

The emerging medical tourism services

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MEDICAL tourism internationally is called a global healthcare tourism or simply a medical travel between countries to obtain health-care services. Medical tourism takes place to obtain health-care services of some special kinds that includes joint replacement of knee/hip, cardiac surgery or dental surgery, cosmetic surgery, neuro-surgery, neurobiological treatment, liver transplant etc. in addition to the other medical services of technical importance.

Life is more important than anything else. In medical tourism, most of the countries do compromise with a legal restriction on visa processing provided by the country's law, rules and regulation. In other words, medical tourism avails an advantage of less regulatory or legal oversight in matters of proper issuance of visa. Until now, it is identified that over 50 countries have been able to develop a national industry of health services based on medical tourism.

At all kinds of production of goods and services of quality at a low price is preferred. This theoretical and economic phenomenon is also commonly applied in medical services as is reflected through the recently developed medical tourism world wide. In the Asian context and in the Indo-Pak-Bangladesh sub-continent, the medical tourism in India has been growing at a rate of 30%, which is expected to make a \$2 bn health service industry in India by 2015. It would be interesting to mention here an example about the health care services and its availability at a competitive price in India. Very recently we happened to meet a few Bangladeshi-Canadian citizens in Bangladesh. They are going to obtain some medical services in India. According to them, minimum ten patients can be treated in India at some cost which is not enough even for a single patient to treat in Canada. It is also estimated that on an average, about 150,000 yearly medical travel to India is taking place for its low cost and quality health care services.

There are many more attraction than can be mentioned here in favor of the medical tourism to India. Advantages including low cost, availability of the latest medical technology and growing compliance on international quality standard etc are the characteristics of Indian modern health service technology. Among the other attraction in India is that more than 80 percent can understand English very clearly. Total people of India speak at least two languages. It is hard to find people in India who do not understand English. It means that the largest number of people can understand English globally only in India. Also, the guest house or hotel and other accommodation are large in other countries than to India. The treatment is also the health service cost in India is much lower than the cost of the cost of comparable treatment in

Britain and USA. Most of the medical treatment in India includes, bone-marrow transplant, cardiac bypass, eye surgery and hip/knee replacement etc. India is known in particular for heart surgery, knee and hip resurfacing and other areas of advanced medicine. Many or most of which are not available in the countries neighboring to India. Medical tourism sector in India has been identified as growing source of foreign exchange. The medical tourism in India has been prestigious and goodwill for the country of India internationally known.

India is a poor country. The provision of medical service and their expenses differ between foreign and domestic patients. The domestic patients however, cannot afford all kinds of expensive treatment in India. They are to some extent discriminated against the relatively solvent patients domestically in India and internationally. India is big country of 1.2 billion people. Medical tourism is good for the countries national income. The general people in India claim to have an equal provision of medical services for both domestic and foreign patients. Medical tourism has been growing rapidly in India as discussed before. The government is under pressure to find the best ways and means to make the medical sector of benefit available to public health service for the common people. It is noteworthy that the average longevity in Bangladesh is about 69 years compared to that of 67 years in India. It may be assumed that public health service in Bangladesh may not be far below than that of India. It is also interesting to note that adult literacy rate in India and in Bangladesh are about the same as 12%. In terms of literacy and health care services combinedly makes the Human Development Index (HDI) in Bangladesh better than India.

Medical tourism to India is an example of how India is making profit out of globalization and outsourcing. Foreigners who receive medical services in India have been helping its expansion of tourism. Medical tourism to India and the earnings of Foreign exchange in particular is in process of increasing substantially. India has the medical tourist from both the rich and the relatively less affluent countries. Medical tourists to India are from industrialized countries including those of UK, USA etc. It also receive a huge number of medical tourists from its neighboring Bangladesh, Pakistan and China. The medical tourism industry in India has been facing an intense competition in Asia particularly with Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia. To promote their outsourcing patients, India has been able to promote 45 hospitals as the health center of excellence. To a foreign patient, cost of treatment, hospital and hotel services are the major concern. All of these are relatively cheap in India. This is the competitive advantage of India.

was estimated that 150,000 medical tourists came to India. As of 2013, according to the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the healthcare market in India is expected to expand recently from \$22 billion to \$50 billion or more due to the expansion of medical tourism. In other words, 5.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have been increased to 8.5% of GDP due to the additional national income from medical tourism to India.

Accredited or certified hospital in India must agree to limit charges to foreigners patients as a part of a card payment system offering lower price for domestic patients. Indian hospitals do not discriminate between the foreign patients to charge high medical fees or they charge the same amount of treatment as in USA, KSA as well as Bangladesh. Even the reduction in charges for patients from India is too high to afford to pay for the services of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

As the India is always blamed for its left-wing policy, its communism, Indian government is trying a subtle way to increase income earned from medical tourism to spend in the health sector. This much public intervention might discourage private health sector incentive and its productivity. All the negative intention of the Indian government will slow down the potential progress of health tourism. The benefits from the medical tourism in many folds. If the accredited hospitals receive a lot of health tourist they will earn more revenue income, which is significantly more than the present. Salary and the remuneration of the Indian health sector workers will go up. It means that health expert will not go out from the India to look for high paying job abroad. The smart physician will stay back with his nation or homeland of India. Brain-drain from the health sector of India will be totally stopped.

In terms of population, India is globally the second biggest country with a population of 1.2 billion. However, India is also geographically very big. Or India is not thickly populated. Infrastructural opportunities are fairly high in India. It is noteworthy that as a single country in Asia, India has the 30 large size hospitals which have been providing health care facilities to domestic and international patients. Health care facilities are relatively cheap compared to their quality services. India has noteworthy Indian health care sector has been contributing more than 5% to its GDP. Precisely speaking, the health sector has been doing good to its population. India is helping itself and the others in the global world. India is not harming anybody. Therefore, Indian health sector is a