

## MEDICAL TOURISM-ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROSPECTS IN INDIA'S NORTH EAST

*Shahnoor Rahman*

*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, DKD College, Dergaon, Assam, India*

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### ABSTRACT

*Medical tourism is a growing sector in India. In October 2015, India's medical tourism sector was estimated to be worth US\$3 billion. It is projected to grow to \$7–8 billion by 2020. According to the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), the primary reason that attracts medical value travel to India is cost-effectiveness and treatment from accredited facilities at par with developed countries at much lower cost. Northeast India is well blessed by Nature. It has rich cultural heritage and exotic presence of flora and fauna. Besides having spectacular biodiversity, wildlife, snow-capped Himalayas, tropical forests, shrines of diverse religions, and prominent archaeological sites, Northeast India provides an immense opportunity for medical tourism. So, medical treatment in the Northeast means adding new life to health.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Cost-Effectiveness and Treatment, Day-to-Day Activities and Achievements*

### INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism refers to the activity of people traveling from one place to another to get the medical benefits which are not available at their own location. In its initial stages, it meant traveling from developing to the developed Nations in search of better health care and treatment facilities. However, nowadays, the tables have turned in favor of the developing Nations. People from the first world Nations now travel to third world countries to get equally good treatment at a much cheaper price, or for certain medical procedures which are illegal in their native countries.

Medical tourism in India has emerged as the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry despite the global economic downturn. The high cost of treatments in the developed countries, particularly the USA and UK, has been forcing patients from such regions to look for alternative and cost-effective destinations to get their treatments done. The Indian medical tourism industry is presently at a nascent stage but has an enormous potential for future growth and development.

From the ancient time India is famous for its traditional treatment therapies and have made a recognized place in the medical literature by providing yunani, ayurvedic, allopathic, homeopathy and naturopathy advantage of medicine not only to the Indians but also to the foreigners. History witnessed that millions of people have benefitted with the medicinal wisdom of our skilled medical professionals. Many states of India are now recognized as well known health care center for providing a particular segment of medical treatment like Kerala and Karnataka has emerged as a hub for ayurvedic treatment, and is specialized in healing the patient with the virtue of natural herbs. Here health tourist not only gains the cure for his disease but also enjoy the benefits of scenic scenes, natural beauty, spas, and pleasant weather. Further

Uttarakhand of India is gaining importance for healing the patient with yoga and meditation and natural medicines. Delhi has emerged as a prime destination for cardiac care, orthopedic care, mental trauma, and other kinds of allopathic treatment, and serving millions of domestic and foreign patient at that cost which is comparatively very low than that of their own country. Chennai is known for quality eye care.

The North-East is one of the most beautiful and mysterious parts of India and the least explored and understood. But people of the region still feel neglected and cannot interact with other regions in a positive note. The news that trickles out of the media is mostly bad and we only hear about the kidnappings, bomb blasts, ambushes, and other such events. There are many day-to-day activities and achievements, which even can become the leading story in print and electronic media of the mainstream. But as it is not highlighted the people of the other region cannot access that news. That is why many people do not know much about the region. The alienation of Northeast is mostly by the National Media. It only gives attention only when insurgency-related issues crop up there.

One such area which can be revolutionary in transforming the tourism industry in India's northeast is Medical tourism. Along with the presence of multiple hospitals and health facilities in each of the seven sisters of the North-east, the states are also abundant in rich and diverse natural beauty with various rare flora and fauna. This paper shall attempt to highlight the present medical and healthcare facilities of the North-eastern states along with relative places of interest which may supplement the treatment of people coming to or willing to come to these places for treatment or healthcare.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Medical tourism takes place when individuals opt to travel overseas with the primary intention of receiving medical (usually elective surgery) treatments (Lunt et.al, 2010). Medical tourism as a niche market has emerged from the rapid growth of what has become an industry, where people travel often long distances to overseas countries to obtain medical care (Connell, 2006).

The major 'push' factors driving medical tourism include the convenience of using the internet to gather information (Henderson, 2004), the availability of skilled labor abroad, the fact that globalization has facilitated the ease of travel between countries (Carrera and Bridges, 2006), and the emergence of low cost telecommunication and economy air travel (Turner, 2007)

Entrepreneurship in the tourism and leisure industries is not new. Medical tourism adds a further dimension and provides an opportunity for some unique and specialized business ventures to be created. International travel for medical care in the past was mainly for seeking treatments that were not available in their home country. (Morrison, Rimmington and Williams, 1999)

Many governments, who recognize the value of medical tourism as an innovative new business that can attract new foreign capital as a high-value product, support this industry by providing assistance for the growth, development, and infrastructure for this business. A number of countries in Asia such as India, Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia have invested in attracting tourists for this specialist market (Henderson, 2004).

India is perceived as a low cost and low hygiene environment as broadcasted by a German radio station for medical procedures (Connell, 2006). However, government backing and also the assurance of the medical provider can be addressed this issue for the potential medical tourists by increasing the consumers' confidence in the quality of the medical product (News 2005).

India is emerging as a prime destination for health and contributing a lot towards the socio-economical development of the society by enhancing employment opportunities and an increase in foreign exchange earnings and helping in uplifting the living standards of the host community by developing infrastructure and high-quality education system. Today, Indian hospitals are well-equipped with the latest technology and houses highly qualified and experienced staff that can provide timely and quality medical treatment to patients (Sharma, 2013).

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this research paper are as under:

- To study the various renowned medical/health care facilities available in the various states of India's northeast.
- To study the various renowned tourism destinations in the various states in India's northeast.
- To study various initiatives taken to develop medical tourism in India's northeast.
- To suggest measures to promote medical tourism entrepreneurship in India's northeast.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study is exploratory in nature keeping in view the lack of literature on medical tourism entrepreneurship in India's northeast. This paper has been prepared by analyzing secondary data obtained from websites, e-books, e-journals, etc.

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

To better understand the medical tourism entrepreneurship potentials of the north-eastern states, it is imperative to look at the various healthcare facilities available in each of the states along with other places of tourism interest in the respective state. The following discussion shall highlight the same in tabular form.

### **Renowned Medical/Healthcare Facilities in Northeastern States Along with Respective Renowned Tourism Destinations –**

This section shall highlight the renowned medical/healthcare facilities available in the northeastern states of India. Also, renowned tourism destinations of respective states have been highlighted.

**Table 1: List of Renowned Hospitals/Healthcare Facilities in Assam**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility		Location
Apollo Hospitals Guwahati		Guwahati
ESIC Model Hospital		Guwahati
Aruna Memorial Hospital		Guwahati
Sanjevani Hospital		Guwahati
GNRC Hospital		Guwahati
Wintrobe Hospital		Guwahati
Nemcare Hospital		Guwahati
KGMT Hospital		Guwahati
Midland Hospital & Research Centre		Guwahati
Advance Neuroscience Hospital		Guwahati
Down Town Hospital Guwahati		Guwahati
Dispur Hospitals Private Limited		Guwahati
Agile Hospitals Private Limited		Guwahati
Guwahati Refinery Hospital		Guwahati
Gnrc Medical, North Guwahati		Guwahati
Vision Hospital		Guwahati
TB Hospital		Guwahati
Guwahati Psychiatric Hospital		Guwahati
Pratikshahospital		Guwahati
Red Cross Hospital		Guwahati
Central Nursing Home		Guwahati
Gmc Cancer Hospital		Guwahati
Hayat Hospital		Guwahati
151 Base Hospital		Guwahati
Civil Hospital		Guwahati
St John's Hospital		Guwahati
ASG Eye Hospital		Guwahati
IITG Hospital		Guwahati
Rahman Hospitals Pvt. Ltd		Guwahati
Regional Dental College And Hospital		Guwahati
Maligaon Railway Hospital		Guwahati
Health City Hospital, Guwahati		Guwahati
Excelcare Hospitals		Guwahati
Nightingale Hospital		Guwahati
GovtAyurvedic College & Hospital		Guwahati
Satribari Christian Hospital		Guwahati
Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital,		Guwahati
Bonda Charitable Dispensary		Guwahati
Marwari Hospital		Guwahati
Sun Valley Hospital		Guwahati
Gate Hospital		Guwahati

Gauhati University Hospital		Guwahati
Global Hospital Of Surgery		Guwahati
District Hospital Sonapur		Guwahati
AyursundraSuperspecialty		Guwahati
Swagat Super Speciality		Guwahati
GNRC Hospital Six-Mile		Guwahati
Guwahati Medical College Hospital		Guwahati
Arya Hospital		Guwahati
Guwahati Psychiatric Hospital		Guwahati
Bharat Sewa Ashram Hospital		Guwahati
Cityheart Hospital		Guwahati
United Hospital		Nalbari
CGHS Wellness Centre		Guwahati
Nalbari Maternity Hospital		Nalbari
IHR		Guwahati
Barthakur Clinic		Guwahati
Rangia Model Hospital		Rangia
Mangaldoi Civil Hospital		Mangaldoi
Sri SankaradevaNethralaya		Guwahati

Source: Google

The list of hospitals and healthcare facilities mentioned in Table- 1 above covers most of the significant ones from and around Guwahati and is not the complete picture of healthcare facilities available in Assam. There are many more private and government aided hospitals and healthcare facilities spread all over the state. Along with the provision of healthcare and medical facilities, the state also offers a lot to people who visit the state for treatment, in the form of natural, cultural and historical diversity. The following discussions shall highlight the significant places of interest for visitors to the state.

**Table 2: Some Nature Related Places of Interest in Assam**

Places in Alphabetic order	Kmsfrom Guwahati	Speciality
1. Bhairabkunda	137	A beautiful place at the border of Arunachal Pradesh
2. Bhalukpung	205	A beautiful place by the side of river JiaBhoroli, famous for angling and water sports
3. Chandubi	64	A natural lagoon, beautiful picnic spot
4.Dibru Chaikhowa	490	70 km from Dibrugarh, national park, the habitat of elephants, buffaloes, famous for wild horses
5. Haflong	355	One of the hill stations in Assam with unsurpassed sylvan beauty
6. Jatinga	364	Near Haflong, North Cachar district, a beautiful hilly place, where birds behave in a mysterious way, the local people call that the birds commit suicide here on certain specific days
7. Kaziranga	217	Internationally famous national park, the home of great Indian one-horn rhinoceros, tigers, elephants, buffaloes, deer, wild ducks and geese, the breeding place of pelicans, a habitat of reptiles and monkeys more particularly golden langurs and host of other species

8. Manas	176	Situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, one of the magnificent national parks in the country, the Manas river flows through it, famous for the tiger project, a habitat for various wild animals
9. Orang	150	A wildlife sanctuary, known as a miniature Kaziranga
10. Pabitarā	65	A wildlife sanctuary
11. Potali	173	38 km from the historic town of Tezpur, near the picturesque river JiaBhoroli, famous for eco-camp set up jointly by the Department of Forest and Assam Anglers Association

Source: [http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr\\_assam/sdr\\_assch8.doc](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_assam/sdr_assch8.doc).

From the Table – 2, above, it can be seen that there are some very beautiful natural beauty endowed places in Assam in close proximity to Guwahati like Pabitarā, Chandubi, while some are in driveable distances like Bhairabkunda, Manas, Orang, Potali, etc. Some places filled with natural beauty are a bit far from the capital like Haflong, Kaziranga, DibrūChaikhowa, Jatinga etc, where tourists can also spend their nights at resorts and guest-houses.

**Table 3: List Of Wildlife Sanctuaries in Assam**

S. No.	Name of Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS)	State	Established Year	Area (In km <sup>2</sup> )
1	Amchang WLS	Assam	2004	78.64
2	Barail WLS	Assam	2004	326.25
3	Barnadi WLS	Assam	1980	26.22
4	Bherjan-Borajan-Padumoni WLS	Assam	1999	7.22
5	Burachapori WLS	Assam	1995	44.06
6	Chakrashila WLS	Assam	1994	45.56
7	DeeporBeel WLS	Assam	–	4.14
8	DihingPatkai WLS	Assam	2004	111.19
9	East KarbiAnglong WLS	Assam	2000	221.81
10	Garampani WLS	Assam	1952	6.05
11	Hollongapar Gibbon WLS	Assam	1997	20.98
12	Lawkhowa WLS	Assam	1972	70.14
13	Marat Longri WLS	Assam	2003	451
14	Nambor WLS	Assam	2000	37
15	NamborDoigrung WLS	Assam	2003	97.15
16	Porbitora WLS	Assam	1987	38.81
17	Pani-Dihing Bird WLS	Assam	1995	33.93
18	SonaiRupai WLS	Assam	1998	220

Source – <http://natureconservation.in/list-of-wildlife-sanctuaries-in-assam>

There are five National Parks and eighteen wildlife and bird sanctuaries for protection and preservation of wildlife in the state. The five National Parks – Orang, Kaziranga, Nameri, Manas and Dibrū-Saikhowa covers an area of 1561.14 sq km. The total area covered by eighteen wildlife sanctuaries in the state along with their year of establishment can be seen in the Table-3 above.

A significantly attractive feature of Assam's forestry is its vivid wildlife. Some species (One-horned rhino, hoolock gibbon, golden Langur, etc) are exclusive to the state. Assam is famous as the home of the one-horned rhinoceros. Some endangered species found in the state are the stump-tailed macaque, hoolock gibbon, the golden langur, the capped langur, the pygmy hog, the golden cat, the clouded leopard, the white-winged wood-duck, and the like. All these make Assam as one of the best tourism destinations of the tourists.

**Table 4: Some Historical Places of Interest in Assam**

Places in alphabetic order	Distance from Guwahati (kms)	Speciality
1. Digboi	523	Famous for the first oil refinery in Asia, war cemetery of World War II
2. Sibsagar	369	Seat of the Ahom rule, famous for royal palaces, monuments, temples, and massive ponds
3. Tezpur	137	Ruins of an ancient capital of the Mahabharata time, famous for the love story of Usha-Anirudha

Source: [http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr\\_assam/sdr\\_assch8.doc](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_assam/sdr_assch8.doc).

Assam boasts of several places of historical importance like the Sibsagar which was the abode of the Ahom kings and houses lots of monuments and tombs of the rulers. Besides Digboi which has the oldest oil refinery in the country is also a place of great historical significance along with Tezpur which is a culturally and historically rich town in the state. The Table-4 above shows some historical places of interest in the state along with their specialty.

**Table 5: Some Religious Places of Interest in Assam**

Places in alphabetic order	Distance from Guwahati (kms)	Speciality
1. Barpeta	137	Famous for a Vaishnava monastery
2. Batadrawa	134	Birth place of Shri Sankardeva, the Vaishnava reformer, saint and a great literary figure
3. Hajo	35	Sacred place for Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists
4. Kamakhya		An important religious place of the Hindus within the city of Guwahati, on the top of Nilachal hill, attracts thousands of devotees and other tourists every day by its natural grandeur
5. Madan Kamdev	35	Vast archeological ruins of fine erotic sculpture
6. Majuli	326	The largest river island in the world, the center of Vaishnava culture, a seat of many satras which are known as the centers of Assamese art, dance, drama, music, a safe heaven for various migratory birds
7. Surya Pahar	162	Situated on a hill surrounded by innumerable statues of Durga Devi, Ganesha, Surya, Chandra, Buddha

Source: [http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr\\_assam/sdr\\_assch8.doc](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_assam/sdr_assch8.doc).

Assam also houses several temples and worship places belonging to various religions. The Table-5 above highlights some significant religious places of interest in the state, which are spread over various districts and places in Assam.

**Table 6: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Arunachal Pradesh**

Name of the Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location
Tara Memorial Hospital	Nirjuli
Ramakrishna Mission Hospital	Itanagar
TawangDist Hospital	TawangDist
District Hospital	Seppa
District Hospital	Anini
District Hospital	Daporijo
District Hospital	Tezu
District Hospital	

Source - <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Health/list-of-hospitals-in-arunachal-pradesh.html>

The Table- 6 above shows the various hospitals and healthcare facilities available in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Though the picture is not very promising, the easy connectivity to Guwahati is very helpful in providing healthcare to people in the state.

**Table 7: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Arunachal Pradesh**

Tawang	Bomdila	Ziro	Itanagar	Pasighat	Roing	Bhalukpong
Pakhui WLS	Namdapha National Park	Sela Pass	DIRang	Sangti	Parashuramkund	Tezu
Hayuliang	Daporijo	Aalo	Mechuka	Changlang	Tuting	

Table – 7 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for recreation and to enjoy the rare scenic beauty.

**Table 8: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Meghalaya**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location
	Shillong
Woodland Hospital	Shillong
Shillong Civil Hospital	Shillong
Hope Clinic	Shillong
Nazareth Hospital	Shillong
Khasi JaintiaPresbyterian Synod Hospital	Shillong
Ganesh Das Hospital	Shillong
Super Care Hospital	Shillong
Childrens Hospital	Shillong
Khonglam Dental Clinic	Shillong
Dr. A. K Singh Clinic	Shillong
Reid Chest Hospital	Shillong
Aman Clinic	Shillong
SKM Clinic	Shillong
Das Clinic	Shillong
Narayan Clinic	Shillong
North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health And Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS)	Shillong

Source: <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Health/list-of-hospitals-in-meghalaya.html>

The Table- 8 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Meghalaya. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several others in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states.

**Table 9: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Meghalaya**

Cherrapunji	NohkalikaiWaterfall	Living root bridge	Umiam Lake	Elephant Falls
All Saint's Church	Dawki	KaBri Ki Synrang	Rainbow Falls	MawkdokDympep Valley
Police Bazar	Air Force Museum	Dain-Thlen Falls	Mawthadraishan peak	Balpakram National Park
Lady Hydari Park	Ialong Park	Siju Cave	Nohsngithiang Falls	KremLiatPrah
Mawsmmai Cave	Shillong Peak	Mawsynram	Mawlynnong Village	Mawlynnong Village
Mawlynnong Village	Mawlynnong Village			



Table – 9 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Meghalaya. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for recreation and to enjoy the rare scenic beauty.

**Table 10: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Tripura**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location
	Agartala
Bhaumik Polyclinic and Nursing Home	North Tripura
Medicaids Lab and X- Ray Unit	North Tripura
Central Diagnostic Clinic	South Tripura
Bhaumik Polyclinic and Nursing Home	Agartala
Tripura Medical College and Dr. BR Ambedkar Memorial Teaching Hospital	Agartala

Source: <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Health/list-of-hospitals-in-tripura.html>

The Table- 10 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Tripura. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several others in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states as well as from neighboring Bangladesh.

**Table 11: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Tripura**

Ujjayanta Palace	Tripurasundari Temple	Unakoti	Neermahal Palace	Tripura Government Museum	Heritage Park
Sepahijala Wild Life Sanctuary	Kamaleswari temple	Sipahijala Wildlife Sanctuary	KalyanSagar Lake	ISKCON, Math Chowmuhani	Jagannath Temple
Rudrasagar Lake	Jampui Hill	Fourteen Goddess Temple	Kalibari Temple	Nehru Park	RavindraKanan
VenubanVihar Buddha Shrine	Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary	Dumboor Lake	Kalapania Nature Park	Kamala Sagar	Haveli Museum
Gondacherra Wildlife Sanctuary	Benu Ban Bihari Temple	ChowdaDevta Temple			

Table – 11 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Tripura. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for recreation, religious interest and to enjoy the scenic beauty.

**Table 12: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Sikkim**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location (District)
S.T.N.M. Hospital	East
Singtam Hospital	East
Namchi Hospital	South
Gyalshing Hospital	West
Mangan Hospital	North
G.B. Pant Hospital, Sazong	East
Central Referral Hospital, Tadong, Gangtok	East

Source: <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Health/list-of-hospitals-in-sikkim.html>

The Table- 12 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Sikkim. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several other PHCs and hospitals in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states.

**Table 13: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Sikkim**

Kanchenjunga National Park	Gangtok	North Sikkim	West Sikkim,	South Sikkim	Aritar
Do DrulChorten	Nathula Pass	Rumtek Monastery	Tsomgo Lake	Mangan	Tinkitam
Rayong	Chopta Valley	Gurudongmar Lake	Lachen	Thangu	Yumthang
Cholamu Lake	Namchi,	Ravangla,	Borong	VarseyGeyzing	Goecha La
Biksthang,	Pelling	Yangtey	Dzongri Trek	Kasturi trek	Yuksam

Table – 13 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Sikkim. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for adventure, recreation, religious interest and to enjoy the scenic beauty.

**Table 14: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Nagaland**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location (District)
Christian Institute of Health Sciences & Research	Dimapur
Police Central Hospital	Chumukedima
Bethel Medical Centre	Kohima
Faith Hospital and Institute of Medical Sciences	Dimapur
Dimapur Civil hospital	Dimapur
Referral hospital, Dimapur	Dimapur
Mhondamo Memorial Nursing Home	Wokha
Naga Hospital	Kohima
Oking hospital and research clinic,	Kohima
Phek Civil Hospital	Phek
Wokha Civil Hospital	Wokha
Zunheboto Civil Hospital	Zunheboto
Mokokchung Civil Hospital	Mokokchung

Source: <http://www.nagalandonline.in/about/health>

The Table- 14 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Nagaland. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several other PHCs and hospitals in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states.

**Table 15: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Nagaland**

Pulebadze Peak	Nichuguard	Chumukedima village	Kachari Ruins	Changtongya	Kuki Dolong Village
Tseminyu	Green Park	Nagaland Science Centre	Medziphema	Ruzaphema	Dzüleke
Naga Bazar	Kohima Zoo	Kohima State Museum	Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow	Kohima War Cemetery	Chuchuyimlang
Mokokchung Park	Mokokchung Village	Longkhum	Ungma		

Table – 15 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Nagaland. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for adventure, recreation and to enjoy the scenic beauty.

**Table 16: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Mizoram**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location (District)
Kulikawan Hospital	Aizawl
Greenwood Hospital	Aizawl
Nazareth Hospital	Aizawl
Faith Hospital & Research Centre	Lunglei
New Life Polyclinic & Physiotherapy Centre	Aizawl
B.N. Hospital & Research Centre	Aizawl
Hope Hospital	Aizawl
D.M. Hospital	Champhai
Med – Aim Adventist Hospital	Champhai
Alpha Hospital	Aizawl
Nazareth Nursing Home	Kolasib
Maraland Gospel Centenary Hospital (Nursing Home)	Saiha
Vaivenga Hospital & Research foundation	Aizawl
Aizawl Hospital	Aizawl
Grace Nursing Home & Research Centre	Aizawl
Mizoram Health Care	Dawrpui
Lairam Christian Medical Centre	Lawngtlai
New Life Hospital	Chanmari
Nazareth Medi-Tech Diagnostic & Care Centre	Aizawl
Bethesda Rural Hospital	Bawngkawn
Greenwood Hospital	Aizawl
Christian Hospital	Lunglei
Seventh Day Adventist Hospital	Aizawl
Presbyterian Hospital	Aizawl
Mizoram State Cancer Institute	Aizawl

Source: <http://www.mizoramonline.in/about/health>

The Table- 16 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Mizoram. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several other PHCs and hospitals in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states.

**Table 17: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Mizoram**

Aizawl	Phawngpui	Serchhip	Lunglei	Champhai	Mamit
Phawngpui Peak	Falkawn village	Vantawng Waterfalls	Tamdil Lake	ReiekTlang	HmuifangTlang
Dampa Tiger Reserve	Kolasib	Saiha			

Table – 17 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Mizoram. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for recreation, adventure and to enjoy the scenic beauty.

**Table 18: List of Renowned Hospital/Healthcare Facilities in Manipur**

Name of Hospital/Healthcare Facility	Location (District)
Imphal Hospital & Research Centre	Imphal
Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital	Imphal
Clinic Marodyar Research Centre	Imphal
North-East India - IPR Investigations	Imphal
Shija Hospitals And Research Institute	Imphal
Shija Hospital & Research Institute	Imphal
OM Clinical Lab RIMS Road Imphal, Manipur	Imphal
Cecil Medical Lab RIMS Road	Imphal
Leirik Memorial Charitable Women's Hospital and Maternity Home, Sangaiprou, Airport Road, Imphal	Imphal
Babina Clinical Lab RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Mona Clinical Lab KombireiKeithel, Imphal	Imphal
Associated Chamber of Commerce Medical Care and Research Centre, Thangal Bazar, Imphal	Imphal
Dr. Mao Dental Clinic Thngal Bazar, Imphal	Imphal
Sapam X-Ray Clinic RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Langol View Charitable Clinic and Maternity Home, KombireiKeithel, Imphal	Imphal
Emo Optical Centre, RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Sangai Optical Centre, Masjid Road, Imphal	Imphal
Leo Optics, Paona Bazar, Polo ground Road, Imphal	Imphal
Ranjan Clinical Lab, BT Road Imphal	Imphal
Catholic Medical Centre, Koirengei, Imphal	Imphal
Joy Guru Optical Shop, Thangal Bazar, Imphal	Imphal
Shija Hospital & Research Centre RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Get-Well Clinic Near KhumanLampak, Imphal	Imphal
Imphal Hospital & research Centre RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Ching Tam Oral & Dental Clinic Khoyathong, Imphal	Imphal
Jobeon Imaging Clinic RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Yumnam Eye care Centre RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Kshetri ECG Centre RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Adarsh Lab Clinic Kangla Park, Imphal	Imphal
Lamphel X-Ray & Lab Clinic & AFCUS RIMS Road, Imphal	Imphal
Leishiphung Christian Hospital Ukhrul	Ukhrul
Berean Medical Centre Ukhrul (merged with Leishiphung Christian Hospital wef March 2002)	Ukhrul
Public X-ray 7 clinical Lab RIMS Road	Imphal
Sielmat Christian Hospital Churachandpur	Churachandpur
Bethsaida Hospital Churachandpur	Churachandpur
Health Care Centre Wangjing, Thoubal	Thoubal
Sanasam X-ray & lab Clinic Thoubal	Thoubal
Daya Clinic Moirang, Bishnupur	Bishnupur

Source: <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Health/list-of-hospitals-in-manipur.html>

The Table- 18 above shows a picture of the Medical facilities presently available in Manipur. Apart from the hospitals mentioned in the list, there are also several others in other districts of the state which caters to the medical and healthcare requirements of people from the state as well as those from other neighboring states as well as from neighboring Myanmar.

**Table 19: List of Renowned Tourism Destinations in Manipur**

Loktak Lake	KeibulLamjao National Park	Tharon Cave	Kangla Fort	Singda Dam	INA Memorial Complex
Shree Govindajee Temple	Manipur Zoological Garden	State Museum	ImaKeithel		

Table – 19 above shows the various places of tourism interest in the state of Manipur. Every year a significant number of tourists from various places in India as well as outside India visits these locations for religious interest, adventure, recreation and to enjoy the scenic beauty.

### Initiatives for Development of Medical Tourism in India's Northeast

This section shall highlight some significant initiatives taken to develop Medical tourism in India's northeast.

- The concept of medical tourism in the region started back in 1987 with the opening of the GNRC (formerly known as Guwahati Neurological Research Center) by Dr. Nomal Chandra Bora. Started as the premiere medical center for the treatment of any neurological problems, this organization has now got three units in Guwahati, each of them including a multi-specialty unit in Amingaon.
- But the issue was that GNRC was focused on neurosciences alone. To fill in the gaps and cater to the surgical needs of the region, came the Swagat Hospitals. Being a pioneer of surgery, Dr. Subhash Khanna came out with a brand with the first Modular Operation theatre in the region.
- The establishment of Narayana Superspeciality Hospital in North Guwahati has ushered in hope for numerous patients of the northeast as well as from outside the region who seeks thorough medical helps along with some recreation.
- Guwahati, the capital city of Assam is fast emerging as a healthcare hub. A new All India Institute for Medical Sciences (AIIMS) is also coming up. It will certainly lead to the development of health tourism.
- Arunachal Pradesh ministry has taken various steps to boost the healthcare services in the state. Disease control strategy in the community through programs such as Revised National TB Control Program (RNTCP), National Vector Borne Disease Control Program (NVBDCP), National Leprosy Eradication Program, AIDS control program, Blindness Control Program, Integrate Disease Surveillance Program etc are under the umbrella of NHM. Maternal and Child Health services are provided through Ante Natal Care services & Routine Immunisation of all children in all health facilities.
- The Union cabinet in December 2016 approved new visa policy for visit to India. The new rule regarding e-tourist visa is aimed to boost business trips, conferences, and short-term medical treatment. The government is now planning to promote medical tourism and attract more of business visitors to India. Under this plan, an e-tourist visa will now be the e-visa. The visa holder would be allowed entries on a dual basis for business and tourism purposes, as well as the third one for medical treatment.

- Indo-UK Institute of Health announced in February, 2018 that it will pump in Rs 1,600 crore to set up a medicity with a 1,000-bedded hospital in Assam, taking the total investment in India to Rs 19,200 crore. The UIIH medicity in Assam will have a medical college, nursing college, PG academy and a training facility for allied health professionals. Cutting edge medical research shall be carried out at the UIIH medicities in areas as diverse as genomics and stem cells, translational research, and clinical research leveraging on the patient data available.
- The Tourism Policy of Assam, 2017 stated that the State government can inject a dose of conventional transit tourism to a patient's itinerary by taking the patients and escorts in and around Guwahati for a day or two. Tourism department will tie-up with such hospitals travel desks and lure these medical tourists to the city tour packages run by ATDC and private tour operators.
- In a bid to make the north-eastern region a medical tourism hub, a conference was held in 2017 in Manipur capital Imphal by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in association with the Manipur government. The conference was aimed not only to build a strong eco-system for a quality healthcare facility in the region but also to invite potential investors in the region for greater development in the health sector. The conference was attended by CEOs and CMDs of leading healthcare providers of the country as well as over 300 stakeholders from healthcare fraternity from across the corner of the country.
- The Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry along with ministries of Tourism and Health has launched a website designed to promote India as a premier healthcare destination. The website is a single-source platform providing comprehensive information to medical travelers on the top healthcare institutions spread across major cities of the nation —highlighting its speciality in various medical treatment, wellness and rejuvenation, and Ayurveda & Alternative medicine. The website, *indiahealthcaretourism.com* also supports Arabic, Russian and French languages.

### **Suggestions/Measures to Promote Medical Tourism Entrepreneurship in India's Northeast**

This section includes some suggestions/measures that can be adopted to promote medical tourism entrepreneurship in India's northeast.

- **Use of ICT:** ICT can provide last mile connectivity to patients and virtual medical assistance to patients in a remote area from doctors who can provide consulting from centrally located hospitals. The use of mobiles for accessing health-related information or consuming health services will be a reality, coupled with wearables for tracking health metrics. Use of Data Analytics and Electronic medical records (EMR) will open up a new trend of data analytics for predictive analysis.
- **Super-specialty and multispecialty hospitals:** North East states should focus on developing medical infrastructure to provide highvalue treatment to attract advanced patients, thereby, opening the route to generate higher revenues. Development of Super-specialty and multispecialty hospitals with international accreditations are more likely to appeal to foreign tourists.

- **Creation of comprehensive packages:** Tourism operators in India's Northeast can create comprehensive packages which include tours or visits to various tourism destinations, while at the same time also visit a hospital of their choice to get some specific medical treatment.
- **Creation of routes for neighboring countries:** Routes can be developed to attract tourists from Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar and other South and South East Asian countries to link with various North East states.
- **Easing entry barriers:** The Government can also look towards easing the entry barriers for people willing to come to India through the borders for accessing the healthcare system in India. A good example is the Shija Hospitals in Manipur where a lot of people from Myanmar come to avail quality healthcare services.
- **Medical visas:** A simplified systems of getting medical visas should be developed in order to make travel across borders easier. Visas can be extended depending on the condition of the patients. A visa on arrival scheme for the tourists from selected countries should be instituted which allows foreign nationals to stay in Northeast India for healthcare reasons. There is a need to simplify and speed up these procedures to make Northeast India a more attractive healthcare tourism destination.
- **Setting up national level bodies:** To market Northeast India's specialized healthcare products in the world and also address the various issues confronting the corporate healthcare sector, leading private hospitals across the region should plan to set up a national-level body with the objective to promote Northeast India as hot healthcare tourism destinations.
- **Role of government:** The role of Government at the central and state levels for success in medical/healthcare tourism is two-fold: a) Acting as a Regulator to institute a uniform grading and accreditation system for hospitals to build consumers trust. b) Acting as a facilitator for encouraging private investment in medical/healthcare infrastructure and policy-making for improving medical/healthcare tourism.
- **Promoting inter-sectoral coordination:** The government bodies like NAHT (National Association of Health Tourism) should take up the responsibility of coordinating the activities of various players – Hospital, Tourism Department, Transport Operators, Hotel Associations, Escorts personnel etc.
- **Tie-up between hospitals and tourism operators:** Tourism service operators in the region can tie-up with renowned hospitals in the region and can also include details of the hospitals, facilities provided, rates, conveyance, facilitating stays, etc in their market promotion portfolio.
- **Setting up agencies to facilitate treatment at renowned hospitals:** Agencies and operators in major cities of the country and other neighboring countries can be set up by prospective entrepreneurs, to facilitate the collection of information about medicals, facilities offered, rates, booking, arranging transportation, stay, currency conversion, etc.
- **Standardization of services:** There is a need to enhance the image of Northeast India. For that, concerned authorities should also focus on establishing price parity for similar kinds of treatments in various hospitals and ensure that the hospitals follow high hygiene and quality standards. It is felt that not only the hospitals but the country too stand to benefit from this by earning foreign currency.



- **Joint ventures / alliances:** To face increasing competition in the healthcare tourism sector, Northeast Indian hospitals should tie-up with foreign institutions for assured supply of medical tourists. Specifically, they should tie-ups with hospitals and insurance providers. For example, Mohali's Fortis Hospital has entered into a mutual referral arrangement with the Partners Healthcare System, which has hospitals like Brigham Women's Hospital and Massachusetts Hospital in Boston under its umbrella, to bring patients from the US. The Apollo group has also tied up with hospitals in Mauritius, Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Yemen.
- **Publicity of the healthcare product:** Production of publicity material such as websites, popular magazines, tourist guidebooks, business magazines and journals on tourism is needed and should be circulated in target markets.
- **Support the public-private partnership:** To accelerate the growth of healthcare tourism in Northeast India, there is a need to support public-private partnership so that different financial and policy related hurdles can be solved timely.
- **Skilled manpower:** To address the growing needs of skilled manpower, training centers for nursing, lab technicians and pharmacists must be set up. While Manipur has gone a long way in providing trained nurses to all over India, similar success stories need to be created in other northeastern states as well

## CONCLUSIONS

North East India not only has a sizeable population which is underserved/ treated, but also there is potential to attract a significant share of foreign tourists from neighboring countries such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar who come to other parts of India for quality and affordable treatment. North East is ideally positioned to attract medical tourists from South and South East Asian countries. With low-cost medical treatment available, lower labor costs, easier transport by road and air, it can be positioned as a medical hub for the country. With improved connectivity, better healthcare infrastructure and the presence of qualified and trained doctors and nurses, the region hold a good potential of becoming the healthcare hub of the region.

Many pan India private players like Apollo and Narayana have come up in the North East and have tried to fill in the void in the healthcare systems with improved quality of services. Some regional hospitals have also come up in the region like Shija Hospital in Imphal which is catering not only to the people in the Manipur but also adjoining countries like Myanmar.

The need of the hour is to think unconventionally on the part of the governments and Tourism operators. Steps need to be taken to unlock the immense potential of the northeastern states of India in the field of Medical tourism and the tremendous entrepreneurship prospects it holds.

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