

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

I. A. No. _____ OF 2026

IN

WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO. 1124 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

S. LaxminarayananPetitioner

AND

Union of India and Ors.Respondents

AND IN THE MATTER OF:-

Airline users Rights & Grievance Redressal ForumApplicant

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(MR. JOSE ABRAHAM)
ADVOCATE FOR THE APPLICANT
CODE NO. 2066

D-144-A, Ashram,
New Delhi – 110014.

Place: New Delhi
Date: 18.02.2026

Mob: 011-35608590, 9003536360
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.....Applicant

APPLICATION FOR IMPLEADMENT

PAPER BOOK

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(ADVOCATE FOR THE APPLICANT: MR.JOSE ABRAHAM)

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Airline users Rights & Grievance Redressal Forum,

Represented by its President,

Biji Eapen, aged 74 years,

S/o. Late Eapen Enchakalody,

R/o. Door No.77/1418 (44/981),

Enchakalody, LFC Road, Kaloor,

Kochi, Kerala – 682017

.....Applicant

APPLICATION FOR IMPLEADEMENT

To

Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India

and his companion judges of the

Supreme Court of India

The humble Application of the
Applicant above named

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:

1. That the above writ petition has been filed under Article 32 of the Constitution of India raising issues of constitutional and statutory importance concerning regulation of domestic air passenger services, unchecked dynamic pricing, exorbitant airfare, unbundling of essential services, lack of tariff transparency, and failure of statutory authorities to effectively enforce passenger welfare safeguards under the aviation laws in force.
2. The Applicant is a registered passenger rights organisation working in the field of airline consumer protection, aviation safety and regulatory accountability. The Applicant represents the collective interests of air travellers across the country and has been consistently engaged with regulatory authorities on issues relating to affordability, fairness and transparency in airfare determination. The true typed copy of the Registration Certificate of the Applicant, dated 05.07.2023 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-1 at Page No..9.....
3. The questions raised in the present proceedings directly affect the class of passengers represented by the Applicant and therefore the Applicant is a proper and necessary party for assisting this Hon'ble Court. In fact, the Applicant has been actively pursuing the issue of fare regulation with the authorities.
4. That Parliamentary scrutiny has since repeatedly acknowledged the problem of airfare regulation. Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 53 answered on 28.11.2024 records significant airfare fluctuations, reported increases during peak periods, and meetings held by the Government with airlines and online travel agents to address lack of transparency and fare hikes. A true copy of the Lok Sabha Starred

Question No. 53 answered on 28.11.2024 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-2 at Page No. **10-13**

5. That Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2931 answered on 12.12.2024 records that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has set up a Tariff Monitoring Unit, mandates disclosure of tariff sheets, and intervenes to prevent exorbitant pricing under Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. A true copy of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2931 answered on 12.12.2024 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-3 at Page No. **14-15**
6. That Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 49 answered on 01.12.2025 specifically refers to the powers of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation under Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 to issue binding directions in exceptional circumstances, acknowledges that self-regulation has not been effective, and records that the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture has recommended route-specific fare capping. A true copy of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 49 answered on 01.12.2025 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-4 at Page No. **16-17**
7. That subsequent to the aforesaid Parliamentary disclosures, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, by an official press release dated 06.12.2025 titled “MoCA Action on IndiGo Operational Crisis – Air Fare Regulation”, expressly invoked its regulatory powers, prescribed mandatory fare caps across affected routes, and recorded that such intervention was necessary to prevent opportunistic pricing and protect passengers in distress, including senior citizens, students and patients. A true copy of the Press Release by Press Information Bureau dated 06.12.2025 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-5 at Page No. **18**....

8. That the aforesaid sequence of representations, Parliamentary proceedings and executive action establishes that statutory powers to regulate airfare exist, have been acknowledged at the highest levels, and have in fact been exercised when public interest so demanded. The failure lies not in absence of power, but in inconsistent and inadequate enforcement.
9. That subsequent public discourse has continued to emphasise the need for sustained regulatory intervention. A published article dated 23.01.2026 has deliberated about the calling for permanent airfare caps for passenger welfare and market stability, and has recorded that temporary fare caps effectively prevented passenger exploitation. A True copy of the article published by the Hindu - Businessline, dated 23.01.2026 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-6 at Page No. **19-20**
10. In fact a detailed representation addressing this issue on hand has been sent to Minister of Civil Aviation. However same proved to be of no good. A true copy of the representation sent by the Applicant vide AURGRF-05/01/26, dated 22.01.2026 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A-7 at Page No. **21-22**
11. The Applicant had earlier approached the High Court of Delhi vide W.P.(C) No. 2156 of 2025 raising concerns relating to passenger protection and regulatory oversight. By order dated 19.02.2025, the Hon'ble High Court disposed of the petition by directing the Ministry of Civil Aviation to consider and decide the Applicant's representation by passing a reasoned order and to take appropriate steps wherever strengthening of safeguards was found necessary. Despite the said judicial direction, the underlying issues concerning airfare regulation

and passenger interest continue to subsist, necessitating the present intervention before this Hon'ble Court.

12. That domestic air travel in contemporary India performs the character of an essential service impacting public order, safety, employment mobility, medical emergencies and family life, especially for migrant populations and geographically distant regions. Absence of effective tariff oversight has rendered air travel inaccessible and exploitative for large sections of the population.
13. Following privatisation and subsequent consolidation within the aviation industry, the domestic airline market has come to be characterised by conditions approaching monopoly or, at best, duopoly on several sectors. The resulting structure bears clear oligopolistic features, including parallel pricing behaviour and the absence of meaningful fare competition. It is increasingly observed that so-called low-cost carriers are pricing tickets at levels equal to or even higher than those of full-service airlines. Such a market environment severely restricts consumer choice and leaves passengers vulnerable to arbitrary, unreasonable and excessive fare escalation, particularly during peak demand or operational disruptions.
14. India's domestic travel and tourism economy represents enormous and still under-realised potential, the growth of which is intrinsically linked to affordable and dependable air connectivity for Tier-2, Tier-3 and remote regions. Public policy, including the UDAN initiative, has consistently articulated the objective that even the common citizen should have access to air travel. However, persistently high and unpredictable domestic airfares, often exceeding those prevailing on comparable international sectors undermine this national objective, discourage mobility, dilute public investment in tourism and regional

infrastructure, and ultimately erode passenger confidence as well as sustainable long-term demand in the aviation sector.

15. That the issues raised by the Petitioner are substantially reinforced by the Applicant's prior representations, Parliamentary material and executive admissions. The Applicant's impleadment will assist this Hon'ble Court in examining the structural and regulatory dimensions of airfare control and passenger protection.
16. That no prejudice will be caused to any party if the Applicant is impleaded. On the contrary, the Applicant's participation will aid effective adjudication of the issues raised in the writ petition.
17. That the present application is filed bona fide, in public interest and without any private, commercial or oblique motive.

PRAYER

It is, therefore, most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may graciously be pleased to allow this application; and

- (i) Implead the applicant as Petitioner No.2 in Writ Petition.
- (ii) pass such order(s) as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of the present case.

AND FOR THIS ACT OF KINDNESS THE APPLICANTS AS IN DUTY BOUND SHALL EVER PRAY

Place: New Delhi

Date: 18.02.2026

Filed By



JOSE ABRAHAM

Advocate for the Applicant

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
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.....Applicant

AFFIDAVIT

I, Biji Eapen, S/o. Late Eapen, Enchakalody, aged about 73 years, R/o Door No. 77/1418 (44/981) , Enchakalody, L.F.C Road, Kaloor, Kochi, Kerala- -682 017, presently at Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

1. That I am the President of AURGRF, the Applicant in the above said Interlocutory Application seeking Impleadment in WP (C) NO. 1124 OF 2025. As such I'm fully conversant with the facts and circumstances of the case and hence competent to swear this affidavit.
2. That I have read and understood the contents of the above mentioned IA for Impleadment in WP (C) NO. 1124 OF 2025 and the same has been explained to me in my vernacular language. Also, I state that the contents of the IA are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.



DEPONENT
For AURGRF

President

VERIFICATION

Verified at Delhi on this 17th Day of February, 2026, and I state that the contents above stated are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and nothing material has been concealed therefrom.



DEPONENT
For AURGRF
[Signature]
President

17 FEB 2026



ATTESTED
[Signature]
Mrs. Sangita Mishra
Advocate Delhi
Regn. No. 16967
Govt. of India
Mob. No. 9990312780

NOTARIAL REGISTER
Sr. No. 1453 PAGE 101
Dated 17-2-26 Reg. No. 5

G. A. Robot
I identify the deponent who has signed/T.I in my presence

Mr./Ms *G. A. Robot* Adv./Self
ID No. *15N/4942/2023*

ANNEXURE - P1

39

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF SOCIETIES

The Travencore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955
Act 12 of 1955

S.NO-EKM/TC/360/2023

Year-2023

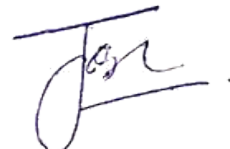
As per the Travencore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955, AIRLINE USERS RIGHTS & GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM is certified to be registered on this day.

I hereby do sign on this day, i.e on the 5th day of the 7th Month of 2023

S/d-

REGISTRAR OF SOCIETIES

ERNAKULAM, COCHIN-11



/TRUE TYPED COPY/

ANNEXURE A/2

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
Lok Sabha**

**STARRED QUESTION NO. : 53
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 28th November 2024)**

INCREASE IN AIRFARE

53. THIRU DAYANIDHI MARAN

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION

be pleased to state:-

(a) whether it is true that there have been fluctuation in air ticket prices and a 40% increase is reported during the last year and if so, the details of action taken thereon along with the corrective steps taken in this regard;

(b) whether there are any plans to set a ceiling on airfare as per sectors, especially during high-demand periods and if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of meetings or consultations held with industry and stakeholders in this regard;

(d) the criteria adopted by various airlines in determining fares at present;

(e) the details of framework or policy being considered to set a transparency mechanism to prevent arbitrary pricing; and

(f) whether the Government proposes to take initiatives to encourage fair competition or reintroduce public sector participation to provide more affordable options for travellers and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

Minister of CIVIL AVIATION (Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu)

(a) to (f) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Parts (a) to (f) in respect of Lok Sabha Starred Ques. No. 53 for reply on 28.11.2024 regarding "Increase in Airfare" by Shri Thiru Dayanidhi Maran ; (a) & (f): With continuous engagement with airlines & Online Ticketing Agents (OTAs) and keeping a watch on the movement of airfares by the government, the airfares have moderated in 2024 relative to 2023. Notably, during festival seasons, a decrease in airfares was observed in various sectors. With the enhancement of capacity by induction of more aircraft fleet, modernization of airports and development of new airports, domestic passenger traffic has increased to 153,674,310 in 2023-24 as compared to 136,028,656 in the year 2022-23. Even in the current financial year 2024-25 upto-September, the domestic passenger traffic (79,345,065) has surpassed the volume (75,358,445) during the corresponding period in the year 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 5.3%. The airlines have also been sensitized to ensure reasonability while fixing the airfares and to keep passengers' interest in mind. ; A meeting was held on 01.08.2024 with all airlines wherein, possible steps to increase the transparency of Airfare were discussed. The importance of airlines to ensure fair and reasonable airfares so that the sector serves the general public and witnesses continuous growth was emphasized.; ; A meeting was held on 20.09.2024 wherein OTAs were advised to take all necessary steps to ensure speedy refund to the passengers and to effectively handle the issue of fare hike while booking so as; to increase the passenger satisfaction level. ; Moreover, DGCA held a meeting with

the Airlines on 19.11.2024 wherein several key issues identified during the meeting held on 01.08.2024 were emphasized for compliance with representatives of the Airlines. ; Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has setup a Tariff Monitoring Unit (TMU) that monitors airfares on select domestic sectors on random basis by using airlines websites on monthly basis to ensure that the airlines do not charge airfares outside the range declared by them.; ; The airfares are dynamic in nature and follow the principle of demand & supply. The trends in airfare prices in India exhibit considerable seasonality, prevailing fuel price, the capacity of the aircraft operating on the route, competition on the sector, season, holidays, festivals, long weekends, events (sports, fairs, contests) etc. The months of May and June experience heightened traffic, with a notable peak in international travel commencing in mid-July, which concurrently influences domestic demand. From July to September, there is typically a decline in travel activity due to the monsoon season. Nevertheless, the arrival of the festive season in October, particularly during the celebration of Diwali, triggers a notable resurgence in travel demand. By mid-January, travel demand begins to wane, continuing its decline until the final week of April. Following this period, a renewed interest in travel coincides with the summer holidays, contributing to an increase in demand once again. ; Besides this, the pricing of airfares is significantly influenced by operational constraints at airports, are subject to limitations imposed by terrain, weather conditions, and restricted operating hours. The combination of constrained capacity and elevated demand leads to increased fares on these routes due to

operational limitations and capacity restrictions. ; When setting prices, airlines consider above factors such as market conditions, demand fluctuations, seasonal trends, and other pertinent market influences. This approach allows them to adjust fares in a way that reflects the current travel landscape. 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. While the government generally refrains from regulating airfares to maintain market competitiveness, however, it remains vigilant, and the Government intervenes to shift capacity from one sector to another to prevent exorbitant pricing to ensure passenger comfort and welfare. ; Given the complex dynamics of the Indian aviation industry, Government is playing the role of a facilitator by way of creating enabling environment to support the growth of the sector.;



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**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
Lok Sabha**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. : 2931
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 12th December 2024)**

MECHANISM TO REGULATE AIRFARE

**2931. ADV. CHANDRA SHEKHAR
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION**

be pleased to state:-

(a) the specific policy initiatives that the Government considers to implement a price control mechanism for regulating airfares;

(b) the action taken by the Government in light of the recent recommendations from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture for route-specific fare capping and the establishment of a quasi-judicial entity to oversee airfare regulation; and

(c) the manner in which the Government proposes to address concerns regarding excessive fare hikes during peak travel seasons ensuring fair pricing for the passengers?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): The airfares have moderated in 2024, relative to 2023. The airlines have also been sensitized to ensure reasonability while fixing the airfares and to keep passengers' interest in mind. Notably, during festival seasons, a decrease in airfares was observed in various sectors.;

;

The airlines are mandated to display the Tariff Sheet at a prominent location on the home page of airlines' website.;

;

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has setup a Tariff Monitoring Unit (TMU) that monitors airfares on select domestic sectors on random basis by using airlines' websites on monthly basis to ensure that the airlines do not charge airfares outside the range declared by them.;

;

The airfares are dynamic in nature and follow the principle of demand & supply. The trends in airfare prices in India exhibit considerable seasonality, prevailing fuel price, the capacity of the aircraft operating on the route, competition on the sector, season, holidays, festivals, long weekends, events (sports, fairs, contests) etc. Besides this, the pricing of airfares is significantly influenced by operational constraints at airports. Routes experiencing high tourist demand, are subject to limitations imposed by terrain, weather conditions, and restricted operating hours. The combination of constrained capacity and elevated demand leads to fluctuations in airfares.;

;

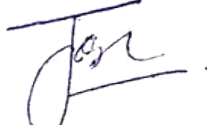
Airfares are not subject to regulation by the Government and airlines have the flexibility to determine their airfares based on their operational needs, while adhering to Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. While the government generally refrains from regulating airfares to maintain market competitiveness, however, it remains vigilant, and the Government intervenes to shift capacity from one sector to another to prevent exorbitant pricing to ensure passenger comfort and welfare.;

;

DGCA with quasi-judicial powers has been entrusted with the task of monitoring airfares charged by the airlines. Further, Anti-competitive practices are kept in check by the Competition Commission of India (CCI). As such, there is no requirement for another separate body to monitor airfares

;

Given the complex dynamics of the Indian aviation industry, Government is playing the role of a facilitator by way of creating enabling environment to support the growth of the sector.



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ANNEXURE A/4
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 49
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 1st December 2025)

16

AIRFARE REGULATION

49. DR. JOHN BRITTAS

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

(a) whether Rule 135(4) of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, empowers Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to issue binding directions to airlines in cases of excessive or predatory pricing or oligopolistic practices by airlines;

(b) if so, the reasons for not regulating air fares so far;

(c) whether Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture has recommended route-specific capping of airfares and establishment of a separate regulatory entity to monitor and control air ticket pricing, observing that self-regulation of ticket prices by aviation companies hasn't been effective; and

(d) if so, actions taken by Government to implement the said recommendations of the Committee?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

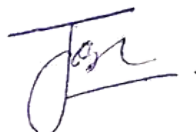
(a) to (d): Airfares are not subject to regulation by the Government and airlines have the flexibility to determine their airfares based on their operational needs, while adhering to Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. The pricing of airfares is subject to dynamic fluctuations influenced by the fundamental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

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) ensures that the airfare charged by the airlines remain within the boundaries of the established tariff sheets. However, in exceptional circumstances of non-adherence to Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135 of The Aircraft Rules, 1937, necessary direction are being issued to all concerned airlines.

To ease surge in air fare, Government remains vigilant and sensitize airlines to exercise moderation. Measures like increase in the number of flights, reallocating capacity, etc. are adopted as done during pandemic, festivals, Mahakumb and Pahalgam incident.

Further, the Government, proactively engages with scheduled airlines and advises them to augment capacity by deploying additional flights during festival seasons or during events causing surge in demand. In October 2025, to meet high festive demand, airlines responded by augmenting flight capacities by announcing 1750 additional flights across 100 sectors. As a result of capacity increase, a general moderation in fares was observed across most of the sectors. This proactive approach serves to mitigate abrupt price surges that may arise from local events or force majeure conditions.

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, under the provision of sub-rule (2) of Rule 135 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. This covers about 27% of the domestic traffic. By doing so, the TMU plays a critical role in maintaining airfare levels within the boundaries of the airlines' prescribed tariffs.



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Ministry of Civil Aviation



ANNEXURE A/5

MoCA Action on IndiGo Operational Crisis - Air Fare Regulation

MoCA invokes its regulatory powers to ensure fair and reasonable fares across all affected routes

Posted On: 06 DEC 2025 12:25PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has taken serious note of concerns regarding unusually high airfares being charged by certain airlines during the ongoing disruption. In order to protect passengers from any form of opportunistic pricing, the Ministry has invoked its regulatory powers to ensure fair and reasonable fares across all affected routes.

An official directive has been issued to all airlines mandating strict adherence to the fare caps that have now been prescribed. These caps will remain in force until the situation fully stabilises. The objective of this directive is to maintain pricing discipline in the market, prevent any exploitation of passengers in distress, and ensure that citizens who urgently need to travel — including senior citizens, students, and patients — are not subjected to financial hardship during this period.

The Ministry will continue to closely monitor fare levels through real-time data and active coordination with airlines and online travel platforms. Any deviation from the prescribed norms will attract immediate corrective action in the larger public interest.

Divyanshu Kumar

(Release ID: 2199755) Visitor Counter : 11754

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LOGISTICS

Call to introduce permanent airfare caps for passenger welfare, market stability

The Ministry's intervention during the recent Indigo flight disruptions has effectively prevented exorbitant air fare increase and protected passengers by implementing temporary fare caps between ₹7,500 and ₹18,000

By V Sajeew Kumar

Updated - January 23, 2026 at 12:35 PM.

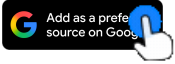


The Airline Users Rights and Grievance Redressal Forum (AURGRF) has urged the Civil Aviation Minister to permanently institute domestic airfare caps for passenger welfare, market stability and sustainable aviation growth.



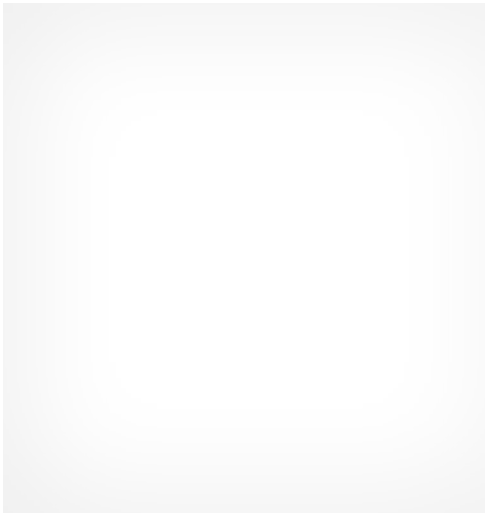
See us first
when you
search on
Google.

Click below to
set it.



Though the domestic airfares are deregulated, the fare caps introduced by the DGCA proved to be an effective intervention during the post-Covid recovery period. However, the dilution of these safeguards by way of unchecked dynamic pricing, unbundling of essential services, fuel surcharges and ancillary fees have exposed passengers to escalating, opaque and unpredictable airfare structures. Biji Eapen, president and Ajith Marath, Secretary, AURGRF said.

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The Civil Aviation Ministry's intervention during the recent Indigo flight disruptions has effectively prevented exorbitant air fare increase and protected passengers by implementing temporary fare caps ranging between ₹7,500 and ₹18,000 and the deployment of additional capacity.

READ MORE


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**AIRLINE USERS RIGHTS
AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM**

Ref: AURGRF-05/01/26

Date: 22 January 2026

To

1) Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu

Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, MoCA, Government of India, New Delhi – 110003

2) Shri Murlidhar Mohol

Hon'ble Minister of State for Civil Aviation, MoCA, Government of India, New Delhi – 110003

Subject: Request to Continue and Institutionalise Domestic Fare Capping in the Interest of Passenger Welfare

Respected Sirs,

Greetings from the Airline Users Rights and Grievance Redressal Forum (AURGRF).

The Airline Users Rights and Grievance Redressal Forum (AURGRF), representing the collective interests of airline passengers across India, respectfully submits this memorandum seeking the continuation—and institutionalisation—of domestic airfare capping in the larger interest of passenger welfare, market stability, and sustainable growth of the aviation sector.

Although domestic airfares are formally deregulated, the temporary fare capping introduced by DGCA in May 2020, linked to flight duration, proved to be a timely and effective intervention in restoring affordability and public confidence during the post-COVID recovery phase. Over time, however, unchecked dynamic pricing, unbundling of essential services, fuel surcharges, and ancillary fees have diluted these safeguards, exposing passengers to escalating, opaque, and often unpredictable costs.

Recent operational disruptions—particularly involving IndiGo Airlines—highlighted systemic vulnerabilities, including large-scale flight cancellations, acute pilot shortages, and inconsistent enforcement of CAR-2024 and FDTL norms, raising legitimate safety and consumer protection concerns. The Ministry's timely intervention, by permitting other airlines to deploy additional capacity and by capping fares between ₹7,500 and ₹18,000, was widely welcomed. It effectively prevented surge pricing, protected passengers during periods of emergency travel demand, and restored operational balance in the market.

As we enter 2026, stable operations and the absence of major passenger disruptions clearly demonstrate that calibrated regulatory intervention supports market stability without undermining airline viability. Current pricing on even the longest domestic routes, at ₹8,000–₹10,000, despite Brent crude prices remaining around USD 64.72 per barrel—far below the historic peak of USD 145.11 per barrel in July 2008—confirms that excessive surge-based pricing lacks both economic and operational justification.

The capital-intensive nature of aviation demands sound financial governance. Past airline failures—Jet Airways, Kingfisher, and GoAir—were rooted in chronic mismanagement rather than fare regulation. At present, however, weak oversight, unchecked dynamic pricing, and route-level monopoly or duopoly conditions have normalised high fares often disconnected from distance flown or actual operating costs.

Airline Users Rights and Grievances Redressal Forum (AURGRF)

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While the Aircraft Act explicitly empowers the regulator to monitor and restrain exorbitant fares, this authority remains under-utilised, leaving passengers—particularly economically vulnerable travellers—without an effective voice.

India today carries over 5.38 lakh domestic passengers daily across 164 airports, including millions travelling under the UDAN scheme. With domestic passenger traffic projected to reach 40 crore by 2029, affordable, predictable, and transparent airfares are central to regional connectivity, domestic tourism, and inclusive economic growth. The growing anomaly of international sectors—especially to Gulf destinations—being cheaper than comparable domestic routes risks undermining state investments in tourism and infrastructure.

Market concentration is not a deliberate policy outcome but the consequence of past airline failures. With three new carriers—Shankh Air, Al Hind Air, and Fly Express—approved to commence operations in 2026, competition is expected to improve further, reinforcing the case for stable and transparent fare regulation rather than price volatility.

In this context, AURGRF respectfully urges the Ministry to consider the following measures:

1. Mandate that all domestic airfares, without exception, remain strictly within the existing fare capping limits, and institutionalise these caps as a permanent, enforceable ceiling applicable under all market conditions.
2. Institutionalise structured and periodic consultations with recognised passenger associations and key stakeholders in the formulation and review of fare policies and aviation safety regulations.
3. Establish a transparent and automatic regulatory mechanism to ensure that any temporary or crisis-driven pricing adjustments remain within the prescribed fare caps and are withdrawn immediately once normal conditions resume, irrespective of seasonal peaks or demand fluctuations.

These measures are essential to safeguard passenger interests, strengthen regulatory credibility, ensure fair competition, support sustainable airline operations, and uphold India's aviation growth as equitable, safe, and globally respected.

Respectfully submitted,

Airline Users Rights and Grievance Redressal Forum (AURGRF)



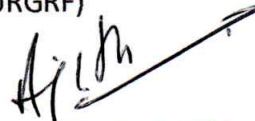
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Copy: **Shri N.K. Premachandran**, Hon Member of Parliament, Gol, India



/TRUE COPY/



IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

I. A. No. _____ OF 2026

IN

WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO. 1124 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

S.Laxminarayanan

.....Petitioner

And

Union of India and Ors.

....Respondents

AND IN THE MATTER OF:-

Airline users Rights & Grievance Redressal Forum

.....Applicant

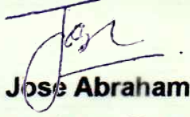
VAKALATNAMA

(S.C.R. Order IV, Rule 19)

I, Biji Eapen, S/o. Late Eapen, Enchakalody, aged about 73 years, R/o Door No. 77/1418 (44/981) , Enchakalody, L.F.C Road, Kaloor, Kochi, Kerala- 682 017, the APPLICANT in the above Writ Petition (Civil) do hereby appoint and retain **Mr. Jose Abraham, Advocate on record** of the Supreme Court to act and appear for me/us in the above Suit/Appeal/Petition/Reference and on my/our behalf to conduct and prosecute (or defend) the same and all proceedings that may taken in respect of any application connected with the same or any decree or order passed therein including proceeding in taxation and applications for Review, to file and obtain return of documents and to deposit and receive money on my/our behalf in the said Suit/Appeal/Petition/Reference and in applications for Review and to represent me/is and to take all necessary stops on my/our behalf in the above matter. We agree to pay his fees and out of pocket expenses, agree to ratify all acts done by the aforesaid Advocate in pursuance of this Authority.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2026

Accepted, identified, satisfied & Certified



Mr. Jose Abraham
Advocate on Record



(Put Signature Below)

Biji Eapen



I have *satisfied myself about the
due execution of the vakalatnama

MEMO OF APPEARANCE

To,
The Registrar,
Supreme Court of India,
New Delhi

Sir,

Please enter my appearance on behalf of the Petitioner in the matter mentioned.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2026

Yours faithfully,


[Mr. JOSE ABRAHAM]
CODE: 2066

ADVOCATE ON RECORD

D-144-A, ASHRAM, NEW DELHI – 110014.

E-mail:-advocatejose@gmail.com

Phone:- 011-35608590, 9891417346.



Service of Impleadment Application in W.P. (C) No. 1124 / 2025, titled as S. Laxminarayanan vs Union of India & Ors

1 message

Jose Abraham <jaassociates.delhi@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 18, 2026 at 4:44 PM

To: cmoffice806@gmail.com, RajBahadur Yadav ILS <r.b.yadavadvocate231@gmail.com>, sukritseth@hotmail.com

Dear Sir !

Kindly see the attached Impleadment Application in W.P. (C) No. 1124 / 2025, titled as S. Laxminarayanan vs Union of India & Ors and kindly acknowledge and take notice accordingly.

With Thanks and Regards

--

Jose Abraham
Advocate on Record,
Supreme Court of India.

Visit : <https://jaassociates.co.in>

To know the present status, last or next hearing date, order etc. of your matter please contact us on +91-9891417346 between 5 PM to 7 PM on Monday to Saturday.

Locate us on Google Map



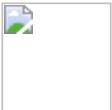
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