

Uber victim hires top US lawyer Douglas Wigdor to sue the cab service

Baishali Adak | Mail Today | New Delhi, January 17, 2015 | UPDATED 06:06 IST



The 25-year-old woman, who was allegedly raped by Uber driver Shiv Kumar Yadav last year, has hired a top New York-based lawyer to sue the online taxi service in US courts.

The financial executive, who is a resident of West Delhi's Inderlok, has engaged the services of Douglas Wigdor to fight her case where she has charged Uber with negligence. The survivor's relative, with whom Mail Today spoke over the phone, confirmed the news. The relative, however, could not comment on the nature of charges that will be slapped on the Silicon Valley-based firm or the timing of the charges.

"Yes it's true. She has signed up New York-based counsel Douglas Wigdor to sue Uber in a US court. However, I don't have her consent to speak to you. Only she will be able to consent on the charges she is planning to slap against the company," the relative said.

Wigdor had represented the hotel maid who had accused former International Monetary Fund chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn of sexual assault. He has been involved in various other internationally-renowned cases.

Shiv Kumar Yadav, formerly a driver with Uber, allegedly kidnapped the woman on December 5, 2104 when she had fallen asleep in the cab. He had later taken her to a desolate spot near Inderlok, locked the car and raped her.

Yadav was arrested from his hometown in Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh after which the police slapped various charges on him including committing rape while causing grievous bodily harm, abducting a woman, criminal intimidation and voluntarily causing hurt. The case is currently being taken up in a fast-track Delhi court where the victim appeared on Thursday and Friday to record her statement.

On the other hand, Uber Taxi service has been dogged by controversies following reports of its drivers sexually harassing women passengers in different countries. Last week, China banned application-based cab services. Uber is also facing legal action in South Korea, US and many other countries for hiring drivers with no taxi licences. In the past three weeks, two of its drivers have been accused of sexually assaulting women in Chicago.

Meanwhile, on Friday the victim stood firm on her stand in court. She was cross-examined before Additional Sessions Judge Kaveri Baweja in an incamera proceeding and according to sources, she was calm and deposed confidently.

On being asked by Yadav's counsel Aalok Dwivedi whether it is correct that on the night of the alleged incident on December 5, 2014, no sexual intercourse was established between her and the accused, the woman denied, saying she had raised an alarm but could not save herself