

## No regulation of air fares: Patel

Civil Aviation Minister Praful Patel Saturday said the government was not considering any regulatory mechanism for fixing air fares, which would remain 'totally deregulated'.

'You all (existing private airlines) are born owing to deregulation of the pricing mechanism. Air fares will be totally deregulated,' the minister said at the HT Leadership Summit.

'As we do not have a regulatory mechanism for fixing air fares, we cannot force them (to cut fares),' he told the delegates, among were industry titans like Jet Airways chairman Naresh Goyal and Kingfisher Airlines chief Vijay Mallya.

On Nov 15 oil marketing companies reduced the prices of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) by more than 30 percent, but the airlines are yet to slash passenger fares.

Last month, the government gave six months' time for the airlines to settle their huge aviation fuel bill arrears pending with oil companies.

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