Atithi Devo Bhava?*

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In 2014, international tourist arrivals reached an all-time high, with a record of 1138 million of overnight visitors - a 4.7 per cent increase from 2013 (UNWTO, 2015). This increase follows a sustained period of growth in international tourist arrivals since the financial crisis of 2008, and a 23 per cent increase since the year before the crisis (UNWTO, 2015). Travel for holidays, recreation and other forms of leisure accounts for just over half of all international tourists (52% or 568 million), followed by travel for other reasons, such as visiting friends and relatives (VFR), religious reasons and pilgrimage, health treatment, etc (27%) (UNWTO, 2014). Some 14 per cent of international tourist reported travelling for business and professional purposes, and the purpose of visit for the remaining 7 per cent of arrivals are not specified (see UNWTO (2014) for more details).

Such an increase in international tourism has been facilitated as governments have started to pay closer attention on visa procedures. One indicator of this is the fact that, in 2014, 62 per cent of the world's population was required a traditional visa from the embassy prior to departure, down from 77 per cent in 2008 (UNWTO, 2014). Moreover, a total of 50 destinations significantly facilitated the visa process for citizens of 30 or more countries between 2010 and 2014, by changing their visa policies from "visa required" to either "e-visa", "visa on arrival" or "no visa required" (UNWTO, 2014). Of all the facilitative measures, the most popular facilitation measure implemented by destinations remains to be the introduction of "visa on arrival" - instead of the "visa required" - where 56 per cent of all improvements were made between 2010 and 2014 (UNWTO, 2014).

In this policy brief, we analyze recent reforms of the tourist visa process of India. On the surface, recent initiatives by India seem impressive. However, as often, details matter, our analysis shows that the Indian initiatives are rather void and, partly, poorly implemented. We also note that the Immigration Bureau of India states that tourists coming to India still prefer to get their visas beforehand.[1] These findings raise pertinent questions on how to make a real impact to the

*Atithi Devo Bhava is a Sanskrit phrase which can literally be translated in English to mean "The guest is equivalent to God" or "Be one for whom the guest is God" See (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atithi_Devo_Bhav). Responsibility of the views, opinions, suggestions, and analysis in this article lies solely with the authors and does not reflect the institutions they represent. Publication Date: 13th March, 2015.

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[1]http://goo.gl/lg3ht2

Indian economy. We conclude by suggesting ways forward, so as to fix the shortfalls of the scheme before extending it to 150 countries, as suggested by the Finance Minister in his Annual Budget for 2015-2016. Such a review should preferably also include learning from other countries that also are working to facilitate their visa processes, such as Australia. Importantly, our findings are of a wider interest since movement of persons is crucial not only for tourism but also for business that want to connect to global value chains as well as for partners abroad.

1 The Indian Tourist Visa on Arrival scheme - Much Ado about Nothing?

Wanting to stay in the facilitator league, the Government of India on 1st January, 2010, launched the "Tourist Visa on Arrival" (TVoA) scheme on a pilot basis for a period of one year. The pilot scheme covered tourists coming from five countries, namely Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, and Japan. In 2011, the scheme was extended to six more countries, namely Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos, Indonesia, and Myanmar. With no additions in 2012 and 2013, the year of 2014 witnessed a large number of countries added to the list of countries whose nationals could be entitled for TVoA in India. In April, 2014, tourists coming from South Korea were included in the scheme, and in November, 2014, the scheme was further extended to tourists coming from 32 other countries (see table 1 on when and to whom did India extend the tourist visa on arrival scheme).[2]

Since its inception on 1st January, 2010, the number of tourists entering India by availing the new "visas on arrival" facility has been trending upwards (see table 2). With an average year on year growth of 60 per cent over the period 2010 to 2014, tourist visas issued on arrival has gone up from as low as 6,549 in 2010 to 39,046 in 2014. Meanwhile, the absolute number of total foreign tourist arrivals (TFTAs)[3] has gone up from 5.8 million in 2010 to 75 million in 2014, signifying an average year on year growth of nine per cent over the period. However, the role of the Indian scheme to facilitate entry for this increase is dubious. In fact, the average share of total visas issued on arrival (TVoAs) in the total foreign tourist arrivals (TFTAs) in India is below half a per cent for the same period (Average share of TVoA stands at 0.27 per cent of TFTAs for the period 2010 to 2014).

Tourists appear not so inclined to opt for the "visa on arrival facility". Both the growth of TVoA over time across countries (see table3) and the growth of TVoAs share of TFTAs over time (see table 4) does not give an encouraging picture. For instance, we see that since its launch in 2010, tourist from Singapore have consistently preferred obtaining their visas on arrival in India. Although the growth rate of TVoA issued to Singaporeans have increased from 2 per cent in 2011 to 65 per by 2013 (see table 3), the average share of Singaporeans that obtained TVoA over the

[2]On 13th March, 2015, the Prime Minister of India, in his visit to Sri Lanka announced the extension of the TVoA scheme to Sri Lankan citizens from the Sinhala and Tamil New Year from the 14th April 2015 (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2015).

[3]Total foreign tourist arrivals from a given country c in a given year t in India or total foreign tourist arrivals in a given year t in India represents (proxies) the total tourist visas issued to a given country c in a given year t by India or total tourist visas issued in a given year t by India.

Table 1: Chronology of the Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme

Announcement date	Implementation date	Countries granted Tourist Visa on Arrival	Number of Countries Added
9th December, 2009[a]	1th January, 2010[f]	Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg and Japan	5
30th December, 2010[b]	1th January, 2011[b]	Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Japan and Laos	4
25th January, 2011[g]	28th February, 2011[c]	Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Japan, Indonesia and Myanmar	2
15th April, 2014[d]	15th April, 2014[d]	Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, Myanmar and South Korea	1
27th November, 2014[e]	27th November, 2014[e]	Singapore, Finland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Japan, Indonesia, Myanmar, South Korea, Australia, Brazil, Cook Islands, Djibouti, Fiji, Germany, Guyana, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Laos, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue Island, Norway, Oman, Palau, Palestine, Papa New Guinea, Russia, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, UAE, Ukraine, USA, and Vanuatu	32
13th March, 2015[j]	14th April, 2015	Sri Lankan citizens from the Sinhala and Tamil New Year	1 (partial opening)

[a] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2009), [f] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2010), [b] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2010), [g] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2011), [c] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2011), [d] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2014a), [e] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2014b), [j] Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2015). Since the press release for the date of announcement is not available, we assume that the date of announcement and date of implementation for tourist coming from South Korea to avail of the TVoA is the same.

Table 2: Performance of Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme

	Tourist Visa on Arrivals (TVoAs)		Total Foreign Tourist Arrivals (TFTAs)		
Year	Total (Number)	Year on Year Growth Rate (%)	Total (Number)	Year on Year Growth Rate (%)	TVoAs as a share of TFTAs (%)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
2010	6549	-	5775692	-	0.11
2011	12761	94.85	6309222	9.24	0.20
2012	16084	26.04	6577745	4.26	0.24
2013	20294	26.18	6967601	5.93	0.29
2014	39046	92.40	7462000	7.10	0.52
2015[a]	25023	-[e]	-	-	-
Average	18947[b]	59.87	6618452	9.24	0.27

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2013), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014). [a]represents data for January 2015 only. Data on several months for several countries for 2010 were not available so the aggregate was taken from Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2010). [b] Average excludes data for January 2015. [e] year on year growth rate for the over the period 2014-2015 is not calculated as the data available for 2015 only represents for January 2015. Years (2010-2014) represents a calender year, i.e., 12 months from January to December.

period 2010-2013 is less than two per cent of the total arrivals of Singaporeans in India (see table 4). Moreover Singaporeans preference to obtain visa on arrival has remained volatile over the period 2010 to 2013; from 1.69 per cent in 2010, the preference for a TVoA reduced to 1.55 per cent and 1.50 per cent in 2011 and 2012 respectively, before it went up to 1.74 per cent in 2013.

On the other hand, even though we see that the growth rate of TVoA issued to New Zealanders have slowed down from 42 per cent to 11 per cent in 2014 (see table 3), New Zealanders preference to obtain visa on arrival has increased over the period 2010 to 2013. The share of New Zealanders that obtained a TVoA in the total arrivals of New Zealanders have consistently increased over time, from 5 per cent in 2010 to 10 per cent in 2013, thus averaging at almost 8 per cent for the period (see table 4).

Despite the arguably poor performance of the TVoA scheme, the government has taken laudable initiations by reformulating the modalities of the scheme. For instance, abolishing the restriction of two months gap between two consecutive visits of a foreigner[4], introduction of visa fees payment through debit and credit cards, increasing the number of airports for the TVoA from four to nine, simplification of visa form, introduction of local language help for foreigners in filling online visa application form, removing the requirement of filling of Departure (Embarkation) card by outgoing foreigners and Arrival (Disembarkation) card by incoming Indians and the simplification of Embarkation/Disembarkation cards, besides the introduction of Collective Landing Permit (CLP)(Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2014c). In addition to these measures, one of the major reforms that the government initiated on 27th November, 2014 was enabling the TVoA scheme through electronic travel authorization (ETA)[5], and extended the same to all the eligible

[4]The exceptions were in the case of nationals of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan, foreigners of Bangladesh and Pakistan origins and Stateless persons (see Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2012))

[5]The tourist visa on arrival scheme through ETA is now renamed to "Visa Online (ETA)" (http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/to-end-confusion-e-visa-scheme-renamed-visa-online-753577)

Table 3: Performance of Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme

Country	2010[c]	2011	2012	2013	2014[b]	2015[a]
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Australia	-	-	-	-	1124	2210
						(96.62)
Cambodia	-	149	157	120	129	-
			(5.37)	(-23.57)	(7.5)	
Finland	1263	1335	914	1030	990	-
		(5.70)	(-31.54)	(12.69)	(-3.88)	
Germany	-	-	-	-	570	1634
						(186.67)
Indonesia	-	2063	2426	2758	2776	-
		(17.60)	(13.69)	(0.66)		
Israel						448
Japan	1457	2344	4604	6448	5289	-
		(60.88)	(96.42)	(40.05)	(-17.97)	
Laos	-	14	10	19	20	-
			(-28.57)	(90)	(5.26)	
Luxembourg	71	74	110	145	126	-
		(4.22)	(48.65)	(31.81)	(-13.10)	
Myanmar	-	71	109	148	391	-
			(53.52)	(35.78)	(164.19)	
New Zealand	1944	2762	3150	3968	4405	643
		(42.08)	(14.05)	(25.97)	(11.01)	(-85.40)
Philippines	-	1956	2444	2967	3783	-
			(24.95)	(21.40)	(27.50)	
Russia	-	-	-	-	2121	3518
						(65.87)
Singapore	1814	1848	1974	2486	4095	423
		(1.87)	(6.82)	(25.94)	(64.72)	(-89.67)
South Korea	-	-	-	-	6631	4569
						(-31.10)
UAE	-	-	-	-	-	443
USA	-	-	-	-	3417	5933
						(73.63)
Ukraine	-	-	-	-	1149	2500
						(117.58)
Vietnam	-	145	186	205	238	-
		(28.28)	(10.22)	(16.10)		
Others[d]	-	-	-	-	1792	2702
						(50.78)
Total	6549	12761	16084	20294	39046	25023
	-	(94.85)	(26.04)	(26.18)	(92.40)	-[e]

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2013), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).[a]represents data for January 2015 only. [b] Apart from USA, Russia, South Korea, Ukraine, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, Germany and Philippines, data for the remaining country-wise distribution of TVoA stands provisional as the Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2015a) does not mention the same. [c] Data on several months for several countries for 2010 were not available so the aggregate and the total was taken from Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2010) .Figures in parenthesis represents year on year growth rate. '-' represents no information available either because the countries have not yet been granted the visa on arrival eligibility or because the Ministry hasn't published the information. [d] Since the Ministry doesn't publish TVoA granted to all the 44 eligible countries, the remaining have been published in the 'other' category.[e] year on year growth rate for the over the period 2014-2015 is not calculated as the data available for 2015 only represents for January 2015. Years (2010-2015) represents a calender year, i.e., 12 months from January to December.

Table 4: Performance of Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme

		Tourist Visa on Arrivals (TVoAs)		Total Foreign Tourist Arrivals (TFTAs)		
	Year	Total (Number)	Year on Year Growth Rate (%)	Total (Number)	Year on Year Growth Rate (%)	TVoAs as a share of TFTAs (%)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Finland	2010	1263	-	24089	-	5.24
	2011	1335	5.70	23730	-1.49	5.63
	2012	914	-31.54	22416	-5.54	4.08
	2013	1030	12.69	21212	-5.37	4.86
Indonesia	2010	-	-	26171	-	-
	2011	2063	-	32530	-	6.34
	2012	2426	17.60	29559	-9.13	8.21
	2013	2758	13.69	33747	14.17	8.17
Japan	2010	1457	-	168019	-	0.87
	2011	2344	60.88	193525	15.18	1.21
	2012	4604	96.42	220015	13.69	2.09
	2013	6448	40.05	220283	0.12	2.93
Myanmar	2010	-	-	14719	-	-
	2011	71	-	25043	-	0.28
	2012	109	53.52	30588	22.14	0.36
	2013	148	35.78	34916	14.15	0.42
New Zealand	2010	1944	-	37024	-	5.25
	2011	2762	42.08	36839	-0.50	7.50
	2012	3150	14.05	38917	5.64	8.09
	2013	3968	25.97	40801	4.84	9.73
Philippines	2010	-	-	24534	-	
	2011	1956	-	31151	-	6.28
	2012	2444	24.95	33323	6.97	7.33
	2013	2967	21.40	42224	26.71	7.03
Singapore	2010	1814	-	107487	-	1.69
	2011	1848	1.87	119022	10.73	1.55
	2012	1974	6.82	131452	10.44	1.50
	2013	2486	25.94	143025	8.80	1.74
Vietnam	2010	-	-	7458	-	-
	2011	145	-	9809	-	1.48
	2012	186	28.28	11332	15.53	1.64
	2013	205	10.22	12312	8.65	1.67

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2013), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014). [c] Data on several months for several countries for 2010 were not available so the aggregate and the total was taken from Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2010). Years 2014 and 2015 are not considered as country-wise foreign tourist arrivals is only available till 2013.'-' represents no information available either because the countries have not yet been granted the visa on arrival eligibility. Years (2010-2013) represents a calender year, i.e., 12 months from January to December.

Table 5: Performance of Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme through Electronic Travel Authorization

Month	Year	Country	Number of TVoA through ETA	Month on Month Growth Rate (%)	Year on Year Growth Rate (%)
	(1)	(1)	(3)	(4)	(5)
December	2014	New Zealand	715	67.45	15.51
January	2015	New Zealand	643	-10.07	38.28
December	2014	South Korea	1551	85.30	-
January	2015	South Korea	4569	194.58	-
December	2014	Singapore	601	28.69	44.47
January	2015	Singapore	423	-29.62	54.95
December	2014	Australia	1124	-	-
January	2015	Australia	2210	96.62	-
December	2014	Germany	570	-	-
January	2015	Germany	1634	186.67	-
December	2014	Russia	2121	-	-
January	2015	Russia	3518	65.87	-
December	2014	USA	3417	-	-
January	2015	USA	5933	73.63	-
December	2014	Ukraine	1149	-	-
January	2015	Ukraine	2500	117.58	-
Average of January 2015	-	-	-	86.91	-

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).'-' represents no information available because the countries have not yet been granted the visa on arrival eligibility and hence the calculation of growth rates was not possible.

countries (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2014b).

The recent initiations of enabling tourist visa on arrival through electronic travel authorization did not fail to grab limelight at the international forefront.[6] The ministry in its press releases highlights the successful implementation of the TVoA enabled with ETA scheme. It repeatedly mentions that the introduction of ETA enabled TVoA scheme for 44 countries in November, 2014 has been the main reason for the upsurge in tourist arrivals in India.[7] The alleged success received attention in the Annual Budget for the year 2015-2016 of the country, where the Finance Minister lauded the success of visas on arrival and proposed to extend the same to 150 countries in a phased manner.[8]

Without doubt, the success of TVoA through ETA cannot be missed out given the impressive average growth of tourist visas on arrival since its implementation stands at almost 87 per cent - average growth of TVoAs through ETA for January, 2015 from its levels in December, 2014 for only 8 of the 44 eligible countries (see table 5).[9]

Moreover, the share of TVoA through ETA seems to be on a rise over the months. For instance, we see from table 6 that 4.59 per cent of Americans in India in January, 2015 availed the TVoA through ETA, as compared to 2.21 per cent in December, 2014, recording a growth 107.03 per cent

[6]See the coverage at Wall Street Journal (http://goo.gl/5qcyU6), and BBC (http://goo.gl/LNnRb1), for instance.

[7]See Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2015b) for December, 2014, and Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2015c) for January, 2015.

[8]Read the full budget speech for 2014-2015 delivered by the Finance Minister at http://goo.gl/A1wzKx.

[9]The success of the scheme is measured for only 8 of the 44 eligible countries as data is only available from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

Table 6: Performance of Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme through Electronic Travel Authorization

Country	TVoA Share in total TVoA (%)	Number of TFTAs	Number of TVoAs	TVoAs as a share of TFTAs (%)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
		December, 2014		
Russia	3.91	34291	2121	6.19
Singapore	2.11	18505	601	3.25
Japan	2.21	19382	606	3.13
Australia	4.75	41658	1124	2.70
Germany	2.58	22627	570	2.52
USA	17.62	154527	3417	2.21
		January, 2015		
South Korea	1.89	14931	4569	30.60
Russia	3.5	27650	3518	12.72
Australia	3.63	28677	2210	7.71
Germany	3.12	24648	1634	6.63
USA	16.35	129165	5933	4.59

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2013), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

over the month. However, it might just be too early to contribute the upsurge of foreign tourist arrivals in India to the scheme of TVoA through ETA. The average share of tourist visa on arrivals issued through ETA in the total foreign tourist arrivals continues to be a very small share. For instance, in December 2014, only 2.21 per cent of Americans entered India by availing their TVoA through ETA while in January 2015, the figure stood at 4.59 per cent.

To conclude, the hope of India that the new, extended and modernized visa scheme - from just five TVoA countries in 2010 to 44 countries by the end of 2014 and TVoA through ETA - would give a boost to the tourism sector, might appear a bit premature.

2 What limits the success?

In evaluating the impact of the TVoA, and, particularly, the TVoA through ETA, we suggest to assess implementation and the drafting of the scheme:

1. Why hasn't the share of TVoA as a per cent of total TFTA gone up in India both over the years and across countries over the years? Is modernizing the industry by granting TVoA through ETA, then the answer? If so, then why doesn't the share of TVoA through ETA in total TFTA look all that encouraging after all? Is it because India hasn't got the needed clarity and the technicality to run the system smoothly and functionally? What we find is that the implementation of the scheme has been poor.

   First, there is confusion as to what the scheme really means. To a layman, a tourist visa on arrival would really mean arriving in India, and receiving a 30 day tourist visa at the immigration on showing your passing. However, the official website[10] is not very clear whether this is the case as instruction number 5 for the applicant on the official website states that

[10] https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html

applicant of the eligible country *should* carry a copy of ETA with him/her at the time of travel while instruction number 1 for the applicant on the same website states that applicants of the eligible countries *may* apply online minimum 4 days in advance of the date of arrival with a window of 30 days. So does it really mean that the TVoA will only be granted to the applicants of eligible country applicants *if and only if* they had a copy of ETA along with him/her at the time of travel.[11]

Second, confusion lies in the objective of the visa scheme. For instance, the official website states that those "international travellers whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, short duration medical treatment or casual business visit" are covered. However, the official website fails to highlight what a casual business visit would qualify for? For comparison, the Australian government clearly specifies that eligible international travellers to Australia that have an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) on them can undertake business visitor activities which includes (1) making general business or employment enquires; (2) investigating, negotiating, singing or reviewing a business contract; (3) activities carried out as part of an official government-to-government visit; and (4) participating in conferences, trade fairs or seminars, as long as you are not being paid by the organizer for your participation.[12] A similar reasoning goes for the Indian term "short duration medical treatment". The official Indian website fails to highlight what would a short duration medical treatment qualify for? Again, for comparison, the Australian government more clearly issues "Medical Treatment Visa (subclass 602)" that allows people to travel to Australia to undertake (1) for medical treatment or consultations; (2) to support someone needing medical treatment who holds or has applied for this visa; and (3) to donate an organ.[13]

This lack of clarity in the Indian scheme is only aggravated by alleged technical difficulties of running the system. For instance, international travellers have consistently blogged on the difficulties in using the ETA system such as uploading their photo, acceptance of their phone numbers, and the payment of US$60 to obtain the ETA.[14]

Although there have been stories of success of the TVoA enabled through ETA[15], stories and complaints of getting around the system online seem to outweigh the little success it has found amongst fewer travellers. Given the hassles involved, travellers seem to continue to prefer to arrange for their tourist visa for India from the Indian embassy in their home country before they depart for India.[16]

2. Or is it the countries to which the tourist visa on arrival scheme has been extended, to be blamed? We see from table 7 that the majority of the eligible 44 countries to which the

[11] See the confusion being highlighted by travellers to India on http://goo.gl/g7Upo5, and http://goo.gl/ENrk4h.
[12] http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/601.aspx
[13] http://www.immi.gov.au/Visas/Pages/602.aspx.
[14] See http://goo.gl/o12nFg, for instance.
[15] See http://goo.gl/7y1bep, for instance.
[16] See http://goo.gl/vsqEQ4, and http://goo.gl/RHQ6Es, for instance.

Table 7: Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
USA	16.12	15.54	15.81	15.58	15.76
Germany	3.94	3.81	3.87	3.62	3.81
Japan	2.91	3.07	3.34	3.16	3.12
Australia	2.94	3.05	3.07	3.14	3.05
Russia	2.11	2.29	2.7	3.72	2.71
Singapore	1.86	1.89	2.0	2.05	1.95
South Korea	1.65	1.72	1.66	1.62	1.66
Thailand	1.33	1.46	1.6	1.68	1.52
UAE	0.79	1.05	0.63	0.74	0.80
Oman	0.61	0.64	0.76	0.89	0.73
Israel	0.75	0.76	0.72	0.7	0.73
New Zealand	0.64	0.58	0.59	0.59	0.60
Kenya	0.51	0.48	0.52	0.58	0.52
Philippines	0.42	0.49	0.51	0.61	0.51
Indonesia	0.45	0.52	0.45	0.48	0.48
Myanmar	0.25	0.4	0.47	0.5	0.41
Ukraine	0.29	0.37	0.44	0.46	0.39
Mauritius	0.38	0.35	0.38	0.39	0.38
Finland	0.42	0.38	0.34	0.3	0.36
Norway	0.38	0.39	0.36	0.31	0.36
Brazil	0.26	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27
Mexico	0.18	0.17	0.17	0.19	0.18
Vietnam	0.13	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.16

Authors' compilation from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2013), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012). Data on the remaining 23 countries and for the year 2014 is not reported as the information in the yearbooks as well as press releases by the Ministry of Tourism, India, is not available. Countries in the table are sorted in descending order on averages. Years (2010-2013) represents a calender year, i.e., 12 months from January to December.

scheme has been opened to (and for which the data is available), the average inbound tourist arrivals do not contribute even one per cent of the total foreign tourist arrivals in India for the period 2010-2013.

Moreover, applicants from eligible countries *have to apply* for their tourist visa on arrival through the ETA scheme *online* thereby making it *mandatory* to use the ETA scheme. However, a deeper look into the countries that have to go through this process highlights the very contradictions of it being successful. For instance, for the countries for which the information is available, we can see from table 8 that the average access to internet for the period 2010-2013 varies from as high as approximately 94 persons in every 100 persons in Norway to as low as approximately 4 persons in every 100 persons in Cambodia. Furthermore, the average fixed broadband internet subscribers for the period 2010-2013 varies from as high as approximately 37 persons in every 100 persons in South Korea to almost no individual in Kenya (0.08 persons in every 100 persons).

Moreover, it appears from table 9 that the average exports and imports of India to and from the eligible countries remains to be less than 50 per cent of India's total exports and imports; India's export share to the eligible countries in total exports stands at 47 per cent while import share stands at 36 per cent. As a matter of fact, for the majority of the countries

Table 8: Internet Usage across the 44 eligible countries including India

Country	Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers (per 100 people)[a]	Country	Internet Users (per 100 people)[b]
	Average for the period 2010 to 2013		
	(1)		(2)
South Korea	36.85	Norway	94.15
Norway	36.48	Luxembourg	91.59
Germany	33.12	Finland	89.25
Luxembourg	32.93	South Korea	84.08
Finland	29.78	Japan	82.44
Japan	28.02	Germany	82.40
USA	27.91	New Zealand	81.62
New Zealand	26.72	UAE	79.75
Singapore	25.52	Australia	79.37
Israel	24.98	USA	76.23
Australia	24.29	Singapore	71.75
Russia	13.54	Israel	69.49
Mauritius	10.19	Russia	54.30
UAE	10.12	Oman	52.57
Mexico	10.01	Brazil	46.63
Brazil	8.65	Mexico	37.86
Ukraine	7.54	Vietnam	37.28
Thailand	6.13	Jordan	36.83
Philippines	6.06	Mauritius	34.43
Tuvalu	4.92	Ukraine	32.27
Vietnam	4.73	Philippines	31.81
Palau	3.30	Tuvalu	31.75
Guyana	3.06	Guyana	31.73
Jordan	2.91	Fiji	29.71
Oman	2.09	Kenya	28.28
Fiji	2.04	Tonga	27.72
Djibouti	1.52	Thailand	25.37
Micronesia	1.48	Micronesia	24.14
Tonga	1.34	Indonesia	13.14
Indonesia	1.14	Samoa	11.56
India	1.08	India	11.31
Kiribati	0.96	Kiribati	10.33
Solomon Islands	0.41	Vanuatu	9.77
Cambodia	0.20	Marshall Islands	9.19
Vanuatu	0.15	Djibouti	7.82
Samoa	0.11	Solomon Islands	6.50
Kenya	0.08	Cambodia	3.83
Cook Islands	-	Palau	-
Laos	-	Cook Islands	-
Myanmar	-	Laos	-
Nauru	-	Myanmar	-
Niue Island	-	Nauru	-
Palestine	-	Niue Island	-
Papau New Guinea	-	Palestine	-
Marshall Islands	-	Papau New Guinea	-

Countries are sorted in descending order. '-' represents no information available. Both [a] and [b] are taken from World Bank (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013). [a] are the number of broadband subscribers with a digital subscriber line, cable modem, or other high-speed technology. [b] are individuals who have used the Internet via a computer, mobile phone, personal digital assistant, games machine, digital TV etc (from any location) in the last 12 months. While [b] gives a general idea of access, caution must be exercised while comparing statistics across countries for [a]. This is because data for [a] is collected by national statistics offices through household surveys and survey questions and definitions differ, the estimates may not be strictly comparable across countries. Years (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) represents a calender year, i.e., 12 months from January to December.

included, their individual export and import vis-a-vis India accounts for less than one per cent of the total exports and imports of India. For instance, average trade of India with countries like Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Micronesia, to name a few, for the period 2010-2013 is negligible.

3 Where to go from here? Policy implications?

India has adopted and recently extended a Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) facility that currently encompasses 44 countries. This facility has now been enabled through Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA).[17] Regardless of such substantial steps, international travellers to India still seem to prefer to obtain their visa at the Indian mission in their home country, arguably, so as to avoid any hassles in India. The hope that ETA would help raise the level of confidence in the TVoA, does not seem to have lived up to its reputation yet. In this brief, we have noted that the growth of TVoAs and the growth of TVoAs as a share of TFTAs (whether the TVoA has been granted through ETA or not) has not really gained momentum amongst international travellers to India since its implementation in January, 2010.

To strategically implement the visa facilitating steps so as to maximize economic benefit, we make two propositions. The *first strategic* step should focus *only* on the smooth implementation of TVoA, which is now enabled through ETA. In this regard, India should now bring in more clarity with regards to the role of Electronic Travel Authorization in the 'Tourist Visa on Arrival' process. More fundamentally, India should bring in more clarity with regards to the objective of the TVoA. Several steps need to be taken for the same. Firstly, if the objective of the policy is to also encourage businesses and medical tourism, it would help to rename the TVoA to simply 'Visa on Arrival'. This would avoid confusion as well as redirect a number of tourists that may have avoided the scheme because of the very name of it. However, if India still wants to continue with the name of it being 'Tourist Visa on Arrival Scheme', then alternatively the government should think of diversifying the objective of the implemented scheme into different groups such as "Visa on Arrival (Business Entrant)" and "Visa on Arrival (Medical Treatment Entrant)" or have diversifying options while applying such as (1) Tourist; (2) Business (3) Medical.[18] This will help not only in correcting the misnomer but also in collecting data for devising on-going strategies to maximize the economic benefit of the same. Irrespective of the correction in the name, India should bring in clarity on the business activities and the short duration medical treatment that the eligible traveller can undertake whilst in India on this visa.

The *second strategic* step should focus *only* on the countries or rather the sequence of the countries to which the TVoA facility should be extended. From 'Look East', India has now taken a stand to 'Act East'.[19] The Finance Minister in its Annual Budget for 2015-2016 stated that

[17] On 14th April, 2015, the scheme will be extended to Sri Lankan citizens from the Sinhala and Tamil New Year (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2015)

[18] For example, see the Australian ETA application at https://www.eta.immi.gov.au/ETAS3/etas

[19] Look at the opening statement by the Prime Minister at the Indian-ASEAN summit (Press Information Bureau,

Table 9: International Trade with the 44 eligible countries

Country	Average Exports(2010-2013)		Country	Average Imports(2010-2013)	
	(US$ Million)	(% share in total exports)		(US$ Million)	(% share in total imports)
	(1)	(2)		(3)	(4)
UAE	34,146.25	11.77	UAE	34,416.92	7.70
USA	33,832.71	11.49	USA	22,803.86	5.09
Singapore	13,203.23	4.49	Germany	13,687.68	3.05
Germany	7,364.00	2.53	Indonesia	13,578.09	3.00
Japan	6,083.48	2.08	Australia	12,318.94	2.74
Indonesia	5,640.07	1.95	South Korea	12,215.75	2.72
Brazil	5,348.73	1.82	Japan	10,631.13	2.36
South Korea	4,122.65	1.41	Singapore	7,444.17	1.67
Vietnam	3,944.96	1.33	Thailand	5,062.19	1.13
Israel	3,611.74	1.23	RUSSIA	4,122.57	0.92
Thailand	3,167.92	1.07	Brazil	4,091.76	0.91
Kenya	3,027.99	1.03	Oman	3,077.23	0.71
Australia	2,209.70	0.75	Vietnam	3,160.21	0.67
Russia	1,971.16	0.67	Mexico	2,863.31	0.62
Oman	1,954.03	0.66	Israel	2,389.27	0.54
Mexico	1,533.96	0.52	Ukraine	2,086.10	0.46
Mauritius	1,141.35	0.39	Finland	1,479.38	0.33
Philippines	1,120.05	0.38	Myanmar	1,301.80	0.29
Jordan	975.73	0.33	Jordan	963.75	0.21
Myanmar	549.42	0.18	Norway	875.65	0.20
Ukraine	501.64	0.17	New Zealand	689.77	0.15
Djibouti	378.53	0.13	Philippines	441.59	0.10
Finland	325.49	0.11	Papua New Guinea	174.81	0.04
New Zealand	255.24	0.09	Kenya	117.49	0.03
Norway	244.32	0.08	Laos	66.88	0.01
Cambodia	105.00	0.04	Luxembourg	46.72	0.01
Fiji	38.75	0.01	Mauritius	26.07	0.01
Papua New Guinea	32.90	0.01	Nauru	11.26	0.002
Laos	26.72	0.009	Cambodia	9.98	0.002
Guyana	20.93	0.007	Solomon Island	10.65	0.002
Luxembourg	11.95	0.0042	Guyana	7.53	0.002
Vanuatu	2.84	0.0010	Marshall Island	4.83	0.001
Samoa	2.51	0.0009	Djibouti	3.47	0.001
Solomon Island	1.48	0.0005	Vanuatu	2.72	0.0006
Tonga	1.05	0.0004	Fiji	2.22	0.0005
Kiribati	0.66	0.0002	Kiribati	0.18	0.00003
Marshall Island	0.50	0.0002	Tonga	0.08	0.00003
Micronesia	0.40	0.0002	Cook Island	0.06	0
Nauru	0.12	0.00005	Micronesia	0.05	0
Palau	0.08	0.00003	Niue Island	0.01	0
Cook Island	39.08	0	Palau	0.01	0
Niue Island	0.02	0	Samoa	0.12	0
Tuvalu	0.05	0	Tuvalu	0.01	0
Palestine	-	-	Palestine	-	-
Total	332,283.24	46.74		160,186.20	35.67

Countries are sorted in descending order. '-' represents no information available. Data is taken from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India and is from April, 2010 to March, 2013.

the 'Act East' policy of the government endeavours to cultivate extensive and strategic relations in South-East Asia.[20] Yes, it appears to be a good strategy that in the process of 'Acting East', majority of the 44 countries that are eligible for a Tourist Visa on Arrival in India are East to India (either in Asia or Oceania region (see table 10). Moreover, UNWTO in its tourism highlights for 2014 demonstrates that the large majority of international travel takes place within travellers' own regions, with about four out of five worldwide arrivals originating from the same region Europe (52%) was the world's largest source region, generating over half of the world's international arrivals in 2013, followed by Asia and the Pacific (23%), the Americas (16%), the Middle East (3%), and Africa (3%) for the same year.[21]

Nevertheless, the strategy could only be strengthened by focussing on the economic importance of the countries of the scheme, now and in the future. One of the ways to identify the economic importance of the countries could be to look for support in the 'Make in India' global initiative launched by the Prime Minister on 25th September, 2014 (Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2014e). The initiative is a major new national program designed to transform India into a global manufacturing hub.[22] Therefore, we suggest that India combines the 'Make in India' initiative and the 'Act East' Policy with the TVoA by analysing the economic importance of countries, notwithstanding reciprocity, other political diplomacy, and obligations arising out of the international agreements that India is a signatory to. For instance, we note that the average share of Chinese tourist stands at two per cent[23] of the total foreign tourist arrivals India while at the same time bilateral trade deficit with China only seems to be increasing. Therefore, if one of the sincere objectives of the TVoA scheme is to promote casual business visits then allowing Chinese to obtain their "tourist visa on arrival" can in turn only prove beneficial in strengthening trade ties with China along with a boost in tourism from China.[24]

Moreover, the government could focus on extending the TVOA scheme to countries of economic significance to it. For instance, India could extend the facility to its large trading partners (for the year 2013-2014, only 11 out of the top 25[25] export destinations of India, and only 10 out of the top 25[26] import sources for India are eligible for the TVoA scheme) and with partners it has large

Government of India, 2014d).

[20]See Press Information Bureau, Government of India (2015d).

[21]See UNWTO (2014) for further details.

[22]The official website of the 'Make in India' initiative can be found at www.makeinindia.gov.in.

[23]Average of two per cent has been calculated by looking at individual year foreign tourist arrivals in India from various yearbooks of India Tourism Statistics.

[24]Although, as a direct impact, exports of goods and services (through increase business ties), particularly in the sectors promoted by 'Make in India' campaign, and export tourism (money spent by Chinese tourist, from India to China might increase, an indirect spillover might occur where intra- and inter-industry imports from China rises thereby further aggravating the trade deficit.

[25]According to its share in total exports, the top 25 export destinations of India for the period 2013-2014 are USA (12.45%), UAE (9.71%), China (4.72%), Hong Kong (4.05%), Singapore (3.98%), Saudi Arabia (3.89%), UK (3.11%), Netherlands (2.54%), Germany (2.39%), Japan (2.17%), Belgium (2.03%), Bangladesh (1.96%), Brazil (1.77%), Vietnam (1.73%), Italy (1.68%), France (1.62%), South Africa (1.61%), Iran (1.58%), Indonesia (1.54%), Sri Lanka (1.44%), South Korea (1.34%), Malaysia (1.34%), Kenya (1.23%), and Israel (1.19%). Data is taken from the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.

[26]According to its share in total imports, the top 25 import sources for India for the period 2013-2014 are China (11.33%), Saudi Arabia (8.09%), UAE (6.45%), USA (5.00%), Switzerland (4.29%), Iraq (4.11%), Kuwait (3.81%),

inward[27] and outward foreign direct investment (FDI) (for the year 2013-2014, 5 out of the top 10 source countries for FDI are eligible for the TVoA scheme). Thus, India could use the TVoA as bait for promoting the 'Make in India' campaign and in turn strengthen the 'Act East' policy too.

India could also focus on countries that are top spenders in international tourism (only 4 out of the top 10 countries that undertake massive tourism spending abroad are eligible for the TVoA scheme[28]. For instance, Chinese tourism spending abroad, which leaped to first place in 2012 and 2013, has increased almost tenfold in the 13 years since 2000 With a market share of 11.1% in 2013; Chinese tourism spending abroad increased by US$27 billion to a record of US$129 billion (UNWTO, 2014).

4 Conclusion

In a nutshell, the Indian initiative to facilitate the visa process is to be lauded. However, the scheme needs to be closely attended to to have any substantial impact, as laid out above. The lessons of the Indian reforms would also seem to be well worth considering elsewhere. Facilitating movement of persons is not only important for the ever expanding tourism industry but also for economies in general in an era of globalisation and international value chains. As one multinational firm puts it: *We work globally we need people to meet and exchange knowledge. We also need to adapt quickly, or we lose competitive advantages. Mobility is therefore very important to us. Business is better when the right people are at the right place at the right time.*[29] To 'Make ...(it)... in India' or elsewhere, smooth movement of persons is key.

Qatar (3.49%), Indonesia (3.30%), Nigeria (3.13%), Venezuela (3.10%), Germany (2.87%), South Korea (2.77%), Belgium (2.39%), Iran (2.89%), Australia (2.18%), Japan (2.11%), Malaysia (2.05%), Hong Kong (1.63%), Singapore (1.50%), South Africa (1.35%), UK (1.34%), Angola (1.33%), Thailand (1.19%), Colombia (1.10%). Data is taken from the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.

[27] According to its share in total FDI inflows, the top 10 source countries for India for the period 2013-2014 are Mauritius (44.07%), Netherlands (9.30%), Singapore (8.78%), Japan (7.33%), UK (5.59%), France (2.99%), USA (2.61%), Germany (2.55%), Cyprus (2.27%), and Spain (1.90%). Data is taken from Reserve Bank of India (2014)

[28] See table on international tourism spending on page 13 of (UNWTO, 2014)

[29] Graneli and Lodefalk (2014)

Table 10: Country Description

Home country	Capital of home country[a]	Host country	Capital of host country	Distance between capital cities (kms)[b]	Region[c]
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Mexico	Mexico City	India	New Delhi	14646.34	Central America
Cook Islands	Avarua	India	New Delhi	14250.50	Ocenia
Brazil	Brasilia	India	New Delhi	14230.84	South America
Guyana	Georgetown	India	New Delhi	13812.44	South America
Niue Island	Alofi	India	New Delhi	13176.99	Ocenia
Samoa	Apia	India	New Delhi	12760.58	Ocenia
Tonga	Nukualofa	India	New Delhi	12760.17	Ocenia
New Zealand	Wellington	India	New Delhi	12641.31	Ocenia
USA	Washington, D.C.	India	New Delhi	12040.33	Northern America
Fiji	Suva	India	New Delhi	12014.41	Ocenia
Tuvalu	Funafuti	India	New Delhi	11617.52	Ocenia
Vanuatu	Port Vila	India	New Delhi	11036.23	Ocenia
Kiribati	South Tarawa	India	New Delhi	10486.89	Ocenia
Australia	Canberra	India	New Delhi	10348.41	Ocenia
Marshall Islands	Majuro	India	New Delhi	10004.09	Ocenia
Nauru	Yaren District	India	New Delhi	9998.36	Ocenia
Solomon Islands	Honiara	India	New Delhi	9804.54	Ocenia
Micronesia	Palikir	India	New Delhi	8752.60	Ocenia
Papau New Guinea	Port Moresby	India	New Delhi	8598.61	Ocenia
Palau	Melekeok	India	New Delhi	6429.23	Ocenia
Luxembourg	Luxembourg	India	New Delhi	6295.49	European Union
Norway	Oslo	India	New Delhi	5978.39	Europe
Japan	Tokya	India	New Delhi	5834.49	Asia
Mauritius	Port Louis	India	New Delhi	5824.79	Eastern Africa
Germany	Berlin	India	New Delhi	5773.40	European Union
Kenya	Nairobi	India	New Delhi	5435.96	Eastern Africa
Ukraine	Kiev	India	New Delhi	5253.59	Europe
Finland	Helsinki	India	New Delhi	5211.54	European Union
Indonesia	Jakarta	India	New Delhi	4993.05	Asia
Philippines	Manila	India	New Delhi	4751.66	Asia
South Korea	Seoul	India	New Delhi	4681.26	Asia
Russia	Moscow	India	New Delhi	4331.25	Europe
Singapore	Singapore	India	New Delhi	4147.28	Asia
Palestine	Ramallah, East Jerusalem	India	New Delhi	4055.04[d]	Middle East
Israel	Jerusalem	India	New Delhi	4024.27	Middle East
Djibouti	Djibouti	India	New Delhi	4007.85	Eastern Africa
Jordan	Amman	India	New Delhi	3955.08	Middle East
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	India	New Delhi	3437.32	Asia
Vietnam	Hanoi	India	New Delhi	3001.27	Asia
Thailand	Bangkok	India	New Delhi	2916.35	Asia
Laos	Vientiane	India	New Delhi	2840.13	Asia
Myanmar	Naypyidaw	India	New Delhi	2341.70	Asia
UAE	Abu Dhabi	India	New Delhi	2316.21	Middle East
Oman	Muscat	India	New Delhi	1940.65	Middle East

Countries are sorted in descending order of distance between capital cities. [a]Capital city of host country is Googled. [b] represents great circle distance between capital cities which is calculated at http://www.chemical-ecology.net/java/capitals.htm. [c] Regional distribution of countries is taken from http://www.internetworldstats.com/list1.htm. [d] Since the great circle distance is not available between Ramallah and New Delhi, flight distance between the two capital cities is calculated using http://www.worldatlas.com/travelaids/flight_distance.htm

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