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Former Chilean Dictator Faces Charges in Chemist's Death

Pinochet is thus stripped of his immunity from being prosecuted

90 year old former Chilean dictator, Augusto Pinochet, has been stripped from his immunity from prosecution in the case of the death of a chemist, who has allegedly been a secret police agent, on Thursday, by a Chilean appeals court in Santiago, Reuters informs. During a press conference in Santiago, lead justice Gabriela Perez told journalists that the court had voted 16 to 2 in favor of removing the immunity status of the general in the case involving Eugenio Berrios, a chemist scientist, who had worked for the former's DINA secret police and who was found buried in a beach in Uruguay in 1995, displaying gun shot wounds to his head. Even though Pinochet is no longer the chief of the Chilean state, he was still the commander of the army at the time Berrios died, which is thought to have occurred in 1992. According to an investigator in the current mysterious case, the reason why Berrios was found in Uruguay was because he had sought refuge there, given the fact that he had been accused in Chile of taking part in the murder of another Chilean official, the Foreign Minister himself, Orlando Letelier, in the US capital in 1976. In addition to this, the chemist was also allegedly involved in another case, where he was supposed to testify in connection with the development of the sarin nerve gas by the Chilean state in order to be employed in mass killings. Pinochet, who ruled Chile from 1973 to 1990, and whose dictatorship saw more than 3,000 people mysteriously disappear or be killed on political reasons, as well as others who were detained and tortured for the same reasons, has been called upon to be prosecuted in a number of other cases that dealt with utter violations of human rights laws, yet most of them were dropped due to his ill health. The Chilean law consists of a sort of legal privilege for those high-ranking officials of the South American regimes, according to which they must be submitted to a case-by-case procedure on whether their immunity should be stripped from them or not, which is why Pinochet has undergone this specific legal proceeding.