

# India court sentences Uber driver to life in prison for rape

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Photo by: The Associated Press

FILE- In this Dec. 8, 2014 file photo, Shiv Kumar Yadav, center, a driver from the international taxi-booking service Uber, is surrounded by police as he is brought out after being produced in a court in New Delhi, India. (AP Photo/Saurabh Das, file)

NEW DELHI — An Indian court sentenced an Uber driver to life in prison Tuesday for raping a passenger in his vehicle last December, in a case that has triggered widespread protests against sexual violence and demands for more efforts to ensure women's safety.

Judge Kaveri Baweja had earlier found the driver, Shiv Kumar Yadav, guilty of rape, criminal intimidation, kidnapping and endangering the woman's life.

She sentenced Yadav to "rigorous imprisonment for life which shall mean imprisonment till his remaining natural life," the Press Trust of India news agency reported.

Yadav's wife, father and two daughters began wailing in the courtroom as the judge announced the verdict, it said.

The victim, who works for a private company, had hired the cab for a ride home in the Indian capital. She filed a lawsuit against Uber in a U.S. court seeking unspecified damages and accusing the company of failing to properly investigate Yadav's background. The lawsuit was later settled out of court.

The case was a blow to Uber, which has attracted global popularity and controversy with a service that lets passengers summon cars through an app in more than 250 cities around the world.

The New Delhi government banned app-based taxi companies after the rape. Uber lost its license to operate in the Indian capital for failing to carry out proper background checks on the drivers they hired, but it was restored in July.

India has a long history of tolerance for sexual violence, but a series of recent attacks on women have caused outrage across the nation, especially after the December 2012 fatal gang rape of a 23-year-old woman aboard a moving bus in New Delhi.

The nationwide outcry following that assault led the federal government to rush legislation that criminalizes voyeurism, stalking and the trafficking of women. The law also makes it a crime for police officers to refuse to open cases when complaints are made.