

Publication: Vancouver Sun; Date: 2006 Aug 02; Section: West-Coast News; Page Number: B2

## **ENGAGING A NEW COLOSSUS**

INDIA: Opportunities for some B.C. industries are offset by increased competition for others

BY WENCY LEUNG VANCOUVER SUN, Second of two parts



IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

**Yasmeen Sayeed's company, Surgical Tourism Canada, puts together entire treatment packages that cover visas, airfare, hospital stays, surgery costs, follow-up care and post-surgery resort accommodations.**

Not only is India becoming an important customer for B.C., it's where a growing number of Canadian firms are shifting their workload, taking advantage of India's heaper, but highly educated, English-speaking workforce. India has become an outsourcing hub for companies worldwide, for everything from call centres to computer software development.

At Vancouver's Surgical Tourism Canada, president and CEO Yasmeen Sayeed has based her company on India's thriving medical tourism industry. State-of-the-art private hospitals and internationally trained physicians in India can provide heart and hip operations to Canadians at low prices and in a fraction of the time, Sayeed said. "The private health care in India is excellent. They have very beautiful hospitals," she said. "For people who can afford it, every [kind of health care service] is available." Her company puts together entire packages that cover visas, airfare, hospital stays, surgery costs, follow-up care and post-surgery resort accommodations.

A typical hip-replacement package trip that includes about three weeks of care in India costs about \$15,000 Cdn, and patients can receive treatment right away. By comparison, Canadians heading to the U.S. for hip-replacement surgery might pay \$25,000 US (about \$22,000 Cdn) for five days of in-hospital care.

And while surgeries conducted at home are covered by the province's medical services plan, the wait could take years, depending on the procedure. Since Surgical Tourism Canada began operating last year, it has sent at least 22 clients to India, and Sayeed said demand for its services is growing.

**Excerpts from the original article, courtesy of Vancouver Sun, August 02, 2006, ENGAGING A NEW COLOSSUS**