

Phuket Gazette

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‘MAKING SAILING ACCESSIBLE TO THAIS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE’

HEADING ON 30

Phuket hosts 30th anniversary of King's Cup Regatta Under Royal Patronage

By Nick Davies

THIS YEAR marks the 30th anniversary of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Under Royal Patronage since its inception in 1986.

What has become one of Thailand's most prestigious sailing events was launched after a number of the country's yachting fraternity met to discuss what they could do as a special tribute for His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's forthcoming Fifth Cycle, or 60th birthday, the following year on December 5, 1987.

Phuket was selected as the venue for the Royal Regatta – the first ever held in the Andaman Sea.

The inaugural regatta was organized by Royal Varuna sailors, including Commodore Chris King, Dr Rachot Kanjanavanit, Al Chandler, Adolph Knees and others. It was yachting and Phuket aficionado ML Tridosyuth Devakul, better known as renowned architect and developer Mom Tri, who placed the resources of his then recently opened Phuket Yacht Club Hotel at Nai Harn Bay in Phuket at the regatta organizers' disposal. And so the regatta began with a mixture of keelboats, catamarans, Lasers and even windsurfers.

Like any prominent yacht racing event, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta has developed its own folklore. Scott McCook, for example, who sailed his beach-launched catamaran up from Singapore, won all five races one year, then sailed the small boat back to Singapore.

More recently the regatta has become a big-boat event, attracting keelboats and ocean-going catamaran teams from around the world. As a principal fixture on the Asian Yachting Circuit with international-standard race management, the regatta annually features upwards of 90 boats – a record of 103 vessels took part in 2007 – and 2,000 sailors, ranging from the Formula One of the sea lanes, the Racing Class, to live-aboard ocean cruisers, multihulls and classics.



Over the past 30 years, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta has become a big-boat event, attracting keelboats and ocean-going catamaran teams from around the world. Photo: Guy Nowell

Under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King of Thailand, the Regatta is organized by the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Organizing Committee under the auspices of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, in conjunc-

tion with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand, the Royal Thai Navy and the Province of Phuket.

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Top ranking officials take on island's top troubles

BEACH management, rental vehicle management, land encroachment, mafia management and entertainment venue management are at the top of the agenda.

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BUSINESS



Don Freeman gives financial advice on what investors need to avoid after Trump's win.

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PROPERTY



Patong vendors fenced out by municipality after their rental contracts expired.

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LIFE&STYLE



Australian athlete Tim Reed triumphs at Foremost Ironman 70.3 Thailand at Bang Tao Beach.

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LOCAL NEWS

Briefly

Marine office takes action on illegal building

THE Phuket Marine Office on November 27 vowed to take action against a business owner who has allegedly constructed a building on public beach land in Mai Khao.

Last month, the building owner, Somboon Pakdee, was summoned for discussions to allow him to clarify his position.

"Locals from Moo 5, Baan Laem La, filed a complaint that Mr Somboon had undertaken construction on public beach land," said Borpit Chomchuey of the Phuket Marine Office.

"Our investigations revealed that there was some construction, including walls and a building, overlapping public land. We issued a letter calling the owner to talk, but he ignored it and did not come to meet us."

The Phuket Marine Office is now preparing to file public land encroachment charges against Mr Somboon, as per the Building Control Act BE 2522.

The incident follows a spate of recent public land encroachment cases in Phuket, including the long-debated four-billion-baht land titles at Freedom Beach, which have been under review by the Department of Forestry and the Royal Thai Navy since May.

– Winai Sarot

Speedboat T-bones longtail



A young Italian tourist received minor injuries when a speedboat crashed into the longtail boat she was in at Phi Phi Island's Maya Bay. The speedboat captain was navigating out of the bay, while the longtail was coming in to dock. The longtail boat was completely obliterated. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Biker's death prompts official probe

FOLLOWING the death of a speeding motorcyclist, who broke his neck in a fatal high-speed crash on the night of November 24, authorities are requesting a 72 million baht budget to fix and widen the road where the crash occurred.

Saran Nattabuth, 25, collided with a concrete road blockade erected on the lane running alongside Phuket Airport runway. The lane had once been a through road but was blocked off with four heavy-duty blocks in August after a landslide.

Mr Saran was reportedly going very fast. "It seems he didn't know the barrier was there," one of the bystanders said.

Following the accident, locals put a sign on the barrier that read: 'How many more deaths do you want before you fix it?' and posted photos on social media.

The protests prompted officials from Thalang District, the Phuket Highways Office, Phuket International Airport and the governor's office to meet on November 29 to find a solution. They later announced a proposal to restore and widen the road, estimating that the project would take 180 days to complete, if approved.

– Winai Sarot

Freedom Beach land deed battle heats up

DEPARTMENT of Forestry officers on November 25 checked up on land at Freedom Beach

after some titles were revoked back in May, while the alleged owner threatened to sue them.

Forestry and Navy personnel were led by Boonsueb Samakwet, director of Forestry Division 12.

These are the long-debated four-billion-baht titles covering 65 rai of land off Freedom Beach, officially revoked as two Chanotes were proven to overlap the Khao Narkkerd Preservation Forest. The land eventually fell under the 'preserved forest' category in the hands of the forestry department.

"On September 8, we ordered the owners to demolish all buildings and leave the area within 30 days. The owners' appeal pertaining to the case was also rejected by our department, and now we're acting on our duties lawfully," said Mr Boonsueb.

Officials filed a complaint against a ticket seller after they discovered that the owners were charging visitors 200 baht each to access the beach.

"Now if the owners don't demolish the building, we will enact Article 25 of the Forestry Act to force them to do so. If they still don't, we will demolish the building ourselves and hand the bill to them," he added.

While the officials were surveying the land, the two holders of the aforementioned Chanotes, named as Eakkachai Sae-Iw and Benja Sae-Iw, ar-

rived at the scene to claim their legal ownership of the land and threatened to sue them.

"I purchased this land from Wirot Kongkaew, a descendant of Thawep Wuthithamporn with *Sor Kor* 2 documentation dated year 2000. The original owner had ownership rights to the land before it was declared a national forest in 1954. All the legal processing has been done," Mr Eakkachai shot back at the officers.

"We will bring the case to the attention of the Administrative Court to cancel the revocation letter. We will request the right to possess and use the land while the case is under investigation. I have a billboards and stickers business in Samkong. I want people to know that I am not just a nominee on the deed – I rightfully purchased the multi-billion baht land for my future."

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Man stuffs stolen phone in underwear

A THAI man was arrested for stealing and hiding a hapless tourist's telephone in his underpants at a Patong tour agency on November 24.

Kuwaiti tourist Abdul Nabimh Redha, 38, filed a complaint at 2:30pm with Lt Col Somsak Thongkliang of Patong Police Station.

"Mr Redha told us that he put his mobile on the counter at the 'All in One Travel' tour agency and went to his room for ten minutes. When he returned, the phone had disappeared," said Col Somsak.

"We went to the shop and questioned Kattamon Chayathayakron, who was a staff member there.

"He told us he didn't have any knowledge of the matter, but since he was acting suspicious, we did a body search and found the phone stuffed into his underpants."

Mr Kattamon confessed to the crime and was charged with theft. He was taken to Patong Police Station for booking.

The management team confirmed the following day that disciplinary and legal action has been taken against the employee and said the victim was satisfied with the company's resolution of the matter.

A spokesperson for the agency stressed that the employee acted alone.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



HAADTHIP

TASTE THE FEELING

Top 5 officials talk Phuket woes

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

FIVE of Phuket's most influential lawmen met at Phuket Provincial Hall on November 28 in order to discuss what they named as the top five issues plaguing the island.

The officials included Phuket Governor Chokchai Dejamornthan; Vice Admiral Surapol Kuptaphan, commander of the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command; Maj Gen Akom Pongprom, commander of the 41st Military Circle; Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Teeraphol Thipjaroen; and Phuket's Chief Prosecutor Banjerd Rattanamanotham.

Beach management, rental vehicle management, beach and public land encroachment, mafia management and entertainment venue management were the five issues under discussion at the conference, titled 'Campaign to check operational results of government policy'.

"We have been discussing these issues among ourselves for a while now. I have ordered the district chiefs to collect information from their



Top officials met at the Provincial Hall. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

areas regarding lawbreakers in these five areas. Once we identify the culprits and collect enough evidence, we will immediately take action against them. It doesn't matter who they are – government officers, local officials or members of the mafia. Everyone must face consequences under the law," said Governor Chokchai.

"Even though some officials, including myself, may be new, it is important for every-

one to know that we are actively working on these issues. Those who are involved in illegal activities should stand warned – stop now, or face charges," he added.

Gov Chokchai also spoke about night venue management and 'tea money' culture.

"We are strictly going to control the operations of night entertainment venues that run overtime. As for the culture of accepting tea money, I am confident that no high level

officials are involved in it. We are investigating it and aim to instill confidence regarding our management capabilities to both tourists and locals," he said.

Gen Akom added that ensuring the safety of everyone in Phuket, whether locals, tourists or expats, is a prerequisite to tackling these issues.

"I think vigilance by the public is the best way to keep an eye on all illegal activities. It works even better than CCTV cameras. If people start reporting illegal activities, it will make our work easier and more efficient," said Gen Akom.

"I have a list of nine names of people who are allegedly involved in asking for or accepting tea money. We haven't been able to act on it yet due to lack of evidence, but we are currently keeping a strict eye on these individuals," he added.

V/Adm Suraphol, Gen Teeraphol and Mr Banjerd echoed the governor's sentiments, adding that their teams were prepared to handle any contingencies during the upcoming high season.

Man killed in collision

A 68-YEAR-OLD man on a motorcycle was killed instantly on November 25 in a horrific 4-vehicle collision in front of a SuperCheap store near the Heroine's Monument on the road to Pa Khlok.

Witnesses told police that the man swerved in front of a Subaru driven by Kornthip Kriangkra, heading toward Pa Khlok. He was thrown into the air by the impact, landing nearby in a crumpled heap.

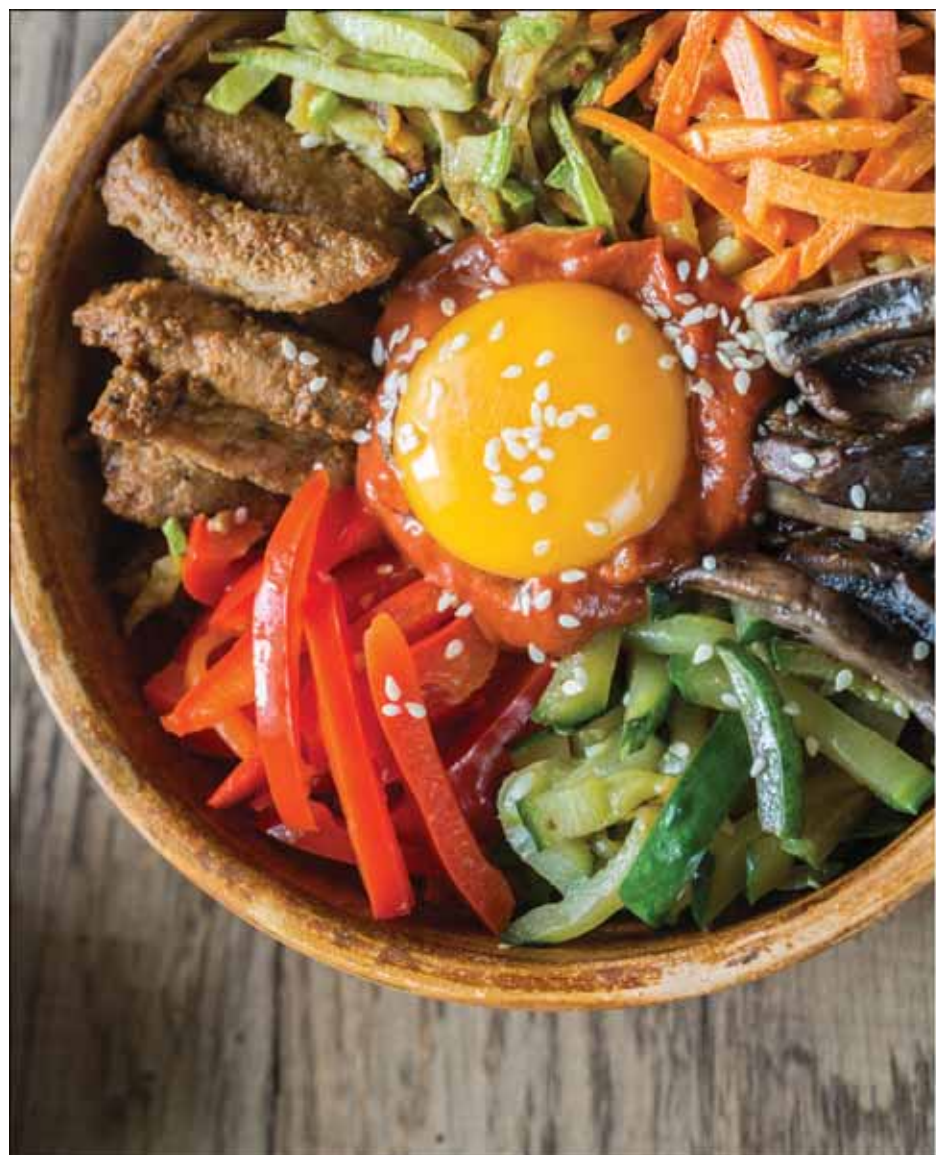
When Ms Kornthip swerved to avoid the motorcycle, she collided head-on with a Toyota Fortuner heading toward the monument, causing the Fortuner to spin out of control.

A Mitsubishi Pajero tailing the Fortuner drove into a ditch to avoid the carnage ahead of him.

All three car drivers escaped unharmed. Ms Kornthip was saved from serious injury by her car's airbag.

The drivers were taken to Thalang Police Station for further questioning to establish more details of the crash, and to determine whether any of them would face charges.

- Winai Sarot



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Busload of Russian tourists sustain injuries as 'brakes fail'



The driver realized a little too late that the brakes didn't work and swerved into a ditch. Photo: Winai Sarot

By Winai Sarot

THREE Russian tourists were seriously injured, and 39 others sustained minor injuries, when the bus they were taking to Phuket ended up in a ditch in Phang Nga on November 27.

Lt Thavorn Thongkam of Takuathung Police received reports of the incident from Kok Kloi District, Phang Nga at 2pm.

"The driver of the bus belonging to MKR Transport, Nithakorn Jamrasklang, 26,

said he swerved off the road when he realized that the brakes weren't working," Lt Thavorn told the *Gazette*.

"Mr Nithakorn told us that Pearl Sea Travel Tours organized the trip, and that he picked up the 42 tourists – all of them Russian – from a hotel in Khao Lak," said Lt Thavorn. "As they approached a red traffic light, he realized that the brakes weren't working so he steered the bus to the side of the road to avoid hitting other

cars in front of it."

One passenger suffered a broken leg. Two others also sustained serious injuries. They were first taken to Takuathung Hospital and later transferred to Bangkok Hospital Phuket. All other passengers received first aid treatment onsite and were picked up by another bus from the same company.

The driver has been charged with reckless driving causing injury and damage to public property.

70-year-old mother 'beaten by offspring' attempts bridge jump

POLICE and volunteers persuaded a 70-year-old woman not to jump off a footbridge in a suicide attempt in Phuket Town on November 24. The distraught pensioner said she'd had enough of being beaten by her son and wanted to end it all.

The woman, whose name has been withheld, was perched atop the footbridge at Komaraphat Junction near the Honda outlet in Phuket Town. Police arrived at 2pm and enlisted the help of three technical college students to talk her down, which they were able to do after about 15 minutes of negotiations.

Phuket Police Colonel Chaleaw Taihoo said the woman was crying and her face had cuts and bruises that she said her son had inflicted on her.

"She lives nearby and said she could no longer stand her son's violent outbursts, saying the bruises on her face and swollen eyes were a result of her son punching her in the face several times that day," said



She was crying when police found her, saying that she'd had enough. Photo: Winai Sarot

Colonel Chaleaw.

Medics treated her at the scene before handing her over to staff from the Department of Social Development and Welfare until her relatives could be contacted.

Police could not immediately trace the woman's son but said they would question all parties involved to get to the bottom of the issue.

"We'd specially like to thank the three students who helped talk her down," said Col Chaleaw.

- Winai Sarot

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Foreign fishing boats seized

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE Royal Thai Navy on November 28 seized seven tuna fishing boats at Tha Sri Thai pier in Rassada for faking nationality documents to enter Thailand.

The investigations are being conducted by a joint task force of the Navy, Immigration, the Marine Office, the Employment Office, the Marine Police and other officers, and led by Vice Admiral Suraphol Kuptaphan, commander of the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command.

The boats were named as *Yutuna 3*, *Abubant 1*, *Abubant 3*, *Abubant 6*, *Abubant 9*, *Abubant 12*, and *Shun Lai*.

Two other boats were also named in the investigations; *Yutuna No 1*, which was requested to stop but instead turned around and left, and *Sheng Ji Qun 3*, which had entered Thailand previously but left the pier on November 15 before the investigation started.

“All nine boats requested to enter Thailand and tie up at the pier, stating boat repairs as the purpose of entry. We started to investigate after we found their documents to be suspicious. They claimed to carry a Boliv-



A total of 7 fishing vessels were seized. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

ian boat registration licence, but after the marine office checked with Bolivian officials, they confirmed that none of the boats was registered there,” said V/Adm Suraphol.

Investigations revealed that all the captains and crew members had legal licences. The captains are mostly Taiwanese, and most of the crew members are Indonesian or Singaporean.

The Marine Office filed a complaint at Wichit Police Station against the agencies that processed and approved the documents for these boats, namely Xiang Hao Co Ltd, Yi Hong Fishery Co Ltd and Suan Ying Co Ltd. The charges include submitting fake

documents to enter Thailand, faking documents, and providing fake information to officers.

Additionally, *Shun Lai* and *Abubant 9* did not notify the Marine Office at least 24 hours prior to berthing at the pier, and were fined 5,000 baht each.

“We will not allow any of the boats to leave until the owners come and provide proof of nationality. If no one appears, we will seize the boats and sell them,” said V/Adm Suraphol.

“Controlling illegal fishing is an important agenda for the government, so all relevant officers are keeping a strict eye on suspicious activities, especially on foreign vessels entering Thailand from the Andaman.”

Man shot in head, suspect on the run



Mr Pisekpong told police he knew the shooter. Photo: Phuket City Police

POLICE are searching for a man suspected of shooting his employer in the head in Koh Kaew early morning of November 28.

“We found Pisekpong Oonwan, 38, behind the Isuzu showroom in the area, bleeding profusely from a head wound. He had a .22mm bullet lodged inside his head,” confirmed Lt Col Naruebadin Pangleesen of Phuket City Police.

“He was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where his condition is stable.”

Mr Pisekpong, who was conscious despite the horrific injury, named the shooter as Chaiya Jongpakdee – his

girlfriend’s cousin.

“The two men were reportedly involved in an argument about Mr Chaiya’s absence from work and his repeated requests for money from Mr Pisekpong’s girlfriend,” Col Naruebadin added.

Mr Pisekpong told police that during the fight he grabbed onto Mr Chaiya’s bag. Police found Mr Chaiya’s hospital ID and twelve .22 bullets inside.

“We also found a hammer at the scene of the crime,” confirmed Col Naruebadin.

Police have yet to apprehend the suspect, who is on the run.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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His Majesty's birthday to be celebrated

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand will oversee a special event in Bangkok this month to mark the birthday anniversary of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The December 5 event at Bhumibol Bridge will feature the song 'Klai Rung' that translates to 'Near Dawn', which was composed by the King, the Royal Anthem and a Buddhist prayer, said Deputy Prime Minister General Tanasak Patima-pragorn November 25.

The event, to be held in the morning, will end with a mass release of balloons and a merit-making ritual in which food and commodities will be given to 999 monks before the event ends at 11am.

The bridge and nearby roads will be closed during this time.

Krungthai bank robbers apprehended

THE SUSPECTS in a 5-million baht robbery of a bank security truck at a Song Phi Nong gas station ATM have been arrested thanks to a mobile phone that was found at the scene.

Police corporal Withoon Phetch-pankan, was arrested for allegedly plotting with his elder brother and others to rob a Krungthai Bank security truck while it was refilling an ATM at the gas station in Suphan Buri's Song Phi Nong District November 21.

The gunman, who robbed the truck and got away with 5.13 million baht, was later identified as Mr Withoon's brother, Chaidech Phetch-pankan.

Somneuk Somsuay, 35 – a fugitive in a separate attempted murder case who allegedly served as a lookout – is also in custody. He allegedly sold popcorn near the ATM to observe the money truck's routine. When he was detained he implicated Mr Chaidech and his brother.

He allegedly swooped in on a motorcycle and forced the truck security guard to give up the cash bag at gunpoint before speeding away.

Mr Chaidech allegedly left a mobile phone at the scene of the robbery in an effort to distract police attention.

However, investigators



found the phone and SIM card were registered to a Thai woman whose house registration had been copied on October 24 by Mr Withoon at the Ban Bung Police Station.

Under questioning, Withoon confessed to making the copy for Mr Chaidech and gave details of the robbery, maintaining he was helping his financially troubled brother.

Deep South unrest continues, 4 dead

VIOLENCE has raged in the deep South, with four deaths reported in three separate incidents on November 25, including a man gunned down while praying in a mosque. Of those killed, two died during a gunfight with soldiers.

The mosque shooting case involved farmer Dorroring Deuramae, who was murdered in Narathiwat's Si Sakhon District. Police said that before becoming a farmer, Mr Dorroring worked for a military-run project in his hometown.

An investigation is underway to determine the motive behind his murder, and police are checking to see if the farmer had any personal conflicts.

Police are also looking into the possibility that he was killed because he used to work with security officials.

Narathiwat Province is part of the unrest-plagued southernmost region. According to witnesses,

NATIONAL NEWS Briefly

Mr Dorroring rode a motorcycle from his home to the mosque to pray. While he was praying, a gunman walked in and shot him twice in the head.

NGO representatives discuss poverty trap

ACADEMICS and representatives of non-government groups have urged the government to review whether its policies are keeping the poor 'in a poverty trap' and favoring the business sector.

They voiced their concern during a seminar titled 'The Fate of the Poor during the Transitional Period: Whose Stability, Prosperity and Sustainability?', held at Thammasat University on November 27.

Decharut Sukkumnoed, a lecturer from Kasetsart University's Faculty of Economics, told the forum the benefits from economic growth need to be shared among all groups of people if development is to be sustainable.

"But the truth is that the lowest 20 per cent of income earners in Thailand have always had more expenses than income," he said.

Although he reckoned that welfare provided by the government had eased the cost of living burden of grassroots households, Mr Decharut emphasised that people in the lowest income group should have better access to land and job security.

Somchai Srisant of the TU Puey Ungphakorn School of Development Studies said that in the eyes of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), only people earning less than 2,647 baht a month were considered poor. By the NESDB criteria, only 7.2 per cent of Thai people were considered poor last year.

Woman busted for pretending to be royal

A WOMAN accused of fraud and pretending to be a royal descendant has been released on bail after being arrested for allegedly tricking people into paying B100,000 each to enter the Throne Hall and pay respects before the King's Urn without having to queue.

On November 27, police took suspect Anoyapat Sitheeraphon, 27, to the Criminal Court to seek permission for an initial period in custody. Anoyapat had already confessed to deceiving others to believe that she was a royal descendant and could offer them special seats at the Royal Funeral and get into the Throne Hall without queuing.

However, they later found out that Ms Anoyapat was a swindler, so they told police about her alleged fraud and police issued an arrest warrant for her on November 24.

Later, police arrested Ms Anoyapat on the allegations that she was an impostor involved in a fraud. They said she confessed to all the claims against her.

She asked the court for bail and was allowed to be released on the condition that she did not leave the country.

Woman and unborn baby killed in Pattani

A MANHUNT has been launched for a gunman who shot dead a pregnant woman and wounded another female in a cold-blooded attack in the deep South on November 26.

The drive-by motorcycle attack on the pair, both Buddhists, at a market in Pattani's Panare District has been condemned as brutal and inhumane by police and human rights activists.

The heavily pregnant woman, Rattikarn Jawang, 26, died along with her unborn baby. The other victim, 30-year-old Saijai Thongdee, is being treated in Pattani Hospital.

Experts urge climate change mitigation help

THE government is confident that Thailand will achieve the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by 2020.

At a seminar titled 'Thailand Agenda and the Climate Change Crisis', held by Banchak Petroleum Pcl and Krungthep Turakij on November 25, representatives from relevant agencies confirmed that Thailand can achieve the goal it pledged in the Paris Agreement of helping to keep rising world temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius.

Wijarn Simachaya, Acting Permanent-Secretary of the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry and director general of the Pollution Control Department, said Thailand had great potential to reduce emissions and the 20-per-cent goal was not too difficult to achieve.



CentralPhuket

supports the Phuket King's Cup Regatta for second consecutive year

CentralPhuket, a brand new mega project in the heart of Phuket, is poised to be a world class shopping center, and will be ready to launch in late 2017. The project will offer excellence in all lifestyle aspects, and will feature brand-name retail stores, Thai cultural elements, one of Thailand's biggest aquariums, plus a luxurious hotel, international convention center and other attractions. CentralPhuket's high quality entertainment centers and cool restaurants will have massive appeal for both tourists and residents, and will contribute to growing the reputation of Phuket as world-leading destination for holidays and luxury living.

Central Pattana Public Company Limited (CPN), part of Central Group, has proudly declared its sponsorship of the 30th Phuket King's Cup Regatta. This will be the second consecutive year the Regatta has received the excellent support of CPN. Central is committed to the growth of Phuket's reputation as a world-class marine tourism center, helping to build awareness for the Phuket King's Cup Regatta and the Island of Phuket on the world stage. CPN is confident that Phuket will continue to grow to accommodate the lifestyles of high-end tourists and Phuket residents alike.

The Phuket King's Cup Regatta 2016 will be held off Kata Beach Resort & Spa, Phuket, from 3rd - 10th December, 2016.



IRC 1 on the beat, Phuket King's Cup Regatta 2015. Photo by Guy Nowell

Phuket Gazette

Next generation of Thai sailors

THE Phuket Gazette is pleased to welcome sailing enthusiasts from across the region to Phuket for Asia's premier sailing competition, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta.

As this year's competition marks the 30th anniversary of the event, this week is an ideal time to reflect on the three decades of the event's development, as well as to consider ways to improve the Regatta so that it remains as exciting and relevant 30 years from now as it is today.

All of the excitement of this year's competition must of course be tempered with due respect to the ongoing nationwide mourning over the passing of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The Father of Thai Sailing, His Majesty was an avid boat-builder whose pioneering contributions to the sport will be remembered throughout the ages. Pictures of HM sailing one of his hand-crafted dinghies remain among the most iconic images of the beloved Monarch. First staged in 1986 to mark HM's 60th birthday, the King's Cup has been held every year since.

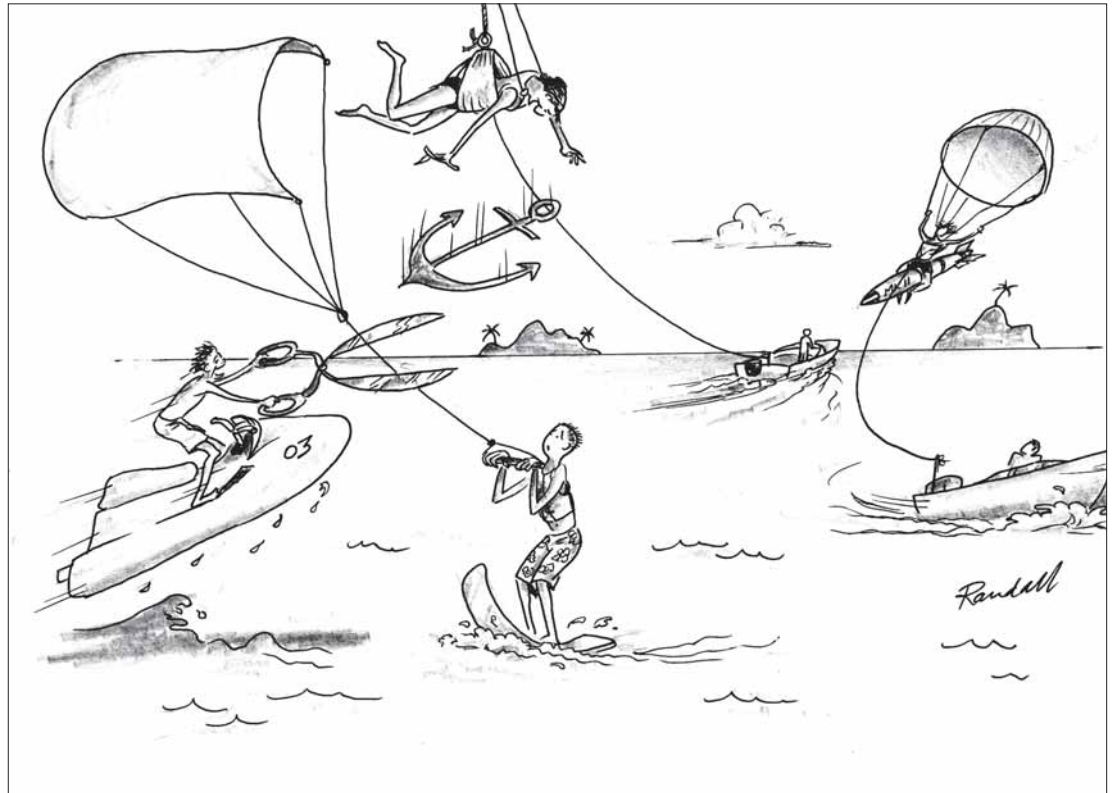
As a ten-year sponsor of the Regatta, the Gazette encourages participants and the general public to join us in remembering Rama IX by taking part in the planned 'sail past' ceremony to take place on December 9.

Looking forward, it is good to remember that nature teaches us that few things remain in stasis; they either grow or decline. Fortunately, the Regatta continues to evolve in ways that draw scores of true 'quality tourists' each year, thus helping to dispel long-held perceptions that jet-skis are somehow much sought after additions to our marine leisure fleet.

As just a few examples of this growth, this year's event marks the introduction of the 'CR:X Kiteboard Class' competition, and will also serve as the award-giving stage for the recently-completed 'Kids' Racing Series'.

Sailing can go a long way in helping distracted youth to drop their tablets and iPhones for a spell and learn to develop themselves mentally and physically, getting in touch with nature and learning to work as a team in the process.

Hopefully the Regatta will continue to develop and grow in directions that include attraction of more newcomers to the joys of sailing, so that it can be handed over in full trust, and with joy, to the next generation of sailors when that time comes.



Congratulations on new terminal

Re: Opinion: Security systems go at Phuket International Airport, Nov 27

I arrived at the new Phuket Air Terminal on Saturday night (November 26) for the first time. I was extremely impressed at how quickly one arrived at the Immigration counters, and how quickly the luggage was on the carousel waiting to be collected.

The terminal is very modern looking and very impressive. The waiting area for cabs, greeters and others is also very well set out. Congratulations all round on the new airport terminal.

Arthur Johnson
Letter to the editor

Attacked by a pack of wild dogs

My partner and I were attacked very viciously by a pack of dogs on Bang Tao Beach next to the Lux club at about 10pm on November 25. If I had not had the presence of mind to get away from them, we would have been severely mauled.

It was a life-threatening situation. My partner was bitten and it was dark and there was no one to help. It is extremely dangerous for tourists and it is just to the right of a large tourist hotel where they live in the trees. It is a very large pack.

If we were less able to manipulate the pack we were dead, or if it was a bunch of kids they would not be alive today. This was the scariest moment of my life. Please warn people and especially tourists in that area not to walk on Bang Tao Beach at

Letters to the Editor

Do you have an opinion to voice?
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night until something has been done about this. Someone could get killed, it was that serious.

Paul Witz
Letter to the editor

Free taxi coupons for tourists

Re: Thailand visa fees to be reduced to B1,000, Nov 23

If they were really smart, they would have given a coupon to the value for a free taxi to their first destination, up to a 1000 baht. This way, farang happy, taxi man happy, and image of taxis would improve.

Kevin Meehan
Facebook

People too quick to jump to conclusions

Re: Phuket tour guides, bus drivers demand action for lost jobs, Nov 28

This is all about the good old 'I was born here' sense of entitlement. If I owned a tour company and needed bus drivers, I wouldn't care a whit about what province those drivers came from. If they are the more polite people from the North, drive better and do it willingly for less money, I would of course hire them.

Wake up, Mr Chanawee.

Mukdahan Bus Driver
Gazette forum

Very sad, but all too common in Phuket

Re: Motorcyclist killed in horrific rush-hour smash, Nov 25

Looks like same story over and over. People driving too fast and too close to stop in time. By the look of it, the only real victim was the person driving the other way as she had no chance.

The person behind her was too close to stop. The Motorbike was badly driven and the car that hit it was not to blame, but not faultless, as it was driving too fast to avoid the smash. She was going faster than him.

Simon
Gazette forum

Just ask vendors to file tax returns

Re: Top officials discuss major Phuket woes, Nov 28

The learned gentlemen need to know that the 'fee' for issuing a 'Certificate of Residence' at Patong Immigration is 500 baht.

When a receipt is requested, we are being told that this isn't possible, as "we're actually just a company assisting officials with their busy workload".

If we are being sincere about this issue, the daily ripoffs have to be tackled or nobody will be confident in the initiative.

Chob
Gazette forum

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Inspiring new sailors

FIRST PERSON

SAILING is one of those clever sports that involves technique, knowledge, aptitude, patience and skill. Sailors are required to think on their feet and come up with strategies to survive under unpredictable wind conditions.

As His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej said, "Sailing teaches people how to think and make decisions on their own. When you are in the sea and the boat stops, with no one there to teach you and tell you what to do, you have to come up with a solution on your own, and think about where the wind is going, how strong it is and whether you can fight it. If you can, you continue, but if you can't, and are still stubborn enough to do it, the boat will capsize. If the wind is weak, what should you do? If there is no wind, should you wait? If you know how to sail, you can apply these decision making skills in real life. Sailing teaches Thai youth how to think and do things by themselves."

In 1986, members of Thailand's yachting fraternity met in Phuket to discuss what could be done as a special tribute to His Majesty the King's forthcoming Fifth Cycle, or 60th birthday, the following year on December 5, 1987.

Under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King of Thailand, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta is organized by the Regatta Organizing Committee, under the support and guidance of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, and in conjunction with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand, the Royal



Capt Kritsada Rattanasupa, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command, has been involved in the Phuket King's Cup Regatta for several years. Before he was appointed as the Deputy COS, he moved around between Songkla

and Phuket. He has been involved in sailing competitions for more than 20 years.

Here, he talks about how the navy supports the Regatta and also about promoting sailing for the next generation of young sailors in Phuket.

Thai Navy and Phuket officials. These four bodies are the ones responsible for ensuring the King's Cup runs smoothly every year.

Our responsibility as the navy is to ensure everyone's safety and to provide search and rescue assistance, if needed. We are prepared in terms of both equipment and people. This year, we have got two patrol ships – one near the shore and one in the sea – two small patrol boats, and a search and rescue unit.

This year at Ao Kata, we will also arrange a warship anchoring ceremony on December 9 and have boats sailing around it, as a tribute to His Majesty.

Even though I just joined the Regatta a few years ago, I have observed that it has been getting bigger and more popular every year. While there are always obstacles such as competitor management, traffic, tourists, and many other administrative issues, we always manage to solve them. The Phuket King's Cup Regatta has now become the fourth biggest sailing event in Asia.

Phuket is a great place for sailing and I think we should make it into a bigger and more popular sport. For this, we need to establish a sailing center in Phuket. Just like in Singapore, the Phuket Sailing Center will be a place where young students can learn about sailing and how to sail.

For instance, about four years ago, I took ten young sailors from Phuket to Qingdao, China to take part in a sailing competition. The kids were orphans, and it was a wonderful opportunity for them to put their skills to the test and represent their country as well.

I believe it will be very productive for Phuket to have an official sailing center, so everyone can come and study here. In fact, all Andaman provinces should have sailing practice centers to teach people the art of sailing.

If we can do this, in accordance with His Majesty's teachings, I think the King, who is now in heaven, will be very proud of Phuket, Andaman and the whole of Thailand.

Death of road safety



The 'one district, one road with 100 per cent helmets' campaign was initially launched in January this year. Photo: Gazette file

Island View

By Zohaib Sikander

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

PHUKET has seen an alarming number of road accidents and deaths this month. While these incidents aren't isolated or unusual, they got me thinking about what efforts were being made to alleviate the situation, which led me to think of the helmet safety campaign implemented in January this year.

The 'one district, one road with 100 per cent helmets' campaign was launched with much oomph. Many bikes were seized in the following months, the monthly tally was reported and all involved were congratulated. Since the Songkran holidays, however, the campaign has rarely been mentioned, until the new governor very recently put it back on the agenda for Phuket.

It's not uncommon to see locals and foreigners careening through traffic jams on their motorbikes without wearing helmets and facing no consequences. Just the other day, I decided to put the campaign to the test. I left home without a helmet and ended up at a red

light in Kathu. With a police box to my right and two officers to my left, I clenched my handlebars waiting for someone to write me up, escort me to a police station to watch videos of road accidents, force me to buy a 99 baht helmet and pay a fine, as the campaign promised.

To my surprise (not really), nothing happened. The light turned green and the officers waved me through.

When the campaign was initiated, officials said that they didn't want to set an end date – it would continue until there were no helmet-related arrests. I was hoping this meant that there were no helmetless riders on the island, not that no arrests were being made in that regard.

It doesn't matter if you're a skilled rider or not – if you're not wearing a helmet you simply should not start your bike. It's still dangerous, regardless of your level of (self-proclaimed) proficiency.

I still foolishly hold on to the hope these campaigns are more than just PR stunts. However, these initiatives are better laid to rest if officials want locals and foreigners to respect the country's laws and administrators. Wasting precious time and resources on campaigns that fizzle in and out of favor just won't do anymore.

Words from the Wise

"I am the inferior of any man whose rights I trample under foot."

– Robert Green Ingersoll

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

– Henry Ford

"Death is not a word to fear, any more than birth is."

– Oliver Joseph Lodge

Thai idioms and their meanings

JUST like any other language, the Thai language has many proverbs and sayings, which often have interesting, and sometimes rather baffling, translations in English.

One often used phrase is *see sor hai kwai fang*, which literally translates into 'playing the violin for the buffalo'. This is the Thai equivalent of the commonly-used English phrase 'talking to a brick wall'.

Another interesting proverb is *nee seua pa jo ra kay*, which literally translates into 'escape



Out of the frying pan, into the fire. Photo: torange.biz

from the tiger to the crocodile', and is the Thai equivalent of the English proverb 'out of the frying pan, into the fire'.

Trump wins: What investors need to avoid



Finance

By Don Freeman

AS THE world learned that Trump had won, equity futures plunged – only to turn positive just minutes after the market opened the next day, with the rally lasting for the rest of the week.

Remember, the stock market is a forward looking indicator that helps predict the future. The fact that the Dow and especially small cap US stocks shot up by 10 per cent to a new high shows – when much of the media punditry was spreading fear and some were even rioting in the street – that the market has voted and so far likes President Trump along with a Republican controlled Congress.

And why wouldn't the stock market like Trump at this stage?

While it's true that Trump has made many conflicting policy statements, he has made it clear that he wants to 'drain the swamp', meaning: fewer politicians milking the system, better trade deals that benefit the USA and a reset of foreign policy – although traditional Republicans are usually for lower corporate taxes, fewer regulations and less 'big-government'. These policies or ideas will not benefit everyone and every sector or asset class of the global economy; but it will benefit business in general and ultimately investors in those



Trump has made it clear that he wants to 'drain the swamp', meaning: fewer politicians milking the system, better trade deals that benefit the USA and a reset of foreign policy. Photo: Noopy420

businesses.

Let's not forget what happened after the new, or different, approach championed by Reagan and Thatcher to dealing with the stagflation of the 1970s that had stymied traditional politicians. Their approach to the economy and government helped to launch important start-ups such as Microsoft and Cisco, which laid the foundation for the internet revolution of the 1990s and eventually e-commerce and social media behemoths such as Amazon.com and Facebook.

Right now, America, not just a few coastal enclaves, badly needs to be more creative. Would-be entrepreneurs must have a goal beyond government

subsidies – such as those for being a 'green' company – to create that next generation of Microsofts, Ciscos, Amazons and Facebooks.

However, investors still need to keep in mind that while the overall market may be going up right now; the following individual sectors or asset classes are turning out to be losing bets.

Government Bonds: The iShares Barclays 20+ Year Treasury Bond ETF (NASDAQ: TLT) dropped 7 per cent alone in the week following the election as money flowed back into the riskier equity class.

Emerging Markets: The iShares MSCI Emerging Markets Index ETF (NYSEARCA:

EEM) fell off in the days after the election. If EEM fails to rebound and breaks towards the US\$30 level, investors will want to avoid emerging market asset classes and country ETFs.

Gold: This traditional safe play was rallying earlier this year but is now breaking lower. This development goes against some people's political views that Trump is the end of the country and the notion that there is still a considerable amount of risk or uncertainty in the world.

Utilities: Many investors have been buying utilities over the past few years as a safety play and for dividends. However, the Utilities SPDR ETF

(NYSEARCA: XLU) has been hitting lower highs and lower lows since July – a clear downtrend.

Dividend Paying Stocks: Recently, too much investor money flowed into dividend paying stocks. The PowerShares S&P 500 Low Volatility Portfolio (NYSEARCA: SPLV) is now seeing money outflows while the PowerShares S&P 500 High Beta Portfolio (NYSEARCA: SPHB) representing growth stocks is seeing money flows coming in; as that's where investors want to be positioned right now.

If the economy does really pick up, good old fashioned earnings and sales will start to matter, while risk will once again be rewarded. In other words, investors will want to be positioned in growth stocks and not in sectors or asset classes that will not benefit from a Trump administration.

Is your portfolio ready for a Trump presidency?

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: freemancapital@gmail.com

Thai exports to grow

THE Business Research Department of the Export-Import Bank of Thailand says exports in 2017 should grow for the first time in five years.

The main reason is that oil prices have bottomed out. The oversupply witnessed this year due to increases in production capacity of several countries, particularly Iran and Iraq, should be relieved to a significant ex-

tent after the fall in the United States' production of shale oil.

Coupled with the gradual revival of global economy, oil demand and consumption should go up. Thai exports of oil-related goods such as refined fuels, plastic resins, chemical products and rubber account for more than 13 per cent of total Thai export value.

– *The Nation*

Surge in online sales imminent

COTTON USA has released a 'global lifestyle' report based on a consumer research study conducted in 10 countries, including Thailand.

According to the report, online apparel and footwear sales are projected to grow 68 per cent by 2020.

Kraipob Pangsapa, a Cotton USA Asean representative, said: "Global Lifestyle Monitor is a consumer research study sponsored by Cotton Inc and Cotton USA in Thailand, UK, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Mexico, Colombia, India, China and Japan to study consumers' apparel shopping behavior."

"Results of the study provide insightful analyses to industry entrepreneurs on various topics, including consumer shopping habits, purchase drivers, key trends and sustainability and social concerns. With these

insights, business operators can plan on their product development, marketing and distribution channels to meet consumers' needs and lifestyle preferences more effectively."

As connectivity grows, the internet has become increasingly influential with the shopping patterns of Thai consumers. One-fifth of Thai consumers shop for clothing online. About 21 per cent shop online and use the internet to seek information for clothing.

The study revealed that 67 per cent use the Internet to browse fashion trends and clothing styles, 55 per cent to research apparel, and 46 per cent to read customer reviews.

Top concerns when shopping for clothes online were quality, as outlined by 91 per cent, shipping time by 79 per cent, clothing availability by 78 per cent, return

policies by 77 per cent and information privacy by 77 per cent.

When asked about the retail channels to shop for clothing, 59 per cent of Thai consumers say they shop for most of their apparel at street markets, followed by 16 per cent at hypermarkets, 11 per cent at department stores, and 10 per cent at independent stores.

"By 2030, Thai consumers' spending on apparel is projected to grow 62 per cent above the 300 million baht in 2015," Kraipob said.

"Online apparel and footwear sales are expected to grow from 3 billion baht in 2015 to 5bn baht by 2020. The figures suggest that Thai consumers tend to do more apparel shopping on online channels and increase social-media utilization for their buying decisions."

– *The Nation*

Analysing SEA's taxi app turf war

THE stakes are high for the taxi-hailing application market in Southeast Asia. Two big players, Grab and Uber, are competing for the lion's share of the market, which is expected to become a US\$13 billion industry by 2025.

Since its inception four years ago, Grab has created a strong foothold in Southeast Asia with US\$750 million in funding support from Softbank in September 2016, and plans to advance further in the region. On the other hand, Uber's recent move to sell off Didi in August 2016 is a clear indication that they are focusing their expansion efforts in SEA as well.

This is apparent as Uber has been doubling down on resources, staffing and technology. While this sounds great for consumers, the ride-hailing industry is getting intensely competitive in Southeast Asia.

A recent study conducted by iPrice (see infographic below) compared and identified the cheapest mode of transportation between the two ride-hailing giants with local taxis in major Southeast Asian countries. It takes into account price differences by Grab, Uber and

standard metered taxis based on various price components and price points.

In Bangkok, where traffic is quite congested during regular hours, it takes about 25 minutes to travel five kilometers in the city center. For such a journey, passengers are better off using Uber over Grab and standard taxis, priced at 74 baht, 77 baht and 103 baht per five kilometers respectively.

However, for a 20km trip from the city center to the suburbs, the average ride is about 40 minutes and Uber is still the cheaper choice over Grab and standard taxis, working out at 159 baht, 210 baht and 216 baht respectively.

However, Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries are still in the process of legalizing ride-hailing applications. Uber drivers who use their own car to serve customers are regulated under the 1979 Motor Vehicle Act. However, Thais prefer to utilize ride-hailing applications over hailing taxis on the roadside because the taxi drivers for Uber and Grab are selected based on the customer's preferred destination.

- *Phuket Gazette*

Seasonal mushroom picking turns profits



Pickers of June mushrooms have been earning up to 3,500 baht a day collecting and selling the fungi found only at this time of year in palm tree plantations. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

KRABI locals are cashing in on a wild cash crop of mushrooms, which only appear for about three months a year between October and early December.

The fungus found in palm plantations in Krabi at this time of year is locally known as the 'June' mushroom and fetches between 250 and 300 baht per kilogram.

Residents of Klontom Sub District have been picking the mushrooms as a source of food

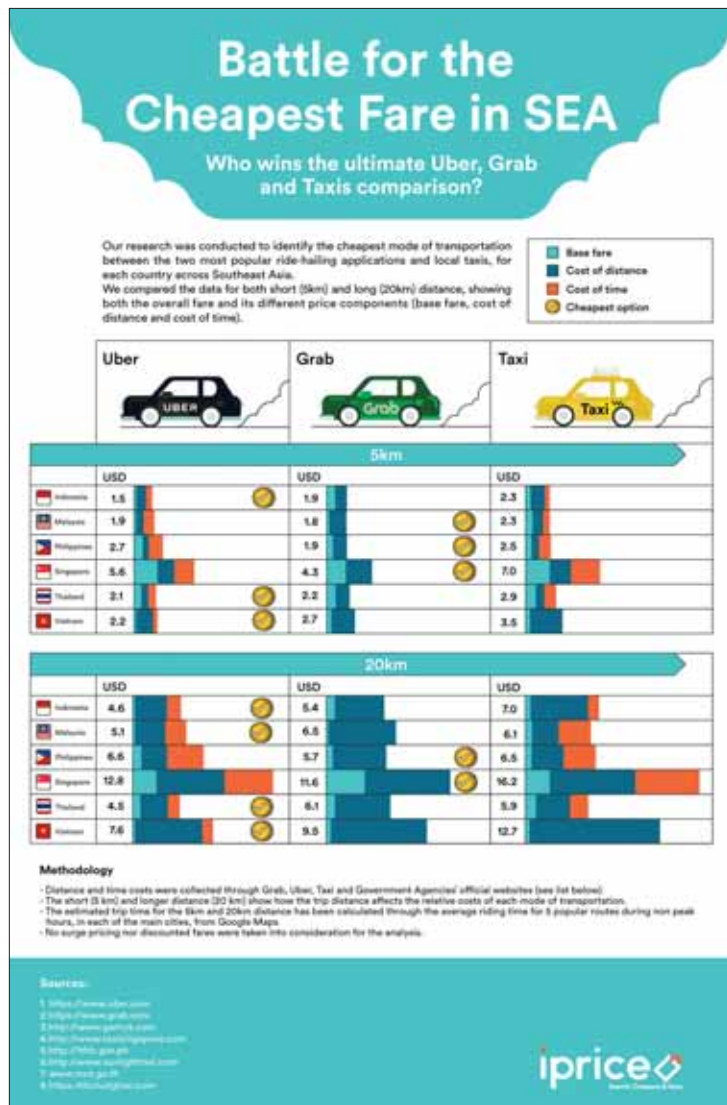
for themselves as well as earning them anywhere between 500 and 1,000 baht a day. Some of the pickers have managed to collect up to 10kg in a single day, amounting to a 3,500 baht daily wage.

Local palm plantation owner Thongpoon Somjit said the June mushroom grows to about eight centimeters tall and the head spreads out to 8-12cm in diameter. "You have to get up early to pick them. The mushrooms thrive in humid conditions with good soil," he said.



June mushrooms thrive in palm plantations.

"One of the pickers has already earned 20,000 baht during this year's harvest. They are popular ingredients for soups such as tom yam or stir fried with oyster sauce," said Thongpoon.



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UWCT announces 3-year scholarship for lucky local

Phuket's United World College Thailand (UWCT) announced on November 24 a plan to select a local Thai student aged 14-16 to be given a full three-year scholarship starting in Grade 10 in August 2017. The student will be afforded the opportunity to work towards gaining an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, widely recognised as the 'gold standard' in education.



Parent Representative Kirill Kay (left); Parent Representative and Deputy Managing Director of Boat Development, Boon Yongsakul (2nd left); School Director Kanok Chupak (3rd right); and School Head Julian Whiteley (Right).

Amari welcomes Ferrari

Twenty members of the Singapore Ferrari Owners' Club pulled up at Amari Phuket on November 25 for their annual get together at the resort. During their stay, the club members took part on charitable activities at local schools.



From left: Amari Phuket Deputy General Manager Tipaporn Koonphol; Ferrari Owners' Club Singapore Vice President Leong Kah Wah and President Teo Bee Tat Gregory, Motoring Director Wong Jes and Amari Vice President & Area General Manager, South Thailand, Pierre-Andre Pelletier.



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Events in Paradise

Novotel Phuket launches new NOVotale rooms

Novotel Phuket Resort Patong Beach held a party at The Rabieng Terrace on November 25 to launch a collection of new guest rooms under the theme NOVotale by Novotel Phuket Resort. Greeting the 100 party guests were the resort's owners and executives from Novotel, AccorHotels, Mercure and Ibis.



From left: Hotel owner Michael Choo; Owner's Representative Kamontip Phunratnamala; Director Of Sales Janpen Dechapan; VP Operator for Novotel, Mercure, Ibis Upper Southeast ASIA Paul Stevens; Hotel Manager Wutti Sanjorn; Director of Sales Accor Upper South East Asia Pete Williams.

Phuket City wins King Prajadhipok Award

The King Prajadhipok Institute Award 2016 was bestowed upon Phuket City for the strengthening of ties between private and public sectors at the United Nations Conference Center in Bangkok on November 6.



Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupana (left) accepts the award from King Prajadhipok Institute Secretary General Associate Professor Woothisarn Tanchai.

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Tim Reed triumphs at Ironman 70.3

AUSTRALIAN athlete Tim Reed was the overall winner of the Foremost Ironman 70.3 triathlon held at Bang Tao Beach on November 27, crossing the finish line with a time of 3 hours 48 minutes and 33 seconds.

The grueling course comprised a 1.9km swim, followed by a 90km bike race from the beach up to Sarasin Bridge and back, and then a 21.1km run.

Mr Reed completed the swim in 22 minutes and 32 seconds, the bike ride in 2:04:58 and the run in 1:17:39.

First place in the female category was Amelia Rose Watkinson from New Zealand, who completed the triathlon in 04:21:01.

Her swim time was 25:20 minutes, the bike ride 2:20:43 and the run 01:31:19.

"It's certainly a big confidence builder winning most of my races but you can never get complacent," Ms Watkinson told the *Gazette* before the race.

"There's always a dark horse somewhere in the field, so I still go into my races a little bit nervous and anxious, but always excited about the competition as well."



Left: Tim Reed was the overall winner of the Foremost Ironman 70.3 triathlon held at Bang Tao Beach on November 27. Right: Amelia Rose Watkinson (2nd left) placed first in the female category. Photos: Foremost Ironman 70.3

The event's title sponsor, FrieslandCampina (Thailand) Public Company Limited, producers of Foremost dairy products, backed the sports event as part of their

'Drink.Move.BeStrong' campaign.

The race, which was last held in Phuket in 2012 until its return this year, carried a professional prize purse of

US\$15,000.

Ironman Asia Managing Director Geoff Meyer says that the race is evidence of the growing interest and development of the famous Ironman

events throughout the region.

The *Phuket Gazette*, *The Nation* and *Gazette Radio* were proud national media partners of the event.

- *Phuket Gazette*

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Still going strong three decades on

...Continued from Page 1

Vice President of the Organizing Committee Santi Kanchanabandhu has been part of the King's Cup Regatta for 23 years, since 1993, when he first sailed in the event and later became active on the Organizing Committee in 1998 while also serving as the secretary of the Phuket Yacht Club.

In 2004 Mr Santi became the Commodore of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club and took the mandate to assume the leading role in the Phuket King's Cup Organizing Committee as President for three straight years, before handing over the duties to his successor, Commodore Kevin Whitcraft, the incumbent President.

The Phuket King's Cup Regatta has made Phuket a premier international sailing center, said Mr Santi ahead of the regatta's 30th anniversary.

"The regatta has made Phuket and its greater areas one of the most popular destinations for international yacht races.

We are proud that Thailand is host to such a world-class regatta," said Mr Santi.

"The regatta has also created numerous downstream industries for yachting, such as marina services, yacht maintenance and sailing, as well as honing seamanship skills among Thais," he said.

"It is also the first and longest-running international regatta in Southeast Asia held every year without a break for three decades, making up a core program in the Asian yachting circuits, and complementing other regattas in neighboring countries," added Mr Santi.

"Under the royal patronage of our late King Rama IX, who was a passionate sailor, the kingdom boasts a precious sailing legacy."

While the regatta has attracted international recognition, it has also derived many benefits for the local youth sailing scene by making sailing a



2016 Young Sailor winners Photo: PKCR



As a principal fixture on the Asian Yachting Circuit, the regatta annually features upwards of 90 boats. Photo: PKCR



The prestigious King's Cup trophy. Photo: PKCR

sport that is accessible to Thais from all walks of life.

"We sponsor the sailing club at the Third Area Naval Command located at Cape

P a n w a , where free sailing courses are on offer during school vacations. We also sponsor the Phuket Dinghy Series races as part of the extended fleet of the Phuket King's Cup, which has in-

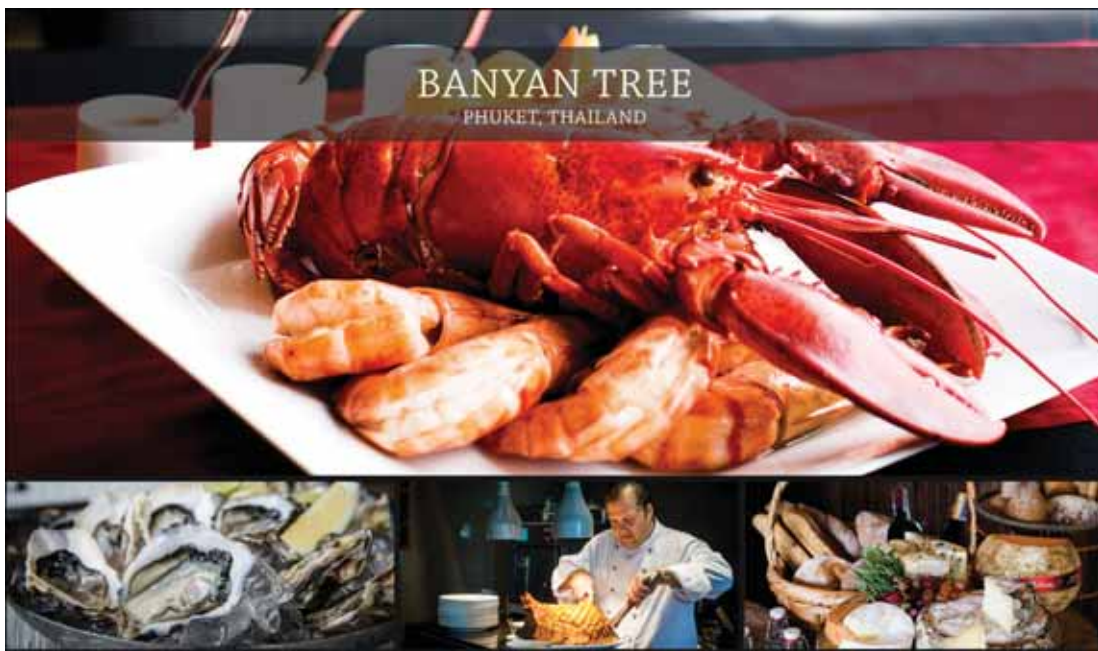
spired youth in many sailing clubs around Thailand to take up sailing seriously in the hopes of racing for the prestigious cup one day," said Mr Santi.

"While we join the Nation mourning the loss of our beloved Royal Patron, we shall endeavor to continue fostering the legacy in sailing that he left behind.

"We will forge ahead with the King's Cup Regatta and look forward to further development under the reign of King Rama X. Long live HM the King."

The *Phuket Gazette* and *Gazette Radio* are proud to be Media Partners of the King's Cup Regatta since 2006.

"The Phuket King's Cup has inspired youth in many sailing clubs around Thailand to take up sailing in the hopes of racing for the prestigious cup one day,"



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Alternatives to the white devil

Excuse Buster
By Craig Burton

“THIS may seem exaggerated and far-fetched, but sugar is the most dangerous drug of the times and can still be easily acquired everywhere,” says Paul van der Velpen, the head of Amsterdam’s health service. This is the same Amsterdam where the sale of cannabis is legalized.

Mr Van der Velpen is not alone in his stance – research that refined sugar is one of the main reasons for our current epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and possibly heart disease and cancer rates today, looks pretty convincing.

So if you are overweight or suffer health issues related to blood sugar, then I recommend getting tested to see where you stand first. The numbers below are based on the American Diabetic Association ranges and I added my own personal ideals for clients seeking excellent blood sugar balance.

Fasting blood glucose: You could buy a kit yourself and test it daily in a state of fasting, or you could drop into one of the many clinics on the island and get yourself tested for a price of less than 200 baht at most clinics.

Normal: 70-99mg/dl (My optimal range is a bit narrower, between 75-90)

Pre-diabetes: 100-126

Diabetes: Over 126

HbA1c (long term sugar): Eas-



Research suggests refined sugar is one of the leading causes of obesity and diabetes. Photo: Alice Birkin

ily done in Phuket and costs less than 600 baht.

Normal: Less than 5.7 per cent (My optimal range is 4.5-5.2)

Pre-diabetic: 5.8-6.5

Diabetes: 6.5 and above

You could also do a glucose tolerance test to confirm this with your doctor, if needed.

If you regularly succumb to sweet tooth desires and the numbers above don’t look so good, then perhaps it’s time to seek some alternatives (especially if you are not willing to go cold turkey). Here are my favorites.

STEVIA

“Stevia is a good choice for sugar

substitution because it is up to 300 times sweeter than sugar, non toxic and has no calories,” says Pisamai Kulkanjanatorn PhD, Pharmacist, Assoc. Prof, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, Mahidol University, Thailand.

But it can be quite bitter and have an after taste, which is why it is often mixed with sugar alcohols like Xylitol and Erythritol. Stevia is grown in the north of Thailand so can be found in many health stores.

ERYTHRITOL / XYLITOL

Xylitol is extracted from trees, has minimal calories and will

barely impact blood sugar. It’s also shown to be beneficial in reducing cavities – which is why many toothpastes and chewing gums now use it instead of sugar or artificial chemical sweeteners like Aspartame. Importantly, it tastes very much like sugar and is good with baking. A few health stores in Phuket have it and it can be ordered online at places like iherb.com that ship cheaply to Thailand.

Erythritol is found in fruits, vegetables and fermented foods. It has almost zero calories and doesn’t affect blood sugar. It is believed that 90 per cent of Erythritol is absorbed before it enters the large intes-

tine and is excreted via urine.

RAW HONEY

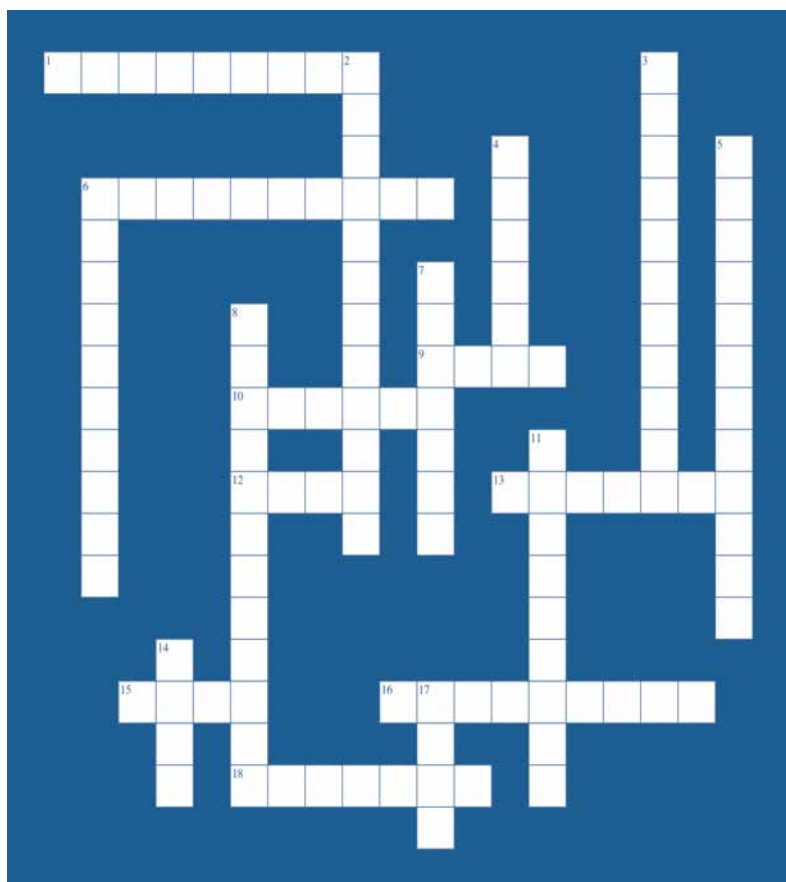
We are very fortunate to have many bee keepers here on the island and they are very popular. Raw honey has many benefits including being packed with minerals, vitamins, and amino acids that have antibacterial, anti-fungal, and antioxidant properties. It is also high in fructose, however, so use it sparingly if you have issues with blood sugar.

COCONUT PALM SUGAR

This Thai favorite in its pure form has many minerals. Though it’s touted as having a GI of 35, some studies suggest it is about 55. It also has just as many calories and carbohydrates as regular sugar so the American diabetes Association says to treat it the same way. I disagree and think it has better qualities – but like honey for those with blood sugar issues, use it sparingly. Perhaps mixing it with stevia would also be a good idea to spike insulin less.

So there is hope for those of us with blood sugar problems by using some of these alternatives on offer.

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



Gazette Crossword

Test your local knowledge and word power

Across

1. Unspeakable or too odious to be mentioned
6. Floating palace of the world’s wealthiest
9. Capital of Ukraine
10. Hobson’s _____. (Take it or leave it)
12. Shrek
13. Province famous for its monkeys
15. Counterfeit
16. Related to the lungs
18. Ironman winner

Down

2. Timed
3. Center of the buddhist universe
4. Indian call-center city
5. Boxing class
6. King’s Park in central Bangkok
7. Automated disc jockey
8. Illegal land use
11. Mushroom
14. Southern province
17. Taxi-hailing application



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Solution on opposite page.

From Switzerland to Phuket

Blazing Saddles
By Baz Daniel

BORN in the mountains of Switzerland and with the strength and resilience of a wiry mountain goat, it may have been Martin Brot's destiny to become a champion cyclist. However, his journey to Thailand and his subsequent launch and management of Siam Bike Tours, now based at Canal Village in Phuket, is the stuff of adventurous legend.

Martin was born in 1958 and says that his fascination with cycling seems to have arrived with him as he lay there in his cradle. He has been involved in both mountain and road bike racing for over 40 years, but it was a holiday visit to the north of Thailand some 30 years ago that inspired his love of the country and his subsequent move here.

He hired mountain bikes and headed off up Doi Inthanon on an early trip, then over in Koh Samui, and thus he fell in love with the cycling terrain, the conducive climate and the charm and friendliness of the locals. He kept coming back for the



Martin's fascination with cycling landed with him in Phuket. Photo: Siam Bike Tours

next 20 years – later with his wife Rosita – and they cycled all over Thailand until finally in 2003 they decided to move to Phuket for its warm year-round climate and great cycling access.

Several of his European-based cycling friends suggested that he might develop an adventure cycling business in Thailand and so 11 years ago he decided to lead his first test trip, taking just four people on a week's ride from Bangkok to Phuket. It was

a remarkable success and all the participants were delighted. The rest, as they say, is history.

Martin realized that he'd discovered the basics of a thriving business, leading tours all over the country that he'd come to love and doing exactly what he had loved to do.

He launched the company originally from offices near Kata Beach and set about building a menu of group bike tours of varying duration all over Thailand. He quickly built an

international following of riders, with the many coming from Europe with German, Swiss, Scandinavian and British riders to the fore.

All the tours accommodate groups of 4-30 participants and are guided by Martin and his team. The tours are suitable for any enthusiastic cyclist who is in reasonable shape. Obviously, the hot climate is a factor and Martin is at pains to ensure that new riders pace themselves and don't over-exert. A minibus accompa-

nies the tour and transports all luggage, spare parts, wheels, tools and so on, and offers water, soft drinks and fresh fruits throughout. Importantly, if a rider wants to take a break and rest, they can always jump aboard the bus at any stage of the tour.

Each group determines the riding speed on any stage of the trip with faster riders often going ahead and then regrouping at selected refreshment stops with the others. Safety is a major concern and all riders must wear a helmet.

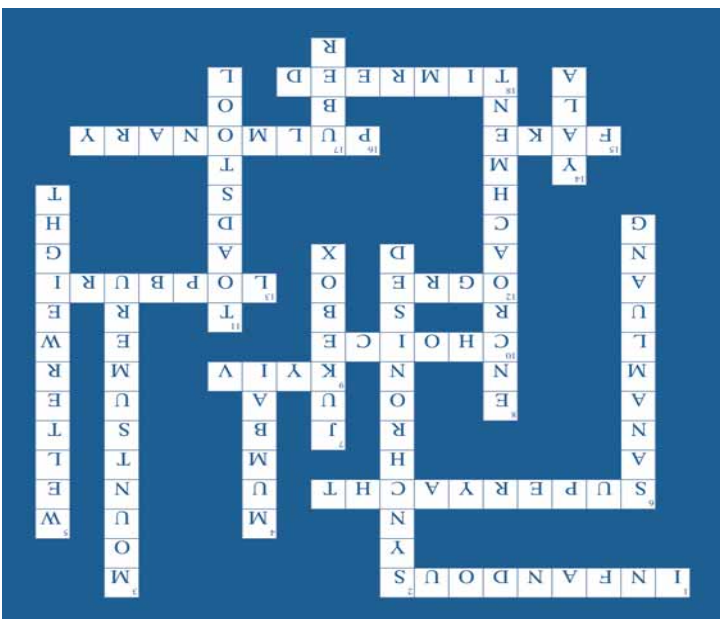
The social side of the trips is as important as the riding itself and nights are spent in excellent hotels along the route, most offering a swimming pool, Thai Massage and spa facilities.

Martin's ten-year Odyssey has seen him clock up over 200,000 kilometers leading bike tours all over Thailand and he has completed his favorite Bangkok-to-Phuket adventure no less than 90 times and still loves it, saying it is still different every time he does it.

He is a true pioneer and we owe him a debt of gratitude for his passion, endeavor and love of both cycling and Thailand.

Crossword Solution

Turn the page upside down to read the answers.



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Across the Land

By Amy Koh

FINALLY, after years and years of consideration and watching other neighboring countries benefit from attracting foreign residents to their country for long-term resident stays, the Thai government has announced a long term 10-year visa for foreign residents over the age of 50 years old.

The intention is to promote Thailand as an international hub for medical services. As Thailand plans to develop itself into a medical and wellness tourism center, this is seen to be a good start in that direction.

Applicants for this 10 year visa must have a monthly salary of 100,000 baht or more than 3,000,000 baht in a Thai bank account (which cannot be withdrawn within the first year after receiving the visa). In addition to that, the applicant must have health insurance that provides a minimum of US\$10,000 in annual coverage, including in-patient hospital stays. The 10 year visa will eventually replace the current one year renewable visa for which the applicant must place 800,000 baht in a Thai bank



The proposed 10-year visa aims to target wealthy individuals over 50. Photo: American Advisors Group

account for a minimum of six months prior to the application of the visa.

The proposed financial requirements will probably target the most affluent, as applicants cannot withdraw more than 50 per cent of those funds and they must prove that the funds withdrawn were spent in Thailand for services related to property, medical, school fees or any such related living expenses.

The visa then allows the spouse of the applicant to apply for a Non-immigrant 'O' visa and for the children of the applicant who are under 21 years old entitled to apply for an education visa.

With the 10 year visa in place, Thailand can expect to draw more foreign residents to live in Thailand and the targeted groups are from Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, France, Finland, Italy, Germany,

Switzerland, Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada. The application fee is 10,000 baht. The foreign residents are mainly expected to live in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Chonburi, Phuket and Koh Samui.

This announcement will hopefully spur both local and foreign investors in the medical and wellness sectors, who will probably benefit the most from

the implementation of this visa. This would also include those looking to create independent active adult communities as well as assisted living communities. Independent active adult communities are when even residents in their 40s can choose between dwelling homes or condominiums in a community where there are swimming pools, club houses, golf courses, spas, shops, hair dressers, medical care, shopping, restaurants, and transportation, all catering to residents who usually do not require any assistance for such day to day activities.

Residents can lease or buy such homes and enjoy an independent lifestyle with neighbors alike. The criteria is somewhat the same for assisted living communities, where the substantial difference is additional care providers or more comprehensive medical care and attention.

However, don't rush out to the nearest Thai embassy to apply for this 10 year visa, as the implementation date has not been announced and changes to the proposals may still take place.

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

Sansiri may lower targets in light of falling demand

SANSIRI may reduce its presales and total revenue targets for the year, given that residential demand in the current quarter looks to be less than in the same period last year, company President Srettha Thavisin said during a recent interview with *The Nation*.

"We will consider at the end of this month whether to revise our presales and revenue targets downward, after seeing a drop-off in demand in October and the first two weeks of November. We may lower our earlier estimates by up to 5 per cent," he said.

The listed developer's current full-year targets are 42 billion baht for presales and 33bn baht for overall revenue.

For the first nine months of the year, the company reported presales of 20bn baht and revenue of 22.7bn baht.

Mr Srettha said that as the market situation for the closing part of the year could not be predicted with any degree of

confidence, the company was unable to promise that presales and revenue would come in on-target.

However, the company is continuing with its plan to launch eight projects together worth 24.5bn baht, in order to boost sales and total revenue for the full year.

Following the decline in domestic demand, Mr Srettha said Sansiri was now accelerating sales to foreign buyers interested in staying in Thailand and/or buying as an investment, with the company focusing on Asian markets such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan.

"We are confident our sales to foreign buyers will reach 5bn baht by the end of this year, more than 10 per cent higher than last year due to foreign investors continuing to expand their investment in Thailand's property market, especially in luxury condominiums in Bangkok's central business dis-



Sansiri expects 2017 to be a challenging year for expanding its investment in new locations, as the government is kicking off mega-infrastructure projects worth over 300bn baht. Photo: My Train Pix

tricts," he explained.

Sansiri's president expects 2017 to be a challenging year for the company in terms of expanding its investment in new locations, given that the government is now kicking off in earnest mega-infrastructure projects worth over 300bn baht.

"When the government begins to invest in these projects

during the remainder of this year and throughout next year, it will open up a new landscape for the property sector to expand its investment in residential projects to serve new demand in these new locations," he said.

"When the infrastructure expands from Bangkok's central business districts into the suburbs, it will create new land

locations for developers to expand their investment to develop residential projects in order to meet the new demand," he added.

Meanwhile, although the company's investment plan for 2017 will be roughly the same as, or slightly more than, this year's in terms of project launches and the overall value of new projects, he said it would continue to achieve business growth of just under 10 per cent during the year.

"Our business strategy is to expand our products to cover all market segments, from budget homes through to the luxury market. This will maintain our 2017 business growth at this year's level," Mr Srettha said.

"The company will continue to focus on developing residential projects for sale by targeting both domestic demand and foreign buyers," he added.

– *The Nation*

Patong vendors fenced out

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

ABOUT 15 stall holders at Loma Park on Patong Beach pleaded with the governor of Phuket to ask for help after Patong Municipality on November 23 cordoned off the area with metal fences in an effort to oust the vendors.

The move follows a meeting between the vendors and Phuket officials on November 1, during which the vendors were reminded that their rental contracts had expired and that they were in breach of the central government's beach management policy.

The meeting at Provincial Hall was no different. Phuket Governor Chokchai Dejamornthan and the vendors could not reach a conclusion on the spot.

"We cannot just talk once and come to a mutual agreement. We need to discuss the matter more, so I've decided to have both sides meet again and have provincial officials present to mediate the talks. However, if there is still no conclusion, we will have to follow state law just like the municipality representatives," said



Vendors arrived to stop the erections and asked Phuket Governor Chokchai Dejamornthan to look into the matter and come up with a peaceful solution. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Gov Chokchai.

The governor did not confirm whether or not vendors can continue to use the area in question for the time being. The date of the next meeting was not confirmed either.

Civil defense volunteers and military personnel led by Deputy Patong Mayor Veerasak Kaminthong erected the fence at 1pm to prevent the

vendors operating their stalls.

"While we were placing the sheeting, some vendors gathered and asked officers to stop and wait for the committee result from the last meeting," said Mr Veerasak.

"We stopped so that they have a chance to meet with the provincial committee."

"We are following the law and our plan to renovate the

building for public use has already been approved. The vendors' contracts ended in October but despite our notices and warnings, they have ignored us and stayed way past the deadlines.

"We have to do this or else they will keep doing what they've been doing – postponing their departure from the area," he said.

Top ten developers post high revenues

ALTHOUGH THE overall residential property market contracted in the first nine months of the year, the top 10 listed developers have posted combined revenue of 168.97 billion baht for the period, 10.21 per cent higher than the same period last year.

This is largely due to the companies having transferred significant numbers of condominium units from their backlogs to customers, following presales made after their launches during the previous two years.

The combined net profit of the top 10 listed residential developers has grown even more, coming in at 24.98bn baht for the first nine months – 30.1 per cent higher than in the same period last year. Representatives of some companies say that the market may slow down for a while.

– *The Nation*

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Very successful property business in Phuket offering joint venture/partnership opportunity. For more information, please call 095-036 4962.

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Available for kids 2 years and over, English speaker, able to teach and assisting in homework, driving capability. Thalung. Tel: 095-429 3636.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP AVAILABLE

BLUE CANYON
Blue Canyon corporate membership (2 players). Special offer: 700,000 baht including transfer fee. Tel: 081-737 5085 (English). Email: phuketcrille@gmail.com

GOLF MEMBERSHIP
Phuket Country Club lifetime family membership. 450,000 baht. Shared transfer (30k ea). Tel: 091-034 0495, 082-805 3403. Email: mikecahill1806@gmail.com

BLUE CANYON MEMBERSHIP
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Google AA Phuket

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Position: Sales Representative

- Listening to customer requirements and presenting appropriately to make a sale
- Cold calling to arrange meetings with potential customers
- Responding to incoming email and phone inquiries
- Negotiating the terms of an agreement and closing sales
- Gathering market and customer information
- Negotiating on price, costs, delivery and specifications with buyers and managers
- Creating detailed proposal documents, often as part of a formal bidding process which is largely dictated by the prospective customer
- Coordinate and follow up sales with agents
- Prepare artwork for advertising in social network marketing and media

Position: Executive Assistant General Manager

The Executive Assistant Manager assists the General Manager and the Hotel Manager. He/she provides both Managers with information of all the departments. An Executive Assistant Manager is responsible for keeping a perfect coordination between all departments and controlling their operation with regards to the company's standards, revenues and controlling costs and the highest comfort and satisfaction for guests.

Responsibilities include the following:

- Manage schedules, answer and respond to phones, set up meetings and general office support for the General Manager and other team members as identified
- Coordinate travel arrangements, expense reports and department invoice processing
- Coordinate department-wide events, meetings, off-site venues, and training programs
- File, track and organize department documents and contracts
- Handle privileged and confidential information appropriately
- Ad the view projects will be assigned as necessary
- Maintain and order office supplies
- Monitoring and supervisor of all operations in all department

Qualifications:

- 2-5 years administrative experience required preferably in a hotel environment.
- Must be fully versed in Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Ability to work in a complex, fast paced environment with changing priorities
- Prioritization and multi-tasking against time lines
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills are required
- Team player and highly collaborative
- Demonstrate high levels of trust and confidentiality
- Sales and PR experience is required.

Contact Person: Tukta
Email: info@theviewphuket.com | Mobile: 083-691 4028

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TAMD71B, 6 cylinder, 380 hp, 2500 rpm, turbo charged. Bangkok. Tel: 02-330 8592, 081-306 1150 (English & Thai). Email: reinhardmurer@gmail.com

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Majesty 56 (2011)
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399,000 EUR



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WANTED FORD OR MAZDA SUV

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Brand new junior 24" wheels, 8-14 years. Asking price: 14,000 baht (new price: 24,000 baht). Tel: 084-625 5090.

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Phuket Gazette

Playing to his own beat

By Chutharat Plerin

DJ KURA, named as the 51st most popular DJ in the world according to DJ Mag's list of 'Top 100 DJs of 2016', performed for more than 3,800 partygoers at Illuzion nightclub in Patong on November 5.

A DJ and producer, Kura was born on August 21, 1987 and has been DJing for 11 years now. He is originally from Portugal and currently travelling and performing at venues all over the world.

"I initially started DJing just for fun, but then I realized I liked it a lot more than I thought. I worked at a surf shop where they had a CDJ, so I started practicing on my own. I was into electronic dance music already, so I kept on practicing without a teacher. A couple of months after that, I started to perform at some small bars and clubs," DJ Kura told the *Gazette* in an exclusive interview.

Although he says he's always liked music, it was not his major in school, where he chose to

study tourism instead.

"I've always liked music, but I never thought I'd be doing what I'm doing today. I feel incredibly honored to be able to travel the world, sharing the music I love. I hope to keep doing it for many, years to come," he says.

DJ Kura doesn't remember his first performance as anything remarkable.

"It wasn't that good – it was at a small bar and at the time I didn't have much experience. But it was a good thing, as it contributed toward my learning curve. It was fun," he says.

One of his most remarkable memories of performing at any particular place is Tomorrowland, which is one

of the largest and most notable music festivals in the world.

"Tomorrowland, where I played this summer, is an unforgettable experience. It is one of the best festivals in the world, the crowd is insane, and the whole experience is just fantastic. I'm very proud I was able to play there," he says.

However, he does not believe any particular venue is his favorite to play.

"I can't really decide any one place as being my favorite. I love travelling the world to play at different venues. Each country and each club has its own characteristics and advantages – each is special in its own way. Being able to play every weekend all over the world is good enough for me. My favorite place is

the DJ booth, so it doesn't really matter which club or country it's in. For me, it's a privilege every time," says Kura.

DJ Kura doesn't see DJing as 'work' in the traditional sense of the word.

"I don't really see it as job, because I have a lot of fun doing it. The opportunity to meet fans, other DJs and promoters, as well as learning about

other countries and their cultures, makes me grow as a person and as an artist. I see it as a lifelong learning experience," he says.

"I can't really say what makes me popular as a DJ, perhaps that's something the fans can decide better. All I know is that I'm really passionate about what I do and I think everybody can sense that."

I love travelling the world to play at different venues. Each country and each club is special in its own way. My favorite place is the DJ booth, so it doesn't really matter which club or country it's in. It's a privilege every time

– DJ Kura



Photo: Illuzion

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