



718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

**HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER INDICTED FOR MANSLAUGHTER IN DEATH OF HIGHWAY  
WORKER ON NASSAU EXPRESSWAY**

*Motorist Allegedly Sped Through Construction Lane and Hit Worker;  
Victim's Body Thrown 168 Feet at Impact; Defendant Faces up to 22 Years in Prison, if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Daveanand Budhai was arraigned on an indictment charging him with manslaughter, assault, leaving the scene and other crimes for the death of Isabel Alvarez, a construction zone flag person working on the Nassau Expressway in September who was allegedly struck and killed by the defendant. Budhai is alleged to have sped away after the crash and then called police to report his own injuries.

DA Katz said: "As alleged, the horrific death of Isabel Alvarez could have been avoided if the defendant – whose license was suspended – had adhered to the rules of the road and not sped into the highway construction zone where the victim was working. Drivers who selfishly believe the law does not apply to them will be held responsible by my office. Our condolences are with the family, friends and coworkers of Isabel Alvarez as they continue to mourn her loss."

Budhai, 25, of 115<sup>th</sup> Street in South Ozone Park, was arraigned today on an eight-count indictment charging him with manslaughter in the second degree, assault in the second degree, leaving the scene without reporting, aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the second and third degrees, reckless driving, operating a vehicle at unreasonable speed and failure to reduce speed. If convicted, he faces up to 22 years in prison. Supreme Court Justice Michael Hartofilis, who presided over the arraignment, ordered the defendant to return to court on January 8, 2026.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges, just before 7:30 a.m. on September 19, 2025, the defendant was driving an Infiniti sedan traveling eastbound at a high rate of speed on the Nassau Expressway. Budhai approached Exit 1N, which feeds into the Van Wyck Expressway. That ramp, however, was an active construction zone and the left lane was closed and marked with multiple traffic drums and signage. The posted speed for the ramp was 25 mph.

Budhai allegedly slammed into the traffic drums and then struck Alvarez, 44, who was the flag person holding a paddle sign that said "STOP/SLOW." She was also wearing her required safety equipment, including a hard hat and a fluorescent reflective visibility vest.

At impact, Alvarez was thrown approximately 168 feet through the air. Her body landed on the left shoulder of the roadway and she was pronounced dead at the scene.

After hitting Alvarez, the defendant allegedly drove away from the area. He exited the expressway and stopped at 134th Street and South Conduit Avenue – approximately a mile from the scene of the collision. Budhai called 911 to request an ambulance for injuries that he sustained to his hands in the incident.

When police arrived to aid the defendant, the vehicle Budhai drove was observed to have significant front-end damage, including a shattered windshield. There was both blood and glass inside the vehicle and fluorescent markings visible on the hood of the car.

Assistant District Attorney Vivian Gonzalez of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Matthew Hauszpigel, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Jonathan Selkove, Unit Chief of the District Attorney's Vehicular Homicide Unit and Deputy Bureau Chief of the Homicide Bureau, and John Kosinski, Bureau Chief of the Homicide Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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

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