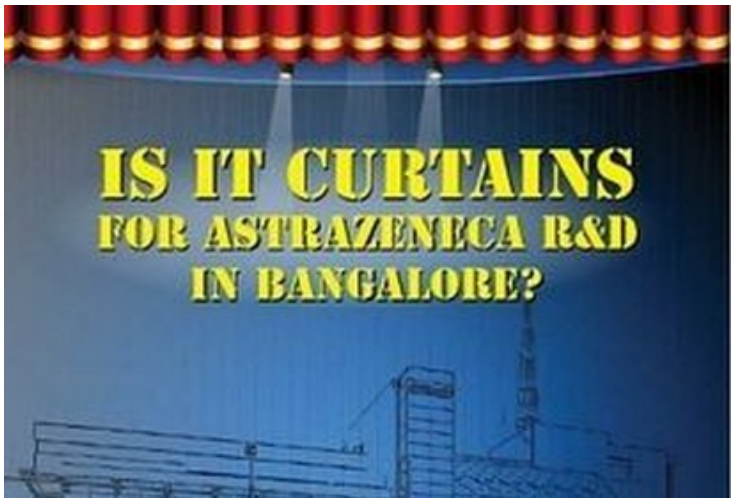
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APAC medical tourism to touch $20.47 bn by 2019: Report

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Singapore: According to a new analysis from Frost & Sullivan, Asia-Pacific medical tourism earned revenues of $9.62 billion in 2014 and is estimated to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 16.3 percent to touch $20.47 billion by 2019.

According to the report, majority of medical tourists to the region are from Asia, Middle East and Africa driven by quality of medical care, immediate access as well as cost effective treatments drive the choices of location. Additionally, as medical tourists tend to travel with their spouses, relatives or friends, these travelers represent additional revenue generation opportunities for the hospitality and airlines sector.

"The medical tourism industry in Asia-Pacific has been experiencing a boom owing to its offer of quality healthcare, ease of access due to availability of travel options and the affordability of treatment compared to western countries," said Ms Rhenu Bhuller, partner, Frost & Sullivan.

The industry is becoming more competitive with the emergence of new medical tourism hotspots, more healthcare providers expanding in the area as well as source countries strengthening their local healthcare infrastructure to minimize the outflow of tourists.

"Overall, medical tourism revenue growth is expected to be in the double digits till 2019," observed Ms Bhuller. "The traditional markets like Thailand, India and Singapore are expected to grow at a steady pace, whereas Malaysia and South Korea are likely to experience stronger growth albeit from a lower revenue base."