



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

LONG ISLAND MAN WHO KIDNAPPED, BEAT AND TORTURED TWO MEN
AFTER LURING THEM SEPARATELY TO LOCATIONS FOR SEX
SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON

*Defendant and Co-Defendant Guilty of Months-Long Crime Spree;
Victims Robbed, Restrained and Assaulted;
Third Victim Forced into Prostitution*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Gil Iphael has been sentenced to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to kidnapping, robbery and promoting prostitution for three separate incidents. The defendant lured his victims to locations for sex with the help of a co-defendant, then the victims were detained, assaulted and robbed. In one instance, Iphael tried to cut a man's toe off and threatened to mutilate his genitalia.

District Attorney Katz said: "This defendant took part in a sadistic months-long crime spree, terrifying his victims and forcing one of them into prostitution. The woman was held against her will and coerced to have sex with strangers for money. Two men, who were lured to different locations for sex, were beaten and threatened with heinous acts. Iphael even warned his victims that if they told anyone, their families would be killed. I thank the brave victims who came forward and helped us build this prosecution and bring this dangerous defendant to justice."

Iphael, 25, of Copiague Street in Valley Stream, pleaded guilty last month to two counts of kidnapping in the second degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and one count of promoting prostitution in the second degree. Supreme Court Justice Peter Vallone today sentenced the defendant to 20 years in prison, to be followed by five years of post-release supervision.

Iphael's co-defendant, Destiny Lebron, pleaded guilty in 2023 and is serving 13 years in prison, with five years of post-release supervision.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the court records, on July 30, 2022, Iphael and Lebron went to pick up a woman whom Lebron had befriended on Instagram months earlier. The two had exchanged several messages of a sexual nature, including photos, and engaged in prostitution-related conversations. Lebron asked the woman to engage in prostitution, but the victim declined. Lebron continued to call and message the victim over two days and the two agreed to meet.

Iphael and Lebron took the woman to the Quality Inn hotel at 153-95 Rockaway Blvd., where the woman was told that she would either help Iphael and Lebron rob victims lured there by Lebron, posing as a woman

engaged in prostitution, or she would have to engage in prostitution herself and turn over the money to the defendants.

When the victim again refused, Iphael and Lebron slapped, punched and threatened her. They coerced her to take pictures of herself and used photos on her phone for online prostitution ads. That evening, several clients showed up at the hotel and the victim performed sex acts with the men. Iphael and Lebron kept all the money from the clients.

The victim was able to escape from the pair on July 31 when she was left unattended in the hotel room.

On August 6, 2022, another victim, a man in his 50s, responded to an ad for sex featuring a photo of Lebron and he met her in a hotel room. After the victim paid Lebron in advance of sex and he'd begun to undress, Lebron threw bleach in his face. She opened the door letting Iphael in and he covered the victim's head with a blanket and began punching the victim and demanding money.

Iphael and Lebron restrained the man and continued assaulting him for several hours. Iphael reached into a bag and threatened to kill the victim, leading the victim to believe that Iphael had a gun. The defendants then took the man's car keys, phone and wallet. When the victim refused to unlock his phone, Lebron burned him with a curling iron until he complied.

The defendants attempted to transfer the victim's money electronically before making multiple trips to ATMs to make withdrawals from the victim's account using his bank card. They also stole the victim's car. The defendants broke one of the man's toes and repeatedly threatened to kill the man's family if he contacted the police.

On August 14, 2022, a man in his 20s, answered a prostitution ad featuring a photo of Lebron. The man was instructed to meet Lebron at a location in Queens. Once there, after the victim had agreed to pay her for sex and began to undress, Iphael and Lebron beat the victim, attempted to cut off his toe and threatened to cut off his genitals.

Iphael and Lebron restrained the man and continued assaulting him, often while holding a pillow over his face. The defendants took turns using the victim's debit card at a nearby ATM to withdraw money. The defendants took the victim's wallet, debit card, driver's license, money and other personal items.

The defendants repeatedly threatened to kill the victim's family if he reported the crime to police.

Assistant District Attorney Tara DiGregorio, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Human Trafficking Bureau, and Assistant District Attorney Kiran Cheema, also of the DA's Human Trafficking Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Jessica Melton, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

#

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

