

Uber rape survivor allegedly plans to sue company in US

WASHINGTON: [The female New Delhi executive who was allegedly raped by a Uber taxi driver is suing the company in the United States through a top American trial lawyer well known for litigating and winning large arbitration awards.](#)

Douglas Wigdor, who is counted among the country's top 100 trial, labor, and employment lawyers, has been retained by the executive in a rare case of an Indian national suing an American company in the United States. "I can confirm that I have been retained by the young lady who was raped by an Uber driver in Delhi, India, last December," Wigdor told ToI, adding, "We will use all of our resources to vindicate my client's rights, hold those responsible for their actions and ensure that this doesn't happen again."

Wigdor said he had "met extensively" with the executive and her family while in Delhi, at her request, and he "can only compliment them for their bravery and fortitude during this very difficult time."

He also praised the Delhi police "for their professionalism in locating the perpetrator and gathering the evidence of this detestable crime as well as the department of transportation for their courage in enforcing a ban on Uber until such time as it can be assured that this will never happen again."

Although US lawyers are known to actively seek out accident victims to encourage them to sue for damages (engendering the term "ambulance chasers" that became familiar to Indians during the Bhopal tragedy), Wigdor doesn't appear to need to chase clients.

"It is hard to imagine another employment lawyer with a comparable record both in the courtroom and at the negotiating table," boasts a profile on his website, adding that "because of his trial abilities, he routinely settles cases, valued over one-half billion dollars through informal negotiations and mediation."

Some of the "notable outcomes" listed in his resume include: a \$23.72 million arbitration award on behalf of the former Chief Financial Officer of Six Flags; a \$7.5 million verdict in a disability discrimination case against Wal-Mart, one of the largest verdicts ever in a single plaintiff case under the Americans with Disabilities Act; a \$8 million (appx.) verdict on behalf of the former Editor-in-Chief of the Source Magazine, who was retaliated against after she complained of gender discrimination; and a \$1.35 million verdict in a disability case where our client was terminated from his employer after disclosing he was HIV positive.

Indian clients seldom have resources to pursue cases in America although US courts are known to hear cases against American companies even if the litigant is not from the US and the incident occurred in another country. Bhopal gas victims did pursue litigation in the US for many years, mostly in vain. More recently, a New York court accepted a case against Pfizer that accused the US drug major of conducting trials of meningitis drugs on children in Nigeria without consent, resulting in a settlement after 15 years of litigation.

Wigdor told the Guardian, which first reported the development, that he is examining the possibility of asking a US court to exercise jurisdiction in the case because Uber's conduct is based on company policy made in the US.