

Indigo Appeals to Others to Assist its Passengers

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.

Nov 30, 2015.

The aggrieved loaders went on a flash strike. The officials had torn a letter from them requesting that their monthly salaries be hiked to 13,000. Several of them were observed sitting outside the old terminal building during the night . With no positive sign forthcoming from the contractor even after 24 hours of the strike, the loaders approached power minister and local MLA Milind Naik for help.



Power Minister Milind Naik re-opens the road

The Mormugao MLA subsequently held a joint meeting with the loaders, IndiGo officials and representatives of J P Aviation Services Limited to iron out the differences. After due deliberations, the contractor agreed to pay each loader a monthly salary of 11,000. Naik then convinced the aggrieved loaders to accept the offer and resume work. He also advised the contractor to provide an annual increment in salaries to avoid recurrence of such an incident.

Dec 1, 2015.

The 107-odd loaders of IndiGo Airlines called off their

strike. They resumed duty.

Indigo is accepted as the best performing Airline in the country. The Goa incident has shown that all is not well with Indigo workforce. Despite showing handsome profits in its books, Indigo is not able to give regular employment to its loaders. It is forced to look for other options during strikes. Its customers are inconvenienced, and its brand value is affected due to such an unimpressive show. At the end of the day, it loses much more than what it has been presuming. The loading job is outsourced. It is quite apparent that Indigo does not want to assume the welfare responsibility of its loaders. It will then have to bear additional costs under the heading 'labor welfare' as-

1. Min salary will have be fixed as per min wages Act. Time bound increment as per labor laws
2. Medical benefits, other facilities like rest room, wash room, first aid, etc., as per Factories Act & Rules
3. PF, gratuity
4. Perks: Flight passage on its network (domestic+International) as applicable to other staff
5. Incentives, bonus
6. Workman compensation: In the event of a mishap resulting in death or injury

Only Capitalism, no Socialism. This appears to be the vision of the company. Even after cutting down such costs on labor, the Rs 13000/- a month salary to a loader appears too much for the country's most profit making airline. By outsourcing the job, Indigo clearly sends a message that it does not want to assume a liability like this. By cutting down its labor costs in this way, Indigo shows the world its profits.

The Goa incident should not be seen as a one-off case. There are 100s of other loader-like workers in its network. Simmering discontent in its workforce can not be ruled out. There must be another Goa like incident waiting to happen elsewhere in its network. This obviously does not augur well for the growth of the company in the long run. Its management, especially its HR, will be aware of this.