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Research Paper Commerce

Tourism Industry and Medical Tourism in India – An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Medical tourism (also called medical travel, health tourism or global health care) is a term used to describe the rapidly-growing practice of traveling across international borders to obtain health care. Services typically sought by travelers include elective procedures as well as complex specialized surgeries such as joint replacement (knee/hip), cardiac surgery, dental surgery, and cosmetic surgeries. However, virtually every type of health care, including psychiatry, alternative treatments, convalescent care available. The key reasons for India emerging as Medical Tourism Destination . India's position in world 2010 that share of India in international tourist arrivals was 0.61 percent, India's rank in world tourist arrivals was 40, share of India in international tourist receipts was 1.54 percent and India's rank in world tourism receipts was 17.

KEYWORDS: FTAs-Foreign Tourist Arrivals. FEE- Foreign Exchange Earnings

INTRODUCTION

Indian tourism sector is one of the most crutial sector of the economy in the India. It is not only a significant contributor to GDP and foreign exchange reserve of the country, but also it provides widespread employment. Tourism sector can also be considered the backbone for allied sectors, like hospitality, civil aviation, and transport. Sensing the importance of the sector, Indian Government has invested abundantly in the past for infrastructure development. It has been partially successful with increase in foreign tourist arrivals over the last decade, courtesy "Incredible India Campaign". Infrastructure in the hospitality sector is still a matter of concern amongst other factors like season-based tourism in some states.

TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA

Tourism in India is the largest service industry, with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) to India increased from 5.17 million in FY09 to 5.78 million in FY10, thereby resulting in a increase of 11.8% YoY. It was better than UNWTO's projected growth rate of 5% to 6% for the world in 2010. FTAs during the period January-June 2011 were 29.19 lakh with a growth of 10.9 per cent, as compared to the FTAs of 26.32 lakh with a growth of 8.9 per cent during January-June 2010 over the corresponding period of 2009. FEE from Tourism in INR terms during January-June 2011 were INR 351.6 billion with a growth of 12.1 per cent, as compared to the FEE of INR 313.7 billion with a growth of 27.1 per cent during January-June 2010 over the corresponding period of 2009. FEE from Tourism in terms of US$ during January-June 2011 were US$ 7.8 billion with a growth of 14.2 per cent, as compared to US$ 6.8 billion with a growth of 36.6 per cent during January-June 2010 over the corresponding period of 2009. Tourism continues to play an important role as a foreign exchange earner for the country. In 2010, foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism were US$ 14.19 billion as compared to US$ 11.39 billion in 2009, registering a growth of 24.6%. FEE from Tourism in INR terms during 2010 were INR 648.8 billion as compared to INR 549.6 billion during 2009 and INR 507.3 billion during 2008. FEE from tourism in US$ terms during 2010 were US$ 14.2 billion as compared to US$ 11.4 billion during 2009 and US$ 11.7 billion during 2008.

The latest information by Ministry of Tourism that Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) during the Month of April, 2012 was 4.52 lakh as compared to FTAs of 4.38 lakh during the month of April, 2011 and 3.72 lakh in April, 2010. There has been a growth of 3.3% in April 2012 over March 2011. Lower growth in April 2012 is also partly due to high base growth rate in April 2011 over April 2010. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) during the period January-April 2012 were 24.34 lakh with a growth of 8.3% as compared to the FTAs of 22.47 lakh with a growth of 12.1% during January-February 2011 over the corresponding period of 2010.

Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) during the month of April 2012 were Rs. 6745 crore as compared to Rs. 5724 crore in April 2011 and Rs 4518 crore in April 2010. The growth rate in FEE in rupee terms in April 2012 over April 2011 were 17.8.% as compared to 26.7.% in April 2011 over April 2010. FEE from tourism in terms during January-April 2012 were 31713 crore with a growth of 28.5% as compared to the FEE of 24676 crore with a growth of 10.8% during January-April 2011 over the corresponding period of 2010. FEE in US$ terms during the month of April 2012 were US$ 1305 million as compared to FEE of US$ 1290 million during the month of April 2011 and US$ 1013 million in April 2010. The growth rate in FEE in US$ terms in April 2012 over April 2011 was 1.2% as compared to the growth of 27.3% in April 2011 over April 2010. FEE from tourism in terms of US$ during January-April 2012 US$ 6274 million with a growth of 14.6% as compared to US$ 5474 million with a growth of 12.4% during January-April, over the corresponding period of 2010.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed for the development of tourism projects in the country. Hotel and Tourism sector is declared as high priority sector and FDI upto 100%, under the automatic route is permitted in 'Hotels & Tourism Sector', subject to applicable laws/regulations, security and other conditions.

As per a report received from the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, the details of the FDI equity flows from April 2008 to January 2012 in the Hotel and Tourism sector are as follows .

TABLE -I

Sl. No.	Year (April-March)	Hotel & Tourism Projects	FDI (` in crore)
1	2008-09	489	2,098.23
2	2009-10	582	3,566.32
3	2010-11	403	1,405.15
4	2011-12 (Apr-Jan)	427	4,041.28
Grand Total		1901	11,110.98

The FDI has been allowed with an objective to encourage investments in the hotel sector in India and to create job opportunities in hospitality sector. The Tourism and the Hospitality sector generated a total of US$ 2,468.39 billion (INR 1,094,48.4 billion) in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) during April 2000-April 2011. .
SHARE IN WORLD TOURISM

Tourism is presently the most important civil industry in the world. Ten percent of the world's work force is in the tourism industry, and 10 percent of the world's GNP comes from tourism. The share of India in international tourist arrivals in 2010 was 0.61%, which is 0.02% improvement over 2009. India's rank improved to 40th in 2010, from 41st in 2009. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India will be a tourism hot-spot from 2009–2018, having the highest 10-year growth potential. Capital investment in India's travel and tourism sector is expected to grow at 8.8 % between 2010 and 2019. As per the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2011 by the World Economic Forum, India is ranked 12th in the Asia Pacific region and 68th overall, on the list of the world's attractive destinations. It is ranked the 14th best tourist destination for its natural resources and 24th for its cultural resources, with many World Heritage sites, both natural and cultural, rich fauna, and strong creative industries in the country. India also

bagged 37th rank for its air transport network. The India travel and tourism industry ranked 5th in the long-term (10-year) growth and is expected to be the second largest employer in the world by 2019.
MEDICAL TOURISM IN INDIA

Medical tourism (also called medical travel, health tourism or global healthcare) is a term used to describe the rapidly-growing practice of travelling across international borders to seek healthcare services. Services typically sought by travelers include elective procedures as well as complex surgeries, etc. India holds advantage as a medical tourism destination due to following factors: Most of the doctors and surgeons at Indian hospitals are trained or have worked at some of the medical institutions in the US, Europe, or other developed nations. Most doctors and nurses are fluent in English. Top -of-the-line medical and diagnostic equipment from global international conglomerates is available at many Indian hospitals. Indian nurses are among the best in the world. Nearly 1000 recognized nurses-training centers in India, mostly attached to teaching hospitals, graduate nearly 10,000 nurses annually. Even the most budget-conscious traveler can afford first-rate service and luxury amenities Medical Tourism is one of the growing segments of travel into India. The percentage of Foreign Tourist Arrivals visiting India for Medical Treatment increased from 2.2% in 2009 to 2.7% in 2010.

There are several Asian destinations like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand etc. that are offering Medical care facilities and promoting Medical Tourism, India stands out

- ❖ State-of-Art Medical facilities
- ❖ Reputed health care professionals
- ❖ Quality Nursing facilities
- ❖ No waiting time for availing the medical services India's traditional health care therapies like Ayurveda and Yoga combined with allopathic treatment provides a holistic wellness which is comparative advantage.

INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE MEDICAL TOURISM

To unlock the huge potential in this sector, the Ministry of Tourism has taken several steps to promote India as a Medical and Health Tourism Destination, which are as follows:

(A) To encourage the tourism sector, the government in recent times, has taken some measures which will benefit the sector. In FY09, Rs.5.2 bn for development of tourism infrastructure was allocated. This figure is higher by Rs.970 m as compared what was allocated in the previous year.

(B) There are about 1,285 approved budget hotels across the country with about 51,000 rooms apart from guesthouses, dharamshalas and devasthans in the unapproved sector..

(C) The tourism ministry has proposed a cash subsidy of Rs.2 lakh per room for one-star category and Rs.3 lakh per room for two and three star category hotels to facilitate their growth..

(D) 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 Pavillion at ITB Berlin.

(E) For participation in approved Medical and other Tourism Fairs/ Medical Conferences/Wellness Fairs and its allied Road Shows Ministry of Tourism provides Market Development Assistance.

(F) Brochure, CDs and other publicity materials to promote Medical and Health tourism have been produced by the Ministry of Tourism and have been widely circulated for publicity in target markets.

(G) Medical and Health tourism has been specifically promoted at various international platforms such as World Travel Mart, London, ITB, Berlin , ATM etc.

(H) A new category of 'Medical Visa' has been introduced, which can be given for specific purpose to foreign tourist coming to India for medical treatment.

(I) Yoga/Ayurveda/Wellness has been promoted over the last two years in the print, electronic, internet and outdoor medium under the Ministry of Tourism's "Incredible India Campaign".

(J) Brochures and CDs on Body, Mind and Soul covering the traditional system of medicine have been produced and circulated extensively by the Ministry of Tourism.

CONCLUSION

In India, the service sector is growing very fast. It now accounts for 50 to 55 percent of the GDP. Tourism is a surplus generating activity. It is a low cost activity. It has become one of the largest foreign exchange revenue earners and provides employment to the organized labour . India is one of the best places for all types of healthcare treatment. People around the world have started considering India as the 'Global Health Destination.'

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