

# PARKS

## New projects slated for Thailand

Four new waterpark and entertainment projects in Thailand worth THB2.23bn (US\$71.3m) have received approval from the government's Board of Investment.

A THB900m (\$28.8m) Thai-Russian joint venture is set to develop the Ramayana Waterpark in Chon Buri's Sattahip district next year. Pacific Shore Development, a joint venture between Hong Kong and Malaysian investors, will create Amazon Falls Water Park. The THB620m (\$19.8m) park will be located in Pattaya and is slated to open next year.

Meanwhile, Kidzania Group is investing THB550m (\$17.6m) to set up a new edutainment centre at Siam Paragon. Kidzania is a role-playing activity where children aged between four and 12 can try out different adult occupations. Lastly, a THB162m (\$5.2m) cultural centre will be developed by Siam World Art Company in Pattaya.

Atchaka Sibunruang, secretary-general of Thailand's Board of Investment, said he expects higher investment in the country's tourism sector, especially theme parks and waterparks that will enable Thailand to compete with Hong Kong's Disneyland, Singapore's waterpark and Malaysia's theme parks.



## Merlin invests in Australian attraction

MERLIN Entertainments has announced plans to invest A\$4m (US\$4.2m) in Mooloolaba's UnderWater World, Australia.

The UK-based attractions operator acquired the Sunshine Coast attraction in March and is developing a new A\$3.5m (US\$3.6m) ocean tank and tunnel with four zones. A new water filtration system and a more extensive marine conservation programme are also part of the

investment, with the new Ocean Tunnel to open from September 22.

Edward Fuller, Merlin's group divisional director Australia and New Zealand, said: "We are committed to a multi-million dollar investment programme and see tremendous opportunity at UnderWater World.

"UnderWater World is a perfect fit for our portfolio and is the jewel in our Queensland crown. Our goal here is simple - to reinvigorate, bolster its presence and turn it into a must-see, unique Queensland attraction."



## Six Flags to add Bonzai Pipelines

SIX Flags New England and Hurricane Harbor, US, has announced plans to add Bonzai Pipelines, a 65ft-tall water slide featuring six drop hatch slides, to the popular theme park's line-up.

Bonzai Pipelines will join New England's largest waterpark's existing 27 slides, pools and attractions. After reaching the top of the six-storey structure, guests will step into a 'DrenalineDrop' launching capsule where the floor drops out beneath them, sending them free-falling down the slide at 40mph.

Bonzai Pipelines is scheduled to open in spring 2013. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor is free with theme park admission.



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