



November 8, 2017

To,

Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation
Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan
New Delhi – 110 003

Kind Attention: Shri P Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation

Sub: Incident at Delhi Airport on October 15, 2017

Dear Sir,

This is in reference to a customer relations incident that happened at Delhi airport on October 15, 2017. You would have seen a video clip of this being played on various media channels since last evening.

At the very outset, let me start off by acknowledging that we were at fault and we not only apologize for this regrettable incident, we have also taken action.

As a responsible organization, we recognize that we have a high degree of duty towards our customers. Treating our customers with respect is core to what we do.

I personally called and apologized to Mr Katyal (the customer) 3 weeks ago. Not now, but on the very same night. In fact, I remember telling Mr. Katyal that I had seen the video and assured him that we will investigate this matter thoroughly.

Even during the pendency of the investigation, we recognized that whatever may have been the provocation, my colleagues should have exercised restraint. Even while the investigation was being conducted, we immediately suspended the involved employees.

The ex-employee, Montu Kalra who was terminated and is claiming to be the 'whistleblower', is the one you can hear shouting in the video and instructing the other two colleagues who were junior to him to prevent the customer from boarding the bus and holding him back at the ramp area itself.

Montu Kalra was a cargo employee. He had no reason to approach the passenger area. He had no reason to prevent the customer from boarding the bus. He had no reason to scream instructions at his other colleagues. In fact, even if he chose to get involved, since he was 4 years senior to them in the Company, he should have acted maturely and apologized to the customer and let him proceed towards the arrival hall. On the other hand, what he actually did was that he instigated the incident and further provoked the customer by beginning to shoot a video on his mobile phone. He is the exact opposite of what IndiGo's customer service stands for.

It is important for us to point out that Montu Kalra was not terminated because he either shot a video or as he is now claiming, brought this to our attention. In fact, the reality is, that it is the other employee,

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Juby Thomas, is the one who raised this issue with his supervisor as per IndiGo's standard operating procedure and brought this incident to the attention of the Company.

Having said this, it is imperative that you and our millions of customers are aware of the true facts of this case and why we took the actions that we did.

Background of the Incident

By way of background, when an aircraft is parked at the parking bay after landing, there is a very high-level of ambient noise from the auxiliary power unit, the air-conditioning packs of the aircraft, the motorized baggage conveyor belt, passenger buses and from other aircraft in the vicinity.

After passengers have deplaned, it is a laid down procedure that, in the interest of safety, passengers be prevented from approaching any of the live ground equipment being used.

When our staff Juby Thomas saw Mr. Katyal inadvertently moving towards the catering high-lift (which was attached to the aircraft), Juby Thomas started waving frantically from a distance in order to ask Mr. Katyal to move away with the sole intention of preventing any accident. When Mr. Katyal could not comprehend what Juby Thomas was trying to convey, Juby Thomas started shouting in a much louder voice to overcome the very loud ambient noise around the aircraft.

It is possible that due to the very noisy ramp area, Mr. Katyal could not hear Juby Thomas properly and which lead to a miscommunication where Mr. Katyal may have felt that Juby Thomas was being rude. The reality is that Juby Thomas was only trying to ensure the safety of Mr. Katyal and prevent an accident.

We understand that Mr. Katyal was irritated and irate. Unfortunately, at the spur of the moment, it seems that Mr. Katyal asked Juby Thomas to "F***-ff". In hindsight, Juby Thomas should have probably ignored the remark. However, Juby Thomas turned around and asked Mr. Katyal why he is abusing him. To this Mr. Katyal responded by asking Juby Thomas to go do his own work.

The irony of the fact is that Juby Thomas was indeed doing his work and ensuring safety of passengers.

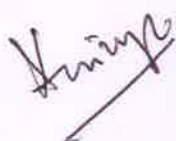
In an ideal scenario, Mr. Katyal would have moved away, boarded the bus from the ramp area and gone to the arrival hall and the matter would have ended there.

However, unfortunately, what transpired was something that is not in accordance with the laid down procedures and resulted in an incident which is a departure from IndiGo's ethos.

The next few paragraphs seek to explain the incident in detail including what actually transpired based on screen-shots from the video clip. We also seek to explain why Montu Kalra was terminated from the rolls of IndiGo and the other two employees, Juby Thomas and Sahiv Sharma were issued warning letters.

Scene 1

At the very beginning of the video, you will note that Montu Kalra is shouting at the two employees who are junior to him and instructing them to prevent Mr. Katyal from boarding the bus. There was absolutely no reason for Montu Kalra to prevent one of our customers from boarding the bus. At receiving these instructions from Montu Kalra, Juby Thomas approached Mr. Katyal and requested him not to board the bus. At the same time, Sahiv Sharma gives the signal to the bus driver to depart.



In this screenshot, it is quite obvious that Mr. Katyal is arguing with Juby Thomas, forcing himself to enter the bus even when he is being requested not to. Throughout this time, Juby Thomas continues to keep a safe distance from Mr. Katyal. It is quite obvious that Juby Thomas is continuing to follow laid down procedures. In fact, he continues to be calm.



Scene 2

The screenshot below shows that the conversation between Juby Thomas and Mr. Katyal continues while the other passengers board the bus. Juby Thomas continues to remain calm and never pushed Mr. Katyal. He only requested him to step aside.



Handwritten signature

Scene 3

This screenshot is critical. While Juby Thomas is keeping a safe distance, the moment the doors of the bus close, Mr. Katyal reaches out and grabs Juby Thomas' face.



Scene 4

Even while Juby Thomas is being assaulted, Juby Thomas does not retaliate and Sahiv Sharma tries to separate the two individuals by embracing Mr. Katyal from the back and escorting him away.



Katyal



Scene 5

After escorting Mr. Katyal away from Juby Thomas, Sahiv Sharma immediately lets-go of Mr. Katyal while Juby Thomas is now calling his supervisor (following the standard protocol). Even at this stage, despite having already been physically assaulted once, Juby Thomas does not engage in any argument with Mr. Katyal and keeps calm and maintains distance.



This screenshot is critical from a perspective of why a stern warning letter was issued to Sahiv Sharma even though his involvement was only separating the customer from Juby Thomas.

The letter was issued to him because he was seen smiling into the camera while separating Mr. Katyal, which is not something IndiGo would expect from its employees given the seriousness of the situation.

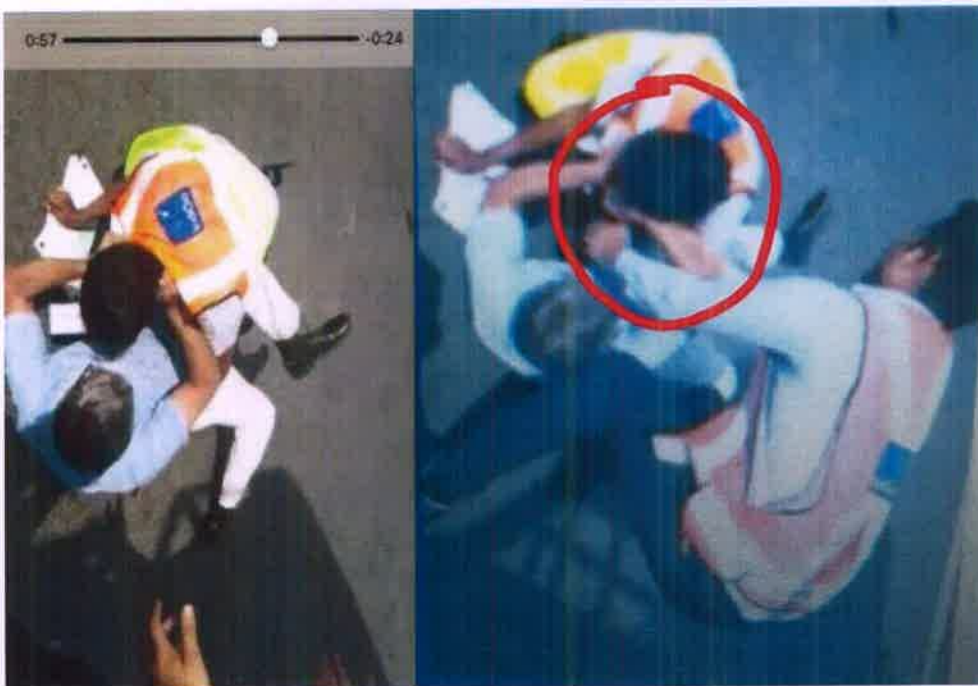
Scene 6

From the screenshots below, one can see that unfortunately that even after Mr. Katyal was separated from Juby Thomas, he once again charges towards Juby Thomas and grabbed Juby Thomas' face and tries to pull Juby Thomas towards himself and in the process both of them lose balance and fall to the ground.

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When they fall, you can see that both Juby Thomas' hands are on the tarmac and the passenger is grabbing Juby Thomas by the neck and hitting him. At this stage, Juby Thomas in self-defense tries to distance himself from Mr. Katyal by extending his hand and placing it on Mr. Katyal's collar bone. Juby Thomas is actually trying to move away while he continues to get assaulted. Juby Thomas never got the opportunity to move away from the situation since Mr. Katyal was holding him by the collar.



It is pertinent to note that whatever the provocation be, Juby Thomas was out of line and acted in a manner that is not consistent with what we stand for at IndiGo, even if it had been for self-defense. Therefore Juby Thomas was issued a final warning letter.

Amir



While the above narration helps set out the facts, we find this incident extremely regrettable and wish that we would have handled this differently. Whatever may have been the provocation, whether verbal or physical abuse, we could have tried to display more restraint.

As soon as we received information about this incident, we immediately took action. At the first instance, I personally called and apologized to the customer and assured him that we will investigate this thoroughly and take appropriate action without delay. The employees were immediately suspended, and we conducted a detailed investigation.

The unfortunate incident should have been avoided by improving our communication with the customer. The reality is that my colleagues were only trying to act in the best interest of the safety of Mr. Katyal, and trying to prevent a potential serious mishap.

At IndiGo, we are acutely aware of the faith and trust that hundreds of thousands of customers bestow on us every day. We know we are not perfect but we try hard every day in our pursuit for excellence, and create a brand and an organization that this country can be proud of.

We will try harder.

On behalf of IndiGo, I once again extend my personal and sincere apologies to Mr. Katyal.

Yours sincerely,

Aditya Ghosh

President & Wholetime Director

Copy to:

Shri Jayant Sinha, Minister of State (Civil Aviation)

Shri R. N. Choubey (IAS), Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation

Shri B. S. Bhullar (IAS), Director General, Directorate General of Civil Aviation

Shri Lalit Gupta, Joint Director General, Directorate General of Civil Aviation

Director General, BCAS

Director General, Central Industrial Security Force