

Phuket Gazette

Volume 15 Issue 23 News Desk - Tel: 076-236555 June 7 - 13, 2008 Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net 25 Baht

The Gazette is published in association with

The Nation

IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS: Police seize nearly 3,000 *ya bah* pills; Burmese workers arrested. **Pages 2 & 3**

INSIDE STORY: One man's search for freedom. **Pages 4 & 5**

AROUND THE NATION: It's good to be Thai. **Page 7**

AROUND THE REGION: Low season hits hard in Krabi. **Page 8**

AROUND THE SOUTH: Shrimp farmers demand support. **Page 9**

AROUND THE ISLAND: High fliers show off their cunning stunts. **Page 10**

GOOD LIVING: Wilko samples Swedish delight. **Page 12**

PEOPLE: Dousing damsel is simply a-blazing. **Pages 14 & 15**

SPORTS: Rugby 10s; Boxing chick dominates in the ring; Dragon boaters prepare for Penang; Top teen takes KTO title; Patong darts league. **Pages 34 & 35**

PROPERTY: Construction Update; Home of the Week; Design: Living in harmony; Gardening: Is Bert the ultimate inanity? **Pages 37-42**

PLUS

QUEER NEWS 6; HAPPENINGS 16; AMBROSIA 17; LIFESTYLE 18 & 19; AFTER DARK 20; WHAT'S ON 21; TAKE A BREAK 23 & 24; GRAY AREA 26; BOOKS, WORD COURT 27; EDITORIAL, LETTERS 28; FIRST PERSON, ISSUES & ANSWERS 29; PATTAYA, HOROSCOPES 30; COMPUTERS 31; BUSINESS, MONEY TALKS 32 & 33; CLASSIFIEDS 43-55.

Quayle calls for better tourist safety

By Matt Crook

PHUKET CITY: Following a wave of *Phuket Gazette* reports of crimes against foreigners in recent weeks, British Ambassador to Thailand Quinton Quayle has voiced his concern over the personal safety of British citizens in Phuket.

Speaking to the *Gazette* at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on May 29, Mr Quayle said, "I think safety is a worrying aspect..."

"[Safety] is one of the things I will be talking with the governor about. Crime happens all over the world - we have a lot in Britain - but if there is a particular spate of attacks targeting tourists or targeting people on motorcycles, one would expect the authorities to take some countermeasures," he said.

Although Mr Quayle said he had been informed of a police manpower shortage on the island, he said, "If crime is going up, then the measures need to somehow react to that. Policemen can't be everywhere, but if there is a pattern like that, then you would imagine there would be some sort of reaction to it."

Possible solutions include more plainclothes officers patrolling on motorbikes and increased surveillance around the island, said Mr Quayle.

"I understand there is a problem with lighting and that the streets are quite dark, so these may be issues for the governor," he added.

As part of his two-day visit to Phuket, Mr Quayle met with Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit on May 30.

Mr Quayle said that crime affects all types of tourists on Phuket: short-stay visitors, long-stay property buyers and those



'If there is a particular spate of attacks targeting tourists or targeting people on motorcycles, one would expect the authorities to take some counter measures,' British Ambassador Quinton Quayle (pictured) told the *Gazette*.

attracted by the marine tourism industry.

"One of the attractions of coming to Thailand is that it is a comparatively safe country, so this is an issue that needs some attention," he added.

While in Phuket, Mr Quayle visited British citizens incarcerated in Phuket Provincial Prison. "In Thailand there are about 50 Brits in prisons; in Phuket there are just two [British] prisoners.

"We have a consular responsibility to look after Brits who get in trouble. I will go and [visit] them, see how they are, see if they have any requirements we can help them with, and see the conditions in the prison," he said.

Mr Quayle added that almost one million Brits visit Thailand every year, "which creates a lot of consular issues," he noted.

In the latest wave of attacks on foreigners in Phuket,

British national Richard Hendren, 50, who runs the September beer bar on Soi One Man in Karon, was shot and robbed while riding home on Patak Rd early morning on May 22.

Mr Hendren was traveling with a 13-year-old girl, the daughter of one the bar staff. The girl was to return the Honda motorbike to the bar after dropping Mr Hendren at his home on Soi Yodsane in Chalong.

The pair were attacked while rounding the bend from Kata Hill to Chalong.

Two men pulled alongside and kicked the bike, causing Mr Hendren to crash.

The man who had been riding pillion approached Mr Hendren and the girl, demanding their valuables. Mr Hendren was then shot in the leg, causing a compound fracture, before the robbers made off with cash, bank cards and a mobile phone.

Mercy mission ship diverts to Phuket

By Sompratch Saowakhon

AO MAKHAM (*Nation, Gazette*): After 10 days in the Indian Ocean waiting for permission to enter Burmese waters, the 24,000-tonne French navy ship *Mistral* docked on May 27 at the Phuket Deep Sea Port to unload tons of supplies intended for cyclone victims in Burma.

French Ambassador to Thailand Laurent Bili said that an agreement had been reached with the Burmese military government making Phuket the logistics center for French supplies heading for the Irrawaddy Delta region.

He estimated the value of the supplies at about 1 million euros.

The Burmese junta has refused to allow foreign naval carriers or airforce cargo planes to enter its territory.

Mistral and her crew of 180 waited in international waters before finally receiving orders to unload in Phuket.

The French military said on May 26 that the supplies would be given to the UN's World Food Program for distribution to victims in the worst-hit areas.

A UN cargo ship arrived to collect the aid on June 1 and left for Burma at 6 am on June 2.

Reportedly equipped with three helicopters, *Mistral* carries enough food to sustain 100,000 people for two weeks.

The ship also had tents and tarpaulin sheets to provide shelter for 60,000 homeless people, as well as cooking pots, mosquito netting and other necessities.

Cyclone Nargis left an estimated 133,000 dead or missing when it struck Myanmar on May 2 and 3.

THE RIGHT PLACE FOR THE BEST STEAK & FRESH SEAFOOD

LA BOUCHERIE RESTAURANT

CALL 076 344 581 FOR FREE PICKUP*

Royal Phawadee Village 3 Sawatdirak Road Patong Beach Kathu Phuket Tel. +66 (0)76 344 581 www.laboucherie-asia.com info@laboucherie-asia.com *Conditions apply