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**BERNARDO RAUL CASTRO MATA SENTENCED TO 28 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SHOOTING  
TWO POLICE OFFICERS**

*Defendant Drove Unregistered Motorcycle Wrong Way on One-Way Street in East Elmhurst; When Cops Attempted to Stop Him, Defendant Shot Two Officers While Resisting Arrest*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Bernardo Raul Castro Mata was sentenced today to 28 years in prison for shooting Police Officer Richard Yarusso in the lower chest area and Police Officer Christopher Abreu in the leg. The officers attempted to stop the defendant on June 3, 2024, for driving the wrong way on a one-way street in East Elmhurst without a helmet on an unregistered motorcycle.

District Attorney Katz said: "It is simply a miracle that Officers Richard Yarusso and Christopher Abreu are alive today. These brave officers attempted to stop this defendant after he was observed riding his motorcycle the wrong way on Ditmars Boulevard and driving on the sidewalk with pedestrians present. As the officers attempted to arrest Mata, he produced a gun and shot both of them at extremely close range - one in the chest and the other in the leg."

Mata, 20, undomiciled, pleaded guilty on May 20 to attempted murder in the second degree and assault in the second degree. Queens Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Holder sentenced him today to 28 years in prison -- 25 years in prison on the attempted murder charge, followed by five years of post-release supervision, and three years on the assault charge followed by three years of post-release supervision. The sentences are to be served consecutively.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges, on June 3, 2024, at approximately 1:40 a.m., NYPD police officers Christopher Abreu and Richard Yarusso and NYPD Sergeant Nicholas Condos were on patrol in an unmarked police vehicle while wearing NYPD uniforms.

The officers and sergeant observed Mata operating an unregistered motorcycle and driving the wrong way on Ditmars Boulevard near 90<sup>th</sup> Street in East Elmhurst. The defendant was not wearing a helmet while operating the motorcycle. Mata also observed weaving the motorcycle onto the sidewalk with pedestrians present.

Officer Yarusso and Sergeant Condos exited the unmarked police vehicle and attempted to approach Mata. The defendant left the motorcycle and fled on foot. Officer Yarusso pursued him on foot, Officer Abreu followed the defendant in the unmarked vehicle and Sergeant Condos joined the pursuit using the motorcycle the defendant previously operated.

After reaching the defendant, in the vicinity of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 89<sup>th</sup> Street Officer Abreu attempted to place Mata under arrest. The defendant resisted arrest by twisting and flailing his body and arms then reached inside a bag he was wearing across his chest.

Officer Yarusso attempted to help Officer Abreu place the defendant in handcuffs. The two officers struggled with the defendant on the ground.

During the struggle, Mata removed a firearm from his crossbody bag and shot Officer Yarusso in the lower chest at point-blank range. The officer's bullet-resistant vest stopped the bullet. Mata also shot Officer Abreu and struck him in the upper right thigh area.

Officer Abreu then returned fire, shooting Mata in the foot and ankle area. The defendant released the firearm. Sergeant Condos arrived and placed the defendant in handcuffs.

Both officers were treated for their injuries and released from a local hospital.

Police recovered a loaded Hi-Point .380-caliber pistol at the scene as well as two deformed fired bullets, nine bullet fragments, three discharged .380-caliber shell casings, and four 9 mm discharged shell casings.

Assistant District Attorney Lauren D. Reilly of the District Attorney’s Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Michael Whitney, Bureau Chief, Roni Piplani and Timothy Regan, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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