



न्यायालय मुख्य आयुक्त दिव्यांगजन

COURT OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN)

दिव्यांगजन सशक्तिकरण विभाग/Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)

सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय/Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

भारत सरकार/Government of India

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Case no. 14660/1101/2023

In the matter of-

Mr. Masoom Reza

...Complainant

Versus

The Secretary,

University Grants Commission (UGC)

...Respondent

1. Gist of the case:

1.1 Shri Masoom Reza, a person with 100% Visual Impairment filed his complaint dated 20.08.2023 regarding UGC-NET web registration portal is inaccessible for persons with visual impairment. The complainant reported that the UGC-NET web registration portal is inaccessible to visually impaired users because its Security PIN/Captcha cannot be read by screen readers. Despite earlier complaints sent to respondent in October 2023, no action has been taken. The issue prevents independent access to registration and result pages, violating the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

1.3 The complainant requested for:

- (a) An audio captcha option on all pages;
- (b) Clear announcement of letter capitalization in the audio captcha;
- (c) Any other suitable accessibility improvements.

2. Notice issued to the Respondent:

2.1 A Notice dated 01.12.2023 was issued to the Respondent for forwarding their comments within 30 days to this Court u/s 75 & 77 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (Hereinafter referred as "the Act"), followed by a reminder dated 18.04.2023 under Rule 38 (2) of

RPwD Rules, 2017.

2.2 No reply was received from Respondent.

3. Hearing:

3.1 A hearing in hybrid mode was conducted on **12.11.2025**. The following parties/ representatives were present during the hearing:

| S.No | Name and designation of the Attendees | Parties | Mode |
|-------------|--|----------------|-------------|
| 1. | Ms. Smita Vedani, Deputy Secretary, UGC | Respondent | Online |
| 2. | Col. B. Vijay Kumar, Director of Exam Unit-1, UGC | Respondent | Online |
| 3. | Mr. Om Prakash, Counsel for UGC | Respondent | Online |

4. Proceedings of the Hearing:

4.1 None appeared on behalf of the complainant. Considering the importance of the subject matter of the Complaint, namely, digital accessibility of UGC-NET Examination System, the Court decided to review the existing structure with the Respondent.

4.2 In response to a query by the Court on whether the UGC-NET registration portal had been made accessible, at least, after receiving the initial notice dated 01.12.2023 of this Court; the representative of the Respondent submitted that the complainant's earlier representation had been forwarded to the NTA, which administers the UGC-NET examination and controls the related online portal. The Court sought to know the present status of the accessibility of the UGC-NET portal, noting that it has been two years since the grievance was taken up with the Respondent. The respondent could not satisfactorily answer the Court, except stating that efforts are being made to gather the relevant information. The Court expressed its deep concerns and dissatisfaction emphasizing that the Hon'ble Supreme Court has in its combined Judgment in April 2025, in the cases titled Amar Singh Vs UOI and Pragya Prasoan Vs. UOI, held that the right to digital accessibility is part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21.

4.3 The representative from NTA submitted that the representation

was received on 19.06.2023, by which time admit cards were already issued and the examination cycle had commenced. The Court clarified that the matter was not limited to the Complainant or a single examination but concerned the accessibility of the entire registration portal. The respondent (NTA) acknowledged that none of the NTA examination portals were accessible as per the latest guidelines. The representative of the NTA stated that the matter had been taken up with NIC and that accessibility work was planned for the upcoming examination cycle. The respondent's representative acknowledged the observations of the Court, and stated that the next cycle would commence on 1 December 2025. He expressed the respondent's commitment to compliance and stated that coordination with NIC and NTA was required.

5. Observations & Recommendations

5.1 The Court stated that the requirements of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and the judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court including the one issued on 08.11.2024 in the Rajive Raturi matter, imposed mandatory and immediate obligations regarding digital accessibility. The Court noted that the basic accessibility features such as audio CAPTCHA and labelled fields, screen-reader compatibility, etc. should already have been implemented.

5.2 The Court observed that UGC, as the responsible authority for the examination, could not avoid accountability by stating that operational aspects lay with NTA.

5.3 The Court sought an undertaking from the respondents within 30 days confirming that the UGC-NET registration portal had been made fully accessible. Once accessibility of the portal is ensured, the respondent is recommended to get the portal and all its other digital platform to be audited. The Audit Report, an Action Taken Report alongwith the weblinks of all digital platforms of the Respondents shall be provided within 3 months in accordance with Section 76 of the RPWD Act. A copy of the ATR shall also be shared with the Complainant.

6. Accordingly, the matter is disposed of.

(S. Govindaraj)
Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities