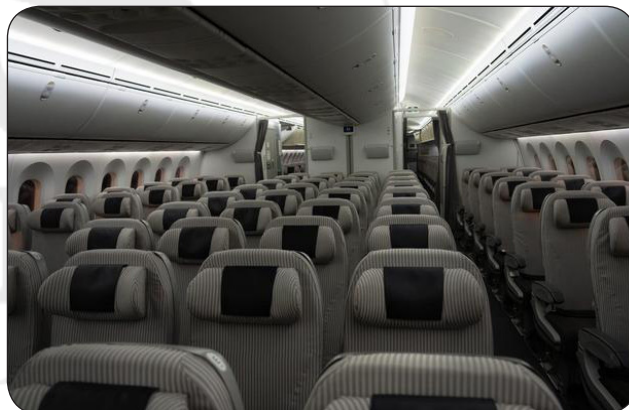


Seat selection fee on flights ‘arbitrary’, says House panel.

Airlines charging passengers a fee for seat selection on an aircraft is “arbitrary and unjustifiable” and the government must keep a close watch on fare pricing, a parliamentary panel said in its report on Monday.

Various airlines in the country offer passengers the option to select their seats on an aircraft before a flight. This could cost anywhere between ₹150 and ₹1,000 depending on the location of the seat. Passengers not interested in paying extra could wait for a seat to be assigned to them at the time of check-in at the airport.

“The committee is also of the opinion that fixing of different fares for selection of seats in the same flight is arbitrary and unjustifiable. Hence, Committee on the principle of equity feels that all the seats in a same flight should have same fare,” said a department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report.



It rejected the response of the Ministry of Civil Aviation on the issue that air travel was “a contractual matter between airline and passenger, which is commercial in nature” as one that was “not at all justified.”

“The Committee is of the opinion that for the Civil Aviation sector to grow in an open market, it is justifiable that the private airline operators should be given a free hand to fix the airfares as they are governed by competition. However, the Committee would like to draw the attention of the Ministry to the provision of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, which specifically mentions that the fares should be reasonable and should maintain reasonable profit,” it said.

Airlines in India are allowed to “unbundle” airfares, which lets them break-up their total fare into service components and charge separately for them.

The panel recommended that the government issue guidelines to ensure that flights on the same route operated by different airlines should have similar airfares.

Expected Question (Prelims Exams)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding parliamentary committees-

1. Indian constitution provide two types of parliamentary committees, standing committee and Ad-Hoc committee.
2. Any matters related to these committees are dealt with Article 118(1) of the Indian constitution.

which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None

Expected Question (Mains Exams)

Q. Discuss the various challenges faced by the Indian Aviation sector and mention the probable solutions. (250 Words)

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Note: - The question of the main examination given for practice is designed keeping in mind the upcoming UPSC main examination. Therefore, to get an answer to this question, you can take the help of this source as well as other sources related to this topic.