

Exorbitant airfares charged by various airlines

3541. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the attention of Government is drawn to the exorbitant airfares being collected by various airlines in the country and there is no justification in the increase of fares;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reasons for variation of prices of air tickets within no time; and
- (d) the measures being taken by Government to curtail such vying in creating artificial demand and increase of airfares?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI G. M. SIDDESHWARA): (a) to (d) Air fares are not regulated by the Government. Under the provision of Sub Rule (1) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rules 1937, airlines are free to fix reasonable tariff having regard to all relevant factors, including the cost of operation, characteristics of services, reasonable profit and the generally prevailing tariff. Air fares so established by airlines are published on their respective websites under the provision of Sub Rule (2) of Rule 135, Aircraft Rules 1937.

The domestic airlines pricing runs in multiple levels (bucket or RBD) which are in line with the practice followed globally. Usually, the lower levels of the fare in the fare bucket are assigned to advance purchase (popularly known as Appex Fares) bookings (*e.g.* up to 90, 60, 30, 14 and 07 days before departure). As time lapses and date of journey approaches closer (from 07 days to date of departure), the fare in higher side of fare bucket are available for purchase.

Airline remains compliant to the regulatory provisions of Rule 135 as long as the fare charged by them does not exceed the fare established and displayed on their website.

Further, Directorate General of Civil Aviation has also set up a Tariff Monitoring Unit in 2010 that monitors airfares on certain routes selected on random basis to ensure that the airlines do not charge airfares outside the range declared by them. The analysis has shown that the airfares remained well within the fare bucket uploaded by the airlines on the respective websites.

Development of armed robots by DRDO

3542. SHRI TARUN VIJAY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has started any project to manufacture robots who can work like the soldiers posted at the border: