

BENCHMARKS **CLOSED**
Nifty 19,638.30 **114.75**

FEATURED FUNDS ★★★★★ 3Y RETURN
Canara Robeco Small C... **37.56 %** **INVEST NOW**

Search Stock Quotes, News, Mutual Funds and more

THE ECONOMIC TIMES | Politics

English Edition ▼ | Today's Paper

Subscribe Sign In

Get 20% discount on ETPrime

Home ETPRime Markets **News** Industry Rise Politics Wealth Mutual Funds Tech Careers Opinion NRI Panache ET NOW Spotlight

India Decoded Web Stories Morning Brief Podcast Newsblogs Economy ▼ Industry **Politics** Company ▼ Defence ▼ More ▼

Business News › News › Politics › Indian parents of US professionals opting wheelchair to make journey trouble free

Indian parents of US professionals opting wheelchair to make journey trouble free

By Manju V, TNN Last Updated: May 28, 2016, 12:01 PM IST

SHARE FONT SIZE SAVE PRINT COMMENT

Synopsis

The passenger from the check-in right up to the aircraft door is aided by an airline assistant and they don't need to figure out which counter to go to.



MUMBAI: To the uninitiated, it would seem that by some strange quirk of genetics or probably destiny, parents of Indians living in the US develop some ailment that leaves them wheelchair-bound, especially during summer when they are booked on an Air **India** flight to visit their children.

These days, on every AI flight from Mumbai or **Delhi** to the US, one can find at least two dozen passengers who have opted for the wheelchair facility. Sometimes, the number goes up to 35, which is about 10 per cent of the total seats onboard the B777-330 ER aircraft that usually makes these journeys.

Not all of them are mobility-impaired; most can walk freely. Opting for wheelchair assistance is just the one and only solution to ensure the parents - often travelling abroad for the first time or may be not fluent in English - have a stress-free journey.

Videos



Why K'taka and TN are fighting for Cauvery



A unique way to bid adieu to Ganesha

Amazon Top Deals

POWERED BY
amazon.in

The passenger navigates the airport from the check-in counter right up to the aircraft door on a wheelchair, aided by an airline assistant. They don't need to read signage, figure out which counter to go to. They only walk the last leg of the journey, from wheelchair to aircraft seat. The process is repeated after the aircraft lands. Being escorted through a vast, foreign airport, albeit on a wheelchair, is priceless.

"None of the airlines charges for wheelchair assistance. It's understandable that the number of passengers who opt for it is on the rise," said a [travel](#) agent. Till last summer, each AI flight had an average of 10-15 wheelchair passengers; now it has gone up so much that the flight attendants have raised a red flag.

A senior AI flight attendant, requesting anonymity, said that this summer, on most of the non-stop flights from Mumbai-Delhi to Newark, New York, Chicago, San Francisco or even London, there were at least 25-35 wheelchair passengers. Their sole concern is the problems they would face during a planned evacuation.


So what could be the problem? The names of wheelchair passengers are asterisked and labelled "WHCR" on the passenger information list that the crew carry, said a flight attendant. "Norms dictate that in an emergency, an aircraft should be evacuated in 90 seconds. So the rule in all airlines is that the wheelchair passengers should be made to evacuate last." That is because they might not be able to jump onto the evacuation slide as quickly as the others. They would want to sit down and slide onto the raft, which would slow the [speed](#) of evacuation.

"So we single out the wheelchair passengers and ask them to wait, while others evacuate first," he said. Now that would be easier said than done, especially when these passengers are not actually unwell.

Generally, the passengers who actually can't walk are very few. They are brought right up to their seat on a wheelchair. "The rest are healthy, but they are labelled as wheelchair passengers; so when we tell them to wait for evacuations, they surely will argue," the attendant said, adding that they wouldn't want to spend the time arguing with two dozen passengers.

In March, an AI flight did a planned evacuation in Bangkok following a bomb scare. There have been no instances of planned evacuation on non-stop flights to the US in the recent past.


AI is the preferred airline for the wheelchair passengers to the US from India. "AI carries the largest number of wheelchair passengers. We don't turn away



Voltas Beko 8 Place Settings Table Top...

₹23,979 ~~₹25,999~~ **8% OFF**

[Buy Now](#)



Lenovo IdeaPad Slim 3 Intel Core i3...

₹34,990 ~~₹49,999~~ **29% OFF**

[Buy Now](#)

[VIEW TODAY'S TOP DEALS ON AMAZON »](#)

Latest from ET

1. MS Swaminathan: In memory of the genius who sowed it right
2. Govt mulls sugar export restrictions to check prices
3. Khan vs Bezos: This is Big Tech's real cage match

POLITICS TRENDING TERMS

- G20 Summit Live
- Aditya L1 Mission News Live
- Chandrayaan 3
- Gyanvapi Mosque Survey Live

anyone," said a senior AI official. It costs AI \$15 to provide wheelchair assistance to each passenger in the US, he added.



Print Edition

Print Edition

Thursday, 28 Sep, 2023

Experience Your Economic Times Newspaper,
The Digital Way!

Front Page

Pure Politics

Brands & Companies

Companies

More



Now, Tesla Rival VinFast Looks to Make in India

Vietnamese electric vehicle maker VinFast Auto – a deemed Tesla rival that emerged as the world’s third most valuable carmaker last month – is mulling...

[Read Complete Print Edition »](#)

READ MORE NEWS ON

Delhi

Mumbai

India

Speed

US

Travel

(Catch all the **Business News**, **Breaking News** Events and **Latest News** Up ...**more**

[VIEW 2 COMMENTS](#) ON THIS STORY

ETPrime stories of the day



FINTECH

Flipkart’s lending dream:
Can Super.money be a
super start as e-tailer eyes
Paytm, Paisabazaar’s turf?

5 mins read



UNDER THE LENS

Finfluencers are having a
hard time amid P&L
exposes. Will Sebi
regulations put an end to
the drama?

11 mins read



TRADE

Strategic location, tax
doles: Many reasons why
India can seek a Mauritian
launchpad to Africa

6 mins read

[Subscribe to ETPrime](#)



Search News, Stock Quotes & NAV

Trending Now

Parliament Special Session

G20 Summit News Live

Aditya L1 News Live

Chandrayaan 3 News Live

MORE

Hot On Web

Asian Games 2023 Live

MS Swaminathan Death News

Eid Milad-un-Nabi 2023

World Rabies Day 2023

MORE

In Case You Missed It

Parliament Special Session

Delhi G20 Summit Live

Aditya L1 Mission Launch Updates

MORE

Top Calculators

Standard Deviation Calculator | Income Tax Calculator | Age Calculator | Time Calculator | BMI Calculator |

MORE

Top Searched Companies

Indian Oil Corp. Share Price | TCS Share Price | Vodafone Idea Share Price | L&T Share Price |

MORE

Top Definitions

Equity | Monopoly | Audit | Law Of Demand | Economics

MORE

Top Commodities

Aluminium Rate | Gold Rate | Menthaoil Rate | Silver Rate | Copper Rate

MORE

Top Slideshow

How Rajendra Badwe Is Making ... | Axis Bank | Raw Vegetables | Stock Ideas | Icici Bank | Raw Vegetables |

MORE

Top Videos

Delhi Riots | Google Celebrates Bubble Tea ... | Google Bard Vs Chatgpt Who W... |

MORE

Private Companies

Tallwin Systems Private Limited | 99exchange.com Opc Privateate... | Safe Shopping Private Limited |

MORE

Top Prime Articles

Falling Off The Momentum Why... | Reliance Jiocinema Is Streamin... | Adani Group Stocks Will Averagi... |

MORE

Top Story Listing

Why Is Crude Oil Price Falling | Infosys Layoffs | Bitcoin | Rbi | Bank Strike

MORE

Other Useful Links

About Us | Archive | Subscribe to ET Prime | Book your Newspaper Subscription | Create Your Own Ad |

MORE

Follow Us On:

Download ET App:

SUBSCRIBE TO
OUR
NEWSLETTER