UNITAID Urges India to Tax Air Tickets to Fund HIV Meds

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UNITAID, a U.N. agency, is lobbyingcountries to tax air tickets as a way to raise funds for HIV and AIDSmedications, reports Reuters. Under the program, countries add a small levy onairfare tickets, which then funds UNITAID to buy HIV drugs for people in thedeveloping world. Ten countries have so far imposed the levy and have generated$200 million for low-cost meds. UNITAID is now asking India to join the group.Though India's airlines are struggling under $20 billion of debt, the countryhas the fastest growing air passenger market of any major economy, with 61million people traveling last year. Officials say that charging a tax of 18cents on domestic tickets and $1 on international flights would be enough tofund low-cost drug programs.

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