

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 995
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 9th February 2026
HIGH AIRFARE CONCERNS AND AIRLINE OPERATIONS
IMPACTING COMMON PASSENGERS

995. SHRI I.S. INBADURAI

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) the reasons behind frequent and steep airfare surges on domestic routes, especially during festivals, emergencies and peak seasons, causing severe hardship to common passengers;

(b) whether any effective regulatory mechanism exists to prevent predatory pricing, cartelisation or algorithm-driven fare manipulation by airlines;

(c) whether Government is aware of repeated complaints regarding flight delays, cancellations, overbooking and poor grievance redressal and the corrective measures that have been enforced against erring airlines; and

(d) whether airlines are being permitted to reduce operational capacity while simultaneously increasing fares and the manner in which this aligns with passenger welfare obligations?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION (Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

(a) to (d): Airfares are not subject to regulation by the Government and airlines have the flexibility to determine their airfares based on their operational needs, while adhering to Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937.

The pricing of airfares is subject to dynamic fluctuations influenced by the fundamental economic forces of supply and demand. Various determinants such as current seat occupancy, fuel costs, aircraft capacity, seasonal fluctuations and other relevant factors significantly impact airline ticket pricing.

The Government generally refrains from regulating airfares to maintain market competitiveness, however, it remains vigilant and intervenes in exceptional circumstances by adopting measures like redistributing capacity across various sectors and imposing temporary fare caps, such as during Pandemic, Maha kumb, Pahalgam incident & recently massive Indigo flight disruptions.

In order to enhance the transparency in airfare, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has set-up Tariff Monitoring Unit (TMU) that monitors airfares on selected 78 routes on a random basis by using airlines websites on monthly basis to ensure that the airlines do not charge airfares outside the range declared by them. This covers about 27% of the domestic traffic.

Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has established a 24x7 Passenger Assistance Control Room (PACR) to enhance passenger-centric governance. This initiative integrates MoCA, DGCA, Airports Authority of India (AAI), and airlines for real-time monitoring of flight disruptions, baggage issues, and refunds, aiming to accelerate grievance redressal and improve the overall travel experience. Further, passenger can lodge their grievances on Air Sewa Portal for timely redressal.

DGCA has issued CAR Section 3, Series M, Part IV on "Facilities to be provided to passengers by airlines due to denied boarding, cancellation of flights and delays in flights", in order to ensure comfort & welfare for the air travellers in case of flight disruptions due to denied boarding, flight cancellation & delays without due notice to the passengers booked on the flight.
