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DEFENDANT INDICTED BY GRAND JURY FOR SLAYING OF PAWN SHOP OWNER;
VICTIM WAS REPEATEDLY STRUCK WITH BLUNT OBJECT

Defendant Also Allegedly Stole Jewelry Before Fleeing Scene;
Faces Up to 25 Years-to-Life in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Rodolfo Lopez-Portillo, 48, has been indicted by a Queens County grand jury and arraigned in Supreme Court on murder charges and other crimes. The defendant allegedly struck and killed a 60-year-old pawn shop owner in broad daylight inside the Jamaica Avenue store in March 2022.

District Attorney Katz said, “The defendant has been indicted on murder charges following the fatal beating of a pawn store owner during a broad daylight robbery. Brutal lawlessness against our local business owners is unacceptable and will not go unanswered. The defendant faces a lengthy prison term if convicted for his alleged actions.”

Lopez-Portillo, of Jamaica Avenue in Hollis, Queens, was arraigned late this afternoon before Queens Supreme Court Justice Kenneth C. Holder on a five-count indictment. The defendant is charged with two counts of murder in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. Justice Holder set the defendant’s return date for July 12, 2022. Lopez-Portillo faces up to 25 years-to-life in prison, if convicted.

According to the charges, soon after noon on March 28, 2022, the defendant walked into the Global Pawn Shop on Jamaica Avenue and confronted the store’s owner, Arasb Shoughi. The defendant allegedly used a blunt object to repeatedly strike the 60-year-old victim in the head multiple times. The defendant then allegedly removed property from Mr. Shoughi, along with other items from store shelves, and then left the store.

Mr. Shoughi died as a result of the beating on April 17, 2022.

The defendant was apprehended by police on May 5, 2022, in Maryland and extradited to New York to face charges.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Derek Webber and James Petruzzi of the New York City Police Department’s 103rd Precinct.

Senior Assistant District Attorney John Esposito and Assistant District Attorney Nicholas Castellano, of the District Attorney’s Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter J. McCormack III and John Kosinski, Senior Deputy Bureau Chiefs, Karen Ross, Deputy Bureau

Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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