Ayutthaya was beyond rescue. He had no choice but to let fate take its course.

On April 7, 1767, Ayutthaya fell. The Burmese looted and plundered the golden city. Any movable valuables were taken back to Burma and the rest torched. It was one of the darkest hours in the history of the Siamese people.

Stay tuned for part two of the story.

Wanon wows with unique wares

LOCATED in the lush green surroundings of the Flying Hanuman eco-adventure park in Wichit, Wanon restaurant offers a truly unique and authentic local dining experience.

Head chef Kittipong Jaramorn Burapong graduated from the Culinary Arts Institute in New York. He has extensive experience with Thai, Italian and Mexican cuisine, having lived and worked in the US for 20 years.

"Our menu is targeted towards both locals and foreigners. You may find some of these dishes elsewhere, but I am proud to say that we serve authentic Phuket food, which stands apart from the rest, and source the freshest ingredients of the highest quality," said Mr Kittipong.

Signature items on the menu include soft shell crab meat with curry and vermicelli noodles, squid ink spaghetti created with edible ink, mackerel soup and spicy sweet and sour soup, among plenty of other flavorful and interesting choices.

"For some items, we have to



The menu boasts authentic Phuket food and is targeted towards both locals and foreigners. Photo: Kongleaphy Kearn

source the ingredients from other provinces, such as fresh raspberries, strawberries and honey from Chiang Mai, because the flavor is completely different," said Chef Kittipong.

One of the most popular dessert items is mango coulis – a light and fluffy mango puree – beautifully presented in a mason jar and served with fresh cream. There's also guava, passion fruit, raspberry, strawberry and chocolate desserts to choose from.

The restaurant has a relaxed, family-friendly vibe and can

accommodate up to a 100 people. However, a separate dining area can easily hold up to 500 people for parties and special occasions.

"We also create especially designed menus for private functions and events," said Chef Kittipong.

Relax after an adrenaline pumping experience at the Flying Hanuman eco-adventure park, or just enjoy the unique food and tranquil environment with your friends and loved ones.

– Sahar Aftab Paliwala

Young swimmers take swim meet by storm



Sonya Wake (C), Ellie Fordham (R) and Alina Yelin (L) finished 1st, 2nd, and 3rd respectively in the under-eight 50m breast stroke. Photo: KIS

BRITISH International School Phuket (BISP) staged a regional swim last weekend, hosted by the school's Flying Fish swim team. Sixteen teams from around the region, including Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, China and the Philippines, took part in the event.

Local representation was also high with teams from Kajonkiet International, HeadStart and Phuket International Academy taking part.

BISP's flying fish prevailed, ranking top for both the men's and women's classes after 72 races. Teams from Beijing and Malaysia came in second and third place respectively.

Among local schools, Kajonkiet International School's 'Barracuda' Swimming Squad stole the show in the girls under-eight 50-meter breast stroke, securing all three medals in the category.

– Phuket Gazette

Ray of sunshine for visually impaired



Touchable Ink, currently in the development process, aims to erase all obstacles associated with Braille printing. Photo: The Nation

HAILED as a major breakthrough for the visually impaired when they were first introduced a couple of decades ago, Braille embossers, as the impact printers that render text as tactile Braille cells are known, are of little use to Thailand's blind. Their high price – about 100,000 baht each or more than 30 baht per printed sheet – means that the blind turn to audio services for their reading pleasure or simply go without.

That could be about to change thanks to Touchable Ink. Currently in the development process, this new process will erase all the obstacles associated with Braille printing, and once it is ready it will represent a real breakthrough for the visually impaired.

The idea was first brought to Thailand by the advertising agency J Walter Thompson.

“We wanted to see if we could come up with a Braille embosser for the home that wouldn't cost a fortune,” said Parattajariya Jalayanateja, managing director of J Walter Thompson Bangkok.

The agency then took the idea to Dr Nopparat Pluckta-veesak, head of the Department of Chemistry at Thammasat University's Faculty of Science and Technology and also asked for support from Samsung, which was pleased to contribute laser printers, ink cartridges and technicians to work on modifying the printers during the experimentation process.

“I'm thrilled about the invention. Once they find the final formula, it will make our lives and education so much easier,” said Sutat Pungsiripattana, vice president of the Thailand Association of the Blind. – *The Nation*

Smiles are truly free



The program was a joint effort by RCoPB, Patong Hospital and Newport Rotary Club. Photo: RCoPB

PATONG Hospital, the Rotary Club of Patong Beach (RCoPB) and the Newport Sunrise Rotary Club of California, USA, last month treated about 400 Phuket children to free dental care.

The Newport Sunrise Rotary Club brought a team of 50 qualified dentists and dental students with them to Phuket, as part of the Ayuda Mission, which is celebrating 50 years of dental missions around the world.

The team from Patong Hospital, led by Dr Porramatte Roongsanganonthai, turned the hospital's dental clinic into an oral hygiene program to conduct screening, cleaning, extraction and restoration for

disadvantaged local children. Many of these children live in construction camps, have little or no access to dental care and know very little about oral hygiene.

The children also watched informative videos, such as 'how to clean your teeth' and other similar videos on the importance of eating healthy food and limiting their consumption of fizzy drinks.

“This was a fantastic example of local and overseas Rotary clubs coming together to enable access to free top-class dental care. Our thanks to the Patong Hospital and to Newport Sunrise for this great initiative,” said Dr Peter Harris, Chairman of the RCoPB

Project Services Committee, which coordinated the project with Newport Sunrise and Patong Hospital.

At the end of the seminar, each child was given a toothbrush and toothpaste so they could continue to practice good dental hygiene.

Dr Harris said the clubs intend to extend this initiative and provide free dental services to children at local Patong schools in January next year.

The RCoPB, Phuket's only English speaking Rotary, has won Rotary Thailand's highest service award, the HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajira-longkorn Trophy, for its invaluable services to the Phuket community.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Lifeguards seek sponsors

THE Phuket Lifeguard Club (PLC) is asking local businesses to help replace equipment lockers on beaches across the island.

PLC president Prathaiyut Chuayuan told the *Phuket Gazette* that the current lockers, which contain rescue worker equipment, are suffering after years of wear and tear. He also mentioned that many of the equipment lockers have been in use for some time, and is concerned that life jackets, buoys and resuscitation kits have been stolen or damaged.

“We are in need of 1x2x1 meter water-proof boxes or financial donations, so we can order the lockers ourselves,” Mr Prathaiyut said.

He hasn't heard from last



PLC president says he has not heard from last year's locker sponsors. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

year's sponsor, namely Coca-Cola Thailand, and has offered to put other sponsors on the lockers.

Sponsors or donors can contact Mr Prathaiyut, in Thai or English, at 081 8925549 or thailifeguard@gmail.com.

– *Chutharat Plerin*

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Learning from the Gulf



On Deck

By Duncan Worthington

I'VE spent the last week in Pattaya at the Ocean Marina Yacht Club, reporting on the 12th Top of the Gulf Regatta. I find it's always good to look outside your "home" town to learn, get some new ideas and a fresh perspective, and the Top of the Gulf Regatta can provide some great lessons for all.

Firstly, it is a unique regatta. The organizers brought together the local club sailing scene and decided they wanted to take it up a notch and create an international regatta in the Gulf of Thailand and promote the region. That was the basis of launching the event 12 years ago and they also incorporated the Platu Coronation Cup (which was launched in 1996) and the Thailand Optimist National Championships (which were launched in 1976) under the one umbrella.

The diversity of the regatta is its uniqueness and its strength. In Phuket there are some great regattas and sailing events, and for the most part they are keelboat and multihull events. That's understandable as that is also the composition of the local fleet, and in the case of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta, that mid-sized keelboat (35-45 foot) has proven attractive to many charters over the years to the point that between 40 and 50 per cent of the regatta fleet today is made up of charterers.

After introducing dinghy sailing into the Phuket King's Cup



Youth sailing in Phuket is still in its infancy and needs development. Photo: Guy Nowell

Regatta approximately five years ago, the regatta has now attracted a good-sized Optimist fleet, as well as a few Lasers. The Phuket Yacht Club has its Sailing School, and the Phuket Youth Sailing Club, led by Kathy Gooch, has its youth sailing program with Optimists and Toppers. However, Phuket youth sailing is still very much in its infancy.

Sattahip, just up the coast from Jomtien, where Ocean Marina Yacht Club is based, is home to the main dinghy fleet of the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand and because of its proximity to the home of the Top of the Gulf Regatta, and the strong relationship the two have, there were 140 youth sailors competing in the Optimist class

for the Thailand Optimist National Championships.

Add to that a strong Laser fleet from Royal Varuna Yacht Club as well as a collection of 420s, and the dinghy fleet is a sight to behold – one rarely seen in Phuket.

In order for boating to grow in Phuket, lessons need to be learned from elsewhere. Talking with many different figures within the local marine industry, there is definitely the desire to develop youth sailing and the acknowledgment that this is key to the long-term development of the industry.

What was interesting when talking with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand was their interest and willingness to help support the growth of sail-

ing all around the country. They can see the strength in their home town area of Pattaya, but are keen to boost sailing elsewhere in the country.

There's an opportunity here to grow boating at the grassroots level, and to bring the industry together in a common long-term goal. Perhaps this is something the Thailand Marine Business Association could support or lead.

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



LPGA winner Ariya Jatanugarn. Photo: The Nation

PM ecstatic over LPGA tour win

PRIME Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha lavished praise on Ariya Jatanugarn's breakthrough triumph on the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) Tour on May 8.

The 20-year-old from Bangkok finished at 14-under 274 to beat South Korea's Amy Yang and Americans Morgan Pressel and Stacy Lewis by one shot and finally reach the winner's circle after three top-10 finishes this year.

According to Maj Gen Sansern Kaewkamnerd, a government spokesperson, the premier said it is a 'golden year' for Thai athletes.

He added that the world gets to know more about the country in another aspect, not just being a 'land of smiles' or a nation with rich cultural heritage.

He wished Ariya and other Thai athletes further success, urging local youths to follow in her footsteps by training hard for success

– The Nation

Phuket cycling team wins big at TOF race

SIAM Bike Tours and Z-Coaching Phuket joined forces to produce a team of eight strapping cyclists, ready to take on the Tour of Friendship (TOF) five-day stage race from April 30-May 4.

The event took place in Bangkok and Kancharaburi, where the recent heat wave has been even more intense than in Phuket.

Now in its 28th year since its inception in 1998, the event attracted over 200 riders this year, of which over 120 were international cyclists as well as top-ranked Thai riders.

Famed for its friendly and fun atmosphere, the event is neither about professional racing, nor money – but to



Celebrating after the event. Photo: Kumpanat Chanmaneeratana

promote the love of cycling and connect cyclists from all around the world, says the TOF website.

The Phuket-based team was successful across several categories, showing their strength

in climbs and the ability to outpace the opponents in mass sprints, but just as importantly, their consistency across the entire 450 kilometers of the race.

The 2005 Ironman Hawaii World Champion Faris Al-Sul-

tan also joined the team. He was the overall winner of the age 30-39 category, securing his victory with a convincing stage win on day three, where he was the fastest rider of the entire peloton.

His teammates Christian Rothart and Manop Suwanachit played crucial roles in his victory, supporting him throughout the race.

The competition in the 50-59 age group was decidedly strong. Jurgen Zack, head coach at Z-Coaching Phuket, secured second place overall, topping off his podium spot with a win in the final stage. Close behind him was Martin Brot, coming 3rd overall and also taking a stage win on

day three.

To finish off the hat trick of stage wins in this age group, Kurt Schlaepfer took a third stage win on day two to come in 5th overall. Jean Perrin fought bravely in the age 60-69 category, taking the stage win on day four, to secure 2nd place over the five-day event.

Representing the girls, Isabelle Boyer-Moulin rode incredibly consistently over all five days to place her as 2nd female overall.

Collectively, the team came away with a significant trophy haul, once again proving that hard work, consistency and fun get you the right results.

– Phuket Gazette

Beware of chemical pesticides



READERS can be immensely helpful, especially when they know more than you do. Come in, Victor Alvarez, who emailed me after I had sounded off about Roundup, the world's most popular herbicide. I had recommended it in these pages for removing grass and weeds from the cracks in a local mountain road. In fairness, I did suggest that Paraquat might be a better choice, since there was 'growing evidence that Roundup could cause environmental damage'.

The word 'might' should be replaced by 'would' as a number of research studies, kindly supplied by Victor, argue that the 'evidence against glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup' is now overwhelming. One US scientist maintains that it is, 'the culprit for the escalating incidence of autism and other neurological disorders', adding that it enters the food chain because it is regularly used to spray immune crops such as GM soybean and wheat. A German study, moreover, found staggering amounts of glyphosate (between five and 20 times the norm) in 'all human urine samples tested', suggesting that it is stealthily contaminating the world's drinking water.

The IARC, a leading agency for cancer research, has concluded that it is 'probably carcinogenic', while another experiment which fed rats on



Environmentalists argue that over 95 per cent of insecticides miss their intended targets. Photo: Pruth Kulprasit

Roundup-tolerant, genetically modified maize, resulted in many animals suffering from gross mammary tumors and liver failure.

Naturally, all this is denied by multi-national corporation Monsanto, the manufacturer, which famously declared that it is, 'as safe as table salt'.

Sadly, it is still used in most countries, including Thailand, where large patches of ugly brown vegetation are usually the result of indiscriminate spraying. It's cheap and effective, but also disfiguring and dangerous.

The world's use of chemical pesticides – and by that I mean insecticides as well as herbicides – is staggeringly large. According to Wikipedia, the world used 2.4 million tons in 2006-7, with 40 per cent of the total used on plants. Why? Simple economics. Most treatments deliver sub-

stantial increases in crop production. In America, it is estimated that an annual outlay of 10 billion dollars will be handsomely compensated by increased yields worth 40 billion dollars. And insecticides offer additional benefits through the reduction of insect-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

But there the good news ends. Environmentalists argue that over 95 per cent of sprayed insecticides and herbicides miss their intended targets, and end up in our air, soil, and water. And if these chemicals are not degradable, organisms internalize and retain them almost indefinitely. They enter the food chain and become more concentrated at each higher level of predation. Fortunately, most of these chemicals – the infamous DDT for example – have long since been removed from sale, but

the residues linger on.

There are alternatives such as bio-controls which deploy living organisms to attack pests. The most obvious example in Phuket is the employment of a parasitoid wasp to attack hispine beetle larvae, which reduce palms to leafless specters. There are also sophisticated fungal or bacterial methods to control infestations or outbreaks.

While the whole topic is full of ignorance and misinformation, we owe it to ourselves and future generations to get informed and seriously control all chemicals that can harm our environment.

If you have gardening or environmental concerns, contact Patrick at drpaccampbell@gmail.com. Many of his creative and academic publications can be found at his website: [GreenGaloshes Wordpress](http://GreenGaloshes.wordpress.com).



Royal Plowing Ceremony. Photo: Amornrut P. Bhoonamsai/ Facebook

Royal bulls predict good farming year

THE Royal Plowing Ceremony is a traditional Hindu and Buddhist religious practice. The ceremony traditionally entails two neutered white bulls hitched to a wooden plow to furrow the earth at Sanam Luang, an open field and public square in front of the Grand Palace in Bangkok.

During the ceremony, the bulls are given seven different types of food and drink: rice seeds, beans, maize, hay, sesame seeds, water and liquor. The Royal Predictor will then forecast the coming year depending on what the bulls choose to eat.

This year, the prediction was read by Sakchai Sriboonsue, deputy permanent secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture. The predictions included plentiful water, rice, cereals and fruit.

"Foreign trade will grow and the economy will prosper," added Mr Sakchai.

At the end of the ceremony, rice seeds are then scattered to an eagerly awaiting crowd, as they are believed to bring good fortune and wealth. The farmers also use these seeds to ensure a good crop in the coming year.

– Pruth Kulprasit

Tip of the week Tap or Rain water

HAVE you ever wondered which is better for your pot plants – rain or tap water?

The English consumer magazine 'Which?' decided to find out.

Perhaps surprisingly, they discovered that tap water (which is usually harder and more alkaline) performed marginally better than rain collected in a water butt.

Even acid loving gardenias did slightly better with water from the mains.

The experimenters grew 20 samples of plants – including *pelargoniums* and fuchsias – in the same peat-based compost.



Tap water is more alkaline than rainwater. Photo: pixabay

The sample watered with rainwater had, after 4 months, a pH of 4.49; well below the neutral range of 6.5-7.

Those dosed with tap water had a pH of 5.6. A slight but clear indication that prolonged rainfall increases soil acidity.

Effective ways to sell your property



By The Book

Kevin Hodges

IN OUR experience 15 per cent of sales will fail, become delayed, or end up incurring higher closing fees than necessary, due to sellers being unaware of the sales process, the documents required, and the options available to them.

Before a buyer is found for your property and you begin negotiations, it is highly advisable to ensure that 'your house is in order'. We recommend that all owners looking to sell should check the following through a certified lawyer in Thailand:

That you have all the correct ownership documents to sell your property

-That these documents are up-to-date and match the records at the land office

-You have the necessary documentation (Tor Tor Three form) required to take the sales proceeds out of Thailand, once a sale has been completed

-An estimate of the transfer taxes payable upon sale

-An explanation of the selling options available to you: can you sell the property leasehold or freehold? Can you sell the property with agreement of the land-owning company?



Owners who are looking to sell their property should do so through a certified lawyer in Thailand. Photo: Siam Real Estate

-Whether or not you need to be physically present to complete a sale, or whether you can give power of attorney to your lawyer?

It is common that having found a buyer and negotiated the terms of sale and price that the seller discovers that they are missing ownership documents; the tax will be much higher than they anticipated; they do not have a TT3 form from when they brought funds into Thai-

land therefore making it difficult to take the sales proceeds back out of Thailand; the freeholder/lessor is required to complete the sale... The list goes on.

All of these are most likely to result in a lost sale, or at the very least, having to return to the negotiating table, delaying the sale and resulting in higher closing costs.

Checking the above details in advance will ensure that hav-

ing done all the hard work to find a buyer for your property, you do not lose out.

We now offer our owners this full Property Check-Up through a certified lawyer here in Phuket:

-Meeting at the lawyer's office in Phuket, ongoing telephone contact and email contact

-Check all ownership documents

-Check at the land office that records there match the docu-

ments you have
-Estimate transfer taxes
-Review of available sales options

-Explanation of selling process and whether a third party needs to be involved (freeholder / lessor)

The advantages are:

-Faster sales completion

-Smooth sales process

-Peace of mind for both seller and buyer when entering into an agreement

-Property due diligence already completed in advance of finding a buyer

-Vastly reduced chance of losing a sale

-Reduced completion costs / transaction taxes

-Knowledge of sales process to completion

-Estimate of transaction costs/taxes

-No issue of repatriating funds/offshore payment

-A banner placed on the property listing showing the ownership has been checked by a certified lawyer, which increases buyer confidence in your property and makes it more marketable.

For more information contact Kevin Hodges, Siam Real Estate (SRE) quoting Property Check-Up. Tel: 076-324 042 Email: kevin@siamrealestate.com; www.siamrealestate.com

REIC reveals property numbers

ACCORDING to the latest numbers coming in from the Real Estate Information Center (REIC), a total of 37,900 units are up for sale as of April 29, while 7,700 units remain unsold in Southern Thailand. These are the units and their values, available in the areas of Muang Phuket, Thalang and Kathu districts.

| FOR SALE | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------------|
| | Units | Value (baht) |
| Housing Estates | 15,500 | 61,800mn |
| Condominiums | 21,300 | 73,300mn |
| Weekend Housing | 1,100 | - |
| UNSOLD | | |
| | Units | Value (baht) |
| Housing Estates | 3,400 | 14,600mn |
| Condominiums | 4,300 | 16,600mn |
| Weekend Housing | 1 | - |

Pruksa to balance market portfolio

PRUKSA Real Estate has restructured its organization by separating the business into two units focused on different parts of the residential market, in order to balance its portfolio.

Pruksa's president for the premium market, Prasert Taedullayasatit, said the listed developer's new structure, which came into effect on April 1, separated the residential business into two groups.

The first focuses on the lower and middle-market segments by developing homes priced up to 10 million baht. This unit is headed by Piya Prayong, Pruksa's president for the residential market.

"The other focuses on the niche market, covering the development of residences priced above B10mn per unit, which I



Pruksa residential property in Phuket. Photo: Zohaib Sikander

will cover myself," Prasert said.

At present, up to 98 per cent of the developer's revenue comes from homes priced below the 10-million mark and the company aims to increase its revenue from the premium market to 10 per cent in the next five years.

The process of setting up a listed holding company will be completed by the end of the year.

- The Nation

New terminal in September

Two months of systems testing required ahead of official opening

COMPLETION of construction work on the new international terminal at Phuket Airport has been pushed back to September, said Airports of Thailand Plc President Nitinai Sirismatthakarn in an exclusive interview with the *Phuket Gazette* on May 10.

Mr Nitinai was in Phuket to assess progress with the new terminal but could not give a fixed date for the opening.

“We hope to open the new terminal by the end of September at the latest, at least in time for the National Day of the People’s Republic of China on October 1,” said Mr Nitinai.

Mr Nitinai said the delay was due to the need to test all the new systems for at least two months ahead of opening the terminal to ensure all were working perfectly.

“There are nine computer systems in total that need to be fully operational by the time the terminal opens, such as baggage handling, announcement systems and security systems. Seven of those systems are in place but we are waiting to finalize concessions on two of the less critical systems,” he said.

The biggest challenge will actually be phase three of the



An artist’s rendition of the new international terminal. Image: Airports of Thailand Plc

expansion, which is the renovation of the existing terminal to become a fully operational domestic terminal.

“Work on renovating the domestic terminal will only begin once the international terminal is complete. Then we will need to partially close the domestic terminal for the renovation while continuing to be fully operational.”

While the new international

terminal will increase the airport’s capacity to handle 12.5 million passengers a year, the president admitted that the airport is already dealing with close to that number and it won’t be until completion of phase three that the airport will be ready to handle more.

“Once phase three is complete and the domestic terminal is fully operational, the airport will be able to handle up to 18

million passengers a year.”

Renovation of the domestic terminal is scheduled to take 330 days exactly. Any further expansion will not be possible due to the limitations of the land that the airport occupies, unless it is extended into the sea or the surrounding hills are removed.”

Asked how the airport will ensure against passengers being ripped off by unscrupulous

taxi drivers, Mr Nitinai said a similar approach will be used as at Bangkok’s Suvarnabhumi Airport, where security staff stop taxis that have picked up passengers but still have their red light on, indicating that they have not turned on the meter.

“The mass transit system planned for Phuket will stop outside the airport so that will be a good alternative to taxis.”

– Nick Davies

DASTA targets regions for developing tourism

THE Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) plans to push three regions to develop sustainable tourist attractions this year.

Hua Hin and Cha-am are to be developed into beach towns, while Chiang Rai is to be a relaxed-travel tourist destination. Ayutthaya is set to become a new center for community-based tourism, highlighting night-time attractions.

“DASTA has launched tourism development and management plans for areas in Trat, Chiang Mai, Loei, Nan, Sukhothai and Kamphaeng Khet provinces. It recently began targeting two new areas in Suphan Buri and Chon Buri,” said newly appointed board



Areas in Chiang Mai also to be considered for tourism development. Photo: Stefan Fussen

chairman, Weerasak Kowsurat on May 9.

He said DASTA would organize training courses developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council to help communities understand tourism development. The GSTC is a global tourism organization that has set 41 tourism indicators for long-

term development, such as green and low-carbon tourism.

Koh Mak, Thailand’s first low-carbon island destination, was introduced to western markets in order to attract visitors concerned with the environment. The island received just under 1.5 million tourists last year, although 90 per cent of them were Thais – the 10 per cent who came from overseas were largely from Europe.

DASTA has also promoted a gastronomic destination, Ban Rai Gong King Village in Chiang Mai, which is now becoming popular for community-based tourism. It has turned into a health and wellness destination.

– The Nation

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VS ASIA

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- ▶ Salary, Social Security Insurance, tax, food, etc.
- ▶ Incentive and bonus: depends on quality, skills and experiences
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Interested applicants should submit resumes stating qualifications, previous work experience and position, along with a recent photograph to:

VS Asia Co., Ltd. (HR Department)

42 Moo 3, Palai 2, Chaofa Road, Chalung, Muang, Phuket 83130
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โทร: 076-381488

The View Co., Ltd.
29/17-18 Moo 5, Rawai
Muang Phuket, Phuket 83130
Tel: 076-381488

ประกาศ / Announcement

เรื่อง: แจ้งบุคคลพ้นสภาพการเป็นพนักงาน
Subject: Notice on Termination of Employment

บริษัท เดอะวิว จำกัด ขอประกาศให้ทราบโดยทั่วกันว่า นายบั๊ดดีอรัญ ปี ได้พ้นสภาพการเป็นพนักงานของบริษัท เดอะวิว จำกัด ตั้งแต่วันที่ 21 มีนาคม 2559 เป็นต้นมา

The View Co., Ltd announces that Mr.Budderun Pi is no longer working for the company since March 21, 2016.

บริษัท เดอะวิว จำกัด ไม่ขอรับผิดชอบต่อการกระทำใดๆ ทั้งสิ้นของ นายบั๊ดดีอรัญ ปี นับตั้งแต่วันที่ 21 มีนาคม 2559 เป็นต้นไป หากผู้ใดพบเห็นกรุณาติดต่อกลับที่ 076-381488

The View Co., Ltd is not responsible for any actions of Mr.Budderun Pi from March 21, 2016 onwards. If you have seen him, please contact us at 076-381488.

Yours sincerely,
The View Co., Ltd.

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Running away with victory

By Pruth Kulprasit

IF WE mentioned the terms 'Ironman' or 'triathlon' 10 years ago, not many people on the island would have known what it meant, or paid much attention. These days, however, when a sporting trend becomes popular, the number of interested athletes on the island increase rapidly.

Dominating the top of the triathlete rankings since 2011 is Thai athlete Jaray Jearanai.

Mr Jaray, now 35, was born and raised in Phuket. Way back in 2001, he began cycling and running with his neighbors as a hobby, as well as to help him stay fit. Inspiration struck him in 2005 while he was working at the Laguna Shopping Center; there to cheer for a friend who was competing in the Laguna Phuket Triathlon, he decided this was

something he wanted to try out for himself.

The first thing he did was learn how to swim, and thus began his arduous training, inching him further towards triathlon glory. "Ranking was not important to me - I just wanted to run through the finish line and receive a finisher medal," he said, when asked about the 2006 Laguna Phuket Triathlon, the first one he ever participated in.

From 2006 to 2010, Mr Jaray practiced by himself and with friends. It was at the end of 2010 that he met eight-time World Ironman Champion Jurgen Zack, a triathlon head coach at Thanyapura at the time.

"I told Mr Zack that I loved triathlons and had been doing them for six years, but wanted to improve my skills and ac-

complish more," said Mr Jaray.

Luckily for him, Mr Zack agreed. After practicing for a year with his new coach, Mr Jaray was ranked the strongest triathlete in the country. He took part in several triathlon events, both locally as well as in other parts of Southeast Asia. In 2011, the first year he won the Laguna Phuket Triathlon as well as the Ironman 70.3 Laguna Phuket, he also qualified for the biggest triathlon events in the world - the Half Ironman Las Vegas World Championship, as well as the Full Ironman Hawaii World Championship, both of which he competed in that year.

"At the world championship, 1,800 of the best triathletes were chosen from 30,000 registrants around the world. I'm thankful that I got this opportunity to represent Thailand and Phuket, and proudly waved the Thai flag when I crossed the finish line," he said.

Today, cycling and triathlon are very popular and Mr Jaray is happy that more and more people are moving towards working out and exercising to

stay healthy. He now coaches students and wants to help aspiring future athletes represent Thailand at these competitions.

These days, Mr Jaray is training for the Hua Hin International Triathlon, an event he is particularly proud of for two reasons.

Firstly, because it is Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's event, and secondly because it was the first triathlon in which he secured first place overall.

Photo: Jaray Jearanai



I'm thankful that I had this opportunity to represent Thailand and Phuket, and proudly waved the Thai flag when I crossed the finish line

- Jaray Jearanai, on finishing the World Championship



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