



## AIRLINE USERS RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM

Memorandum submitted to Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Hon. Minister for Civil Aviation, Government of India by AURGRF on 13th Feb 2025, requesting for the “Restoration of Previous Baggage Allowances to Protect Passenger Rights and Improve Travel Experience”

Honourable Minister ji,

Greetings from the Airline Users Rights and Grievances Redressal Forum (AURGRF)!

The Indian government's recent decision to limit carry-on baggage to a single 7 kg item has raised significant concerns among passengers and aviation experts. Imposed by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), the regulation aims to manage growing passenger traffic, reduce airport congestion, and enhance security. However, it compromises passengers' established rights and convenience, sparking widespread dissatisfaction.

### Key Concerns and Implications:

**Passenger Rights:** The new policy eliminates the long-standing privilege of carrying personal items, such as laptop bags or handbags up to 3 kg. which were traditionally permitted for passenger convenience.

**Convenience and Safety:** The restriction poses challenges for business professionals, scholars, and international travellers who rely on laptops and essential items during flights and transit. The inability to carry essential items like medicines, cosmetics, and valuables—typically kept in personal bags—creates significant hardships and discomfort, particularly for international travelers and women.

**Economic Implications:** The restrictions limit passengers' ability to shop at duty-free stores, as items like shopping bags, liquor, or cosmetics, which would typically be considered a second piece of baggage. The change may impact domestic and international tourism, undermining the economic sustainability of the aviation sector.

**Passenger Contributions to Airport Security:** Passengers directly fund airport security and infrastructure through mandatory fees. These include a ₹200 Passenger Service Fee (PSF) for security services and a User Development Fee (UDF), which ranges from ₹150–₹700 for domestic flights and ₹500–₹1,200+ for international travel.

**Lok Sabha Address on Aviation Safety:** On August 8, 2024, Hon. MP N.K. Premachandran called for the full implementation of ICAO Doc 10147 and the repeal of the flawed Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) dated January 25, 2023. He emphasized that CAR contradicts ICAO Doc 10147, compromising passenger safety and security.

**Ensuring Global Safety Framework:** To address these challenges, India must fully implement ICAO Doc 10147, the global safety framework that has been in effect since January 2023 for all air transportation personnel, including airline, airport, security, and CISF staff. It mandates a Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) program tailored to specific roles, holding employers responsible and employees accountable for detecting and preventing hazardous materials in baggage, cargo, and passengers, regardless of quantity or weight, to enhance aviation safety and security.

**Safety and Security Gaps:** Existing regulations, including the Aircraft (Carriage of Dangerous Goods) Rules, 2003, and the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) dated January 25, 2023, are outdated, incompatible, and misaligned with ICAO Doc 10147 and IATA standards, compromising passenger safety. Additionally, their nonalignment with Chapter 8 of the ICAO Aviation Safety Manual poses a security risk.

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**Balancing Regulation and Passenger Rights:** The aviation industry must strike a balance between regulatory efficiency and the protection of passenger rights. Allowing airlines to set ticket fares based on market demand also means that baggage allowances and passenger facilities should be treated as commercial decisions, not regulatory matters, impacting airline profitability and the broader national economy.

**The Way Forward:** As the third-largest domestic aviation market, India's aviation sector is growing rapidly. It's important to balance safety and security protocols with passenger rights. Advancements in 3D CT scanners, coupled with skilled personnel, enable passengers to keep electronics and liquids in their cabin bags during screening, enhancing security while significantly speeding up the process. We urge Indian carriers and aviation authorities—DGCA and BCAS—to review current baggage restrictions, considering safety, security, and operational factors, while working with stakeholders to ensure safety measures also enhance passenger comfort.

**Request for Restoration of Carry-On Baggage Allowances:** The Airline Users Rights and Grievances Redressal Forum (AURGRF), representing the interests of airline passengers, respectfully submits this formal request for your kind intervention in addressing the current restrictive carry-on baggage policy. We urge your esteemed office to kindly consider withdrawing these limitations and restoring the previous baggage allowances.

India currently has 153 airports. This revision is essential to ease growing concerns among domestic and international passengers and enhance their experience, especially with 120 new airports planned under the UDAN initiative as outlined in the new budget, which will significantly boost regional connectivity and make air travel more accessible across the country

We appreciate your kind attention to this pressing matter and look forward to a favourable resolution.

Sincerely

For Airline Users Rights and Grievances Redressal Forum (AURGRF)



**Biji Eapen**  
President



**Adv. Ajith Marath**  
General Secretary



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2. The Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Govt of India  
3.- Director General of Civil Aviation, Office of DGCA, Govt of India  
4. Director General, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security  
5. Shri. M.K. Premachandran M.P (AURGRF Chief Patron)  
6. Shri Amitabh Khosla, Country Director, IATA -India