

On Women's Day, Uber rape victim lashes out at taxi firm

[IANS](#) New Delhi, March 8, 2015 | [UPDATED 12:08 IST](#)

A Delhi woman executive who was allegedly raped by an Uber cab driver, has accused the web-based US taxi firm of making only cosmetic changes to their policies, which do not make women feel safe.

"Until women can legitimately feel safe, we cannot obtain equality. Sadly, Uber doesn't understand this," she said in a statement released on Sunday through her US lawyer on International Women's Day.

"As a rape survivor and Indian woman, International Women's Day is an important day to reflect on where we have come and how much more must be achieved before we can claim true equality," the executive said.

"While I would like to forget what happened to me when I was raped by an Uber driver back in December, I have had to re-live the vicious attack multiple times, most recently last week when I was cross-examined for a second time by the assailant's counsel," she recalled.

"Words cannot describe what I am currently going through and I continue to suffer mentally every day this goes on," she said.

"To add insult to injury, while Uber had originally said that it would help my family and me, they have refused to meet with my legal team and me to discuss important safety measures that I believe are necessary to ensure that other women do not have to go through what I am enduring."

"Instead, they have defied the local authorities and continue to operate in Delhi and have made cosmetic changes to their policies that are clearly marketing efforts designed to attract more customers," she said.

The victim's New York-based lawyer, Douglas H. Wigdor, who had represented Nafissatou Diallo, a New York hotel maid, in her case of alleged sexual assault against then IMF managing director Dominiqu Strauss-Kahn in 2011, also issued a statement.

Wigdor said his firm's representation in Diallo's and the Delhi rape victim's cases "underscore how much more work needs to be done in order for women to achieve true equality".

"Sadly, rape and sexual assault myths continue to be floated about to 'justify' or 'explain' these heinous crimes including the interview by the BBC of the perpetrator of the fatal 2012 gang rape in Delhi in which he stated 'a girl is far more responsible for rape than a boy'," he said.

"The dismissal of the DSK indictment by the Manhattan district attorney, the recalling for a second cross-examination of the victim in the Uber rape, and Uber's refusal to meet with my client only exacerbate these problems," Wigdor said.

"Rape and sexual assault are crimes of control and domination - hopefully, discussions surrounding International Women's Day will bring about positive change so that women can achieve true equality," he said.

The Delhi woman has filed a lawsuit in a California court seeking a jury trial and a direction to Uber to "remedy the effects of the unlawful conduct" alleged in the complaint, "and to prevent repeated occurrences in the future".

It also seeks an award of unspecified amount of punitive damages "for all physical, monetary and/or economic harm".