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Wednesday, July 26, 2006

The six defendants arrested today in connection with an auto theft ring that operated up and down the eastern seaboard and specialized in stealing high-end luxury automobiles – including Mercedes, BMWs and Jaguars – were arraigned late this afternoon before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Barry Kron. They are variously charged in ten separate indictments with Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Third and Fourth Degrees, Illegal Possession of a Vehicle Identification Number Plate and Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree. If convicted, the defendants each face up to seven years in prison

The arraignment details are as follows:

- Bail for LEWIS PANIAGUA, 23, of 35-34 101st Street in Corona, was set at \$45,000 and a bail sufficiency hearing was ordered (to determine that the money being used comes from a legitimate source). Paniagua is scheduled to return to court on August 15, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Paniagua is the alleged owner of Rapan Auto, an auto body shop located at 33-33 103rd Street, also in Corona, which is one of numerous garages where stolen vehicles were allegedly stored. He is being represented by Linda Povman (718-261-6408).
- Bail for MARCOS SONG (a/k/a. Chino), 27, of 85-03 Jamaica Avenue in Woodhaven, was set at \$50,000 and a bail sufficiency hearing was ordered. Song is scheduled to return to court on August 15, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Song is a salesman at Major Auto World, a car dealership located at 43rd Street and Northern Boulevard in Long Island City, where four of the vehicles were reported stolen. He is being represented by Kevin O'Donnell (718-261-4500)
- Bail for CARLOS PAYAMPS, 26, of 37-28 101st Street in Corona, was set at \$10,000. He is scheduled to return to court on August 15, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Payamps is a salesman at BMW of Bayside, a car dealership, located at 21707 Northern Boulevard in Bayside, where two of the vehicles were reported stolen. He is being represented by Warren Silverman (718-281-2311).
- Bail for FELIX RODRIGUEZ (a/k/a Gato), 28, of 31-28 104th Street in East Elmhurst, was set \$40,000 and a bail sufficiency hearing was ordered. He is scheduled to return to court on September 8, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Rodriguez is purportedly known as a “paper guy” who allegedly altered VINS and forged fake titles and VINS. He is being represented by Sean McNicholas (718-261-0033).
- Bail for JUAN GARCIA (a/k/a Lazlo, Pete and Eredito), 37, of 835 Blake Avenue in Brooklyn, was set at \$20,000. He is scheduled to return to court on August 15, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Garcia is purportedly known as a “paper guy” who allegedly altered VINS and forged fake titles and VINS. He is being represented by Steven Goldenberg (718-819-0740)
- KEVIN URENA, 34, of 103-11 Altsyne Avenue in Corona, was released on his own recognizance. He is scheduled to return to court on August 15, 2006 and appear in Part K9. Urena was allegedly the “broker” in the sale of one of the stolen vehicles. He is being represented by Philip Middler (718-520-0820).

It should be noted that an indictment is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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