

A Study on Tourism Services with special reference to Medical Tourism of Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Medical Tourism is a growing potential for India's health care products and medical tourism of late in domestic as well as inbound tourist market. Medical tourism is a blend of tourism and health thereby known as 'health or medical tourism.' It can be broadly defined as 'a provision of 'cost effective' private medical care in collaboration with the tourism industry for patients needing surgical and other forms of specialized treatment. This paper addresses the concept of medical tourism in India and the government strategies for the development of tourism in India

Introduction

Tourism is directly and indirectly involved with many sectors in the economy, viz., airlines, car rentals, coaches and buses conference centers, hotels, railways, theme parks, travel agencies, cafes, clubs, shops, sports stadium, theatres, zoos, and the like.

Tourism has become an accepted part of life styles of a large and increasing number. Of people the people of the advanced countries have increased leisure time, higher incomes, and extended mobility. In tourism we can find every kind of economic activity of consumption, demand production and supply. In the beginning of the twentieth century, tourism developed due to transport revolution. People began to travel by private cars and coaches to places wherever they liked. The better standards of living, broader outlook of the people, their increasing exposure to outside world, developments through different media, development of infrastructure facilities and slackening of international barriers promoted tourism development. Along with this, the emergence of travel agencies, transport Companies, hotel chains, cheap air travel facilities have given a boost to tourism. Since tourism industry brings, more foreign exchange,

the third world countries also began to patronize tourism. Today the tourism prospects or industry has grown into one of the major foreign exchange earning sectors in the country.

- To study the present scenario of Medical Tourism activity.
- To study the socio-economic profiles of the tourists and nature of their tours and expenditure pattern of the Medical Tourists.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Government of India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Tourism have jointly formed a Task Force with a view to promoting India as a Health Destination for persons across the globe so as to enable them to gainfully utilize the health care expertise and infrastructure available in the country. The aim is to expand the range of the tourism products in India, both for domestic and international market. For this, streamlining of immigration process for medical visitors is necessary. In this connection, the Government of India has introduced a new category of Medical Visa (M-Visa) which can be given for specific period to foreign tourists coming to India for medical treatment. The Ministry of Tourism India (MoT) is planning to extend its Market Development Assistance (MDA) scheme to cover Joint Commission International (JCI) and the National Accreditation Board of Hospitals (NABH) certified hospitals.

Major Medical Tourism Facilitators

In order to promote the positioning of India as a Medical destination and increase the presence of the medical fraternity in the international travel exhibitions, a dedicated space of 4 sq m. was provided to the medical fraternity within the India Pavilion at ITB Berlin. All stakeholders engaged in Wellness and /or Medical Tourism activities would endeavour to form either Wellness Tourism Association of India or Medical Tourism Association of India or Wellness and Medical Tourism Association of India, which will have open all India membership, is committed for holding elections at regular intervals & hold annual Audit of Accounts and is registered as a non profitable society.

Road shows focusing on Medical Tourism is a continuous process and is organized in consultation with the Stakeholders from time to time. The last road show was organised in West Asia (Dubai, Riyadh, Kuwait and Doha) in October 2009 which was led by the Minister of State for Tourism. The Ministry of Tourism would consider providing financial support in the ratio of 50:50 for making publicity and promotional material subject to the condition that the Ministry of

Tourism would provide a maximum of Rs.10.00 lakh under the category for each stakeholder in a financial year.

Tourism in Economic Development

Tourism industry creates a bond of friendship and peace throughout the world. Tourists spread the culture and tradition of the host country to places wherever they visit. Tourism has been recognized as an engine for economic development. Tourists feel that they have visited different cultures. They interact with the local people and get good information on the social, economic and political environment of the place they visit. They come to know of the local customs and appropriate behaviour in the host countries. Tourism potential generates employment opportunities to local people and the country is benefited by the enormous accumulation of foreign exchange. They buy the locally manufactured artistic, goods and handicrafts. In short, there is an abundant amount of good will and rapport between the local people and the tourists. When such a harmonious relationship exists between the local people and the tourists, the message of hospitality spreads and the tourists come in hordes and tourism is promoted.

Conclusion

Tourism sector can bring about changes in the economic, ethological, social, and cultural aspects of a country. Tourism generates employment directly, indirectly and has potential to earn foreign exchange to a host country. Considering the significance of tourism 27th September is being observed as the World Tourism Day every year. A high degree of variation would mean little uniformity or consistency whereas a low degree of variation would mean great uniformity or consistency” in this study area. It is catalysis of the development process at the national and global levels.

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