

# BAYON



*Pearnik*

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# Wishful Thinking, Cambo Style

A government minister recently announced that a light rail train service would be running to the airport by next April. This impressed me as a lot like raising the flag for an idea and seeing if anybody salutes, except it'll take a lot more than raising hands to construct a viable, functional rail line. The whole idea is ridden with breathlessly phantasmagorical absurdity. It's not that a light rail line wouldn't be a great idea and considering today's traffic, a necessity for a smoothly functioning city, but to use the current single track now used by freight and long haul passengers, and build a new 1.5 kilometer track to connect to the airport and to do it all in 8 months... wow I'd sure be impressed. And if it actually did come together it'd be the cheesiest light rail line in existence.

In the first place, the track is extremely slow, it takes practically an hour for the long haul passenger train to go the last 10 kilometers; part of the reason is that in one section people have set up market stalls on both sides of the track within inches of the trains going by. With 2 or 3 intermediate stops, it would take more than an hour to go the 9 kilometers from the PP train station to the airport, and that's if there were no conflicts with the freight and long haul passenger trains. A single track means lots of waiting on sidings for trains to pass in the opposite direction. I'll concede that it'd be better than nothing, though not by a whole lot. At least the government would be thinking about rail alternatives to deal with traffic.

A week after that announcement, the whole idea got upgraded to asking Japan for \$800 million to build a skytrain. The airport is so close that a train running at 80 kph wouldn't take ten minutes even with intermediate stops. Japan has given Cambodia \$4.2 billion since 1992, so \$800m in one shot doesn't seem very likely.

A far more realistic solution that'd probably cost five or ten times less would be to double track the existing line and upgrade it for higher speeds. As I remember there's plenty of room for another track along most of that stretch. It wouldn't be able to go as fast but even if it only went at 50 kph it'd still get you to the airport in 15 minutes. It's never preferable to mix local light rail trains with long haul trains, but it'd work fine in the interim and cut nearly an hour off of long haul timetables – Kampot to Phnom Penh in four hours rather than five. It could also be implemented in much less time than the skytrain. I'd guess 1½ to 2 years against 3 to 4 years to build a skytrain. Also asking Japan for \$150 million or so is a lot more realistic.

As of August 15 the story has changed again. Japan has agreed to loan Cambodia the money, with long payback terms and low interest rates. Their experts will begin studying two or three possible routes. The same article in the Daily said that the Transportation Ministry was going to simultaneously develop the ground based train. Really? Spend millions on a ground

based system that'll be obsolete a year or two after it's finished? I guess we'll see... and maybe I'll have to revise this story again before my deadline.

In other transportation news China has donated 100 used buses to enable new lines to be added to the three currently in operation. When the announcement was made the word was that the new lines would be operational within 6 weeks. Then a short time later, the ministry decided they probably should do a little planning first. Over the years several proposals for new lines have been made – I've seen a couple different maps – but that's not the same as actually making it happen. Once they settle on a route, they have to get out and decide where the stops need to go, then they need to design maps and finally build the stops: that doesn't happen in six weeks. Once lines are set up, it's expensive and difficult to change them, so it needs to be done right the first time. At least it's finally getting done.

Back in 2000 Japan financed a pilot bus system, but at the end of the six month trial, the city wasn't interested in providing the funds necessary to keep it going. Big bus systems always need

subsidies. As I understand it, the current 3 line system requires a \$1m per year subsidy. Sounds like a lot, but that's less than the cost of 5 luxury SUVs of the kind that hundreds or thousands of public officials drive around.

The government is also expecting Japan to donate 180 buses. The



timetable now for implementation is early next year with a total of ten lines running. Public transportation is essential for a big city. No matter how small motorbikes are, they still take up more street space than the equivalent number of people riding a full bus. They are safe; how many people are hurt riding city buses? They're more comfortable with air-con and shelter from inclement weather. It's also healthier not being in the traffic on a moto breathing exhaust. Public buses are a boon to low income people, as Phnom Penh's buses allow riders to go long distances for 1500 riel – about 37 cents – giving them many more job and life possibilities. We expats look at the dollar or two it costs us to pay for moto transportation all the way across town as a pittance, but it's a heavy burden to the many locals who earn \$100 or \$200 dollars a month. Yes they're much slower, so motodops and tuk-tuk drivers will still have their customers, but a lot of people will take the bus when the system is more complete.

I've often wondered why a minibus system was never set up in Phnom Penh similar to the Philippines where jeepneys operate in big cities like Manila as well as the countryside. Manila has big buses and a train system as well as the minibuses. Minibuses cover the countryside here so it's curious that they were never used in the capital. No matter, a real transit system is coming.

Speaking of wishful thinking a couple little tidbits in the August 3 edition of the Daily caught my eye. In one, two companies, one each from Malaysia and Cambodia announced they were going to

build a \$5 billion, 522 kilometer expressway from Phnom Penh to the Lao border and start construction by the end of the year. Bwahahahaha. Not only is \$5b a shitload of money, but that area is very sparsely populated and one of the least likely places in the country to justify the expense in building an expressway. The transport ministry didn't know anything about it and when the Daily checked it out, one of the two companies, the Malaysian one, had a one page website that made no mention of the project and they were unable to make contact with the other. Another pure fantasy.

The other tidbit was an announcement that a task force of local and national officials was being set up with the charge of solving the capital's flooding problems. A Water Resources Ministry spokesperson was quoted saying the committee would take the results of the task force and stop the flooding... Bwahahahaha. Just about every person in Cambodia who doesn't have a personal

financial stake in filling in wetlands and lakes knows exactly what the problem is and what to do to begin fixing the problem: Stop It! Just Stop It! Well okay, I'll grant you that some people who are filling the city's natural drainage areas with concrete actually believe what they're doing is good for the city... after all a while back one of

the city's elite businessmen actually proposed developing the Olympic Stadium grounds with malls, condos and such saying the land was too valuable to be used only for recreation. And that's the only substantial public space outside the riverside area in the whole city of 2 million people. The rich, as everywhere, are oblivious to the needs of commoners. They have their urban villas and country estates so they feel no loss when public parks or lakes are turned into concrete.

In other transportation news, the government has announced a plan to clear the city's sidewalks for pedestrians, starting with major thoroughfares, which is long overdue as far as I'm concerned. It's uncouth, uncivilized and dangerous to force people to walk in the street amongst cars and motos whizzing by.

It wasn't that long ago (okay 7 or 8 years maybe) that a public official decided that the city was going to eliminate all the sidewalks since Cambodians didn't like to walk anyway. On the contrary, plenty of Penhers like to walk, look at the thousands who saunter around the riverside every afternoon, it's just that it's now so uncomfortable and unpleasant that few have the incentive. A Khmer friend who visited Europe related how she greatly enjoyed walking there and was excited to return and walk in the capital but realized very quickly walking in PP was pure hassle and not worth it.

In fact, before the turmoil of the Khmer Rouge, encumbrance of the sidewalks was strictly forbidden. Since blocking sidewalks was a long tradition in Vietnam I assume it was during the time of their occupation that usurping public sidewalks for private use became common.

When I'm in the capital I do almost everything by walking because I have a fierce dislike of motorbikes and can't imagine riding a bicycle there. Of course it's terribly frustrating and frightening to be a lowly pedestrian dodging traffic, and very



uncomfortable in many places because the sidewalks are so inconsistent. They go up and down – sometimes one will be 30 centimeters higher than the adjacent one – and sometimes are at a steep slant. If the city wants them to be used they need to establish standards so they all are built to the same level, with minimal slant. They should be angled only enough for rain to shed off. But at least it's a start.

It might not be easy; more than once I've read that Bogota, capital of Columbia was having a terrible time getting the sidewalks cleared. When you consider it's 3 times Phnom Penh's size and Columbia has more than 3 times Cambodia's population, it could be a challenge.

In Kampot I ride bicycle in the daytime and car at night. I would ride the bike at night at times if not for the dogs of midnight who terrorize anybody who comes near; they even bark at my car sometimes. The PM remarked recently in reference to the city's heavy traffic that he didn't want

to restrict people from having cars, they're starting to be middle class and want their autos. I agree, except he should also be looking at the developed world where the greater emphasis is on bicycles and walking. Everybody having cars is an interim phase. Rich countries encourage and facilitate bike use because they're clean, quiet, healthy and take up little street space. Once the sidewalks are cleared, there'll be many places where safe bikepaths would be possible.

Finally a few notes on Kampot. First, in the wishful thinking

department a private firm has announced a \$23 billion development on the coast. That's more than the value of all the property in the city, maybe several times the value. Another figment of someone's outsized imagination and a disaster if it ever really happened.

Also I have to mention the new international passenger port being constructed 9 kilometers south of town with \$18m in Asia Development Bank funds. It'll be designed to take people to Phu Quok and destinations in Cambodia like Sihanoukville, Koh Rong, Koh Kong. It'd be kinda nice to be able to go those places on the water, but they are confidently expecting an average 1000 people a day to use it in the first year, which seems quite outlandish to me. In the first place water travel tends to be expensive; the relatively short boat trip between S-ville and Koh Rong costs ten dollars. The first time I traveled between Koh Kong and S-ville in 2002 I took a boat as there was no road alternative: it was expensive and took a long time.

I've been wrong before, so maybe my pessimism is way off and thousands of people a day will be using it. I hope that doesn't come to pass since who really needs all those extra people coming through? We already have lots of 'refugees' from S-ville settling here as well as a steady stream of people from all over the world seeking haven from the madding crowds. There's an old saying that sums up the conundrum... If you find the perfect place, don't stay because it won't be perfect anymore. It happens all the time, as soon as a place is discovered it's on the way to destruction. On the other hand, Kampot's still a cool and pleasant place to be and the influx hasn't yet changed it's essential nature, but is there a tipping point?

I'm stuck almost whatever happens. I've been in the same rental house for 10 years and I've turned my little plot of land into an Eden, buying plants every month to add to my garden.

On another topic, a couple months ago the riverside strip suddenly was free of parked cars, well almost free, there were still a few scofflaws. I checked for signs, but saw none. The police somehow got the word out and almost everybody obeyed, even assuming that some of the cars didn't have local owners. But just to be sure no good deed goes unpunished, the authorities have compensated for the improvement of the experience by erecting large -1.5 by 2 meter - lighted advertising signs every



30 or so meters all along the 3 kilometer riverside park. Tacky, ugly, trashy, tasteless and vulgar. Now in the old town section of the riverside park there are the garishly lit restaurant boats on one side and intrusive telecom ads on the other. Since the park,

actually a promenade, is not very wide, it's like you're being bombarded with ugly.

In a final note: [kampotheadradio.com](http://kampotheadradio.com) is up and running with local presenters several hours a day, including yours truly between 7 and 8 pm Monday through Thursday playing those good old tunes.

Cambostan

## Cambodian Folk Tales

### The Trial

A long time ago in the kingdom of Cambodia, a young man fell in love with a young woman and so he set off to ask her parents for permission to marry her. "If you want the hand of our daughter in marriage," said the parents, "then you must first undergo an ordeal. Your legs must be bound and you must be submerged up to your neck in the water of a lake for three days and three nights. However cold you may be, you must not move to warm yourself. If you survive this trial of your courage then you may have the hand of our daughter in marriage." The young man agreed to the ordeal and so he was tied up and submerged in the water.

After he had been standing in the lake for two days and two nights, he looked up and saw a fire burning on top of a hill some way off. By now he was tired and cold. He lifted his hands out of the water and held them up towards the distant flames. At that moment the girl's parents came down to the water and saw what he was doing. They decided that he was trying to warm himself with the flames from the distant hill and so he had not fulfilled their conditions. They refused to give him their daughter in marriage.

The young man was very angry about this and went off to lay a complaint before a Magistrate. The official invited the girl's parents to come and be judged. The parents agreed and because they were rich, they were able to give the Magistrate several presents. However, the young man was poor and gave nothing to the Magistrate, who then pronounced the judgment. "The young man broke the conditions of the ordeal by warming himself. He has lost his case. He cannot marry this girl. In addition, he must repay the defendants by preparing a banquet for us all." When the young man heard this judgment he was very angry and upset and went off complaining bitterly. On the way home he ran into Judge Rabbit. "Why are you so miserable, Brother?" asked Judge Rabbit. The young man told him the whole story as it had hap-

pened. "Where are you off to now, Brother?" asked Judge Rabbit. "I have to go and prepare the banquet," replied the young man. "Ah" said Judge Rabbit, "Go ahead and prepare the feast; then come and fetch me and take me along to the meal as well. I will win the case for you for sure if you do what I say. When you prepare the meal, make the soup without any salt in it. Put the salt by itself in a separate dish."

The young man was very happy when he knew that Judge Rabbit would help him. He went off to prepare the banquet, making sure the soup had no salt as he had been told. Then he went along with Judge Rabbit, to offer food to the Magistrate and the parents. The Magistrate saw Judge Rabbit coming and asked him: "Brother Rabbit, what have you come here for?" "I have come to help you with this trial" said Judge Rabbit. "Ahh," said the Magistrate, "Then why not stop and have a meal with us?"

When the banquet was served, the Magistrate was the first to start the meal. He took two mouthfuls of the soup and then called out, "Well, why is it that this soup is not salted?" Judge Rabbit quickly answered him, "The fire burning on top of the hill, far away from the young man was supposed to warm him up. How is it that the salt for the soup, which is placed far from the soup does not flavor the soup?" The Magistrate was embarrassed and was silent. The case was reversed and the young man was declared to have won his action and married the couple's daughter immediately.

"The Trial" in Cultural Context

In this story the judge is bribed by a rich family to give a verdict in their favor. This reflects the corruption which many Cambodians feel is found throughout their justice system. Also, the story does not mention how the daughter of the family feels about this man who wants to marry her. The story just mentions the wishes of her parents and also the young man who wants to marry her but it does not mention her

# IN BAD TASTE

## Selfie sticks banned in the Vatican; they could reveal too much!

Tourists visiting Italy's fabulous cities, Rome, The Vatican (Yes it is a city within a city Klugscheisser!), Milan, etc, have been confronted with a ban on their favourite toy, Selfie Sticks!

Jaggedone sent his undercover, hi-tec, Italian CIA (Cockroach Infiltration Army) reporter, Bello Adonissimo-Buggatissimo, into Milan's main piazza to find out how Chinese and Japanese tourists are dealing with the ban; and here are his findings after interviewing several lost souls:

First reaction in best Chinese Mandarin:

"Velly blad, no slselfie slicks, I feel I need to protest to the Plope!"

A Japanese tourist looking glum:

"Ooh dis is awful, banzai, my selfie stick is back at de Tokio Hotel, and I don't know what to do with my hands, banzai, I need a pizza or a samurai sword, banzai!"

One Italian police officer controlling the piazza also commented on the latest ban of selfie sticks;

"Mama de mia, noe selfie stickos, noe fines for dezo stupido turistas, no money in mio pocketos, et questo no pasta for mama! Uno disastero!"

The Pope has a lot to answer for and has promised millions of pilgrims heading to his Vatican window that he will himself use a selfie stick to prove to the world that the Catholic Church is not full of gay paedo's by sticking it where the sun never shines; and they should follow his Holy Message!

"When in Rome do as the Romans do, only use your selfie sticks in bed!"

## Fake news journalist nearly accidentally writes the truth

Fake news journalist Edgar Blyton, not his real name, came close to accidentally publishing a true story last week in Illustrated Lies Magazine. "It's not that I intended to write the truth" the fake Blyton said, "I was in the middle of writing some fake news when I forgot which bits were fake, applied some double nega-

tives to the true bits instead of single or triple ones and drafted some real news by mistake."

Blyton clarified "Luckily the true news was about a weather forecast and the forecast weather never happened anyway. So even if the false news had been published it was about something that never happened in the end and so it would have been true that it didn't happen."

A graduate of the Trump University of Journalism, which is not accredited by the American Fake News Association, Blyton ad-



mitted he has never been sure whether he was writing fake news or not. "Although some people don't agree, in my experience it's never straightforward and it's a fine line between true and fake news no matter what the facts may or may not be", Blyton claims.

"Half the time true news journalists write things that aren't true, and similarly fake news journalists don't write stories that are false quite often", and that's not surprising."

"In any case, true news is disliked by many people who get fed up hearing so many depressing stories about good things that didn't happen. Many people prefer fake news, even depressing stories, because they know it's not true, if you get my drift."

Janice Goebbels, Blyton's editor, supports Blyton's assertions even though that's not his real name. "Our circulation never improves when we don't publish fake news" she said. "Fake news is not the issue. It's not about that. People want to be entertained and sometimes that means not publishing too much true news and substituting the true stuff with upbeat false news and alternative, non-conforming facts."

## Donald Trump tells adoring crowd at Phoenix rally 'I can't be racist, because I'm black'

Donald Trump has been accused of misleading the American people once again after he told an adoring crowd that he is a black man.

Addressing fans in Phoenix, Arizona, the President explained that the fake news lying media had been making him out to be a racist, which is impossible because he himself is African American.

"Growing up black in America, I know what racism is, and I don't see it when I look in the mirror," he explained, to



cheers from the crowd hanging on his every word.

“You can’t trust the fake news media, they will say anything to make me look bad, but you great people here know the truth, because I can give it to you, right here, and on social media, I never tell lies. The media lies.

“When I say I grew up black in the slums of New York, and that I faced discrimination my whole life, you know that’s the truth because I am saying the words to you now. do not trust the lying media who will try and distort what I say with images of me being white and evidence like my birth certificate.

“Do not trust the lying media who will try and distort what I say with images of me being white, and things like my birth certificate.

“Birth certificates don’t mean anything, trust me.”

Rally attendee Chuck Williams said that he was delighted to have heard the truth, straight from the President’s mouth, telling us, “I would never have guessed Donald Trump was black, but now I know that he is, I can not believe the fake news media is accusing him of being racist.

“Picking on a black man like that, it’s just so... racist.”

### **Wayne Rooney retires from international football seven years after he stopped playing in an England shirt**

Former England captain Wayne Rooney has announced his international retirement, just seven years after he stopped performing in an England shirt.

Rooney holds the record for the highest number of caps for an outfield player and is the nation’s top scorer, all despite not having a good game for his country since before the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

England fan club member Simon Williams told us, “Wayne Rooney was absolutely incredible in an England shirt, just simply breathtaking, he would have every single one of us off our seats every time he got the ball... at Euro 2004, but it all frankly went a bit downhill from there.

“We all thought we had England’s very own Messi, but it turns out the messiest thing about him was his extra-curricular activities. Fortunately, there aren’t too many grandmothers amongst the travelling England support, so we weren’t too distracting for him while he was on the pitch.

“He was also pretty unlucky to arrive at the end of the ‘golden generation’, who all got too old to play with him, especially as he seems to enjoy the company of the elderly so much.

“Still, we’ll always have the memory of that time he slagged us all off after having a bad game in the draw against Algeria in the 2010 World Cup.

“That was a special moment for all of us.”

### **Aircraft carriers named after Royal Family because they’re a huge waste of money, MoD**

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that the Royal Navy’s two new aircraft carriers have been named after the Queen and the Prince of Wales because, much like them, they are an enormous waste of money.

The cost of the aircraft carriers was originally thought to be in the region of £5.2bn, which is an amount the nation can definitely spare in the current economic climate, but the firms building the new aircraft carriers say the cost has risen by at least £1bn and possibly almost £2bn.

A MoD spokesperson revealed, “It seemed a fitting tribute that two people who have contributed very little to the country at the

taxpayer’s expense should have the honour of having their names put to what amounts to 120,000 tonnes of metal contributing very little to the country at the taxpayer’s expense.

“Also, we’ll be spending millions of pounds sending them to the far flung corners of the world for years to come, so the Royal symmetry doesn’t end just with their manufacture.”

Royalists have said they are delighted with the impact the aircraft carriers have on the country, insisting they do more good than harm.

Royalist Miriam Walters said, “People come from all over the world to have attacks launched at them by our aircraft carriers, we should be proud they’re ours.”



A Navy spokesperson concluded, “Of course, their main function will be to aim various weaponry with the intention of harming foreigners, which is why we didn’t name one after Prince Philip, we thought that would be a little too on the nose.”

### **Eclipse to make everyone in America black for three minutes**

Astronomers in America have warned that all white people watching the rare celestial alignment must take every precaution they can to ensure that are prepared for the experience of ‘temporary blackness’ that will result from today’s solar eclipse. The first thing they say observers will notice is that the light will dim slowly and that the colour in people’s faces will also start to dim, a bit like Michael Jackson’s between Billy Jean and Liberian Girl.

American police officers have been warned to take extra care not to shoot people who might actually be white, but just appear black due to the unusual light. ‘We’re worried about a massacre’ said one officer from North Carolina. ‘Gun-owning white Americans could experience their worst imaginable nightmare – a sea of black faces surrounding them – when it could just be their regular white neighbors coming out to see eclipse.’

To be on the safe side, white Americans are being advised to stay inside until the eclipse is over, although this method of ‘being forced to sit inside for long periods’ by jailing black Americans has proved to be an inconclusive and unsatisfactory cure for their blackness.

# Phnom Penh Pub Page

As promised I did actually make it to hostess bars this month. Unfortunately, the Wall proved to be too great an obstacle so I have only partially delivered on my promised reviews. On the plus side, it means I have a goal for next month. Even more disappointing, Shrek passed on our night out so he could play with his sprog instead of some poor deserving bar staff.

Before I get on to the new reviews, enough people spoke to me about Chaplin's after last month that I thought I should follow up - I was a bit surprised to learn that about half the people who mentioned it to me thought I had slammed the place. I have re-read my review (I usually forget what I write within seconds of it hitting the screen) and did not think I had done that at all. I actually quite liked it - thought it looked good, drinks were reasonably priced and it turns out they have regular specials that I did not know about when I was there for my review. I think the location may be an issue but a number of people have told me it has been busy when they were there and my point was that it is probably more of a destination bar than a place you would wander by on your rounds. My only negative was a personal

issue and not the bars. The place is not meant to be a hostess bar (as far as I understand) so I did not think the staff was supposed to entertain me. I was just not happy to see that I was not getting the extra friendly service others received so I went off to find Cheers. Anyway - hope this clears it up - I liked the place and will be back (even if I am not handsome or generous enough to get preferred service).

Let's start with one of the new bars on the "Block" - I still have trouble using that expression so as I would prefer to identify it - the second block from the river on 130 St. I actually missed the grand opening, but since they were kind enough to invite the Pub Page, I thought I would lead off this month with Ponytail bar. I went in pre-official opening and have decided it is already one of my favourite spaces of this group of bars. Much lighter than most with a spacious and comfortable feel. The music was kept at a very reasonable level and, while it may be due to the DJ of the moment, the tunes were excellent while I was there. The staff was friendly and were mostly kind enough not to annoy; although the one who decided that my not engaging with her was a good excuse to keep walking in front of me, squawking in my ear and then having a loud chat in Khmer about it with her friends will not make my hostess of

the month list. There was a big sign saying free beer while it lasts, but I assume there will be a real happy hour specials posted by the time this is published.

Moved over to 136 St. and finally checked in at the Phnom Penh Hilton. There were a bunch of girls sitting outside and welcoming potential customers. Worked on me so I went in for a short stay

(not a short time). Place was spacious and looked good to my admittedly undiscerning eyes. Unfortunately, they did not have the AC on and it was sweltering when I went in. A bunch of the staff had followed me in which I, at first, gave them points for as it looked like they were going to make an effort to keep their only customer entertained. In another unfortunate turn of events, all four of them just stood in front of me and stared. No conversation directed towards me although there was occasional mutterings in Khmer amongst themselves. Felt a bit of a Children of the Corn vibe which was made worse when they all stepped closer in sync. Between the lack of space, silence from the lifeforms around me and increasing heat, I decided that I should vacate the premises and checked out.

Went up the street a bit to Route 136 bar. Not sure what to make of this place. It was huge although a bit loud. Big patio with a pool table on it. Great AC

Was quite surprised when I was greeted by a male waiter and escorted to a table. He took my order, brought my drink and then backed away to let the female staff have their turn at the plate. Bar was basically empty although there were a bunch of customers on the patio playing pool. Staff was pleasant and most moved on when I did not express any interest. Overall, bit of an odd experience, but a nice place and friendly staff. I would happily head back.

Last hostess bar this month is Frog Skin Bar on 5 St, a bit up from 118 St. Not a huge space and very black with a touch of green - good choice. Music was good. There is a mezzanine with a pool table and it sounded like most of the staff was up there with some customers. I was downstairs alone with the bartender and some other customers but was quite comfortable. Draft tiger was USD 2, most bottled beer was USD 3.5 and most cocktails were USD 4. The lady drinks started at USD 3.5, but the price options seemed confusing but perhaps I had just had too many customer drinks to sort it out by then. Seemed like a nice, relaxing hostess bar - would be happy to head back.

Dropped by Ortho on 136 St. a few times this month again - still think it is a good option if you need a break from the hostess bar wars or just want to watch the action.

That is about it for this month,





### Changed again

The other week a new raft of changes in visa policy took affect. If you want a 12 month Business visa you now have to show proof of where you work and where you live.

For the retirement visa you now have to show proof of a pension or prove you are not working (easier said than done).

There is also now a six month non working visa available but details on this are still a little sketchy.

### Clampdown

The standard pre election

clampdown is in full swing but this time it is going a little further than normal.

The Cambodian Foreign Ministry has closed the US State Department-funded National Democratic Institute (NDI) and expelling all its foreign staff from the Kingdom. For “providing the Cambodia National Rescue Party with an “ill-intended” plan to overthrow the government!”

The Ministry of Information has ordered the closure of the Moha Nokor radio station that broadcasts content from the opposition Cambodia National

Rescue Party, as well as from foreign-based outlets Radio Free Asia and Voice of America.

Then the Tax Department slapped The Cambodia Daily with a 6.3 million dollar tax bill for monies owed over the last decade. He who must be obeyed stepped in demanding for their closure on Sept 4th. So it looks like they are a goner no matter what they do.

Best bet is publish their accounts online so everyone can see. We doubt if they even made that much revenue in that period! It will be sad to see them go but the policy of whomever disagrees must go will be ongoing.

### What logs!

The Environment Ministry stated that “Large-scale forest crime does not happen anymore in Cambodia,” it read, adding authorities had been “preventing” and “eliminating” medium- and small-scale extraction.

The statement followed the

release of Vietnamese customs data compiled by US-based NGO Forest Trends showing that Vietnam had registered imports of some 313,000 cubic metres of Cambodian timber – valued at \$142 million – in the first six months of 2017.

Sounds exactly like the Singaporean sand debacle a few months ago.

Do you believe the Ministries here or properly collated data from a foreign government! No brainer really.

### Holidays

With Pchum Bem falling on the 19—21 of September Tue-Thur. You can basically wipe out that week.

### Iconic Bar for sale.

Due to the owners personal situation Sharky Bar is up for sale at 65k. Long lease huge space and reasonable rent. Please contact the Owner/Packo by email : packo256@yahoo.com for further details.

# FAUX NEWS

## Donald Trump tweets tribute to Bruce Forsyth

President Trump has used his Twitter account to express his deep sadness at the death of veteran British entertainer Sir Bruce Forsyth, who died yesterday at the age of 89.

Sir Bruce has been a star of British television for decades and much-loved by audiences young and old. The US President, wrote:

"RIP Sir Bruce Forsyth, talented singer, dancer, comedian and presenter."



The tweet was re-tweeted over a million times.

President Trump, long-known for his inspirational tweets which have brought together an often-divided American society, has used his Twitter account to condemn such diverse evils as Russian intervention in US politics, sexual harassment of women in society, cronyism in top jobs, bullying at work, global pollution and racism.

White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told a press conference that Donald Trump had been a lifelong fan of Sir Bruce, ever since he and his father had taken part in the Generation Game in the 1970s. The younger Trump had been introduced as "a philanthropist businessman" and his father as "a grand wizard", and had left the show with several prizes, including a coffee maker, a drill set, fine china and a cuddly toy. The President had spent many happy hours tapdancing the night away to archive footage of Sir Bruce at the London Palladium.

More recently, the President has championed the fight against racism in towns such as Charlottesville, Virginia, which have seen violence caused by white supremacists and Klu Klux Klansmen, which the President has been very quick to unconditionally condemn.

## What eclipse? "The Great Solar Eclipse Hoax of 2017"

In an interview today on Fox News, a spokesman for Eclipse Deniers charged that the highly touted solar eclipse set for Aug. 21 is nothing more than a scam hatched by a coalition of transportation, hotel, resort and food service interests.

"There will be no total solar eclipse next month... or any other month," Will Bligh, the Denier Guy, told Sean Hannity. When

Hannity's response indicated a degree of disbelief, Bligh set him straight.

"Follow the money! Billions of dollars have already been spent on airline tickets to Boise and other cities along the supposed route of this phony eclipse. Hotels, motels, and campgrounds have sold all their space for the weekend preceding the "event" and for the two days afterward. It's almost a month before this fraud and you can't get a seat on a plane to Boise or Kankakee. Never happened before, and its lining the pockets of those who thought it up and the rest of the business community along for the ride. Now, some of them are asking why they hadn't done this before. If we'd had a solar eclipse in 2009, Obama wouldn't have needed 8 years to get us out of the Great Recession."

That was good enough for Hannity, but he still had a question,

one that he asked reluctantly. "O. K., you make sense when you look at the dollars. But if there is no eclipse, what happens then?"

Guy smiled. "Oh, there will be an "eclipse," all right. Not that ridiculous solar one, but a manufactured "eclipse," right out of Silicon Valley. Those high tech boys are concocting a kind of black fog that will be released in stages across the country. Yup, all the yokels standing in a meadow near Boise will see the sky go black for a few minutes as a satellite, orbiting in sync with the moon, releases whatever it is the techies have created. From the Oregon coast to the Atlantic, onlookers will "Ooh" and "Ah" as they witness the sight that they'll tell their grandkids about. But the grandkids will giggle, because they'll have learned in their history and science classes about the Great Solar Eclipse Hoax of 2017." As the interview ended, Hannity informed his viewers that Guy also denied the lunar landing, claimed that the Mars rovers were in the

Crater of the Moon, and is currently the press agent for Global Warming Sceptics.

"Someone else will host this program during August," Hannity added. "I'll be in Boise." And in an aside to his show's staff, "Can anyone loan me a telescope?"

## Australians asked to vote on what century it is

The Australian government will issue a postal plebiscite (kind of a questionnaire for plebs) to ask Australians to vote on what the date is.

Dogged by claims of being out of touch, Prime Minister Malarkey Bullshite indicated in federal parliament this week that he would ask Head of State Queen Victoria what century it is. Members of the Opposition pointed out that Victoria died in 1901. Bullshite and his cabinet dispute this and said this matter was too important to be decided by parliament and required the electorate to vote.

The century Australia is using has been questioned by many commentators recently following the government's refusal to vote on legalising same-sex marriage despite the lead taken by advanced nations like Malta, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay and the Republic of Dnaleri (where married same-sexers are entitled to extra social benefits compared with boring hetero couples).

Bullshite's ruling Liberal-Nazis-And-Trickle-Down-Christian-Pedophiles-And-Wife-Beaters-For-Rich-Bastards government also wants a plebiscite on the same-sex marriage topic. The PM has repeatedly refused a parliamentary vote because "they do funny things with their bums and it might lose us seats in the marginal, redneck electorates, and I like my fancy, all-expenses-paid government house on Sydney Harbour".

Accused of being "a softcock" on this stance by opposition leader Bill Shortarse, Bullshite has remained firm.

## Trump Denounces Science, Announces New 'Age of Superstition'

President Donald Trump, in an obvious bid to create news that will take America's attention off the Trump Family Russian Investigation, denounced science again today. In a prepared statement delivered to the press by his new press secretary, Emmett B. Clown, Trump explained.

"Everything was much better before Science stuck their noses into everything. People could see the sun and worshipping it seemed to work. Some people want to worship me. It doesn't bother me, it's not hurting anybody. So people talk about how everybody just had all these crazy superstitions before Science tried to explain everything their way and make everyone else look stupid," the Trump statement read.

"So we need to bring back superstition!" said Trump, promising to use "Bring back superstition" as a campaign slogan.

## Stella-guzzling arsehole has strong moral stance against drugs

A MAN who regularly gets into fights while drunk would never get involved with dangerous drugs like cannabis, he has announced.

Scaffolding contractor Julian Cook regards drugs as a scourge on society, unlike his favourite recreational activity of getting blackout drunk and hitting

people.

Cook said: "I feel sorry for people who need to take drugs instead of just going out and having 10 to 15 pints of strong lager. There must be something seriously missing from their lives.

"I've seen what drugs do to people, making them sit around laughing or deciding to dance a lot. They're just in no fit state to twat someone if they look at you funny in a kebab shop.

"I'd never take drugs because I don't like being out of control, although admittedly last weekend I woke up in a police cell and had somehow lost my shoes."

Acquaintance Martin Bishop said: "Julian is a menace to bouncers, cab drivers and chip shop owners, but because he doesn't take drugs he thinks he's Jesus.

"The thick bastard actually believes if you have a spliff you'll hallucinate a giant orange coming to eat you."



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# TECHNOLOGY PAGE

## How to change your email address without losing your friends

### Step-by-step instructions for a smooth transition

Think of all the places where your old email address resides, outside of your immediate control, waiting to give people plenty of false information. There are other people's address books, old messages in people's inboxes, websites that use your address as your logon name, and your business cards.

Changing your email address can be quite a chore.

#### 1. Keep the old address for a little while

The first thing you need to do is check with your old mail provider and find out how long you can keep the old address and at what price. It's probably worth the money to keep it for at least a few months.

[ Further reading: Your new PC needs these 15 free, excellent programs ]

#### 2. Tell your contacts, but bcc: please

Then you need to tell everyone about the change. Using your new address, send an email to everyone in your address book—friends, relatives, and business associates. Address the message to yourself (again, with the new address), and BCC everyone else.

The BCC part is important. Providing everyone with everyone else's email address is going to get people angry—especially if some people Reply to All.

#### 3. Auto-forward and auto-respond

Set up your mail client to receive messages from both accounts.



In the resulting dialog box, enter your old address in the To field. Click Create filter with this search in the lower-right corner. Check one of the options. I suggest Star it or Apply the label and create a new label.

Click Create filter. Lincoln Spector

Set Gmail to redirect messages sent to the old address to another location.

#### 4. Update your site logins and subscriptions

Meanwhile, go through all of the websites you log onto via your email address, and change your account information to reflect your new address.

Do the same with mailing lists. If you subscribe to a blog, a newsletter, or just a group of friends, make the change so you won't fall off the list.

#### 5. The lazy way out

You can avoid a lot of these hassles if you decide to keep the old address indefinitely—especially if the old address is cheap or, better yet, free. You can phase it out at your own pace, or make it the repository for all your junk email.

#### 6. Other ways to make email addresses easier to manage

On the other hand, you may want to lose the old address precisely because of all the garbage that fills its inbox. If that's the case,



Check the client's features to see if there's a way to send an automated response in reply to any message coming from the old address—and only the old address. The message, of course, should remind them to use the new address.

You might also want to set up your client to separate messages by the Send To address. That way, you can really see who's still using the old address.

For instance, if you use Gmail, you can create a filter that can move the message to a label (Gmail for folder) or put a star next to the message:

Click the tool icon near the top-right corner of the webpage and select Settings.

Click the Filters and Blocked Addresses tab.

Go to the bottom of the page and click Create a new filter.

you need to protect the new address as well as junk the old one. Sign up for a service that provides disposable email addresses that forward messages to your real one. If you're worried about giving someone your address, give them a disposable one. I use Blur, a free Firefox and Chrome extension. Other options include spamex and mailshell.

Finally, consider buying your own domain name, and using an email address from there. No one can take away your email address if you own the domain. Domain hosting prices can vary widely, so shop carefully.

Speaking of expenses, remember to reprint your business cards, too.

# Bits from the Beach

The Reef Resort closed its door at the end of August. The owners with just two years to go on the lease had the property leased out by, you guessed it, Chinese Interests. This has nothing to do with the matter mentioned last month of the aggrieved former investor. Incidentally they managed to get the website taken off line and with the closure of the Reef that issue becomes a moot point. They intend to concentrate on their three resorts over on Long Set Beach on Kho Rong and rumour is that they may open a fourth. Good luck to any investors in that one.

The Chinese have continued to lease or buy up swathes of residential accommodation. They have even taken control of a 20 bungalow development and will apparently raise that and build either more accommodation or a poorly located Casino. The expats (including a major US maritime know it all) who are living in hope of the Chinese Government cracking down are probably going to be disappointed. The recent announcements from China cracking down on overseas investments apparently refer to new capital, not capital that is already invested. Interestingly there have been no recorded raids of Chinese Boiler room operations being raided in SHV, instead these are occurring in Kampot and Phnom Penh.

Speaking of Boiler Rooms, it is not just the Chinese that have been operating these. There has not been anything in the press over the last couple of months about the Barang run boiler room that was selling shares in worthless companies to unsuspecting investors in Australia. They were operating out of the BS holiday villa complex and were one of the largest employers of Barangs in town, apparently employing nearly 100 on the phones. This operation was related to the two suspects in the Pattaya shooting earlier when the suspects fled to Cambodia, Sihanoukville in particular where they had a rival operation. It was raided and the suspects were arrested, however it appears that there has been no extradition request from Thailand.

The rear part of the land behind Otres 1 is a dirty, dusty hell hole with a very large development under construction. Guess what, it is another Chinese development. Many temporary barracks have been erected to house the imported workforce that appear to work at a much faster pace than many of the locals. There is a rumour that much of the workforce are Chinese prisoners being flown over as indentured labour to earn money and shorten their sentence, but unless we see some harder facts, this will remain just a rumour, but one worth repeating here for the sheer salacious enjoyment of our readers.

Sewerage has been flowing down the street that is Serendipity Beach Road. Whether it is a street or a drain is a matter of debate. It is low season and the town is expanding rapidly with no increase in infrastructure. The sewerage treatment plant looks abandoned and the tourist and permanent population down by the beach is expanding rapidly. One wonders what will happen in high season. Mind you it may well be caused by the large amount of rain we have been experiencing and the fact that there is little differentiation between stormwater and sewer drains in the eyes of local builders. Otres has been hit by sewerage recently with brown foamy scum in the water. What was once a safe beach for swimming now looks to have gone the way of Occheateal. Little wonder the place is often labelled Shitsville by those who live in Phnom Penh.

On the bar scene, especially the Sihanoukville square, there are many bars for rent. Moustache bar recently closed and thigs are supposedly pretty tight financially amongst the operating bar. A new bar is set to open called the Glory Hole. Whether it lives up to its name will remain to be seen. The owners intend to be the only bar in the square not to employ girls, but freelances will be welcome to attend and there will thus be no barfines.

Air Asia flights between Sihanoukville and Kuala Lumpur have begun and are at the moment reasonably price. Rumour has it that Jetstar, who fly out of Singapore, have been in town looking around and there are rumours of direct flights from Bangkok. This will be welcomed by many who need to currently endure the now nearly 5 hour drive to Phnom Penh. Some people are finding it preferable to fly from Sihanoukville to Siem Reap and then flying down to Phnom Penh as they find it faster and not much higher cost.

The 9th Rebels Annual poker run is being held on 10th September so if you want a fun day call in at one of the 7 bars that are involved in this charity event and buy yourself a ticket. The Rebels Handle Bar, Stevie C's (above Ernie's Burgers), Ochheateal Guest House, Toys, The Shipwreck, Banana Joes and Martinis on the beach.

When the Bits from the Beach first started a couple of decade ago, Sihanoukville was a small place with only a few hundred expats. Many of them would be described as eccentric. The Bits from The Beach was a way of letting other expats in the Kingdom of Wonder keep abreast of the often zany and always entertaining goings on. Now Sihanoukville has an expat population similar to what Phnom Penh had back in those days and whilst there are many eccentric and eclectic individuals, they do not stand out.

The Bayon Pearnik has been hearing interesting stories of expat goings on in Kampot that reminded us of Sihanoukville back in the good old halcyon days. It has an expat community that is well under 1000 and many of them are similar to the type of expats that Sihanoukville once had. Just to make it clear, Stan will not be the source ore author of these titbits from Kampot.

A local travel agent who handles many of the visa extensions for expats ran into a bit of trouble earlier in the month. People were wondering where their passports were. The agent had been using a trusted friend (now former friend apparently) to do the extensions in Phnom Penh, sending the passports up there to her. This was news to the customers who thought that the agent was doing it themselves. After many angry calls from customers it turned out that the trusted friend had kept the money and had not put the passports in for visas. Eventually the agent got it all sorted, however it cost her a lot of money as she had to cover some decent overstay fines and visa fees. People are wondering, quite rightly, if they should use this agent again, however they did the right thing and paid up, something few Khmer run businesses ever do.