

JAPAN AIMS TO GET MEDICAL TOURISTS FROM CHINA



Japan aims to do what almost every other nation on the planet is doing in tourism right now: making use of the growth of the Chinese market. However, Japan aims to focus on the field of medical tourism and improve its worldwide reputation in this field.

It has been typical for Japanese tourist to travel to China for transplants for some time. However, the tide is changing and a flow in the opposite direction is now more realistic. China has always suffered from the rumor that the Chinese use the organs of executed inmates in transplants instead of those from regular donors. This has never been proven yet a rumor of such magnitude never really needs to be. **It has basically stopped Japanese tourists going to China for operations.**

The Japanese Tourist Agency wishes to increase the number of patients making the opposite journey. The first step is to increase the figure of 30 visitors per year to 100. The official reason is to stop illegal organ trafficking yet the real reasons are to bring more money to Japan, improve the country's reputation and get one over on Korea, which also has a firm grip on the Asian medical market.

The project is, however, facing a few problems before reaching its targets. Firstly, there is the question of language. Few Japanese speak Chinese and vice versa. The common Western myth that Chinese and Japanese are very similar is born out of ignorance. Another problem involves bureaucracy and neither country has a great track record in making peoples' lives easy. **A further problem Japan will face is how to provide extra services for richer and more demanding patients.** Right now, no such infrastructure is in place.

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