

Phuket Gazette

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Surin Restored

70th anniversary of HM King's reign marks return of Surin Beach to the public

By Kongleaphy Keam

MORE than 5,000 people, including government and military officials, as well as yellow-clad locals, poured onto Surin Beach for its grand reopening on the 70th anniversary of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's coronation on June 9.

The beach's reopening comes after the April demolitions of private structures, operating on public land.

The renovated beach and surrounding land was renamed as 'Rajabhakti Park', in honor of His Majesty. Region 4 Army Deputy Commander Kunnawut Morkaew headed the ceremonies after being invited by provincial officials.

The ceremonies got underway at 7am, with provincial officials giving alms to Buddhist monks. Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu blessings for the beach and His Majesty the King were conducted by the island's religious leaders.

Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada also used the beach opening to announce the launch of 12 'Love the Beach Community' projects, which partner local communities with beaches in an attempt to keep them clean and safe.

The festivities included a photo contest and exhibition, under the theme 'royal duties in modern-day and historical Phuket'; a Phuket gastronomy food contest; an exhibit and information booth about sailboats, traditional local sports and cultural performances. Participants also released turtles into the sea and planted trees.

"It is our great pleasure to honor His Majesty and the natural wonders of Surin Beach today," said Maj Gen Kunnawut.



Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada used the beach opening to announce the launch of 12 'Love the Beach Community' projects. Photo: Phuket PR

"Today, we can witness the great efforts of the Phuket officers who've worked on beach management."

Officials have announced plans to spend 60 million baht on improvements to the beach, including planting a botanical gar-

den dedicated to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit; an exhibit showing projects initiated by His Majesty the King in 76 provinces; a sailboat museum; a golf course...

Continued on Page 4

Bay Boat collision kills two tourists, twenty injured

TWO speedboats collided in Phang Nga Bay on June 8. Both drug tests on the boat operators' have come up negative. Heavy rains were blamed for the collision that killed two tourists and injured about twenty.

Story on Page 3

BUSINESS



Social media forums are the next big thing in business marketing strategy.

PROPERTY



Let's discuss who buys what and where - the property drivers on the island.

LIFE & STYLE



Phuket's cycling infrastructure could be modelled along the lines of Brisbane's.

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LOCAL NEWS
Briefly

Man murders girlfriend's ex

ONE man is dead after being found by his lover's boyfriend at the Irawadee condo in Kathu.

"We found the body of Metha Kaowadee, 36, with three stab wounds and head injuries," said Lt Sawanya Eiatrong of Kathu Police.

Wachaya Thepsing, 29, reported to police that Mr Metha, her ex-boyfriend, visited her room on June 14, when her current boyfriend, Suriya Kruakaew, 39, arrived and found them *in flagrante*. She said that Mr Suriya was enraged and stabbed Mr Metha.

The two then reportedly escaped to Phang Nga on Ms Wachaya's motorbike. Police are hunting for Mr Suriya.

- Winai Sarot

Hungry python caught near Patong school

A THREE meter long python was captured near a school in Patong on June 14.

The snake was found with its head stuck in netting covering a chicken coop next to Baan

Crane collapse kills one, injures three



Police have ordered a halt to construction of an eight-storey building near Phuket International Airport, after a crane collapsed at the site on June 10, killing one construction worker and injuring three others. The cause of the crane collapse is still unclear. Kritsana Crane Company and the developer, Phuket Sirinath Property, have been ordered to stop construction while investigations are underway. The injured were taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Kalim School.

Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation said the python was later released into the wild near a Chinese shrine on Patong Hill.

- Chutharat Plerin

Serial purse thief arrested

POLICE arrested a serial purse snatcher in Patong on June 9, after tracking his whereabouts

with CCTV footage.

Nissan Islam, 21, was apprehended while he was driving.

Mr Nissan confessed, and was charged for two counts of robbery.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

Russian father nearly drowns 5-year-old son

PATONG Beach lifeguards saved the life of a 5-year-old Russian boy, who nearly drowned while being taught to swim by his father on June 7.

Passersby reportedly approached the boy's father and tried to warn him against holding his son's head under water, in what appeared to be an attempt to teach his son how to hold his breath.

A lifeguard said the man later ran up the beach carrying his unconscious son, seeking help from the lifeguards who resuscitated the boy.

- Pruth Kulprasit

Elderly man dragged under dump truck

A 79-YEAR-old motorcyclist was crushed to death when he collided with a garbage truck in Mai Khao on June 9.

The man's motorbike was wedged under the front right wheel of the truck, with his body stuck to the back left wheel.

The man was fasting for Ramadan, and had just left his house in search of food to break his fast.

- Winai Sarot

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Speedboat collision kills two, leaves more than 20 injured

A BOAT collision between two speedboat ferries killed two tourists and wounded 20 more, on June 8, officials confirmed.

Phuket police said they have drug tested both boat operators, with both tests coming back negative. Both boat operators blamed heavy rain for the incident, which occurred in Phang Nga Bay.

Police identified the dead tourists as Liang Guanfu, 62, and Xu Tingting, 29, both Chinese nationals. The deceased were taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital.

The deceased and injured were ferried back to Phuket's Rassada pier after the incident, authorities told the *Gazette*.

Five wounded tourists are still in recovery: one in Phuket Bangkok Hospital, one in Phuket Provincial Hospital and three in Vachira Phuket Hospital. The rest have been discharged.

One Chinese man underwent facial reconstructive surgery at Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

Phang Nga and Phuket officials visited the victims in hospital on the day of the incident, and confirmed that the tour companies will be held responsible for the victims' hospital expenses.

"Both boats have insurance, so the companies will pay about 50,000 baht for each injury and



The two speedboats were reportedly carrying 62 passengers between them, mostly Chinese and Korean nationals. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong.

about one million baht for each of the deceased victims," said Phuket Provincial Police Commander Teerapol Thipjaroen.

Police questioned Jakrapong Naweewong, the captain of *Chanakit* 856, and Anan Pramongkit, the captain of *Hongfah* 20. Both operators have been charged with reckless driving resulting in death and injury.

"Both operators said that they

departed from Koh Kai and were headed to Maya Bay on Phi Phi island," said Col Teerapol. "The two boats were moving parallel to each other, *Chanakit* on the left and *Hongfah* on the right,"

Police reported that about 15 minutes into the journey, the boats encountered very heavy rain.

With visibility obscured, the *Chanakit* reportedly slowed

down, which made it turn to starboard, following the direction of the wind. The *Hongfah* then collided with the *Chanakit* on her side.

Police reported that the *Chanakit* was carrying 36 passengers and the *Hongfah* 26 at the time of the collision.

"There are more than 300,000 boats leaving Phuket's shores every year," Col Teerapol said. "These kinds of accidents

rarely happen, but we've learned from this incident, and we are working to avoid tragedies like this one in the future."

"Our officers have to check the health and condition of boat operators, their boat's condition, make certain there are enough life jackets and that weather conditions are satisfactory, before letting the boats leave shore," he added.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Collision prompts regulatory inquiry

OFFICIALS from the Phuket Marine Office (PMO) told the *Phuket Gazette* that the investigation into a fatal speedboat collision in Phang Nga Bay on June 8, may result in additional regulations for speedboat operators.

Tanthai Wongsayree, an officer with the PMO, said that staff are in the process of reviewing the causes of the boat collision, which wounded 20 tourists and killed two Chinese nationals.

Mr Tanthai said the PMO plans to expand its operational capacity as a result of the investigations.

"We are going to broaden the

Phuket Yacht Control Center's potential to accommodate tourists in a far-ranging area, and increase our incident-response capacity."

Mr Tanthai said the PMO's expanded operations will be coupled with additional regulations for boats leaving Phuket.

"We plan to put forward regulations mandating that every tourist boat have a radio to contact nearby boats or piers. This is better than only having contact with the PYCC, because it will allow operators to coordinate disaster response at sea more immediately," he said.

– Sukawin Tanthavanich

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Celebrations honoring HM the King reopen Surin Beach

From page 1

... a pavilion; a photo center; and statues of the seven kings of Siam from the Sukothai period.

In addition to these celebrations, the return of Surin Beach to its former glory for the 70th anniversary commemorations of His Majesty the King's reign, was a chance to celebrate Phuket's culinary culture and the province's recent nomination by UNESCO as a 'City of Gastronomy'.

Organized by Phuket Municipality, the culinary contest had teams competing to make the best herbal rice dishes and Hokkien noodles for which the province is famous.

The Phuket pineapple had its own special place in the celebrations, with judges sampling locally grown pineapples and nine teams competing in a pine-



Dignitaries officially reopen Surin Beach. From left: Mayor Somjai Suwansupana; Gen Kunnawut Morkaew; Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada and his wife Vassana. Photo: Phuket PR

apple carving contest.

Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupana awarded the cu-

linary contest winners with prizes provided by Gen Kunnawut.

Sea gypsies sue



Members of Rawai's sea gypsy community gather outside Phuket Provincial Hall during mediated talks on June 9. Photo: Kongleaphy Keam

MORE than 200 of Rawai's sea gypsies are named as plaintiffs in a civil lawsuit against Baron World Trade Co Ltd, for allegedly blocking access to their sacred ceremonial grounds.

The land conflict between the sea gypsies and Baron World Trade has led to a number of confrontations between the two groups in the last few months. The sea gypsies complain that workers from Baron continually block access to an ancient sacred site for their people.

The lawsuit, which was filed June 13, calls for 500,000 baht in reparations to the community, and is the latest development in the ongoing land feud between the sea gypsies and the land developer.

Pasit Tavornlamlert, the sea gypsies lawyer told the *Gazette* that the lawsuit, led by Nuengruthai Raknawa, represented 203 sea gypsies in total.

"We went to the court on June 13, and we are suing Baron for troubling the community by blocking their access to the sacred site. That's caused the sea gypsies bodily injury and has negatively affected their livelihoods as fishermen, since they have to look out for Baron workers blocking the area to start land work," Mr Pasit said. "We have an appointment with the courts on August 15."

Baron World Trade representative Chatree Madsatun said he isn't worried about the lawsuit, and is willing to see the sea gypsies in court.

"I have no ideas why they are doing this," Mr Chatree said. "We have the rights to the land legally. More over, at least nine of the sea gypsies have been wanted by the Phuket Provincial Court for damaging our property. I pity them."

"These human rights activists are using them as a human

shield," Mr Chatree said. "If we win the case, the sea gypsies will pay, and how could they possibly have the money to pay for the lawsuit?" Mr Chatree said. "This is a civil case. But if they sue us in a criminal case and we win, I will sue them back and they will be the ones who go to jail."

Mr Chatree said Baron owns the rights to the land and will continue to build.

"We agreed to pause the construction because we thought we could broker an agreement with them, but that's fallen through, so we'll keep on doing our work."

A meeting between government officers, sea gypsy leaders, human rights activists and Baron World Trade management on June 9 ended without a decision on any viable solutions to the ongoing land dispute.

A gathering of the sea gypsy community was left distraught after the Region 4 Army deputy commander, Kunnawut Morkaew, left Phuket Provincial Hall after the meeting without accepting a letter they had prepared for him.

"Nothing has been decided so far. The issues still need to be processed through the court," said Maj Gen Kunnawut after the meeting.

Officials stated that they had tried to explain that the rejection of the letter was a misunderstanding, but were unable to persuade representatives from the sea gypsy community that that was indeed the case.

"The NGOs and human rights activists shouldn't do this to the sea gypsies," Mr Chatree said. "Those people have no idea what they're facing."

- Kongleaphy Keam and Chutharat Plerin

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Safety team inspects mall columns

By Kongleaphy Keam

JUNGCEYLON CEO Prawit Janyasitikul said on June 9 that his building poses no danger to shoppers, after an anonymous source posted pictures of cracked and degraded pillars underneath the Patong shopping mall.

Four concrete columns were found to be damaged in the mall's basement indoor market, the Port Zone. The area was immediately closed off after the discovery, but the rest of the shopping mall remains open for business, Mr Prawit said.

"The safety of our shoppers and staff is our first priority. There is no danger to anyone," Mr Prawit said.

Phuket Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada, Patong Mayor Chalermluck Kebsup and Kathu District Chief Sayan Chaichanawong, along with the Jungceylon management team, inspected the closed-off area around 8pm on June 9. At the time, workers from KCS & Associates Co Ltd, appeared to be shoring up the columns with steel I-beams.

"We cannot explain the cause of the damage to the pil-



Gov Chamroen visits the closed-off section of Jungceylon mall, as part of a delegation to visit the site. The governor encouraged residents to remain calm, and said panic may discourage tourism. Photo: Phuket PR

lars right now. Engineers are looking into it," said Mr Prawit.

About 20 shops in the area are affected by the closure. Jungceylon confirmed that they will not charge them rent while the area is closed off.

Gov Chamroen urged the public to remain calm.

Jungceylon management has stated they will reopen the area

to shoppers.

"At this stage, the area is closed. Experts are examining the causes of the columns' degradation. Beams are being put in place to support the broken pillars. An engineer from the Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning will also make an inspection," Gov Chamroen

said. "Engineers will check the whole structure, to ensure visitors' safety."

Gov Chamroen said Phuket's primacy as a tourist destination is challenged whenever issues of safety are called into question.

"Please don't panic. We will do our best to ensure citizens' and tourists' safety," he said.

Ladyboy romp ends with an empty wallet

A LADYBOY was arrested in the early hours of June 14, after allegedly stealing money from a Singaporean tourist in Patong.

Around 3am, Ng Wei Kiat, 31, met Tanakorn Jaiban, 25, on Bangla Road.

"Mr Kiat was reportedly interested in Ms Tanakorn, and they both went to have some fun in a hotel room on Phra Metta Road," said Lt Col Weerapong Rakito of the Patong Police.

"Later, Mr Kiat found that he was missing 402 Singaporean Dollars. Both argued over the missing amount until hotel staff called the police."

The two were taken to the police station to be searched.

"It was at that point that Ms Tanakorn excused herself to go to the toilet. She was acting suspiciously, as though she was trying to get something out of her underwear, when a police officer told her to stop. She quickly locked herself in the toilet," Col Weerapong said.

Police then broke down the door and found Ms Tanakorn holding 402 Singapore Dollars.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Taskforce seizes illegal lumber



Members of the forestry taskforce pose with an illegal cache of lumber found in Khao Lak Khao Ton forest. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

INVESTIGATORS in Phang Nga's Takuapa District seized more than one tonne of contraband lumber found in protected forests on June 11, conservation officials confirmed.

The team, led by Takuapa District Chief Manit Pianthong, seized a total of 43 pieces of lumber that had been cut from protected trees in the Khao Lak Khao Ton forest preserve.

Protected trees in Thailand include the threatened Rosewood and Teak varieties.

"The illegal lumber was found in Bang Muang sub-district. All of the wood found at the site came from protected trees," Mr Manit said. "The

wood had been cut and hidden on the roadside. However, we found no one around when we seized the wood."

Mr Manit said the culprits faced multiple charges, including illicit logging in a forest preserve, cutting down protected species, as well as charges related to illegal possession of the timber totalling 1.20 cubic meters.

The province, located some 60km north of Phuket, has often been used by illegal loggers for their illicit trade.

Officers have yet to estimate the total value of the logged wood.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Geologists battle waves

Oldest fossils in Thailand face monsoon swells, lowering budgetary tide

GEOLOGISTS in Krabi are seeking a solution in the fight to preserve one of Thailand's largest fossil sites, after it was damaged by monsoon waves.

Some of the naturally-formed slabs of fossilized shells, believed to be about 75 million years old, at Fossil Shell Beach – locally known as 'Susan Hoi' – have broken off this week, after heavy waves repeatedly broke against them.

The beachfront site in Noppharat Thara - Mu Ko Phi Phi National Park is the largest in the country, and was pounded by rough monsoon weather in recent weeks.

Pleanprasob Khaonuan of the Noppharat Thara - Mu Ko Phi Phi National Park said that this was not the first time that the fossil plate has been damaged, but national park officers are still working on a way to preserve the site.

"At this stage, we have yet to find a solution," Mr Pleanprasob said. "We have been requesting an increased budget in order to build a wall that would protect the area. However, our request has never been considered, as it would cost about 400 million baht."

Mr Pleanprasob said that the site is currently considered as an ancient fossil site by the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR), which may allow for additional funding of the proposed sea barrier.

"The shell field extends along a 2km stretch of the



Visitors at Fossil Shell Beach walk out across the 75 million year old slabs of fossilized shells. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



Monsoon season swells have battered the beachfront site in Mu Ko Phi Phi National Park. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Krabi coastline," said Thanyathorn Thonrat of the DMR. "It's a very important site; the only one in Thailand. It's probably the only such site like it in the world, and it's in critical condition now,"

"We will raise the issue with

the board, in order to find a solution as soon as possible. Registering Susan Hoi as a fossil site is the best solution we can think of. However, it could take up to a year to get approval," she added.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Nearly extinct bird to breed again

THE Wildlife Conservation Office plans to build a 'house of love' to breed rare birds that were recently discovered in Khaopra-Bangkham forest in Krabi.

The birds, known as Gurney's Pitta, had disappeared for many years prior to the first sighting of a female in mid-April and another at the end of May.

"We have a male Gurney's Pitta from the Klong Saeng Environmental Conservation Center in Surat Thani, which was raised there by humans," Wuttipong Chusangrat, head of the Wildlife Conservation Office, told the *Phuket Gazette*.

"The bird is not found anywhere else in Thailand. When the two females were sighted,

we came up with the idea to breed them with the male."

"The male was put in a three square meter cage, built in the forest by the Wildlife Conservation Office, to get him comfortable living there," explained Mr Wuttipong.

"As soon as he gets used to the cage, we will make a bigger one for him. We will also install CCTV to monitor his behavior and see if he calls out to the females," he added.

Mr Wuttipong said that the caged area is prohibited for anyone but the officers. "Once the female and male get together, we will build a larger cage, covering about one rai. This will be their 'home of love'," he said.

Ornithologists and officials



A Gurney's Pitta. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

from the Wildlife Conservation Office, who teamed up to search for the birds, also heard the call of another male bird nearby.

"It's encouraging to know that the Gurney's Pittas are still in existence," he added. "We will make every effort to breed them in order to preserve the species."

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



HAADTHIP

TASTE THE FEELING

Woman killed as runaway pick-up plows into spectators

A PICK-UP truck plowed into spectators at a famous motor circuit in Khon Kaen Province on June 11, killing one woman and wounding six people.

“The driver was racing at the back of the race track, when the headlights suddenly went out. The vehicle then swerved into the crowd,” Pol Major Prayut Kambornpitak, inspector at Nam Phong Police Station, said on June 12, citing testimony by eyewitnesses. The accident occurred just outside the racecourse.

The pick-up driver apparently ignored the rules of the racecourse that barred vehicles from revving up their engines and testing their speed outside designated tracks on the circuit.

More than 1,000 arrested for Euro 2016 gambling spree

MORE than 1,000 suspected gamblers and bookmakers were arrested as police targeted Euro 2016 betting.

“No minors were found to be involved,” said deputy national police chief Pongsapat Pongcharoen on June 13.

In his capacity as chairman of the anti-gambling police center, which was launched



Sex offending teacher arrested in Bangkok

A TEACHER at Suankularb Wittayalai School, who allegedly molested schoolboys and shared images and video clips of his exploits with others via Twitter, was taken into custody after an arrest warrant was issued on June 10, police said the next day.

Sarot Meepai, 33, was arrested in Bangkok, where he was transferred pending a fact-finding disciplinary probe, Central Investigation Bureau chief Maj-General Thitirat Nongharnphithak said.

The teacher said he had sex with people who were all over 20 years old.

Suvarnabhumi-bound bus goes up in flames

AN AIR-conditioned bus heading to Suvarnabhumi International Airport burst into flames the morning of June 13 on an elevated road in Bangkok's Lat Krabang District, police said.

The 20 passengers and bus driver, Ratana Jenraksa, fled the bus and there were no injuries. It took firefighters 20 minutes to put out the fire that consumed the entire bus.

The driver told police he was driving when smoke came out of the engine.

ahead of the Euro 2016 tournament, Pongsapat received campaign material from Lt Col Noon Sansanakhom, a Government Lottery Office board member, and other anti-gambling networks at Royal Thai Police headquarters.

Noon said the GLO Foundation for Social Development and its allies produced 2,000 vinyl signs saying “[People’s] lives are safe if [they] refrain from football gambling” for the center to distribute to precincts nationwide.

He also urged the public to alert authorities about football betting activities by calling 191 or 1599.



Shooters give themselves up

TWO more young suspects surrendered to police on June 13 in relation to the shooting death of a 15-year-old boy at an intersection in Bangkok's Min Buri District on June 8.

The boy was shot dead by one of three students riding on a motorcycle while he was riding his own motorcycle home with a friend.

Hwai Kwang police bribed by Nataree staff

THE Nataree massage parlor scandal could implicate more officials as the ongoing investigation uncovers incriminating evidence of bribery.

Sources said on June 12 that the entertainment venue staff must have been paying protection fees to policemen or officials, because it employed foreign masseuses who were working illegally.

“These masseuses carried a blue card with an emblem of a lion on it. They said they paid 1,000 baht a month to get such a card for immunity against any arrest or harassment by state officials,” the source said, adding the masseuses had been told they could show the card when

Frozen Granny for 30 dollars

A NORTH Carolina woman bought her neighbor's used freezer for US\$30, not realizing that it contained the seller's dead mother.

The buyer had the freezer for several weeks before opening it because the seller told her to wait, as it was a ‘time capsule’ project for Sunday School. When the buyer finally peeked inside, she spotted the body and called 911.

“It's just unbelievable how she could just stick her mom in a freezer,” said the woman.

Also unbelievable is that someone would purchase a used, \$30 freezer without opening it first.

Phuket Gazette

Better safe than sorry

REPORTS of structural damage at the Jungceylon shopping complex in Patong need to be taken seriously to protect shoppers from potential danger, but calls to close down the entire complex indefinitely appear to be unduly alarmist given the situation on the ground – and beneath it.

News that support pillars in the basement of the complex were damaged apparently came to light only after a concerned visitor noticed some of the damage and alerted authorities to it.

Once apprised of the situation, Jungceylon management was correct in putting public safety first, quickly closing off the affected areas to shoppers and taking steps to shore up the structure's support base with I-beams, while qualified engineers assessed the extent of the damage.

As this edition went to print, Jungceylon management had yet to publicly reveal much about the engineers' findings, except to specify the number of affected support beams at just four. We hope this turns out to be the case.

Given the sprawling nature of the 200,000sqm complex and the lack of any high-rise structures thereupon, the management appears to have been justified in limiting the closures to potential risk areas and reassuring the public that there was no need to panic.

With the current monsoon season now well underway, and with the inevitable associated downturn in tourist arrival figures and trade, it might also be a good time for owners and operator of other large structures in the seaside town to inspect the structural integrity of their properties.

This should particularly be the case for the handful of high-rise structures in the town that were built before the current set of sensible building ordinances were put in place in the 1990s.

It is difficult to explain the importance the Jungceylon complex plays to Patong to those who do not remember what an eyesore the area was back in the 1990s, when it was home to seedy karaoke bars, putrid drainage ditches, pump-on-a-barrel gas stations and even piles of illegally dumped garbage.

The opening of Jungceylon in late 2006 was a major turning point in the town's difficult recovery from the 2004 tsunami and its presence has helped build Patong, increasing its economic independence from the rest of the island and growing its appeal as a cosmopolitan beach resort destination – and not just a place to indulge in sex tourism and other seedy pursuits.

As such, Jungceylon deserves a greater degree of public support and understanding than is indicated by the many anonymous postings on social media.



Hats off to Phuket Governor Chamroen

Re: Video Report: Surin re-opens for 70th anniversary of HM King's coronation, June 10

This is a great man who has done much for Thailand.

There are very few men who could walk in his shoes and receive the respect of an entire country.

We salute you.

Charlie
Gazette forum

Billboards can easily be switched off

Re: Blinding light at intersection disgruntles locals, June 9

The lit billboard at the checkpoint in Tha Chat Chai could be turned down at night too.

My 10-year-old TV has the technology to automatically turn down its illumination in a darkened room, surely these high-tech billboards have the [same] technology.

Cindy
Gazette forum

Other car parks are always welcome

Re: Island View: The perks of parking are ready to be reaped, June 14

To my knowledge and if I am not wrong, in Phuket Town around the Banking Center there is a small multi-storey parking behind Bank of Ayudhya inside the old Phuket Shopping Center and further away the Royal Phuket City Hotel.

Of course, other multi-storey car parks would be welcome.

However, as long as there are egoistic reckless traffic

Letters to the Editor

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

rules ignoring motorists on the road, there will be chaos and traffic jams.

Phuket Expat
Gazette forum

Need to promote better road safety

Re: Truck driver charged for crushing 79-year-old to death, June 10

Yes, we may blame the truck driver, but it's too late for the rider now.

There is a better way, but it requires us to move beyond this current state of placing the blame after the event.

Instead, we must look to avoid the event happening in the first place by promoting better road safety.

No surprises, no accidents.

Thai Safe Rider
Gazette forum

Punishment needs to be commensurate

Re: Boat captains drug tested, face charges, June 9

"These kinds of accidents rarely happen" – is he for real?

Just look at the number of 'accidents' and deaths last year.

No wonder no one takes this seriously when those in charge don't realize or pretend not to know what is going on.

Punishments need to fit the

crime or they will have little effect. Tourists lives are cheap in their eyes.

Mister Ree
Gazette forum

Great work on zoo raids by authorities

Re: Police seize protected species from Hua Hin Zoo, June 9

Well done to the authorities on the zoo raids.

However, it is beyond comprehension how this zoo was allowed to function if all of the animals were indeed 'illegally acquired'.

Aren't there any checks when the facility opens for business, or any other regular inspections along the way?

Hoping to hear that the zoo owner, and anyone else involved in this shameless act, faced maximum possible penalties and jail time.

Cynthia Rodericks
Facebook

Sea gypsies' case needs to be sorted

Re: Sea gypsies break down over letter 'misunderstanding', June 10

Isn't it about time the sea gypsies received what is their due?

If hundreds of years of DNA evidence isn't enough proof for them to become naturalized land owners, then I don't know what is.

All we can see is a whole lot of meetings without any conclusions or 'viable solutions'.

Martin Edgar
Facebook

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Managing Director: Oranee Hildebrand
General Manager: Natthira Susangrat
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Contact us:

Editorial: news@phuketgazette.net
Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net
Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net
Website services: anna@phuketgazette.net
Gazette Guide: guide@phuketgazette.net
Events Sponsorship: events@phuketgazette.net
General: info@phuketgazette.net

Telephone: 076 273555 (10 lines) Fax 076 615240
79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Kaew, A. Muang, Phuket

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Publishing responsibly

FIRST PERSON

IN THE current era of 4G data, our entire lives revolve around technology. Social media is now a normal and major part of our daily lives.

I would like to pass on my concerns and urge all of my media friends, as well as those who are new to the profession, to realize that our role is to pass along a correct understanding for others, based on facts and accurate information.

Before you share any information, please make sure that you have fact-checked it and verified its details. Make sure that the information you choose to pass on has come from reliable sources.

As Governor Chamroen Tippayapongtada says, Phuket is not just another province of Thailand; we are a strategic province, as we present the image of the country. About 12 million people from around the world know Phuket and visit here every year. What happens in Phuket reflects on all of Thailand.

Therefore, before you share or publish something that affects Phuket's image, whether it be via social media or any other form of media, please check the facts first. You may check with authorities in provincial departments or directly with us at the Provincial Public Relations Office. We can lead you to the right people and experts, depending on the issue.

Publishing incorrect information from a computer is a serious crime, and can be used against you in court.

The government is paying attention to information shared on social media, and the Computer Crimes Act may be used against



Busaya Jaipiam, 56, is the Phuket Provincial Public Relations Chief. She is originally from Surat Thani, and received a bachelor's degree in Mass Communications from Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University. She also obtained a Master's degree in Political

Science from the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA).

Here, she talks about the media's – and all citizens' – responsibilities when it comes to computer publishing.

you. In Phuket, the governor's office is also paying attention to those who may be considered to be sharing false information on social media. We can check for the sources of incorrect information, and those who harm others' reputations by spreading false information will not get away with it.

However, the government is not looking to arrest every single person who posts or shares incorrect information on a computer. We would like to call for publishers to make sure that they've checked facts before publishing anything, especially information that could ruin Phuket's reputation.

It is not only registered media companies or journalists with credentials who can publish anymore. Everyone faces these same responsibilities now that the power of social media is in our palms.

Phuket is a small island province with only three districts, but it has massive potential. We are a tourist destination that brings a lot of income to Thailand. We make billions of baht a year.

There are so many media companies on the island, both in Thai and international languages. To my knowledge, Phuket has many more media companies than any other province. The media is very powerful here, and people around the world know of Phuket. So, I'd like to urge the media to publish information that benefits the island and its public.

I am not saying that the media cannot publish any negative stories in Phuket. The media can always publish stories to make Phuket a better place. Stories that check in on the government and private sectors, for example, by publishing how government departments are progressing on public projects.

I just want to see the media look forward to making our island better, based on mutual benefit for everyone, not as some personal revenge or only for self-benefit.

Phuket has given us a lot, therefore we must pay it back. We must take good care of the island to make sure this Pearl of the Andaman lasts forever.

If it ain't broke



It's hard to understand why a road built a few years ago is in need of repairs. Photo: gratisography.com

I HAVE lived and worked in Phuket for several years, even before the underpasses were built.

I'm sure we all agree that driving on the island is one of the biggest challenges in our daily lives. Making your way home each day is a matter of luck and skillful maneuvering, but I am not going to complain about any of this.

I know it's impossible to predict or control the behavior of others. People don't drive to please you and neither can you be a perfect driver all the time.

Driver behavior is one thing, but road blockages due to construction are another thing completely. I sometimes use the road by the wall of Tah Rua Temple to avoid the traffic at the Bang Khu Underpass on my way to work.

This road is, of course, much longer than my usual route from Thepkrasattri to work. Nonetheless, it is serene and beautiful, lined with hundreds of rubber trees on both sides, and hardly any traffic in sight.

Alas, this pleasure was short lived. My favorite road has now been dug open for repairs. What baffles me completely, however, is why this road needs to be repaired in the first place. From what I can recall, it was constructed a handful of years ago. Before it was dug up, it looked smooth and I

Island View

By Chutharat Plerin

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

couldn't even see a pothole anywhere. I am completely lost as to what the authorities were thinking when they dug up an almost-new road for 'repairs'.

Last month, I called some of the local authorities to find out the reason for these repairs and was shocked to discover them say that it was ten years old and in need of repairs.

Now I don't know whether my memory is playing tricks on me, but I find it very hard to believe that this road was built a decade ago.

I have no idea what the real reason is for these repairs, or how the annual budget works. However, as an ordinary taxpayer citizen, I'd like to state that if there is a budget surplus, why not build a new road? Why repair a road that doesn't need to be repaired at all? I am a law-abiding citizen and I want to see my tax money being put to reasonable use.

I have no idea how much it costs to build a new road, but I know anything would be better than channeling our hard earned money into repairing a road that doesn't even need it.

Words from the Wise

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

– Winston Churchill

“It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.”

– Mark Twain

Issues & Answers

Are we allowed to go climbing at Khao Toe-Sae?

MY FRIENDS and I used to go up to Khao Toe-Sae in Phuket Town. We spotted some rope between trees.

We wonder if we could climb the hill by ourselves and are there any recommended safety measures?

Ed Cooper
New Zealand

Nittipat Wanthanaprateep of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) replies:

Thank you for your query. No, we cannot advocate that anyone climb the hill via the rope trail. We do not maintain

that trail anymore and it's possible for people to have accidents.

The rope used to be for villagers before we built the road, as they had no way to get up the hill.

That's all since changed, and we have a very convenient road up the hill now. If tourists would like to go up, they may walk or drive up the road. The hilltop is CCTV monitored and there's a security guard up there to make sure people stay safe.

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.
Submit your issue at:
www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Runts rally amid mixed earnings season



Finance

By Don Freeman

AS OF the beginning of May, earnings season is in full swing, with the markets sending mixed messages to investors. So far, some big names like Facebook Inc (NASDAQ: FB) and Amazon.com (NASDAQ: AMZN), with the latter sometimes being a difficult stock to own given its ups and downs, have put in good earnings reports and have pretty decent technical charts. On the other hand, Netflix, Inc (NASDAQ: NFLX) has a chart so choppy that it's not even close to being ready to own, while Apple Inc (NASDAQ: AAPL) is running into mounting troubles in China.

Somewhat ironically, it's beaten-down sectors (gold, materials, silver, oil and commodities) and stocks (Exxon Mobil) that have been leading the latest two to three month rally, with nimble risk-tolerant investors capturing some nice gains from bounces by sectors or stocks that have otherwise been in the garbage can.

However, the S&P 500 moved back up above the 2,100 resistance level in mid April, only to begin retreating again over the past few weeks, as the technology sector still lacks leadership stocks with biotech coming under pressure. This explains why the multi-year range the S&P 500 has been stuck in continue to hold.

That range is preventing the S&P 500 from hitting all-time



Moving on to the global market, we need to see all of them start firing on all cylinders. Photo: WiNG

highs, as breaking above the 2,150 level is of primary importance for the index. The failure to take out that resistant level has the index remaining in a choppy range or potentially rolling back over to February lows, or even lower.

Meanwhile, the technical chart for the tech-laden NASDAQ market is more worrisome, as it's showing three lower highs and two lower lows. This is not what you want to see in a healthy market.

There were also a couple of NASDAQ listed semiconductor stocks that were looking

good, only to get whacked again. This makes me a little concerned about the technical chart for the Market Vectors Semiconductor ETF (NYSE-ARCA: SMH), as it's been showing lower highs and is now pulling back from a late April rally.

This also doesn't bode well for tech stocks, as semiconductors are their 'canary in the coal mine.' A look at the technical chart for the Technology Select Sector SPDR ETF (NYSE-ARCA: XLK) shows the index is in a tightly-bound range, and falling back down towards a

support level.

Over in biotech, the SPDR S&P Biotech ETF (NYSE-ARCA: XBI) did break out to a new base rather than a new high only to start falling off again to below a potential support level. Ideally, I want to see the chart breaking above that support zone before I start jumping back into biotech stocks.

Moving on to the global market, we need to see all of them start firing on all cylinders, but we just aren't seeing that yet. The iShares FTSE/Xinhua China 25 Index ETF (NYSE-ARCA: FXI) repre-

sented the China market was actually looking good, with a bottom in January/February followed by a rally that only rolled back over again. A technical chart for the iShares MSCI Emerging Markets Index ETF (NYSE-ARCA: EEM) also looks similar to that of China.

Europe has been a basket case for years, but a few weeks ago, a technical chart for the SPDR STOXX Europe 50 ETF (NYSE-ARCA: FEU) was looking good with a solid base, bottoming formation and a breakout. Unfortunately, Europe is now retesting a support level, and is still not out of the woods yet – especially with the UK getting ready to vote on Brexit.

Finally, I should mention that when I start to lose one, two, or three stocks (or even sector/market ETFs), it means it's time to pause and just watch the market, as it's usually not a good sign for the overall market or a sector (from my past 20 years of experience) to see something suddenly start to get pummeled.

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

Positive forecasts abound

THE Center for Economic and Business Forecasting (CEBF) has found that consumer confidence in May decreased for the fifth consecutive month, and was the lowest in eight months.

CEBF Director Thanawat Polvichai said on June 9 that consumers were still concerned about Thailand's shrinking ex-

ports, drought and low agricultural prices. The May consumer confidence index was 72.6 but consumer confidence in the future is expected to go up for the first time in five months to 74.6. He said the center forecasts Thai economic growth in 2016 will be around 2.5-3.5 per cent.

– NNT

Tips for establishing a start-up

Biz Chat

by Zohaib Sikander

WHEN it comes to starting your own business, it's easy to get lost in the details. However, there are a few necessary steps you can't let fall between the cracks. These are the last three crucial steps.

As a business owner (or prospective owner), you have to obtain the appropriate licences and permits. Different fields in every country are different when it comes to licensing requirements. But it's your job to figure out which one is specific to your business. To that end, enlist the help of the local business community and small business agencies – people love

talking about their business and themselves. Ultimately, it's up to you to find out what the necessary certifications are. These can vary based on your visa type, country of origin, proprietary conditions and the amount of money you are willing to invest into your new startup.

As an employer, you'll have certain responsibilities. Firstly, you need to hire employees, give them insurance and, obviously, you need to pay your taxes. Eventually, you'll have to pay them, and it's your job as the head honcho to put the appropriate systems into place. Hiring agreements, tax returns, medical and accidental insurance contracts all need to be laid out and followed on through in order to avoid the

wrath of 'The Man' if something unfortunate happens.

Lastly, get help. Stop being all high-and-mighty. Local government agencies are all there to help you get through this, whether you know about them or not. They will give you advice on what is and isn't allowed in the country, and not just help you make profits. Hopefully, they'll help you figure out the dos and don'ts of getting your business off the ground, and avoid unnecessary headaches in the future.

Zohaib Sikander is the Business Editor at the Phuket Gazette. He has a degree in entrepreneurship and operations management. Drop him a line, ask questions and/or suggest ideas for articles at zo@phuketgazette.net

Growing social forums



ONE of the biggest business benefits of social media is creating a database of your perfect customers. Just imagine it: people asking to join your customer list, at no cost to you.

While most people know all about Facebook fan pages, the 'groups' option remains a lesser-known factor. People have also probably heard of forums, but again they are used a lot less successfully by businesses to target like-minded people in their target market. That's probably because the businesses think forums are too hard to set up and maintain. But if done correctly, they can return massive results to marketeers, in terms of both traffic and income. Surprisingly, they are much easier to set up and maintain than you think.

A group, as opposed to a fan page, allows for notifications to be sent to every member of the group. Without going into too much detail here, a group can be set up on any given topic or cause, and like-minded people can join. The groups can be private or public, but the advantage is that everyone in the group is sent 'push' messages when content is posted



Social media forums have changed the face of marketing strategies across the world. Photo: Allan O'Rourke

and can see that there is new content. This is a big advantage over the fan page, where about seven per cent of the people who have liked the page actually see the content. To get everyone who has previously said they were interested in your content, you need to boost your posts, which soon becomes expensive.

A forum is another format where someone sets up a platform around a theme or subject, and then members can view and comment. A very well-known example in Thailand is ThaiVisa. Readers can look at and post content, and then make their own comments, all of which gives valuable information to the marketeer.

These platforms are very profitable to set up and operate for two reasons. First of all, you get to brand yourself as an expert or administrator that cares or is knowledgeable about a given topic, allowing you to become an authority figure and influencer – which is very powerful in marketing, as you build trust and rapport with your audience.

The second is that you can control traffic flow, and traffic translates into money. Many people do not realize that by generating lots of traffic, not only do people create more sales, but they are building databases. At the same time, they are normally creating multiple income streams, often getting per-click income and advertis-

ing revenue as well. As I have mentioned many times, the money is in the database.

Done correctly, they can be a gold mine. This doesn't mean you should all rush out tomorrow and set one up, but if you plan it properly and match it correctly to your social media imprint, it can be a great addition to your social media arsenal.

Simon Wetherell is a social media expert, trainer and lawyer. He now resides in Phuket where he trains businesses and individuals on how to profit from the Social Media industry. For more information, go to <http://PhuketOnlineMarketing.com> or call him on 095-085 3355.

Trade up B300bn



Ministry sees 2016 potential up by 1.74 per cent. Photo: Allan Ajifo

THE Ministry of Commerce sees potential for trade and investment between Thailand and CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam) countries.

It was revealed on June 10 that trade between Thailand and CLMV during this year is 353.31 billion baht, up 1.74 per cent, as compared to the same period last year.

Thai business operators can obtain investment information, data and advisory services from the ministry's trade offices with regards to CLMV.

The ministry plans to set up a trade and investment-promotion network, leading Thai businesses to explore opportunities. According to Commerce Minister Apiradi Tantraporn, Vietnam accounts for most of the trade with Thailand, followed by Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia.

Under the Asean economic community, Thailand's geographical position could serve as a gateway for trade between Asean and CLMV countries.

– *The Nation*

Spending boosts economy

FOR the first eight months of fiscal year 2016, collections of revenue from state agencies and contributions from state-owned enterprises via the Government Financial Management Information System totaled 2.69 trillion baht as of May 3.

Overall government spending from October to May was 1.79tn baht of the 2.72tn baht budget, Manas Jamveha, director-general of the Comptroller-General's Department, said on June 8.

The largest proportion of the revenue came from value-added tax at 50.81 billion baht; followed by corporate income tax at 30.44bn baht or 10.40 per cent; personal income tax at 24.67bn baht or 8.43 per cent; and tax on oil and oil products at 12.99bn baht or 4.44 per cent.

Other non-tax revenue comprised 12.99bn baht in contributions from state enter-

prises and 30.13bn baht in off-budget funds.

The department expects tax revenue last month will exceed that of May last year, thanks to the slight improvement in the economy.

State agencies expedited their spending to help boost the economy in line with the government's economic stimulus measures.

Mr Manas said the stimulus measures were raising the standard of living in sub-districts and at the village level, investing in small stimulus schemes nationwide and upgrading villages' potential to help expand the economy.

The higher tax revenue via the information system and state spending over the same period last year, helped stimulate the economy in line with the government's objective to ensure sustainable economic growth and stability, he said.

– *The Nation*



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Patong still offers stunning sunsets

Loyal guests of the KEE Resort & Spa, Patong, who stayed a week or more were treated to a cocktail reception party with free-flow snacks and sundowners on June 8 at the resort's rooftop open-air KEE Sky Lounge & Restaurant. The rain held off and guests were also treated to a stunning sunset.



KEE Resort guests enjoy sundowners with a spectacular sunset over Patong Bay.

Thai Olympic road cyclist trains hard at Thanyapura

Thai national team cyclist Jutatip Maneephan, visited Thanyapura last week for some last-minute training before joining her team-mates at the Rio Olympics.



Thai Olympic cyclist, Jutatip Maneephan was in Phuket to train at Thanyapura.

GUNDAM FESTA 2016 @JUNGCEYLON

Jungceylon Shopping Center in Patong hosted the "GUNDAM FESTA 2016 IN THAILAND" June 9-13. The first ever Gundam festival in the southern region was a hit with kids, who got to stare up at imposing life-size models of the popular Japanese cartoon and range of toys.



Jungceylon General Manager Paul Rochel and Phuket Japanese Association President Fumio Nishioka on the opening day of the Gundam Festa.



Life-sized Gundam models on display at Jungceylon.

Events in Paradise

Tree planting for the King

Local government, community leaders, students and the private sector came together in Kathu on June 8 to plant 300 trees in honor of His Majesty the King.



Kathu Mayor Chai-Anan Suthikul helps plant trees in honor of His Majesty.

Amari Phuket welcomes E! Entertainment celeb

Amari Phuket staff gave a warm welcome to Sabrina Chakici, E! Entertainment's host in the UK and Ireland, and professional photographer Aimee Le Tourneau upon their arrival at the resort for a holiday on June 7.



(From L to R) Tipaporn Koonphol, Amari Phuket's Deputy General Manager; professional photographer Aimee Le Tourneau, E! Entertainment host Sabrina Chakici; and Penprapa Chooklin, Amari Phuket's Associate Director of Marketing Communications.

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Tsunami survivor's story hits the stage

By Sahar Aftab Paliwala

THE Regent's Park Open Air Theater in London staged its largest-ever performance this month, inspired by a true story of resilience, courage and man's relationship with nature.

The play is set during the Indian Ocean tsunami that struck Phuket, and devastated large areas in Southeast Asia more than a decade ago.

A cast of more than 50 exceptional young performers came together in Samuel Anderson's adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's 2009 novel *'Running Wild'*.

The novel is inspired by the story of an eight-year-old British schoolgirl named Amber Owen, who was visiting Phuket with her mother and stepfather when the tsunami hit the island in 2004.

Ms Owen was riding on the back of a baby elephant named *'Ning Nong'*. She said



A scene in Regent's Park Open Air Theater's adaptation of *Running Wild*, which was inspired by the bond between a girl on holiday in Phuket and a baby elephant, which saved her life when the 2004 tsunami struck. Photo: Johan Persson

that the animal became alert and alarmed before the ruthless waves came crashing in.

"People were going into the sea to pick up fish, but the elephant kept trying to get away,"

Ms Owen told *The Telegraph*. "I didn't know what a tsunami was, but he could clearly sense there was danger."

Ning Nong then ran toward high ground – with Ms Owen on its back – until the waves subsided, protecting her from being carried off to sea.

"As the water came in, I was safely on his back. He saved my life," Ms Owen added.

Ms Owen was safely reunited with her mother, who reportedly pledged to donate money to *Ning Nong's* upkeep every year, as a show of gratitude for saving her daughter's life.

Earlier this month, *Ning Nong* was found at an elephant camp in Kanchanaburi, after being sold to a new owner after the tsunami, reportedly because her old owner found her too expensive to maintain. She now has a new name – *Bai Tong* – but is still the same gentle and friendly creature she was before, and still a favorite with locals and visitors to the camp.

Mr Morpurgo, a Children's Laureate and best-selling author, based his novel in Indonesia, where a young boy named Will is on holiday with his family, and whose life is saved in a similar fashion by an elephant named *Oona*.

The protagonist of the play alternates between Lilly (played by Ava Potter), and Joshua Fernandes and Tyler Osborne (who share the role of Will). A team of skilled puppeteers maneuver the prop elephant and other animals that Lilly (or Will, depending

on which performance you watch) meets on her adventures.

Following the success of his novel, Mr Morpurgo was first approached by Chichester Festival for permission to adapt his novel for stage. After a successful run there, the Regent's Park Open Air Theater staged a production in London this month.

Mr Morpurgo's other works include the 1982 novel *War Horse* which also focuses on the bond between a young boy and a horse during the war torn backdrop of World War I. He has also written dozens of other plays, novels and poems for children.

Ms Owen, who is now 20 years old, lives and works in Milton Keynes. She was aware that a children's book had been inspired by her adventures in Phuket, but had never met Mr Morpurgo. The author had never contacted the young girl either – he had merely read about her island adventures in a newspaper clipping, and decided to base his novel on the incident.

In fact, there was never any contact or personal interaction between the two, until *The Telegraph* interviewed Ms Owen. Mr Morpurgo subsequently invited Ms Owen and her family to watch the adapted performance of his novel at Regent's Park.

The performance moved audiences to tears, with both adults and children mesmerized by this tale of courage, survival and indomitable spirit in the face of adversity.



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A brief history of Thong Dee

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

PICKING up from where I left off in part one of the history of Thong Dee, in 1765, the Burmese invaded Siam with the aim of crushing Ayutthaya. King Ekkathat tried desperately to defend his country from the invaders.

When Ayutthaya came under siege, the king sent word to Phraya Taksin for assistance. Taksin assessed the situation and believed that his efforts would prove futile. The general led five hundred of his best fighting men and their commanders, including Luang Pichai Asa out of the city and made sure they were not detected by the enemy.

By this time Luang Pichai Asa had become known for his characteristic fighting style, holding a pair of swords, one in each hand. His company consisted mostly of Chinese fighters. When they managed to break out of the Burmese siege, Taksin's small but loyal band of fighting men began to travel east.

When the Burmese realized that they had let Taksin and his men escape, they sent an army in pursuit. The two forces clashed at Pho Sao Harn, which would be one of the first times that the Burmese would learn of the general's ferocity. Taksin's forces smashed the pursuing Burmese forces, routing them completely and seizing many of their weapons.

After the battle, Taksin's



Monument of Phraya Pichai, in front of Uttaradit City Hall. Photo: Notty

army set up camp near a village called Ban Phran Nok on the western banks of the Chao Phraya River. While in search for food, a company of Siamese soldiers came across more Burmese troops who were searching for them. The Siamese managed to retreat back to their camp, but the Burmese followed.

Taksin organized his men to defend the camp. He sent his trusted cavalry commanders out to lure the Burmese army into an ambush. The Burmese attacked the Siamese cavalry. The cavalry pretended to retreat as planned. The Burmese, confident that it was their day, followed and were caught in Taksin's ambush. They were surrounded and slaughtered mercilessly.

Taksin's early victories against the Burmese gave the Siamese people renewed hope. Fighting men from nearby villages began to flock to his camp.

Taksin continued to move east, away from the Burmese stronghold. He knew that his forces were still not strong enough to attack the Burmese and win. He needed more men and the only way was to get help from the Siamese governors of the eastern towns, which had escaped the Burmese onslaught during the invasion of 1766.

But when Taksin's army reached Nakhon Nayok, he once again received distressing news. An army of Burmese fighters was closing in on him fast. He had no time to set up his defenses so Taksin decided to use the geography of the area to his advantage. He placed his musketeers in the tall grass where they would be hidden from the enemy. General Taksin, Luang Pichai and a handful of his trusted cavalry then rode out to meet the Burmese army.

They clashed once again on

the plains. Again Taksin and his cavalry pretended to rout. The Burmese chased them with renewed impetus. Taksin led them straight into his trap. Once they were in range of the hidden gunmen, the muskets fired. Round after round, the Burmese army was cut down. The Burmese reserves, unable to communicate with the rest of the army, marched in as well and were indiscriminately gunned down by Taksin's musketeers. By the end of the day, hundreds of Burmese soldiers lay dead on the battlefield. General Taksin was once again victorious.

Since that battle, the Burmese did not send anymore of their men in pursuit of Taksin. The general continued to march east, passing Chachoensao, Banglamung, eventually reaching Rayong. The governor of Rayong, upon seeing Taksin, welcomed him into the city. He

offered his troops to Taksin's service.

But there were a few nobles of Rayong who did not agree with the governor's decision to assist Taksin. They believed that if the governor of Rayong helped Taksin, the Burmese would not spare their city. Eventually they would follow Taksin eastwards and crush his rebellion and all the cities that assisted him would be razed to the ground.

The nobles gathered and plotted to get rid of the general. But once again, news of their plot reached Taksin. That night, a sizeable army led by a few of the conspirators surrounded Taksin's camp. They shouted and made loud noises to intimidate Taksin's men.

Taksin, anticipating an attack, ordered his men to stand down. Seeing the camp dead quiet, the nobles ordered their men to attack. The men charged at the camp. But when they were just a few yards away, Taksin's musketeers began to fire. The first line of attackers fell instantly. Luang Pichai then emerged from the camp at the head of fifteen men and charged into the confused ranks.

The army broke and routed. Luang Pichai managed to capture the conspirators, cut off their heads and throw them at Taksin's feet that same night. Taksin was very impressed by Luang Pichai's bravery and compared him to the likes of Phraya Siharat Decho, a legendary general in service of King Narai during the Ayutthaya period. That night, the town of Rayong was undoubtedly his for the taking.

Youngsters compete in Futsal Junior Cup



Sarot Ungkanapilas of the Phuket Provincial Administrative Organization (center) chaired the closing ceremony of the Futsal Junior Cup 2016 on June 11. The under-12 competition saw 14 schools, and the under-14 competition saw 16 teams participating. Top three schools and best players from each category were awarded cash prizes and trophies. Photo: PPAO

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When in Phuket, do as Brisbane does



Blazing Saddles

By Baz Daniel

QUEENSLAND's capital city of Brisbane has a population of 2.3 million people, some four times the official figure for Phuket. Yet driving around Brisbane, as I did recently, you could be forgiven for thinking you were in a quiet country town. The traffic flows efficiently and there's rarely any bottlenecks, or congestion, with which to contend. Certainly Brisbane has a modern and efficiently-planned system of super-highways, dual carriage-ways, roads and bridges over the Brisbane River, upon which the city stands.

To complement these, this forward-looking modern city also boasts superb cycle pathways, largely separated from the vehicular roads and traffic and in addition a new City Cycling facility.

Brisbane's cycling initiative (www.citycycle.com.au) is designed both for recreational and work-related biking. Of course the key to any successful cycling initiative is not just the convenient availability of rental bikes at reasonable cost, but also the availability of excellent and safe riding tracks and it is here that Brisbane excels.



Brisbane has 150 separate locations where City Cycle bikes are available on a 24/7 basis. Photo: Baz Daniel

The beguiling waterside environment alongside the Brisbane River weaves right through the heart of the city, so that commuters and tourists alike can get to shops, offices, cafes, botanical gardens, museums and art galleries quickly safely and conveniently by bike.

Does that remind you of anywhere else where such an initiative might work?

Exactly. Phuket has every opportunity to capitalize on its island topography and large tourist base to develop a financially-successful community bicycle rental program, and

could learn a great deal from the model that Brisbane has established.

Brisbane has 150 separate locations where City Cycle bikes are available on a 24/7 basis. These dovetail closely with mainstream transportation infrastructure, such as bus, rail and ferry stations. Plus there are plenty of suburban and downtown car parks encouraging you to leave your vehicle and go by bike.

You can sign up online for a day for as little as 60 baht. You get a code to enter into the computer at the bike docking stations

which releases a bike plus helmet for you and away you go. Amazingly, if you use your bike in less than 30-minute intervals throughout the day, you don't have to pay any more than that. If you become a regular user, you can buy the annual subscription – giving you the flexibility of City Cycle any day of the year – which works out at 1,800 baht a year or about five baht per day.

So, when visiting Brisbane, you can do what I did.

Take a bike from near your hotel and ride a river pathway into town to a riverside coffee shop for breakfast and the

newspapers, after locking the bike into a nearby docking station. Then, take another bike through the botanical gardens, over to the *Museum of Contemporary Art* (also on the river). Again dock the bike and spend a couple of hours browsing the Brett Whitleys and Sidney Nolans prior to lunch in the museum's outdoor restaurant.

Take yet another bike across the river on a cycle/footbridge to the free outdoor swimming pool on the riverbank. Dock the bike and swim, then doze in the sun for an hour. Take another bike back for a final ride along the river to the little park by your hotel, lock up the bike and sit by the river enjoying a well-deserved sun-downer while watching the evening commuters scurry home across the Story Bridge.

I cycled for a total of almost three hours, covering maybe 30 kilometers, and I was out all day. All for the princely sum of 60 baht.

Now, imagine what a wonderful attraction it would be for tourists if Phuket could offer such a bike scheme with attendant cycle-ways. And imagine how much Phuket's notorious traffic congestion, mayhem, death, injuries, and pollution could be reduced by such a scheme. Food for thought indeed.

New PTT campaign encourages Thais to sort out their garbage

GAS stations in Phuket could soon be displaying colorful trash bins as part of a nationwide campaign by PTT to urge consumers to sort their waste and dispose of it in the appropriate bins.

Dubbed 'Yak Lak Yim', the trash-sorting drive is aimed at improving better waste-disposal habits in exchange for funding to assist local communities.

Sarun Rungkasiri, Chief Operating Officer of the Petroleum Authority of Thailand's (PTT's) downstream petroleum business group, said the aim was to raise consumer awareness about environmental issues and make waste separation a habit. The waste sorting bins will be placed at more than 1,400 PTT gas stations nationwide.

"This campaign is a tangible demonstration of our commitment to environmental impact



The sorting of waste is becoming increasingly important the world over but while it is common and indeed mandatory in several European countries, Asia has been slow in catching on. Photo: www.yaklakyim.com

reduction by managing collection of waste for recycling and using the funds raised for community activities," said Mr Sarun.

"PTT dealers all over the country are collaborating by setting aside a site for garbage containers and waste disposal

that will generate revenue from recycling for nearby communities. Most importantly, this campaign implicates the synergy of all consumers in bringing a big smile to society by just correctly sorting trash for recycling."

– *The Nation*

TAT campaign aimed at female travellers

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is launching a special campaign in August to attract local and international female travellers to the country with a wide range of activities, special offers, discounts and privileges on offer.

"We've designated August 2016 as a 'month for women travellers', in honor of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 84th birthday," said TAT Governor Yuthasak Supasorn.

"Research has shown that women enjoy visiting the beach, benefiting from Thailand's amazing spa opportunities and trying Thai food, but they are more concerned with safety and privacy than male travellers," said Juthaporn Rerngronasa, TAT deputy governor for International Marketing.

"With this in mind, TAT is joining forces with airlines,



Hotels and airlines are partnering with TAT. Photo: Kata Group

hotels, resorts, spas and tour operators to arrange activities and offer special discounts and privileges."

TAT has come up with five promotional concepts: Beautiful Look, Beautiful Shape, Beautiful Mind, Beautiful Retreat, and Beautiful Experience

Other special arrangements will be provided to female travellers, including special immigration lanes, parking spots and airfare discounts.

– *Phuket Gazette*

The stress connection to belly fat

Stay on track with diet apps



THE hormone cortisol is considered the 'stress' hormone because it plays a major role in the function of our body during times of stress. Cortisol is secreted by the adrenal glands. You have probably heard of the term 'adrenal fatigue', otherwise known as 'burnout', and may have suffered from this common 21st-century condition.

Well, this hormone appears to play a role in our belly fat, along with insulin; the hormone that helps control our blood sugar levels by moving it from the blood and into cells.

So why are insulin and cortisol such a bad combination when it comes to belly fat?

Cortisol activates a hormone called lipoprotein lipase, which stimulates fat storage, but it also activates a hormone called hormone sensitive lipase, which breaks down fat.

Unfortunately, insulin turns off the effect of cortisol on hormone sensitive lipase, preventing the breakdown of fat. So this leaves insulin and cortisol promoting fat storage, primarily in the belly region.

One hormone out is not good but both together is a nightmare for losing fat.

By following sound nutritional principles – reducing your intake of processed food, sugar, empty carbs (bread and pasta) – you will begin to balance insulin.

This leaves dealing with cor-



Cortisol activates a hormone called lipoprotein lipase, which stimulates fat storage. Photo: Pixabay

tisol; essentially, stress.

Stress is a disruption in the balance or equilibrium of the body and can result in inflammation (in flames – think fire). Cortisol (cortisone) is then pumped out to extinguish the fire.

As well as emotional and psychological tension being an obvious cause of stress, other causes can include: poor dietary choices resulting in vitamin and mineral imbalances; malnourishment; food intolerance and build up of toxins; tissue stress from pathogenic bugs such as candida; bacteria; parasites; viruses; environmental toxins; and not enough sleep.

All of these things can increase inflammation, and ultimately cortisol.

The key is to also reduce inflammation caused by a poor

diet of processed food, sugars and bad fats. Promote healing through a clean diet of whole foods.

Now, that's half way to getting cortisol under control but let's look at how we usually deal with stress and how that can be improved.

Common stress-busting techniques are: using alcohol and/or drugs; excessive exercise, which can lead to injuries and elevate cortisol levels; junk food; mind-numbing TV and entertainment; working more with a focus on achievement; separation from loved ones; and in extreme cases, resorting to violence.

In reality though, all these methods just result in more stress so more cortisol is produced. That's why a bad state of mind is so destructive to health and, yes, to body fat levels as well.

The sad fact is that when we are stressed, we often do the opposite to what we should be doing for a healthy and lean body. Try healthy stress-busting alternatives such as yoga (no shortage on the island), or meditation. Try the app 'headspace' if you are new to meditation.

Simply getting out and walking more is a great stress buster. Aim for 10,000 steps per day.

It's important to find activities that you enjoy and feel comfortable with incorporating into your life as a preventative measure, not as a last resort when times are tough, because by then, it's often too late.

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



MyFitnessPal is a free app for iPhones and Android devices. Photo: Gazette File

HERE are a few free apps for iPhone and Android devices to help stay on track with diets and fitness regimes.

MyFitnessPal is a flexible and fun diet app that allows you to add your personal stats, such as height, age, sex and weight, as well as your target weight. Add your details and the app works out how many calories you should be consuming each day in order to hit your target weight in your specific time frame.

7 Minute Workout is for Android devices. The app serves up illustrated examples of short but intense workouts that are sure to make you break a sweat. There are 12 workouts to choose from. The only equipment you will need is a chair and a wall.

Google Fit is an Android app with a simple but effective interface that lets you track your daily steps and your workouts, calculating distance covered, calories burned, and elevation.

– Nick Davies

Stop sugar cravings with a celery cocktail

CELERY is an excellent supplement to help quash sugar cravings when on a diet, while providing essential electrolytes and alkalizing minerals.

You can get a lot of juice out of just a few stalks of celery but, on its own, celery juice can be a real struggle to drink in any great quantity, so it's best to blend the juice with sweet fruits such as pineapples or green apples. The celery also helps balance out the sourness of green apples, and it goes well with carrot juice, too.

Add a dash of cinnamon to help regulate blood sugar.

Method: Throw these into a



juicer:

- 2 apples
- 8 stalks of celery
- 1 pinch cinnamon

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Rosewood to expand in Asia early 2017



Rosewood Phuket guests will feel 'at one with the land and sea'. Photo: Rosewood website

ROSEWOOD Hotels & Resorts have revealed an expansion plan for the first quarter of 2017.

Located on the 600-meter Emerald Bay beachfront in southwest Phuket, the resort will include 71 villas and 32 residences. Public and private areas will be separated.

Phuket-based lead architect PMC, together with Melbourne-based consultant BAR Studio are handling interiors for the villas and restaurants, which will incorporate sustainable practices and indigenous materials, including an abundance of stone and timber.

The villas at the hotel are planned to be 120 square meters, while the residences are measured at 1,500 sqm. Recreational facilities will include beachside organic-form pools, lap pools, a gymnasium, a yoga pavilion and children's club.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Property drivers for high season



WHO will be the market drivers for property this coming high season in Phuket?

Phuket has always been a hotpot mix of nationalities, whether it be the long-term residents, holiday home buyers or tourists.

Long-term residents in Phuket basically fall into two broad segments. The first segment tends to be families from the surrounding Asian regions, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong or Dubai, who are looking for a change of environment, reducing the family's overhead costs or seeking a better quality of life. This segment also includes families from Russia, though the numbers of families have declined over the last year or so due to the decline of the Russian ruble.

This segment would be looking for properties closer to the international schools and should they have previously been living in a condominium, they would opt for a property with a garden and one that offers more space. Properties within a 30-minute drive radius from the popular international schools are usually snapped up



Retiring couples from Europe prefer to live in countries with warm climates, hence choosing Thailand. Photo: TaxRebate.org.uk

pretty quickly before the start of each school term.

The second segment consists of couples who had previously lived in Asia due to work commitments for years and have decided to retire and live in Phuket. This segment also includes retiring couples from Europe who prefer to live in a warm country rather than endure the cold winters back home.

Some of the holiday home buyers are savvy investors looking for 'good bargains' in a market where they hope to see

a return on investment (ROI) in the future. Some properties in Phuket also offer investors a fixed guaranteed ROI over a certain period, or a shared profit split after management costs and other overheads. This works out pretty well for investors who are looking for a hassle free property investment with net returns ranging from three to six per cent.

Investors who manage their properties and seek returns by renting their property out, whether on their own or through Airbnb, real estate

agents and websites, may achieve a slightly better return of five per cent and above. Another set of holiday home buyers are owners who purchase a holiday home just for their own or family's use and may use the property just two to three months throughout the year.

The traditional holiday home buyers from Europe are still some of the biggest buyers on the island, but a stumbling block has been the currency exchange where the strong Thai baht against the weak Euro is postponing or delaying sales. The US dollar is expected to strengthen this summer and this will hopefully bring a fresh round of investors to the property market.

It's very easy to spot who are the latest tourists in Phuket, just walk into any restaurant or shop in Patong; whatever language the menu or the posters on the wall are written in will give you the answer. At the moment it's all up in the air as to who will be the market drivers for the coming high season – place your bets.

Amy Koh is the sales manager of Engel & Voelkers Phuket. To contact Amy or for more information, visit www.engelvoelkers.com/en/phuket

Increasingly aggressive campaigns to sell property

LISTED residential developers have launched aggressive marketing campaigns to boost sales in the current quarter, having witnessed only slight growth in demand following the expiry at the end of April of the government measure to reduce transfer and mortgage fees.

For example, LPN Development has a marketing campaign for customers interested in buying a unit at its condominium project, for those who can not get bank approval for a mortgage.

The developer is giving home-buyers the opportunity to rent a condominium for the first year, with the amount paid then going towards a down payment on the property when applying for a mortgage.

Pruksa Real Estate has launched a 'Free to stay in the first year' promotion for its Pruksa projects.

Property Perfect teamed with commercial banks to offer a

zero-interest deal for the first year, with a monthly installment of 3,000 baht per 1-million-baht loan for the first year.

AP (Thailand) is offering a special fixed interest rate of 3.5 per cent for the first five years of a mortgage at the project.

Sansiri, in collaboration with Bangkok Bank, has the '555 Like' campaign, under which home-buyers pay monthly installments of 555 baht for the first year of a mortgage.

Another listed developer, Ananda Development, has a promotion under which buyers benefit from free transfer and mortgage fees – akin to the government's measure that expired on April 30.

The various campaigns, all of which expire at the end of this month, are part of the leading developers' efforts to boost their second-quarter sales following the end of the government's stimulus package for the property sector.



Campaigns are becoming more and more aggressive. Photo: Mark Moz

LPN Development managing director Opas Sripayak explained that this is also a way to reduce the company's stock, where 5,000 of the 7,500 units are still available. AP (Thailand)'s chief of business unit & strategic marketing, Vittakarn Chandavimol, said residential demand in the current quarter had slowed after the government's 'Thai Condominium Association' fees measure expired, as most

home-buyers had taken the plunge and committed themselves to buying before the deadline.

Land & Houses' chief executive officer, Anant Asawabhokhin, said residential developers could experience a drop in net earnings this quarter as a result of the campaigns. They felt it necessary to introduce these to boost sales following the end of the government's stimulus package.

"There will, however, be more of an impact on small and medium-sized property firms than on the market leaders, as the smaller companies have less cash to compete with the same sort of marketing campaigns, which offer discounted prices and fee exemptions for customers," he explained.

Thai Condominium Association and premium products at Pruksa Real Estate president Prasert Taedullayasatit reiterated the view among developers that the raft of special marketing campaigns had been launched to reduce their inventory and boost second-quarter sales following the drop-off in demand.

As per a Real Estate Information Center (REIC) survey by the Government Housing Bank, residential inventory in Bangkok totaled 138,400 units – worth 527.95bn baht as of the end of April.

– *The Nation*

New Hyatt Place opens doors for business and leisure in Patong

HYATT and Boutique Corporation Ltd. announced the opening of Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong on Phuket island, Thailand.

“Thailand is an important market for Hyatt, and Phuket is one of Southeast Asia’s premier tourist destinations where demand from both leisure and business visitors continues to grow,” said David Udell, group president Asia Pacific, Hyatt Hotels Corporation. “Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong is the second Hyatt-branded hotel in Phuket, and we believe the hotel will exceed guest expectations and provide them with everything they need while visiting this beautiful island in the Andaman Sea.”

The 161-room beachside hotel marks the first Hyatt Place hotel in Southeast Asia, featuring an additional 10 specialty guestrooms offering ocean views. A 400 square foot space has been allotted for corporate meetings as well. Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong is strategically located in the heart of Phuket – overlooking Patong Beach. The seafront is a short walk from the hotel and has panoramic views across the bay. The hotel will additionally provide its guests numerous



The Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong is Boutique Corporation’s first hotel on the island, an important milestone in the company’s real estate portfolio in Thailand. Photo: Hyatt

entertainment options nearby and activities like golf, diving and other water sports.

Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong joins three Hyatt-branded hotels currently open in Thailand, including Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok, Hyatt Regency Hua Hin and Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort. Additionally, there are three hotels under development in Thailand, including Park

Hyatt Bangkok, which is expected to open in late 2016, Hyatt Regency Bangkok, Sukhumvit and Hyatt Place Bangkok, Sukhumvit.

“We are delighted to officially open Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong, which marks the Boutique Corporation’s first hotel in Phuket and an important milestone in our company’s real estate portfolio in Thai-

land,” said Prab Thakral, president and group chief executive officer of Boutique Corporation Ltd. “We plan to expand and add more hotel developments to the company’s portfolio on the island. We are confident that Hyatt Place Phuket, Patong will gain loyal travelers through its services, food and beverage offerings.”

– *Phuket Gazette*

Cabinet approves tax levy



The bill was approved on June 7. Photo: Brian Turner

TIM Leelahaphan, economist at Maybank Kim Eng Securities, said that low personal income tax could offset high burden from the new land and buildings tax.

On June 7, the Cabinet approved the bill which seeks to levy taxes on plots nationwide.

Homes valued below 50 million baht will be waived from tax while the maximum 0.5 per cent rate is applied for second homes. About 90 per cent of home-owners will remain unaffected. This will cost the payers about 1,000 baht for every 1mn baht above the 50mn baht threshold. The maximum 0.2 per cent rate will be levied on agricultural land and 2 per cent on commercial and industrial land.

The 5 per cent rate will be applied to undeveloped land in the first three years and the rate will be doubled if it remains undeveloped in the following three years.

– *The Nation*

Central plans Europe push

CENTRAL GROUP has set aside an investment budget of 12 billion baht to renovate and build new outlets in Europe until 2020, aimed at doubling revenue from the continent, said Tos Chirathivat, chief executive officer of the group.

Currently, the group’s total sales revenue in Europe stands at 40bn baht. It is expected to achieve 100bn baht by 2020.

An investment of 10bn baht will be spent on renovating its existing branches in Europe. Another 2bn baht would be spent opening a new branch of La Rianscente in Italy, he added.

Mr Tos said the group is focused on Europe and Asean for overseas investment, as the company sees potential to expand its business in both regions. In Asean, the company is focusing on Vietnam after its success in acquiring a major

stake in Big C Vietnam in April this year from France’s Casino Group for 36.6bn baht.

“The Big C takeover got us not only the Big C hyper-markets, which comprise 33 branches in Vietnam, but 10 convenience stores and 30 shopping malls owned by Big C Vietnam’s subsidiaries. The challenge for us is to concentrate on the retail business in Vietnam at this time,” Mr Tos said.

The company also plans changing the name of Big C in Vietnam next year, he added.

“Although we can use the Big C brand for 10 years after the takeover, we have decided to change the name next year instead of waiting,” he said.

Central Group has expanded its business in Vietnam by establishing Central Group Vietnam in 2011 with its business partner Nguyen Kim.

After the takeover of a majority stake in Big C Vietnam, the Central group recorded total sales revenue of 40bn baht in Vietnam. The group expects revenue in Vietnam to show double-digit growth annually.

Mr Tos said the reason it sold its 25 per cent stake in Thailand-based Big C Supercenter Plc to the TCC Group was because of its success in taking over Big C Vietnam. Also, the stake in Big C Supercenter Plc was not enough for the company to manage the business.

“In Thailand, we will focus on the premium food market under the Tops brand, as we also have more business categories in Thailand. This is enough for our business expansion in Thailand’s retail market although we sold our stake in Big C Supercenter Plc,” he said.

– *The Nation*

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Phuket Gazette

Born with the healing touch

By Sahar Aftab Paliwala

JIRADECH Chittawong, or Charlie Arm, as he is better known to his friends, is a physiotherapist from Hat Yai. Just 23 years of age, his clients refer to him as a ‘miracle worker’. He graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in physiotherapy from the Prince of Songkla University (PSU) Hat Yai Campus two years ago.

“I spent my last year of university interning at different clinics in the south of Thailand. During this time, I learned a lot, but also realized that working at a hospital would not suit me well. My professors told me that I spent too much time tending to each patient, which wasn’t practical with hundreds of patients coming in on a daily basis,” said Charlie.

He decided to move to Phuket after graduating and immediately fell in love with the island.

“I love the beaches, sunshine and the lovely environment, as well as the opportunity to meet lots of different people. I started from scratch when I moved here. My thesis adviser at college had a friend who ran a

wellness retreat in Rawai called *Atsumi*, so I started working as a physiotherapist and guest manager there. At that time, I could barely speak any English – it was hard for me to string a proper sentence together. As I met more people and made new friends, my English improved as well,” said Charlie.

After expanding his network, Charlie moved to another wellness retreat, *Phuket Cleanse*, where he worked as a physiotherapist, grew his client base and started conducting workshops.

“Most people breathe through their upper chests, whereas the correct way to breathe is through your diaphragm. It helps to improve your posture and restore proper circulation of blood throughout your body,” said Charlie.

“This is especially useful for people who work in desk jobs and keep sitting for long periods of time everyday. About half my clients suffer from the ‘office syndrome’, which is back, neck and shoulder pain due to long periods of inactivity. I help them to remain active and restore blood circulation,

which also reduces stress levels in the body.”

These days, he works as a freelancer, visiting patients at their homes to provide services.

“It is important for me to be mobile, as a lot of my patients are unable to come to me. Sometimes, it’s as simple as adapting yourself to your environment. For instance, your bed could be too low, or your shelves may be too high. The human body is a marvelous machine and I always love enhancing my knowledge of anatomy, biology and bio-mechanics. They are fascinating subjects and very useful in our daily lives,” he said.

Charlie also conducts community activities to encourage people to stay healthy and active.

“I want to involve more people, particularly Thais, with physical fitness. A group of friends and I started a ‘fun run’ at Nai Harn for this purpose, which quickly gained popularity among locals and foreigners alike. I was surprised, but happy, to see the increasing numbers every week. Now

people have even started organizing their own events and the groups are getting larger than ever.”

Charlie also works as a sports therapist and treats sports injuries.

He was also part of Damien Rider’s team when he undertook the paddle against child abuse late last year.

To learn more about his work, visit his website at: www.theartofphysio.com.





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