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### 1. A passenger attacked a pilot. How are airlines expected to respond?

#### Why in news?

IndiGo has initiated the process of putting on the no-fly list a passenger who assaulted a pilot after the flight was delayed for several hours amid heavy fog in Delhi on Sunday. The airline declared the passenger "unruly", and further action will be guided by the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) on "Handling of unruly passengers" issued by the aviation watchdog Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

The CAR lay down the procedure that airlines must follow with regard to unruly passenger behaviour of varying degrees at the time of the incident and subsequently.

Over the past few months, the DGCA has been prodding carriers to proactively report incidents of disruptive passenger behaviour on board aircraft, which the regulator feels could compromise operational safety.

#### How are airlines supposed to respond to incidents of unruly passenger behaviour?

The airline should first inform the passengers concerned that in case their behaviour is deemed unruly as per the guidelines, they could be arrested.

Unruly behaviour includes (but is not limited to): consuming liquor or drugs resulting in unruly behaviour; smoking; not obeying the pilot's instructions; using threatening or abusive language against crew or other passengers; physically threatening and abusive behaviour; intentionally interfering with discharge of duties by the crew; and endangering the safety of the aircraft and those on board.

In the incident that took place at Delhi's IGI Airport, the aircraft was still on ground, so the passenger was handed over to airport security immediately. In cases of unruly behaviour in the air, the pilot is required to quickly assess if the cabin crew can control the unruly passenger, and accordingly inform the airline's central control on the ground.

If the pilots and the airline's central control believe that the unruly passenger cannot be brought under control by the cabin crew, they must land as soon as possible at the nearest available airport. Upon landing, airline representative shall lodge FIR (First

Information Report) with the concerned security agency at aerodrome, to whom, the unruly passenger shall be handed over”.

### **What is the procedure to be followed after the incident is over?**

When an airline receives a complaint of unruly passenger behaviour from the pilot-in-command, it must refer the complaint to an internal committee, which must include (i) a retired district and sessions judge as chairman, (ii) a representative of a different airline and, (iii) a representative of a passengers’ association, or consumer association, or a retired officer of a consumer disputes redressal forum.

The internal committee is required to decide the matter within 30 days, along with the categorisation of the incident in one of three defined category levels. The committee shall also decide the duration for which the unruly passenger will be banned from flying. The committee’s decision shall be binding on the airline.

### **And what are the category levels of disruptive passenger behaviour?**

The levels define behaviour ranging from verbal harassment to murderous assault.

Level 1: Unruly behaviour, including physical gestures, verbal harassment, and unruly inebriation.

Level 2: Physically abusive behaviour, including pushing, kicking, hitting, and grabbing or inappropriate touching or sexual harassment.

Level 3: Life-threatening behaviour, including damage to aircraft operating systems, physical violence such as choking, eye gouging, murderous assault, and attempted or actual breach of flight crew compartment.

### **What penalties can unruly behaviour by a flight passenger attract?**

The airline can ban the unruly passenger for up to 30 days immediately after the incident.

“Pending decision of the Internal Committee, the concerned airline may ban such unruly passenger from flying, but such period may not exceed a period of 30 days. In case the Internal Committee fails to take a decision in 30 days, the passenger will be free to fly,” the rules say.

Airlines are required to maintain a database of unruly passengers and share it with the DGCA and other airlines. The DGCA maintains a No-Fly List based on the data shared by carriers.

In addition to the airline on whose aircraft the incident occurred, other carriers also have the option of banning such passengers from flying for varying durations based on offence levels. For Level 1 and 2 offences, the ban on flying can extend to three

months and six months respectively. For a Level 3 offence, the minimum ban should be for 2 years, with no upper limit.

An individual who is banned from flying can appeal within 60 days to an Appellate Committee constituted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and headed by a retired judge of a High Court. An appeal against the appellate panel's decision shall be made to a High Court.



A passenger hits an IndiGo pilot when he was making an announcement regarding a delay in take-off at the Delhi airport.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: The Indian Express

## 2. Punganur, dwarf cows that PM Modi fed on Makar Sankranti

### Why in news?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi fed cows at his residence, 7 Lok Kalyan Marg, on the occasion of Pongal/ Makar Sankranti.

Officials in the government confirmed that all the cattle seen in the pictures from the Prime Minister's residence are of the Punganur breed of Andhra Pradesh. What are the characteristics of Punganur cows, and why are they considered to be a very special breed?

### What is the Punganur breed, and where are these cattle found?

The Punganur is an indigenous breed native to the Punganoor, Vayalpadu, Madanapalli, and Palamaneer talukas of Chittoor district in the Rayalaseema region of southern Andhra Pradesh. They are a unique dwarf breed, considered the shortest humped cattle in the world. Their small size makes it easy to keep them at home.

Punganur cows can be white or grey, or of shades of light or dark brown. They have small, crescent-shaped horns of 10-15 cm length.

**How numerous is this breed of indigenous cattle?**

The Punganur were once on the verge of extinction, and their numbers had fallen below 3,000 heads of cattle across the country. However, in recent years, these numbers have increased.

In the breed-wise report of livestock and poultry in the 20th Livestock Census conducted in 2019, the total number of Punganur was recorded at 13,275.



PM Modi with the cows

Relevance: GS Prelims; Biodiversity

Source: The Indian Express

**3. ASER survey results show gaps in learning persist, but access to tech offers avenues beyond physical school**

## **Annual Status of Education Report**

Since 2005, the NGO Pratham's Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) has been recording trends in school enrollment, attendance, and reading and arithmetic abilities among children ages 6-14 years in rural areas of the country.

The 2023 survey focused on an older group of 14-to-18-year-old children, specifically on their ability to apply reading and math skills to everyday situations, and their aspirations. It also sought to capture their access to digital technology, and whether they possess the skills to use it.

The ASER 2023 'Beyond Basics' survey was carried out among 34,745 young respondents in 28 rural districts in 26 states, including two districts each in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

### **What are some key findings from the survey?**

Children in this age group are doing multiple things, even though that is not always captured by the education sector or the job market. Around 30% are already working, often for their parents. But when asked whether that was what they wanted to do when they grew up, the children say that is not for them.

The majority of respondents in Class 11 or higher were studying humanities-related subjects. It suggests that their prospects in a job market are bleak that values STEM knowledge.

As far as the digital component is concerned, at one level, it shows that everybody knows how to use the basic things. But they're not using it in depth; they're using the surface layer, say, mainly engaging with social media.

### **The enrollment gap between boys and girls has been closing over the years. Can we say that about digital access too?**

About 90% of surveyed households had smartphones. Of the surveyed children, almost 95% boys and 90% girls could use a smartphone.

Across all phone-related tasks assigned to respondents, boys outperformed girls. Performance in digital tasks improved with education level. Ability to perform digital tasks also increased with basic reading proficiency.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: The Hindu