



All At Sea In A Leaky Boat

Three Indonesian fishermen who were happy to see land once again after spending at least five days adrift without food didn't quite get the reception they were expecting when they washed ashore at Kalim Beach recently.

Abdul Ali, 55, Shavil Fukkree, 22, and Bakhtiak, 28, left their home port in Aceh province, in Indonesia a week prior to do a bit of fish poaching in Thai waters near Racha Noi island. When storm waves knocked out

their engine, they were at the mercy of the currents and winds.

What they drifted into was a country preparing for the upcoming APEC conference on terrorism and very touchy about unannounced arrivals from neighbouring countries. The three survivors were treated in a local hospital then had to explain to Customs and security officials why they shouldn't be locked away for the duration of the meeting.

Patong Beat *From Page 5*

Another of the entries into the 100 Baht BBQ will be the World Bungy complex (Soi Keksap 2 off Sai Namyen road - not to be mistaken with Soi Keksap at the other end of Patong) opposite Rock 'n' Bowl. We had a test run recently and it was delicious. Great garden settings, an ideal place for a Barbie, but on the night we were there it was incredibly still and warm, so the occasional fan may be the go when they kick off officially around mid September. (Being done as you read this)

Good to see the north end of Rat-U-Tit Road finally becoming less of a death trap with the realigning of the drains. When the road was resurfaced recently the drains were left a good four inches below road level. With brand new black as black asphalt and a lack of street lighting in the area, it was nearly impossible to see them. Many found this out and journeys to the hospital were becoming regular for motorcycle riders. Even car drivers were expressing their dismay after severely testing car suspensions when hitting the holes.

With all the talk of Phuket becoming a 'cyber paradise', I asked a friend visiting from Bangkok, who was there to conduct some computer seminars, how this was going to

be achieved. As one of many who has to deal with the local phone companies, who has never received a bill (sent to the right premises) despite being in the same place for six months, and regularly being cut off for non-payment of those non-arriving bills, how was it going to happen? "Easy" he replied, "they are going to bypass the whole phone system and go wireless". Apparently there is several high-powered software developers and others in the industry already set-up on the island. Considering it would probably take another millennium to sort out the phone system, it seems the only way to go.

And finally, we made the effort to have a look at the new Star Wars..er..World (seems the Lucas boys have come-a-knocking) recently. It did nothing to inspire, in fact I think the Tiger (presently closed for the low season) had more atmosphere to it. With two drinks for the 200 baht entry fee, it is quite reasonable on the pocket, but wanting to charge 50 baht upstairs for a game of pool is fairly optimistic. Hence the tables were empty. On the night we visited, the place appeared to be only filled with tired and emotional people - or maybe that was just us...



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