



National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism

For Prelims: National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism, Medical Tourism Index (MTI), Medical Visa, National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH).

For Mains: Medical and Wellness Tourism, Steps Taken for the Promotion of Medical and Wellness Tourism.

Why in News?

India has been ranked **10th in the Medical Tourism Index (MTI)** for 2020-2021 out of 46 destinations of the world by the **Medical Tourism Association**.

- With an aim to improve medical tourism in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has formulated a [National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism](#) in 2022.

What are the Key Pillars of the Strategy?

- The **National Strategy and Roadmap for Medical and Wellness Tourism** has identified the following key pillars for the development of medical-value travel in the country.
- **Key Pillars:**
 - Developing a brand for India as a wellness destination.
 - Strengthening the **ecosystem for medical and wellness tourism**
 - Enabling digitalization by setting up **Online Medical Value Travel (MVT) Portal**
 - Enhancing **accessibility for Medical Value Travel**
 - Promoting Wellness Tourism
 - **Governance and Institutional Framework**
- [Foreign Tourists Arrival](#) on medical purpose increases from **1.83 lakh** in 2020 to **3.04 lakh** in 2021.

What is Medical and Wellness Tourism?

- **About:**
 - **Medical and wellness tourism** refer to the practice of **travelling to another location to receive medical treatment** or to improve one's health and wellbeing.
 - These types of tourism are growing in popularity as **people become more interested in alternative healthcare options** and seek out high-quality medical care at a lower cost.
- **Issues related to Medical and Wellness Tourism in India:**
 - **Language and Cultural Barriers:** Many medical tourists may face language and [cultural barriers](#), making it difficult to communicate effectively with healthcare providers.
 - This can lead to **misunderstandings and miscommunications** that could impact the quality of care received.
 - **Ethical Concerns:** There have been concerns about the exploitation of **vulnerable populations** in medical tourism, particularly **in the case of** [organ transplantation](#).

▪ **Steps Taken for the Promotion of Medical and Wellness Tourism:**

- **'Medical Visa'** has been introduced, which can be given for specific purposes to foreign travellers coming to India for medical treatment.
 - **'E- Medical Visa' and 'E-Medical Attendant Visa'** have also been introduced for **156 countries**.
- The Ministry of Tourism provides financial Assistance under Market Development Assistance Scheme to Medical Tourism Service Providers accredited by [National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers \(NABH\)](#) for participation in **Medical/ Tourism activities**.

Source: PIB

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