



MakeMyTrip loses IndiGo, much of Jet biz

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Two private airlines are at war with leading online travel agency MakeMyTrip, alleging it continued to offer arbitrary and opaque fares despite objection by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). [IndiGo](#) has withdrawn all content from MakeMyTrip, and [Jet Airways](#) has drastically reduced its inventory on the site.

Offering opaque fares is a trade practice where a portal sells heavily discounted tickets but does not disclose the name of the airline until the payment is made by the customer.

Soon after the airlines took this step, the portal removed all bargain fares from its site. [MakeMyTrip](#) claims the opaque fares were withdrawn on March 28, the day [DGCA](#) asked airlines to stop publishing opaque fares and users could see all flight details before making the payment. The opaque fare issue had flared recently, following Kingfisher Airlines' flight cancellations. Travel portals had put up a

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note saying the carrier was not part of the bargain fares.

Aditya Ghosh, president of IndiGo, said, “The arbitrary display of fares and opaque pricing is anti-consumer and in violation of DGCA norms and directives. We have raised this with MakeMyTrip on several occasions but, unfortunately, there has been no resolution. We were therefore left with no choice. IndiGo can’t be seen supporting a blatant violation of the law.”

A Jet Airways executive, who did not want to be named, said the company had capped the ticket sale to five seats a day on MakeMyTrip, in retaliation to low fares being sold through the portal.

Jet Airways has a daily inventory of about 80,000 seats on its domestic and international routes. “We have put a cap on ticket sales. The portal is offering rock-bottom fares. This is killing the market. It is acting like a banker to Kingfisher Airlines. We have told them we will not participate until they stop selling these low fares,” a senior Jet executive said.

MakeMyTrip issued a statement that fares and inventory on its website were controlled by airlines and “all the fares are displayed according to the guidelines received and approved by airlines, including special fares, which are approved by participating airlines”.

Jet Airways and Indigo, with 30 per cent and 20 per cent market share, respectively, cater to about half the total passengers in the country and form a substantial part of the bookings done through MakeMyTrip.

According to analysts, in a scenario where Kingfisher has cut its operations, IndiGo and Jet Airways stand to gain and would not want to share the yield with travel portals.

The Travel Agents Federation of India said at the absence of regulation as a problem area. “There is no regulation in the way portals are behaving. We have been discussing these issues, but there is no headway yet,” said Ajay Prakash, president.

Supreme Court lawyer and cyber law expert Pavan Duggal said the aberrations were a result of the absence of specific industry regulation for online travel agencies.

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