

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1288
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012
HEALTH MEDICAL TOURISM
Dias Dr. Charles;Pradhan Shri Nityananda

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is a wellness destination for foreign tourists;
- (b) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of foreign tourists visited the country for health/medical tourism during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the various schemes being implemented and projects sanctioned for the promotion/development of health/medical tourism in the country along with the funds allocated/sanctioned and released thereunder during the said period, State/UT-wise;
- (d) the places/States identified having the potential of health/medical tourism in the country; and
- (e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for the development/promotion of health/medical tourism to boost inflow of foreign tourists?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SULTAN AHMED)

(a) & (b): Wellness Tourism is one of the growing segments of travel to India. Ministry of Tourism does not compile data on foreign tourist arrivals for Wellness tourism. However, total FTAs in India during 2009, 2010 and 2011 were 5.17 million, 5.78 million and 6.29 million (prov.), respectively. The percentage of Foreign Tourist Arrivals to India for Medical Tourism increased from 2.2% in 2009 to 2.7% in 2010.

(c) to (e): Development & Promotion of Tourism including Health & Medical Tourism is primarily the responsibility of State Governments & Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism sanctioned Central Financial Assistance of Rs.10.00 lakh to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for the project (Phase-I) involving development of pre- qualification standards for member hospitals of the Medical Tourism Society during 2011-12. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance under the Market Development Assistance Scheme (MDA) to approved medical tourism service providers i.e. representatives of hospitals accredited by Joint Commission International (JCI) and National Accreditation Board of Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) and medical tourism facilitators (travel agents/tour operators). The Ministry also provides assistance under this scheme to approved wellness centres i.e. representatives of wellness centres accredited by NABH or the State Governments. The MDA assistance is for participation in medical/tourism fairs/medical conferences/wellness conferences/ wellness fairs and allied road shows.

The Ministry of Tourism has formulated guidelines for Wellness tourism. These guidelines address various issues including inter-alia making available quality publicity material, training and capacity building for the service providers and participation in international & domestic wellness related events. In order to address the issue concerning the mushrooming of wellness centres, the guidelines for accreditation of wellness centres have been developed by National Board for Accreditation of Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) in consultation with the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) and released during the workshop on Wellness tourism organized by the Ministry of Tourism in February 2011. A series of sensitization workshops are being held across the country to sensitize the wellness centres about the importance of the accreditation mechanism and the various promotional efforts of the Ministry of Tourism.

In addition, the steps taken by the Government to promote medical health tourism include promotion in overseas markets through road shows, participation in travel marts, production of brochures, CDs, films and other publicity material.