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MASSACHUSETTS MAN FACES ASSAULT AND FIREARMS CHARGES
IN SHOOTING OF WOMAN OVER FAMILY DEBT

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Minliang Zheng was charged with assault and criminal possession of a weapon in the cold-blooded shooting a 45-year-old woman, allegedly over her male relative's unpaid financial debt. The defendant fled to Massachusetts and was extradited to New York this week.

District Attorney Katz said: "The defendant shot the victim simply to settle a score. In this case, fortunately, the victim survived and the defendant will now be held accountable. We thank the Massachusetts law enforcement community for helping to bring the defendant in to face justice."

Zheng, 50, of Pope Street in Quincy, Massachusetts, was arraigned Thursday on a four-count indictment charging him with two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree, assault in the second degree and criminal possession of a firearm.

If convicted, Zheng faces up to 15 years in prison. Supreme Court Justice Justice Mary Bejarano ordered him to return to court on November 21.

According to the charges:

- On February 26, a man who has not been identified approached a 57-year-old woman at her Flushing home saying that a male relative of hers owed him money and that if the debt was not paid, someone would hurt her family.
- Shortly after the threatening visit, cellphone records show that Zheng was near the woman's house on multiple days, spending several hours at a time in the area.
- Video surveillance footage recorded March 19, at approximately 10:30 a.m., shows a gray Honda Odyssey van registered to Zheng near the woman's house. The van later followed the woman's 45-year-sister as she left the house and drove to several locations near her own home in Oakland Gardens.
- At 12:30 p.m., the 45-year-old was loading laundry into her car, which was parked in front of her home. Zheng got out of the Honda Odyssey and approached the woman. He demanded money, saying in sum and substance, "The boss said to get the money." Zheng pointed a gun at the woman and shot her in the leg.

- Video footage shows the victim crawling into the driver's side of her vehicle and attempting to evade Zheng by closing the door. Zheng grabbed the car door, pulled it open and told victim he would shoot her entire family and left.
- Zheng fled to Massachusetts where he was apprehended August 8. He was extradited to New York Thursday.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Michael Rotanz of the 111th Precinct Detective Squad under supervision of Sergeant Brian Pierre and the overall supervision of Queens North Detective Bureau, with the assistance of Detective Nicholas Sofokles of the Queens District Attorney's Office Detective Squad under supervision of Lieutenant William Negus. Also assisting the investigation was Intelligence Analyst Joanna Ceballos of the Queens District Attorney's Office Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau, under the supervision of Supervising Analyst Jennifer Rudy and the overall supervision of Assistant District Attorney Shanon LaCorte, Bureau Chief.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Leann Staines of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Catherine Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave. Assisting the extradition was Assistant District Attorney George Deluca-Farrugia, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Felony Conferencing Bureau, Director of Extraditions, Renditions and Property Release Services Unit.

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

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