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D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MANSLAUGHTER
IN DEATH OF RICHMOND HILL BUS MECHANIC

Faces 10 Years in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a 20-year-old Richmond Hill man has pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the death of a 52-year-old neighborhood man in front of his own home in March 2005.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant senselessly attacked a hard-working family man on his way home from work, resulting his suffering a fatal heart attack. Though the defendant has admitted his guilt, it doesn't eradicate the harm and suffering that his action inflicted on the victim and his family."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Antonio Roque, 20, of 114-09 Jamaica Avenue in Richmond Hill. Roque, who was attending high school at the time of the incident, pleaded guilty yesterday to first-degree manslaughter before Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy who indicated that he would sentence the defendant to ten years in prison on December 18, 2006.

District Attorney Brown said that, in pleading guilty, the defendant admitted that about 1:00 a.m. on March 1, 2005, he punched school bus mechanic Jagat Balram outside of his Jamaica Avenue residence. Mr. Balram was transported to a nearby Queens hospital and pronounced dead of a heart attack suffered as a result of the beating.

Assistant District Attorney John W. Kosinski, of the District Attorney's Homicide Trials Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Brad Leventhal, Bureau Chief, and Jack Warsawsky, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org