



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. 14720/1101/2023

In the matter of-

Dr. Guruprasad T. S.

...Complainant

Versus

The General Manager (Operations),
 Airport Authority of India,
 Safdarjung Airport,
 New Delhi

...Respondent No.1

The Manager
 TATA SIA Airlines Limited (Vistara),
 Gurugram, Haryana

...Respondent No.2

1. Gist of the Case:

1.1 Dr Guruprasad T. S. filed his complaint dated 10.12.2023 regarding harassment caused to his wife Ms. Swarnalatha, a wheelchair user, travelling from Delhi to Coimbatore by Vistara Airlines.

1.2 Complainant submitted that on 04.12.2023, he travelled through Vistara Flight UK 533 (PNR: 51GHJD) from Indira Gandhi International Airport (DEL) to Coimbatore International Airport (CJB). His wife was forced to deplane via rear stairs instead of a ramp/aerobridge despite medical risks. The ground staff behaved rudely and initially refused assistance. Boarding of return passengers had already begun before all passengers had de-boarded, contrary to the DGCA norms.

2. Notice u/s 75 & 77 issued to the Respondent and its Reply:

2.1. A Notice containing the legal framework of Harmonized Guidelines and Standards for Universal along with other relevant guidelines was issued to the Respondents on 27.12.2023. In response, the Respondent No.1 filed their reply

dated 25.1.2024 and submitted that CCTV and records show no evidence of rude behaviour or altercation. Boarding occurred after de-boarding of a wheelchair passenger. A ramp and steps were used, and aerobridge de-boarding was arranged on request.

2. Hearing:

2.1 A hearing was conducted on 17.11.2025 in hybrid mode, wherein following parties/representatives were present:

Sl. No.	Name of the parties /Representatives	Parties	Mode
1.	Dr. Guruprasad T S	Complainant	Online
2.	Shri Sanjay Dulare, The General Manager (Operations), Airport Authority of India	For Respondent No.1	Online

3. Proceedings of the hearing:

3.1 At the outset, Complainant submitted that despite pre-booked and confirmed wheelchair assistance, no wheelchair was provided on arrival at Coimbatore. The passenger was asked to de-board via rear stairs and was allegedly attempted to be physically lifted. Though the airline issued an apology and partial refund, full airfare was not reimbursed and no satisfactory initial response was received from AAI.

3.2 Respondent No. 1 submitted that handling of the wheelchair inside the aircraft was the responsibility of the airline. It was stated that an aerobridge was available and that, upon the complainant's objection, an alternative arrangement was made within 5–6 minutes. CCTV footage indicated that no boarding passenger had entered the aircraft prior to the de-boarding of the wheelchair user. Further, no audio or video evidence substantiating the alleged altercation was found. The airline was accordingly advised to sensitize its staff regarding appropriate handling of such situations.

4. Observations and Recommendations

4.1 The issues involved in the present case relate to non-discrimination, dignity and reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities under the RPwD Act, 2016. Manual lifting of a wheelchair user, particularly when an aerobridge or ramp is available, is inconsistent with the principles of dignity and accessibility. The

absence of complete audio/video recording also creates a lacuna in establishing the sequence of events. While the airline has the primary responsibility for handling wheelchair users, the airport authorities also have a supervisory and coordinating role in ensuring accessible and dignified boarding/de-boarding. The complainant has accepted the apology and partial relief extended in the matter.

4.2 The case also highlights the need for better coordination among the airline, airport authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that accessibility and dignity of persons with disabilities remain central to aviation operations.

4.3 Accordingly, Respondent No. 1 is recommended to put in place binding SOPs ensuring mandatory availability of wheelchair/ramp facilities where pre-booked, prohibition of stair-based de-boarding where accessible facilities are available, proper sequencing of boarding and de-boarding, sensitization of staff, and effective coordination with the DGCA.

4.4 In terms of Section 76 of the RPwD Act, 2016, the respondents are recommended to submit an Action Taken Report (ATR) on the above recommendations within three months from the date of this Order.

5. Accordingly, the complaint is disposed of.

(S. Govindaraj)
Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities