

Indigo Leaves its Passengers in Lurch

Novemeber, 30, 2015.Goa.

A situation had come when the country's best airline, IndiGo, had to appeal to other agencies to assist its passengers with their luggage. Reason: there were no loaders. They had called a strike. [See Indigo appeals to others]

Indigo is already carrying the dubious label of "Unfair Business Practitioner". [See...could have been penalised more].

Now, thanks to dynamic pricing policies, it has now resorted to the practice of duping passengers on one pretext or the other. Fog being the most common excuse.

The noted Journalist Ms Barkha Dutt being one of the latest victims. Being a celebrity figure herself, she succeeded in getting its Chief to say sorry; other less fortunate passengers were left in the lurch.



December 9, 2015.

Indigo flight 6E 633 was cancelled. Hundreds of passengers at Goa, Kolkata, Patna and Lucknow were left in the lurch. The airline accepted its passengers, it duly performed passenger and luggage check-in. After three hours of delay announcements, it announced "Flight Cancelled"!!

The fact of the matter is the ticket price and the working

system of dynamic pricing. It should have been a uniform Rs 6100/- for an hour of flight which could justify its actual costing. The airline sold these tickets at as low a price as Rs 1700/-, Rs 4000/- and as high as Rs 10000/-. But, as was inevitable, this could not generate sufficient revenue, it could not meet its operating expenses, and so it coolly decided to cancel the flight and refund the money. In the process it gulped all the interest earned while holding the amount for fairly long periods. The airline forced its passengers to buy tickets at the prevailing price which was 5-10 times higher. By the same token it is to be noted that it has already "sold" its tickets on all its other flights at a far lesser price and intends to hold that money for as long as 6 months time with a clear intention to avail all the interest earned. This policy under the garb of "dynamic pricing" appears very lucrative to the seller since it keeps the cash flow brimming. The situation becomes precarious when it is cancelling the flight at the last moment due to non availability of the machine itself. It is a known fact that the aircraft can be held up somewhere due either to technical snag or weather. With no stand-by option in place, the airline cuts a sorry figure. In legal parlance this can be construed as "it tried to sell something which it did not have" in the first place.



This particular incident is being appealed in a consumer court to claim damages by the passengers who were obviously not so amused. This case additionally might be seen with a criminal angle to it: intention of cheating, besides causing inconvenience to its unsuspecting customers. The aviation regulator, the DGCA, will also be in the loop and would be

expected to take some action. The Govt. had earlier favored the airlines to fix their own prices. [See ...Regulate economy fares]

Aviation analysts believe that more such incidents in future can not be ruled out. The practice of dynamic pricing has several inherent flaws which could prove fatal someday.