



DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
QUEENS COUNTY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568  
718-286-6000

**RICHARD A. BROWN**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** KEVIN RYAN  
NICOLE NAVAS  
MERIS CAMPBELL  
(718) 286-6315  
[www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org)

**DA BROWN: RIKERS ISLAND INMATE BEING PROSECUTED IN BRUTAL  
SEXUAL ASSAULT OF FORMER GIRLFRIEND INDICTED IN MURDER-FOR-HIRE  
CONSPIRACY TO KILL HER**

*Defendant Allegedly Conspired to Kill Victim To Prevent Her From Testifying Against Him*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Queens man – already being prosecuted for sexually assaulting his former girlfriend – has been indicted on new charges of conspiring to murder her while he was in custody on Rikers Island.

According to the District Attorney, the alleged plot was prevented by an undercover “sting” operation.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant has been charged with having plotted the murder of his former girlfriend to prevent her from testifying against him in an alleged sexual assault and burglary being prosecuted by my office. The defendant was in custody at the Rikers Island Correctional Facility and allegedly asked another inmate if he knew of anyone who could carry out the plot. Prison authorities were informed about the alleged plan and a sting operation followed. Fortunately, as the result of superb investigative work, the defendant’s alleged violent plot was thwarted and he now faces additional prosecution.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Angel Lopez, 29, formerly of 45-33 162<sup>nd</sup> Street in Flushing, Queens who has been charged in two separate indictments: a seven-count indictment charging him with Rape in the First Degree, Burglary in the First Degree, Robbery in the First Degree, Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, Unlawful Imprisonment in the First Degree and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fifth Degree and today’s new three-count indictment charging him with Conspiracy in the Second Degree to commit Murder in the First and Second Degrees and Criminal Solicitation in the Second Degree. The defendant faces up to 50 years in prison if convicted.

District Attorney Brown said that an investigation began last month when a Rikers Island Correctional Facility inmate informed prosecutors in the District Attorney’s Special Victim’s Bureau about the defendant’s alleged plan. The investigators and prosecutors then set up the undercover “sting” operation in which an undercover police investigator posing as an inmate’s cousin willing to carry out the contract murder met with Lopez on Rikers Island.

The District Attorney said that it is alleged in the indictment that on November 2, 2005 – three and one-half weeks after the victim told the defendant that she no longer wished to see or speak to him – the defendant broke into the 26-year-old victim’s Floral Park, Queens, residence in the middle of the night, woke her, handcuffed her and then sexually assaulted her while she pleaded with him to stop. It is further alleged that the defendant dragged her to the bathroom, filled the tub with water and threatened to drown her and then put a knife to her throat and forcibly raped her. The defendant is further charged with stealing \$700 in cash from the victim.

According to District Attorney Brown, the defendant was arrested shortly after the incident and was remanded without bail in Queens Criminal Court.

District Attorney Brown said that it is alleged in today’s indictment that while the defendant was in custody at Rikers Island Correctional Facility between February 9 and March 16, 2006 the defendant conspired with others to have the 26-year-old victim killed to prevent her from testifying against him in the pending prosecution.

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According to the charges, it is further alleged that the following events occurred:

- The defendant provided another inmate with an oral and written description of the victim's physical appearance, the exterior and interior of her home and her work schedule;
- The defendant met with an undercover police officer – who was posing as a “hit-man”– at Rikers Island and provided him with a written description of the victim's home and offered to pay him a sum of \$1,000 to kill the victim. He additionally arranged for the undercover officer to meet with his female friend so she could pay him the money to carry out the hit and provided his friend's address and phone number to the undercover. The defendant made numerous phone calls to the undercover officer seeking information regarding the status of the purported efforts to kill the victim; and
- The defendant arranged the payment of \$1,000 to an undercover New York City Police Officer whom he believed was a “hit-man” to shoot to death his former girlfriend who was the complainant in the pending sexual assault case.

The defendant was arrested on the conspiracy charges on March 22, 2006 and arraigned earlier today in Queens Supreme Court on both indictments before Queens Supreme Court Justice James P. Griffin who remanded him without bail and set a return date for May 30, 2006.

The murder-for-hire investigation was conducted by Detectives Dominick Digennaro and Ferdinand Caravousanos of the District Attorney's New York City Police Department Squad under the supervision of Captain John M. Zanfardino and Sergeant Frank Horvath; Captain Edward Vasquez of the New York City Department of Corrections under the supervision of Rikers Island Deputy Warden Raino Hills and Lieutenant Michael Saladino of the NYPD's HIDTA Unit assigned to Riker's Island.

The sexual assault investigation was conducted by Detective Sean Ward of the NYPD's 105 Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Michael Miltenberg, Commanding Officer.

Assistant District Attorney Kenneth M. Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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**Note to Editors: E-version of press release is posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**