

# CASES OF DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY

Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, those entitled to immunity are expected to obey the law, and if allegations are brought to light, the relevant foreign government can be asked to rescind the privilege so they can be investigated. Under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1963), individuals are protected from a host country's laws only when the offences are related to their consular duties



**Saudi Prince Saud bin Abdulaziz bin Nasir al-Saud** was sentenced to life imprisonment after the British government pursued a case against him for murdering his manservant in a sexually motivated attack at a London hotel. He was released after serving a three-year sentence.

In 2014, The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK, revealed a list of the most serious alleged offences in 2013 where diplomatic immunity prevented conviction. The list of those involved included representatives from **Pakistan accused of rape and child abduction**, and a **Zambian diplomat allegedly involved in a sexual assault case**. A diplomat from **Kuwait**, where alcohol is strictly banned, was also accused of drink-driving.

Indian diplomats, especially in the US and UK, have been vulnerable to investigation and conviction because of the 1963 rule. **Devyani Khobragade** is a case in point. **An Indian diplomat was also recalled in 2011** when the UK police threatened to register a case of wife-beating against him.

In 2011, charges of attempted rape against **IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn** were dismissed citing diplomatic immunity.

In 2011, **US citizen Raymond A Davis**, was charged with **gunning down two people in a crowded market in Lahore**. According to officials, Davis was part of a covert, CIA-led team collecting intelligence on militant groups in Pakistan. President Barack Obama's intervention led to Pakistani government charges against Davis being dropped and he was sent home. "If our diplomats are in another country, then they are not subject to that country's local prosecution" Obama said.