



CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. Thailand Announces Visa-Free Entry For Indians to Boost Tourism -

- Thailand is taking steps to revitalize its tourism industry by allowing visa free entries for the citizens of India and Taiwan.
- **This move comes as the high season approaches and is part of a broader strategy to attract more visitors to the country. Thailand had previously visa requirements for Chinese tourists, a significant source of visitors before the pandemic.**
- **Starting from 10th November 2023 and continuing until 10th May 2024, tourists from India and Taiwan can enter Thailand without the need for a visa. This decision aims to make it easier for travelers from these countries to explore the beauty of Thailand and contribute to the country's tourism sector.**
- **As per the announcement, travelers from India and Taiwan can enjoy a maximum stay of 30 days in Thailand without the need for a visa. This new policy is expected to attract a significant number of tourists from these regions and give a much-needed boost to the local economy.**
- **In September, Thailand took a similar step by scrapping visa requirements for Chinese tourists. China was Thailand's top pre-pandemic tourism market, contributing 11 million of the record 39 million arrivals in 2019. This move was aimed at rekindling the flow of Chinese tourists to Thailand and rejuvenating the country's tourism sector.**
- **The decision to waive visa requirements for Indian and Taiwanese tourists aligns with Thailand's efforts to boost its tourism industry. According to the latest government data, from January to October 29, 2023, Thailand welcomed 22 million visitors who**

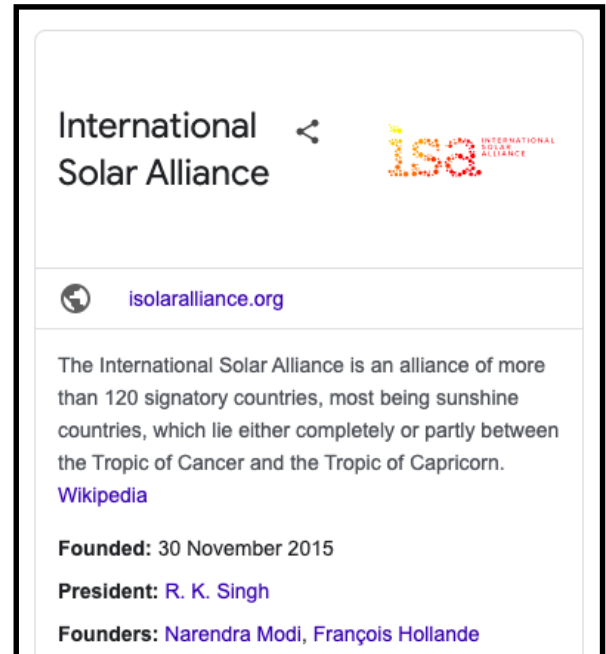




contributed 927.5 billion baht (\$25.67 billion) to the economy. These figures indicate a positive trend in Thailand's tourism sector and demonstrate the potential for growth.

2. Recently, the Sixth Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was convened at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi -

- **The Assembly discussed the ISA's broader strategy, emphasizing the need to focus on energy access before transitioning to renewable sources, echoing the organization's philosophy of "access first and then transition."**
- **The assembly announced an increase in Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for projects, raising it from 10% to a range of 10% to 35% to foster greater investments, particularly in African countries.**



Four projects supported by the ISA were inaugurated during the assembly. These initiatives spanned across different countries-

- A. Solarization of the Malawi Parliament**
- B. Solarization of rural healthcare centers in Fiji**
- C. Installation of a solar-powered cold storage in Seychelles**
- D. Solarization of a school in Kiribati**

3. Lebanon's Hezbollah hits 19 positions in Israel simultaneously -

- **In recent developments in the Middle East, the armed wing of Hamas, known as the Al-Qassam Brigades, claimed responsibility for a rocket attack on the northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona.**



- This attack resulted in injuries and damage to buildings. Simultaneously, Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shia militant group, launched an attack on 19 positions in Israel, marking an escalation on Israel's northern border. Both Hamas and Hezbollah are considered proxies of Iran.



- Hezbollah, for the first time, admitted to using drones filled with explosives to target an Israeli army command position in the disputed Shebaa Farms area on the Lebanese-Israeli border.
- The Shebaa Farms area is a source of territorial dispute, with Israel claiming control since the 1967 war, while both Syria and Lebanon assert it belongs to Lebanon.
- Hezbollah's use of drones and surface-to-air missiles against Israeli forces signifies a shift in their tactics.



Quiz

Q1. With reference to Ethics Committee, consider the following statements

1. In parliament, only Lok Sabha has its own Ethics Committee.

2. The members of the Ethics Committee are appointed by the President for a period of one year.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q2. Recently, which two cities of India have joined the UNESCO's Creative Cities Network ?

- a) Kozhikode and Gwalior
- b) Srinagar and Jaipur
- c) Chennai and Varanasi
- d) Mumbai and Hyderabad

Q3. Recently, 'Shiyan 6' was in the news. It is a

- a) Research Vessel
- b) Hypersonic Missile
- c) Spacecraft
- d) Moon Surface Lander

Q4. Which state government has challenged its governor in the Supreme Court over pending bills recently ?

- a) Telangana
- b) Bihar
- c) Karnataka
- d) Kerala

Q5. 'Artemis' is the Lunar Mission launched by which country ?

- a) China
- b) Russia
- c) USA
- d) UAE

Q6. Who inaugurated the branch of State Bank of India in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka ?

- a) Amit Shah
- b) Nirmala Sitharaman
- c) Shaktikanta Das
- d) Dinesh Khara

Answer Key

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| d | a | a | d | c | b |