

THAI to spearhead free trips for travel industry

BERLIN : Thai Airways International (THAI) will join other tourism **bodies** in Thailand to **stage** a grand-scale "familiarization" campaign to persuade about 1,000 international travel and media **figures** that the kingdom's severe political crisis has passed.

The flag carrier will hand out free tickets to fly the visitors to Thailand in July, while others including the Tourism Authority of Thailand, hospitality and retail industries, plan campaigns to show the world that Thailand is back on track.

The "fam trip", as such junkets are known in the travel trade, is expected to be the biggest ever staged, reflecting the severe damage the political violence caused to the country's image.

It would outstrip a similar campaign staged in October 2008 - before the yellow-shirt protesters' seizure of Bangkok's airports - to counter the twin setbacks of an oil-price spike and political turmoil in Thailand that had caused a **sharp** downturn in arrivals. Then 2008 campaign offered 2008 free trips, all paid for by THAI, for tourism decision-makers.

THAI president Piyasvasti Amranand on Tuesday estimated the carrier lost potential revenue of 3 billion baht in May alone, adding that THAI would likely **lose** money in the second quarter. Its aircraft occupancy was 58%, against a break-even figure of 65%.

A **highlight** of the fam trip would be a visit to Ratchaprasong intersection, where the supporters of fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra **rallied** for six weeks. Participants would be staying at the five-star hotels around the intersection, Mr Pruet said.

But he said it would be an uphill task to persuade outsiders that political turmoil would not re-emerge in the near future. "What we're doing is like rowing a broken boat against the tide," he said.

Dr Piyasvasti agreed, saying it would take time for tourists to come back to Thailand, though he hoped that by the fourth **quarter**, which is the holiday season, traffic should return to normal.

(Adapted from: <http://bangkokpost.com/business/economics/38500/thai-to-spearhead-free-trips-for-travel-industry>)

Select the most appropriate meaning of the following word

- 1) "bodies" (paragraph 1)
 - a. (n.) the physical remains of a dead person or animal
 - b. (n.) the trunk or torso of a human or animal
 - c. (n.) an organized group of individuals
 - d. (n.) the main or central part of something

- 2) "stage" (paragraph 1)
 - a. (n.) A raised and level floor or platform.
 - b. (n.) The scene of an event or of a series of events.
 - c. (v.) To organize and carry out something
 - d. (v.) to put on a play, concert, exhibition, or similar event for an audience

- 3) “figures” (paragraph 1)
 - a. (n.) an individual, especially with regard to status within a particular context, for example, in history or in a community or profession
 - b. (n.) a written or printed symbol representing something other than a letter, especially a number
 - c. (n.) the shape of an individual human body, especially with regard to its slimness or attractiveness
 - d. (v.) to form an idea about or envision something

- 4) “sharp” (paragraph 4)
 - a. (adj.) Having a thin edge or a fine point suitable for or capable of cutting or piercing
 - b. (adj.) strong and slightly bitter in taste
 - c. (adj.) sudden and significant
 - d. (adv.) exactly, and not before or after

- 5) “lose” (paragraph 5)
 - a. (v.) to fail to obtain or gain something
 - b. (v.) to fail to win a victory, for example, in a contest, argument, or game
 - c. (v.) to be unable to maintain or control something
 - d. (v.) to be unable to find the way

- 6) “highlight” (paragraph 6)
 - a. (v.) to draw attention on something
 - b. (n.) the most important part of an event
 - c. (v.) to mark something, for example, parts of a text, with a highlighter pen
 - d. (n.) an area or a spot in a drawing, painting, or photograph that is strongly illuminated

- 7) “rallied” (paragraph 6)
 - a. (v.) to come together for a common purpose
 - b. (n.) a large meeting or gathering of people, usually organized by a movement or political party and intended to inspire and generate enthusiasm among those present
 - c. (v.) to increase sharply in value or price owing to renewed buying by investors
 - d. (v.) to revive from inactivity or decline

- 8) “quarter” (paragraph 8)
 - a. (n.) any of four equal or approximately equal parts into which something is divided
 - b. (n.) in the United States and Canada, a coin worth 25 cents or one quarter of a dollar
 - c. (n.) one of four equal periods of playing time into which some games, such as football and basketball, are divided.
 - d. (n.) any of the three-month periods into which the year is divided, especially for accounting purposes